

Sitting With History

Written by
Students in the
Department of History



Volume 1



HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY

Department of History

Edited by Dr. Amanda Allen

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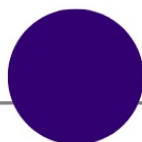
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Foreward

Dr. Amanda Wrenn Allen

Assistant Professor of History



I vividly remember one specific aspect of my interview at High Point University. I was lucky to have interviewed during two beautiful early spring days which highlighted HPU's blossoming grounds. In-between multiple meetings and talks I found a few minutes to sit outside and enjoy the surroundings- all while sitting next to Marie Curie. I remember reflecting on sitting next to this incredible woman who was not only a female pioneer in science but was a female pioneer in academia, too. During her lifetime women were starting to earn graduate degrees, yet were still restricted from teaching in higher education. I reflected on how thankful I was for Marie Curie and the other women who paved the way for my being able to do what I love as a university professor. Thankfully, I got the job and since beginning at HPU I have always wanted to incorporate the historical figures sitting all over campus into my work. And so this project developed. I greatly appreciate HPU's commitment to creating an inspiring environment in which students can learn beyond the classroom. These sculptures all over campus highlight HPU's appreciation of both history and education. It is the goal of this project to provide brief historical sketches highlighting why the figures represented on campus are important in history as well as to our modern context. In turn this project will connect the history learned in the classroom to the sculptures and values found in the larger HPU campus community. And all of this by our students.

This first volume does not yet feature every historical sculpture. Each year we will have more history students write on the remaining figures until all are featured in a collected edition. As new sculptures are

added to campus we will also include essays for those. Thus, this is a multi-year project and I am thankful for these first students who volunteered not knowing entirely how all of this would come together. I also am appreciative to the history faculty for supporting this idea and working with students on shaping the essays related to each of our individual content specialties. Thank you to Smith Library for their aid in this project. Our students exclusively used materials found in our library system. Each essay features a “further reading” section highlighting these sources, and we hope you will explore the collection. Historians cannot work without a library and we have a great one with great staff here at HPU.

On the following pages you will learn not only about pivotal historical persons, but also see the extraordinary work of history students- both majors and minors. The essays that follow exhibit the important academic and life skills we instill in our students in their various history courses- most importantly the skills of research, critical analysis, concise writing, and, perhaps most importantly, learning about humanity. All of these skills are crucial to historical work, yes, but also are crucial beyond our field. HPU is devoted to providing students with the skills they will need not to prosper in a job but to prosper in life. In the history department we know wherever our students go, whatever job they pursue these skills will transfer and help them shape their futures.

I am very proud of the work that follows. Our student contributors worked with Robert Fitzgerald in the library to find solid historical resources, both primary and secondary. They spent hours reading through multiple books and articles to understand better the importance of their chosen historical figure. History is not about memorizing facts but finding out how these facts have been interpreted, how contexts shaped the facts, and how those facts impacted other facts and events. History is also about acknowledging that there are both past positives and negatives that have led us to our present context. From both the good and the bad we can find

value in where we are today as a people as well as see what more is to be done. This level of critical analysis and research takes time and these students did it all beyond their regular course and extracurricular commitments. Why? Because they are historians who love and appreciate history and want to spread this to others. Here you will see their intense scholarship and devotion to a field they love. We hope you appreciate their work and learn something new.



John Coltrane

Kate Reagan 2025

There is a significant excellence imbedded in the name John Coltrane. Whether you are privy to jazz or not, the name rings of high importance. Coltrane was not only a saxophone virtuoso but a literary and spiritual figure who will be admired for decades. As a sculpture on High Point University's campus, he embodies HPU's core values- John Coltrane lived a life holding his family and God sacred as well as being a heavy influence on the country.

Coltrane's family was a defining factor and support in his road to notability, specifically, the influences from his father and his mother's nurturing nature. Coltrane's humble beginnings are especially important to HPU as his journey to fame and success began right down the street. Born in North Carolina, Coltrane grew up in the city of High Point. In a two-story home with a small yard on Underhill Road John lived with his mother and father, his aunt and uncle, his cousin Mary, and his grandfather, and grandmother. Growing up in the presence of his grandfather who served as a reverend, Coltrane spent most of his childhood at church, attending Sunday school.¹

Apart from his religious duties, Coltrane enjoyed the thrills of any boy in his time- comic books, cars, and sports. But Coltrane was especially enthralled with music. From an incredibly early age Coltrane was exposed to various instruments in his household. His father played the violin, ukulele and clarinet, which Coltrane would admire in awe. His father was known as the epitome of southern hospitality and hosted many neighbors and friends weekly for musical sets. Coltrane joined the party and silently observed.² With this introduction, he went on to study the clarinet and

¹ J. C. Thomas, *Chasin' the Trane: The Music and Mystique of John Coltrane* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1976), 7.

² *Ibid*, 7.

saxophone in high school, and eventually became the most iconic and complex saxophonist in the world.

Graduating from William Penn High School, Coltrane enlisted in the navy. In the force he was able to keep up his love for music and played in the navy band, which at the time was exclusively an all-white band. Coltrane's talent earned him not just a spot, but he became leader by the end of his term having broken the racial divide. After serving, Coltrane moved to Philadelphia where his mother and grandma had moved and studied at Ornstein School of Music in hopes of pursuing a music career. As his reputation spread John eventually was invited to play in Dizzy Gillespie's big band and in 1952 he toured with fellow saxophonist Earl Bostic.³ Coltrane quickly made a name for himself in the music industry playing among legends such as Miles Davis, Thelonious Monk, and Charlie Parker.

Unfortunately, with Coltrane's success he was introduced to a scene that led him to drugs. Among popular artists at the time indulging in drugs, alcohol, and partying was an unfortunate norm. He became a heavy drinker and heroin user while playing in Mile Davis' band. Nodding out during performances Coltrane's addiction became a concern to many. In 1957 Coltrane returned to his mother's home and asked for her and his grandmother's help in becoming clean. "But I need your help, I cannot do this all by myself. Will you help me Naima?"⁴ Naima (his grandmother) and mother were thrilled he was making this decision and their caring nature aided him in his sobriety. During withdrawals they would pray for him, bring him what he needed, and show love and support. After two weeks Coltrane achieved sobriety and returned to his rigid and disciplined practice and study of jazz.

Alongside family, Coltrane's relationship with God and religion was extraordinarily strong. Just like his grandmother and mother, Coltrane's

³ "John Coltrane," in *Contemporary Black Biography* 19 (1998).

⁴ Thomas, "Chasin' the Trane," 82.

faith would foster recovery in his addiction. “During the year 1957, I experienced, by the grace of God, a spiritual awakening which has led me to a richer, fuller, more productive life.”⁵ During this spiritual awakening, Coltrane composed one of his most famous works: *A Love Supreme*. The album contained four sections: *Acknowledgement*, *Resolution Pursuance*, and *Psalm*. Although the album’s only spoken words are “a love supreme,” a poem is written alongside the linear notes accompanying *Psalm*. Coltrane performed this poem on his saxophone, melodically sounding out the words through the instrument. “God is all. Help us to resolve our fears and weaknesses. In you all things are possible. Thank you, God.”⁶ Coltrane's words resonate with his struggle with addiction and the deliverance he experienced through God as a testament to his faith. This became one of the most celebrated spiritual jazz albums, inspired by Coltrane’s dedication and love for the divine. Coltrane’s faith was so influential, he later had a church named after him: the Saint John Coltrane African Orthodox Church in San Francisco appointed him a saint, a “divine sound Baptist, and a “messenger from God.”⁷

With Coltrane's music and poetry, he was a prominent influence in the Black experience in the United States. Jazz was an essential part of the civil rights movement in America as the respected art form was curated and cultivated by the Black community. Negative stereotypes were challenged, broken, and redefined as African-American jazz virtuosos rose in popularity. Not only was the jazz scene a career catapult for African-American artists, but the representation and prosperity were inspiring for the Black community. “Coltrane and the colleagues, peers, and friends with whom he worked and the audiences and fans with whom he made and

⁵ Ibid, 83.

⁶ John Coltrane, *A Love Supreme*, Impulse!, 1965.

⁷ “Coltrane Church,” Coltrane Church, accessed February 21, 2022, www.coltranechurch.org.

shared community realized a kind of freedom in work, sound, community, and personhood.”⁸

Coltrane’s virtuosity is among the most complex as his harmonic structures were advanced and improvisations most complicated. Of course, this proficiency came with hours of study, work, practice, and experience. For Coltrane this was essential to his success. He studied arrangements, arrived early to and left late from band practices, and tired his superiors with pressing questions regarding music theory. He also read books on world music, such as Indian and African styles.⁹ Coltrane had an innate desire for knowledge not just in a musical sense, but for an understanding of the world. This understanding of music and other enrichments is the freedom Coltrane embodied- the freedom of complete self-expression and interest, without scrutiny or judgment, and freedom to achieve the American Dream.

His talent, self-determination, hardships, and credentials exemplify a life of pure gift and expertise, and in the context of High Point University, a life extraordinaire.

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⁸ Leonard L. Brown, *John Coltrane and Black America's Quest for Freedom Spirituality and the Music* (New York City: Oxford University Press, 2010), 37.

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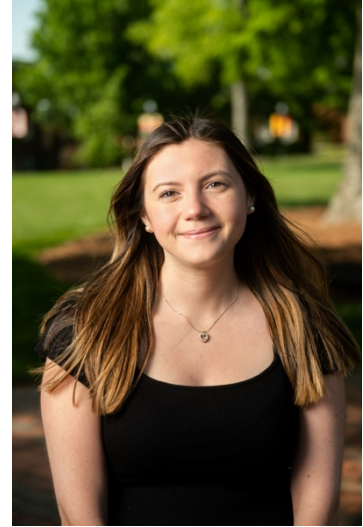
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Leonardo DaVinci

Emma Scrivo 2024

At High Point University, faculty aim to provide students with a well-rounded education and provoke thought by immersing students in a variety of courses from different discipline areas. Being exposed to different fields of knowledge, students are able to become critical thinkers and make deeper connections within the various areas they study. The university inspires its students by placing benches around campus each with a different historical figure along with a quote from them. The benches help students learn something new or make realizations about how the particular figure can relate to their life. One of the benches located on HPU's campus holds the spirited freethinker of the Renaissance period, Leonardo DaVinci.



Leonardo DaVinci is an important figure as he is known as the epitome of a “Renaissance Man.” He immersed himself in the connections between art and science and made numerous important discoveries in multiple fields. It was such that led DaVinci to becoming one of the most prominent figures during the Italian High Renaissance alongside other influential artists and thinkers, Raphael and Michelangelo. From an early age, he began an apprenticeship under Andrea del Verrocchio, during which he learned skills such as drawing, painting, and sculpting. In addition, he was also able to gain knowledge in mechanics, carpentry, architectural drafting, and chemistry. Throughout his apprenticeship, DaVinci was also able to contribute to Verrocchio's paintings and other artistic endeavors, however he was not able to launch his personal career until later in his life. *The Baptism of Christ* and the *Annunciation* are two of several works on which Verrocchio and DaVinci worked together.

Following his apprenticeship, DaVinci began producing his own works using his newly gained knowledge and skills. Some of his most popular works from his early career include *Madonna of the Carnation*, *Adoration of the Magi*, and *St. Jerome of the Wilderness*. Throughout his career, he created many works commissioned by donors. A common Renaissance trend, patrons who wanted a specific painting in their home would reach out to a painter whom they paid to paint exactly what they wanted. Often these paintings were a religious scene or held religious symbolism; also, the scenes commonly included the patron somewhere in the painting. Another common style patrons demanded was that of the portrait. It was under the request of such patrons that two of DaVinci's most famous paintings were painted: the *Mona Lisa* and *The Last Supper*, both of which are still among the most valuable pieces of art in the world today. These works still draw thousands of visitors who stand in line for hours to catch a moment's glimpse at DaVinci's masterpieces.

DaVinci began to dabble with science during one of his commissioned projects. He was commissioned to create an equestrian statue in 1506. To complete the project accurately, he began to create a series of drawings on a variety of subjects beyond that of animal anatomy. Some of these subjects were human anatomy, botany, and studies of birds in flight. All of these drawings eventually led to his drawings for a human flight machine. These flight machine drawings were not just about sketches but about machinery and how things worked in the air. These drawings, thus, highlight his interest in science because he was fascinated by the technicalities of objects and how they were related. He looked at these objects in a more mathematical and technical manner, rather than the typical abstract manner usually seen in art. Thus, he was combining science, math, and art in his thinking and works.

DaVinci's lasting legacy is important to note because he was not only a revolutionary artist, but also involved himself in other fields such as science, making him well rounded and able to think about life holistically.

In art specifically, he strayed away from typical techniques which made his paintings stand out and become more dynamic than others at the time. He created two famous techniques known as *chiaroscuro* and *sfumato*. These two techniques focused on the lighting which helped add depth and dimension into an otherwise flat looking traditional painting. DaVinci used his talent and knowledge in order to make strides and discoveries in the areas of science, art, and architecture.

Leonardo DaVinci's holistic learning and approaches are valuable lessons still today in a liberal arts education. Sometimes it is hard to see how things that seems opposite- such as science and art- are related, but when seen similarly the biggest discoveries can be made. While many may think math and art are completely different, DaVinci understood the importance of mathematic symmetry and alignment of shapes and angles in order to add depth and dimension to painting. Through uniquely crafting and positioning his creations DaVinci created works that became visually striking to audiences. This is seen, for example, in *The Last Supper* where DaVinci depicted Jesus in a triangular shape. This allowed Jesus to be the focal point of the painting. This is to show not only the importance of Jesus, but practically, made a complex image pleasing to the eye and not visually chaotic as there are several other people shown; despite all the other characters and images, the eye of the audience will always go straight to Jesus and bring the entire painting together.

Leonardo DaVinci certainly deserves his bench here at High Point University as his dedication to his studies along with his ability to be innovative underscore the expectation for every HPU student to be extraordinary. The ability to be innovative and create new ideas or new discoveries is crucial to a student's learning process. The ability to ask questions and keep asking *why* helps students dig deeper into their personal educational journey at High Point University. There is no way to truly find an answer or come to an understanding without curiosity similar to Leonardo DaVinci's. DaVinci had to work at his craft in order to become

great, he took the time and was dedicated, so his bench serves as an inspiration and model to HPU students from any major. In conclusion, the importance of Leonardo DaVinci and his contributions should be acknowledged by all. HPU has high standards for their students and wants them to excel in the same way Leonardo DaVinci made the most of his given talents.

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Amelia Earhart *Bonnie Showfety 2023*

Through Amelia Earhart's timeless feminism and ability to achieve what no other woman had been able to accomplish before her, she has become a symbol for all women around the world. With her inspiring courage, Amelia Earhart was able to conquer the societal boundaries of her time, making her a perfect statue for High Point University's



Campus. Amelia Earhart was born in 1898 in the small town of Atchison, Kansas. With this humble background she received her adventurous spirit from her father who worked with the railroad as a lawyer. With her father constantly traveling she was accustomed to going on adventures quite frequently. This sense of adventure created further curiosity in Earhart. She wanted to test the boundaries of society and her limits of being a young female in the early 1900's.

Earhart was an incredibly inquisitive child often playing sports generally seen as sports for boys alone, experimenting, and reading for hours on end in the library. Books were exceedingly important to Earhart from a young age in which she was able to escape from reality and learn about the world. With her family moving around the country quite frequently she felt ostracized from other students due to lack of stability and foundation within a town in which she was a newcomer. Even though she was commonly lost in a book she had difficulty from an early age with academics. This does not mean that she did not enjoy learning due to her incessant reading, but her unstable home life created an environment for her to excel in independent thinking while being able to take care of herself, versus structured school life. Her constant desire for climbing trees, horseback riding, and running around outside also had a habit of keeping her out of the classroom.

It was not until her high school in Chicago, she was able to develop her curricular excellence. In high school she was particularly fond of chemistry and was able to graduate within the normal four years from Hyde Park High School. Earhart states in her autobiography, “I went to at least six high schools in the usual four years’ time.”¹ Once graduated from high school Earhart went adventuring to Canada with her sister. In Canada she saw firsthand the impacts of World War I with wounded soldiers returning from across the Atlantic Ocean. These soldiers were her inspiration to work as a courageous nurse’s aide for the Red Cross, thus, opening the door for her to meet many wounded pilots. These pilots served not only in the war but as a catalyst for Amelia’s interest in aviation. It was not until she was with her family in California when she learned how to fly in 1920. By reading every book she could get her hands on she learned how to fly very quickly. Her inspiration and dedication led to her breaking known records and shattering the views of women at that time.

In 1922, Earhart demolished her first flying record- she flew her plane to 14,000 feet above sea level. After doing so, she was given a pilot’s license making her the sixteenth woman to receive such honor. A few years later she joined the American Aeronautical Society in Boston and wrote for the local newspaper promoting flying at the Dennison Airport in Massachusetts. With her reputation growing as quickly as her dedication to flying, she strove to become the first woman to conduct a transatlantic flight after Charles Lindbergh’s famous flight in 1927. Earhart was initially asked to join this project as merely a passenger because of her gender. Most men believed the transatlantic flight would be too strenuous for a woman to fly by herself. This flight was conducted in June of 1928 by two men and Earhart flying as a passenger for twenty hours and forty minutes. The trio started in Newfoundland and ended in England. The transatlantic flight did nothing but make Amelia want to conduct the flight herself, solo.

¹Amelia Earhart, *The Fun of It*, reprint (Chicago, IL: Academy Chicago Publishers, 1977).

In preparation for her solo transatlantic flight, Earhart decided to fly across America in 1929 alone. Her voyage ran from Santa Monica to Cleveland in a Women's Air Derby competition, in which she placed third. By having this experience she was able to develop her stamina through her practice with flying. This event sparked her involvement with the Ninety-Nines which was a feminist group of aviators who strove to bring awareness to female pilots and demolition the views of women at the time. She became the group's first president and helped promote the group as a whole. She made several other flights within North America in order to stay prepared for her biggest flight yet. She traveled from Honolulu, Hawaii to Oakland, California, Los Angeles to Mexico City, and Mexico City to New York all within the year 1935. As for records, Earhart set several records throughout the 1930's for women's aviation regarding speed and distance.

In May 1932, she had finally practiced enough and gained enough strength to make her extraordinary flight across the Atlantic. She decided to fly solo from Harbour Grace, Newfoundland all the way to Culmore, Northern Ireland within fifteen hours. She left the North American soil with herself, a newspaper, and her courage to face what no other woman had done before. Immediately she began having some issues with the weather from where she was flying. Experiencing ice, dense clouds, and some mechanical issues with her plane she was concerned with how the rest of her flight would go. She needed strength and self-reliance in order to persevere through this trying time during the transatlantic flight. She finally landed in Culmore making her the first woman solo pilot to conduct a transatlantic flight in less time than Charles Lindbergh.

Through her determination, moxie, and adventuresome ideology, Amelia became a hero internationally. Because of her bravery she won several honors for her flight across the Atlantic Ocean. In 1932 she received the Distinguished Flying Cross from the U.S. Congress, the Gold

Medal from the National Geographic Society, and the Cross of the Knight of Legion of Honor from France.

Her extraordinary endeavors led to her desire to be the first pilot to circumnavigate the globe. She began to prepare for this global flight through developing a team and doing a large amount of research in order to determine the correct path to take. She decided on three men to ride with her, two navigators who had experience with marine and flight navigation, as well as a technician to help advise her during her travels. The four together determined that she would need to travel from California to Hawaii, eventually to Australia, then south to India, across the Indian Ocean to Africa, conduct another transatlantic flight to Florida, and then finally returning to California. The team left for Hawaii in March 1937 and landed at America's Navy field in Pearl Harbor. After a few days her team went to start their flight again but there were mechanical issues so the aviators needed to return to Hawaii. Upon their descent the plane needed major repairs and they were forced to put their journey on hold for the time being. Having to restart her flight around the world she decided to take a new route going east instead of west. This time, it seemed to work better- her persistent team made it all the way from California to New Guinea in June 1937. The final stretch was over the Pacific Ocean to Howland Island. Amelia and her team developed many emergency plans in case there was a problem with the Aircraft. Yet, the group was lost on July 2, 1937.

Even though Amelia Earhart's death has been disputed for years her aviation legacy overpowers the superstition. Her dedication to women's rights as well as the appreciation of aviation encourages High Point University students to strive to be as strong, courageous, and resilient as Amelia Earhart. Earhart sparks the adventurous side of students as they pass her during their walk to class. She inspires students to reflect on possibilities and test the limits of society, technology, and the human body. As many had done for her, Earhart is now a catalyst for students to spark

ingenuity and revelation in the educational environment of High Point University.

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Albert Einstein

Kenan Althoff 2023

Albert Einstein was born on March 14, 1879, in the city of Ulm, Germany. He moved to Switzerland and at the age of seventeen began attending the Swiss Federal Polytechnic School in Zürich, from which he graduated in 1900 with a federal teaching diploma. Einstein later attended the University of Zürich, earning his PhD in 1905.



Einstein held positions at the Prussian Academy of Sciences, the Humboldt University of Berlin, and the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Physics. After the rise of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi regime in Germany in 1933, Albert Einstein moved to the United States of America, where he became an influential part of the United States' nuclear programs. Throughout his life and career, Einstein made extensive contributions to the scientific realm of theoretical physics, specifically important contributions in the theory of relativity, the theory of quantum mechanics, and the mass-energy equivalence formula $E=mc^2$. Albert Einstein received numerous awards for his work in physics, including a Nobel Prize in Physics in 1921. Although renowned for his intellectual contributions, Einstein inadvertently made another crucial contribution to the world: providing a guideline for success.

Albert Einstein was an avid learner. From a very young age, Einstein was always proactive in his work, often exhibiting a high degree of intellectual curiosity. This was evident in his taking it upon himself to independently teach himself advanced mathematical and scientific concepts with no external assistance or pressure. At the age of twelve, Einstein had already taught himself algebra and geometry, and by the time he was fourteen, had already mastered most of calculus. Later in life, Einstein used his intellectual curiosity in the search for more knowledge, pursuing

difficult concepts in theoretical physics such as electrodynamics, relativity, and quantum mechanics. Einstein also exhibited a growth mindset in that he was willing to challenge what he knew and explore the unknown, propelling him to important positions in academia. Although Einstein exhibited a level of intellectual prowess that has not been seen in the world since his passing, that does not mean the lessons this character trait teaches should be forgotten. Einstein's life and legacy teaches that success requires a certain degree of proactiveness. Like Einstein, HPU students learn they should not wait for things to come to them but instead seek out opportunities and knowledge. Having intellectual curiosity and a growth mindset assists students in achieving goals and dreams. Einstein's legacy, like an HPU education, teaches students to not be content with what is already known; instead, students should push the boundaries, seek out the unknown, and attempt to make it known to the world.

In addition to being proactive and having intellectual curiosity, Einstein exhibited a great deal of persistence and determination. One of the earliest examples of this determination was evident in his application to the Swiss Federal Polytechnic School in Zürich. When he took the entrance examinations, he did not score high enough on most of the exam yet scored extraordinarily high on the physics and mathematics sections. Because of this, Einstein was not accepted into the school he wanted. Undeterred, Einstein went to further schooling to complete his education in hopes that it would enable him to pass the entrance exam when he attempted it again. After only one year, Albert Einstein re-took the entrance exam and passed, and was granted admittance into the Swiss Federal Polytechnic School. Even after the initial setback of failing on the entrance exam, Einstein did not let that get to him. Instead of shutting him down, he took the failure in stride and used it as an incentive to continue striving for his dreams. This determination and persistence continued into his later life and was particularly evident in his belief on pacifism. While Einstein was involved in the creation of one of the deadliest weapons in

human history, nuclear weaponry, he was adamantly opposed to the actual use of those weapons. A lifelong pacifist, Einstein was vehemently opposed to war, especially when it came to his involvement during both World Wars. Although he was in the minority of opinion when it came to the notion of war, Einstein stood firm in his beliefs and remained determined in practicing what he preached. What students at HPU can learn from this is to never back down on their beliefs, but still be willing to listen to and understand beliefs and opinions of others, even if there is disagreement. Einstein was still willing to work with those who had views on war different from his own.

Albert Einstein also exhibited civility, particularly through the practice of his pacifist beliefs. Einstein supported the idea of approaching and resolving conflicts or disputes through discussion, discourse, and reason rather than with anger, violence, and emotion. Einstein understood that violence was not the solution to any problem. During World War II, when the United States military suggested using nuclear weapons to end the war quicker, Einstein opposed this option on the grounds that such a weapon would cause unnecessary death and destruction. He believed the only way to end conflict was through a peaceful approach, and that humans should always strive to seek resolution in a civil manner. This aspect of Einstein's legacy presents a way in which students can approach conflict in their lives: not responding irrationally, but rather be willing to listen and attempt to understand the other sides of an argument to come together and make a fully informed resolution. Through discussion and discourse, the ability to work together with others increases, thus allowing students to work towards their goals without being hindered by conflict with others.

When Albert Einstein passed away on April 18, 1955, the world lost one of the greatest scientific thinkers of all time. But Einstein left behind a legacy that was more than just his scientific contributions. Albert Einstein was a man who exhibited a high degree of intellectual curiosity and lived his life with a growth mindset. His proactiveness and intellectual prowess

have shaped the world and will continue to do so, including serving as a continuing inspiration on HPU's campus. All HPU students should seek to practice being proactive in their daily lives and have some degree of intellectual curiosity. Albert Einstein was persistent and determined in his studies and in chasing his goals, even in the face of challenges and failure. His legacy inspires students to never give up on their dreams or what they believe in. They should always strive to accomplish goals and work twice as hard when they fail to achieve them. Albert Einstein also practiced civility, promoting discussion, discourse, and reason as the solution to any conflict, argument, or disagreement. Einstein provides HPU students with a very valuable lesson, to be willing to approach disagreement or an argument with an open mind, listen to the opinions of others, and attempt to find a solution through discussion rather than anger or violence. Even though Albert Einstein has passed, his legacy has lived on and will continue to live on, not just as one of the greatest thinkers of all time, but also as someone who lived a life we should all strive for; a life of curiosity, growth, determination, civility, understanding, and proactiveness.

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Thomas Jefferson

Tony O'Connor 2022

Thomas Jefferson was an important Founding Father and statesman during the turn of the nineteenth century. He played an integral role in defining the ideology that separated the United States from any other country in the world. Jefferson believed in individual autonomy over the supremacy of a parliament or monarch.¹ He based this belief on the idea that happiness was a natural right and put forth this notion as fact in the Declaration of Independence with the phrase, “Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”¹ However, he was not just known for his contributions to the founding document of the United States of America, but also for his dedicated public service and building of early America.



After the Revolutionary War, Thomas Jefferson remained a key political figure who helped shape early policies of the new country. Jefferson participated in shifting global trade as the United States Minister to France where he realized that France was key to helping solve America’s economic woes following the Revolutionary War.² As an American diplomat he worked closely with French politician Gilbert du Motier, the Marquis of Lafayette (who had aided the colonies in the Revolutionary War) to shape a French-American economy.³ Jefferson and Lafayette worked together to reduce restrictions on American direct trade in France. In 1788, Jefferson succeeded in convincing the French Minister of Foreign Affairs to exempt American whale oil from a prohibition in French ports.⁴ With this success, Jefferson became the first US Secretary of State

¹ Merrill D. Peterson, *Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation - A Biography* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1975), 94.

² Peterson, *Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation*, 94.

³ Peterson, *Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation*, 316.

⁴ Peterson, *Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation*, 326.

immediately upon his return from France.⁵ As Secretary of State Jefferson clashed with Alexander Hamilton over the federalization of the states' debt from the Revolutionary War, but continued to fight for what he believed was best for the young nation.⁶ Following his domestic duties he became the Vice President of the United States in 1797, at the end of which, he immediately followed up his public service as the third President of the United States in 1801 serving until 1809.

While working hard to assert the new ideals of individual liberty in the United States, Thomas Jefferson was not without fault. During the mid 1780s, Jefferson wrote in his book, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, about the contradiction he recognized with slavery and American freedom. In it, he acknowledged that there was a problematic inconsistency with the foundational ideology he put forth about individual liberty in the United States and the country's active involvement with slavery. At the time of his writing, Jefferson, who was himself a slave owner, felt like racial tensions had been too high to make ending slavery practical at that moment in time. He argued that prejudiced whites and scarred blacks would never be able to reconcile without destroying each other.⁷ He believed abolition of slavery was impractical in 1784, and that resolving this issue was the next generation's challenge. While he was wrong in perpetuating slavery, rather than fighting for full abolition, with his understanding that the institution was antithesis to American ideals, Jefferson did try to limit it. During his presidency he passed the Act Prohibiting Importation of Slaves of 1807, the first federal law preventing the import or export of enslaved persons in the United States.⁸

Thomas Jefferson demonstrated his faith in the American people when he brought forward an answer to the problem that power, even

⁵ Peterson, *Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation*, 391-393.

⁶ Peterson, *Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation*, 409.

⁷ Kermit L. Hall, Paul Finkelman, and James W. Ely, *American Legal History: Cases and Materials*, 5th ed. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2017), 104.

⁸ Jefferson, *Jefferson: Political Writings*, 27.

under the best forms of government, can slip back into tyranny through slow means of degeneracy.⁹ Jefferson suggested the best way to avoid this was to educate the masses on politics and history so that the American people could prevent it happening again in the future.⁹ This understanding that education and history both directly impact on the future, is the crux of High Point University's liberal arts education as it prepares students for the future.

Jefferson's belief that an enlightened population with practical knowledge of democracy instead of tyranny demonstrated his faith that not just his generation, but future generations could preserve and promote democracy. Jefferson was not concerned about losing liberty within his lifetime, but future lifetimes. He entrusted the freedoms and independence he fought for to those coming generations and wanted to give them the tools necessary to protect them. He also acknowledged the faults of his own lifetime and believed that through education the generations after him could fix the problems he left behind. Jefferson's faith in the next generation to carry out this duty echoes the faith High Point University has for its students' ability to change and improve the future world and always move towards the better.

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William Shakespeare

Paige Vercio 2025

William Shakespeare is a paragon of writing composed of both substance and value. Famous for his diverse collection of writing, William Shakespeare more than earned his title as the Bard of Avon. His innate ability to capture readers and viewers in a torrent of emotional and mental complexity is what stamped his name in history books. It is why students still study his works, dissecting and analyzing how his concepts continue to have a role today. Despite his death centuries ago, Shakespeare maintains his strong, immovable grip on the people of modern society and generations to come.



William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, a small town near London, England in April 1564, his exact birthdate is unknown. He was the first of his parents' children to survive the plague which was sweeping the town. His mother, Mary, was a housewife while his father, John, steadily rose in bureaucratic office. John Shakespeare's work as a judge aided itself handsomely to William's education and later writings- the family could attend the many plays put on by theatre companies as they traveled through Stratford. This early exposure to drama and performance led to Shakespeare's future career as one of, if not the best, playwrights of the age.¹

This early exposure to the arts and the world of drama was astronomically instrumental as it shaped the way Shakespeare analyzed situations. It also led him to study further dramatic writing, going as far back as its Roman origins. Young Shakespeare grew up during the Tudor Dynasty, during which humanist learning based largely on ancient Roman

¹ Peter Holland. *William Shakespeare* (UK: Oxford University Press, 2007), 1-6, accessed February 24, 2022, ProQuest Ebook Central.

classics allowing academics, who were so inclined, to follow artistic rather than political pursuits. This structured learning began with basics such as grammar, Latin, and classical poetry, with particular emphasis on Homer's works. By fourteen, young students like Shakespeare would have learned dialectics, rhetoric, cosmography, and history. These subjects then led to more advanced subjects such as philosophy.² This introduction to writing and rhetoric (spoken word) guided young men towards a life of political or scholarly positions. Shakespeare's interest moved towards using advanced rhetoric techniques early on as seen in the plays, sonnets, and speeches from his early adulthood. For example, Claudius' speech in *Hamlet* Act I is a type of *vituperatio*, or blame, highlighting Shakespeare's advanced use of classic rhetorical techniques for dramatic effect.³

Shakespeare, however, was more than just his writing, he was also at one point an actor. In his early to mid-twenties, Shakespeare joined an acting troupe; he left home and travelled with them for some time, and eventually out of his acting came his entrepreneurship. He used his experience with the crowds to aid his writing so that his works appealed to everyone, rather than just an intellectual mind. Traveling and experiencing life beyond his hometown, Shakespeare truly came into himself. Much of what he saw or learned while traveling shows in his works. For example, he visited the Tower of London which serves as a location in several of his history plays. The location's detail, which he could picture from experience, aids the overall feel and impact of his plays.⁴ It is also these experiences which connect him with High Point University's values and pillars.

William Shakespeare's life and works are well known with modern scholars, young and old, studying the history-rich writing and, thus, gaining

² Quentin Skinner, *Forensic Shakespeare* (UK: Oxford University Press, 2014), 26-27, accessed February 25, 2022, ProQuest Ebook Central.

³ Skinner, *Forensic Shakespeare*, 50.

⁴ Park Honan, *Shakespeare : A Life*, (UK: Oxford University Press, 1999), 81-83, accessed February 25, 2022, ProQuest Ebook Central.

wisdom from and a connection to the past. Though there is much to say about his writings, it is his life as a young entrepreneur from which we at HPU can gain the biggest lesson. He used the education and experience he was given and ran with it. A simple lesson, yes, but an important one that HPU teaches each day. A valuable and enjoyable life requires hard work which can either be seen as a burden or a blessing, however, it is the person who chooses which way to view it. Shakespeare chose to see hard work as a blessing for the life he wanted; the same values HPU instills in its students. Shakespeare also exhibits High Point University's value for life-long liberal arts education, hence, his statue's placement outside HPU's David Hayworth Fine Arts Building. He did not stop writing after his schooling, instead he utilized it not for politics or much monetary gain, but to continually gain more experience in order to create his eternal memory. Through travel he learned (and saw through visiting historical sites) the importance of history and its long-lasting legacy. This inspired him to work hard, doing what he loved, to become a part of history too.

Furthermore, Shakespeare is to be admired for his progression and use of a growth mindset to improve in what he could and accept what he could not. For example, he could improve upon his writing style, the diction of his characters, and use of emotion to gain public favor, however he could not change the fact that public opinion would not always support his works. Shakespeare, though, did not view every impasse as an imposition, instead having a growth mindset he accepted criticism and continued to move forward. He continued to learn and incorporated what he learned into his works, subtly buried between humorous or tragic lines. Shakespeare continued to write for both personal wants, reaching goals, as well as improving his intelligence. He used what he learned to become something greater than anyone ever believed would or could happen.

In conclusion, the works of William Shakespeare are a collection of more than just plays, speeches, and sonnets. His life is more than structured education. It is education mixed with experience, growth mindset, and

passion. This is the same educational model HPU provides its students every day. His words hold value, yes, but it is the subtle attributes of his personality which highlight Shakespeare's true self and lasting legacy. His background speaks of a literary mind beyond imagination, and a work ethic to match. It is this which is the primary connection he has with High Point University's values; he instills this imagination and drive in each student who enters the hallowed halls of any building, lending to them their own seeds of education and life to grow and nurture.

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Mark Twain

Mary Purcell 2021

The United States in the mid-nineteenth century was embroiled in the debate of slavery and human rights. In 1832, Great Britain, the other major power in the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, outlawed the transportation of enslaved persons; as a result, the American South, whose agrarian economy was built on the institution of slavery, began to attempt a quelling of the long present and ever-strengthening abolitionist tides—culminating in the Civil War from 1861-1865. Within this world, Mark Twain established himself as one of the South’s staunchest critics and abolitionists and still to this day remembered as one of America’s greatest writers.



In Florida, Missouri on November 30, 1835, Samuel Clemens—later Mark Twain—was born into a world not yet on the verge of change; in the antebellum United States chattel slavery was thriving, and Clemens’ birthplace was firmly set in the practicing South—his own family owned a young enslaved girl named Jenny.²⁴ In his autobiography, intentionally published posthumously, Twain writes of his family’s relocation to Hannibal, Missouri, and fondly tells of his uncle’s farm and the enslaved people he knew there: “It was on the farm that I got my strong liking for [their] race and my appreciation of its fine qualities. This feeling and this estimate have stood the test of sixty years and more.”²⁵

It was also in Missouri, after his father's death when Clemens was only twelve years old, that Clemens first entered the literary world as a printer for a number of newspapers and writing a small number of humor pieces. However, literature was not Clemens’ only love—the adventurous

²⁴ John C. Gerber, *Mark Twain* (CT: Twayne Publishers: 1988), 2.

²⁵ Mark Twain, *Autobiography of Mark Twain*, North American Review (1906-1907).

spirit that later characterized so many of his young protagonists seem to have stemmed from Clemens himself. For several years, Clemens worked as a riverboat pilot and both delighted in and was in fear of the unpredictability the experience offered. In 1861 with the beginning of the Civil War, Clemens ended his career as a pilot for a short-lived one as a Confederate soldier, where his idealistic notions of heroism were dethroned by the threat of actual fighting.

The man known as “Mark Twain” would arise after this brief stint, when in August 1871 Clemens traveled west with his older brother Orion, who was Secretary of the Territory of Nevada (Nevada would not become a state until 1864). Twain quickly was known in the West for his humor sketches and, more notoriously, the elaborate hoax stories in which he cloaked satirical criticisms with “true” crime. His springboard into fame was his sketch, “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County,” the success of which would push Twain to move to the East Coast, publish a collection of his sketches including “Jumping Frog,” and accept and complete his first book deal, all by 1868. Two other novels published over the next six years helped make Twain a household name. However, it was *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, published in 1876, that even today is still one of Twain’s most admired novels.

Tom Sawyer was an ode to boyhood in the late nineteenth century. Tom and his friend Huckleberry Finn encapsulate much of Twain himself: cleverness, romanticism, and a yearning for all the adventure life has to offer. The boys become entangled in plots and treasure hunts, relying on their own cunning and heroism. Though the book was initially low-selling and unpopular compared to his previous publications, today it has become not only one of Twain’s best known novels but a staple of North American literature.

Shortly after the publication of *Tom Sawyer*, the United States saw another shift in race relations; the implementation of the Jim Crow Laws continued to oppress African-Americans even after the abolition of slavery.

Racist sentiment still thrived in the United States, as well as segregation—and with the support of the Supreme Court. The Jim Crow Laws prohibited and restricted many rights for African-Americans including interracial marriage, the sharing of public spaces, and voting. The intention of these laws was not only the marginalization of African-Americans, but the complete othering of them; it sought to create two entirely separate worlds in which white people never interacted with people of color. It was in this fractured world that Twain wrote *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

Huckleberry Finn is a continuation of the world of *Tom Sawyer* following Tom's best friend Huck as he flees his alcoholic, abusive father. He is aided in his escape by Jim, an enslaved man owned by his guardian's sister who is trying to reach a state that had outlawed slavery. Over the course of the novel, Huck's discomfort with Jim and his escape grows into empathy; the pair's journeys and motivations are thematically identical, though the way they are treated by others could not be more different. Twain crafted a narrative that emphasized the likeness of Huck and Jim despite race and social status, and highlighted the inequity in how an African-American man and a white boy were treated. Despite its dated vernacular and characters, *Huckleberry Finn* remains a rebellion against the status quo of the late nineteenth century and a sign of progression in race relations. However, Twain's appreciation of African-Americans was by no means free of racist ideology of sentiment—his lifelong adoration for minstrel shows and the exploitation of Black performers seems contrary to his efforts to normalize integration. This clash between progression and prejudice existed fully in Twain, and is present in his works as well as his personal life—his political views changed strongly from his younger years in Missouri to his life in Nevada and beyond; from a Confederate “soldier” to a vocal abolitionist, from imperialist to harsh critic of United States imperialism.

After *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*, Twain wrote several more works, that last of which being his autobiography before his death in 1910.

He instructed the publishers to release the work a hundred years after his death, and it was in fact not released until 2010. His works have been deemed some of the greatest literature of all time by authors such as Ernest Hemingway. Today, Twain's works are definitive of North American literature; his humor and sharp societal criticism are intensified by the memorable narratives and characters he wrote. His ability to write stories both personal and universal, whimsical and grounded in harsh reality has cemented him as one of the greatest writers in history. It is this exceptional brilliance and perspective that earned Twain his place on the campus of High Point University.

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George Washington *Maeve O’Dea 2023*

A sculpture of George Washington sits proudly on the campus of High Point University as a tribute to the devotion of a young man, the leadership of a general, and first President of the United States, and the lifelong learning of a man who envisioned a strong, unified country that would endure well beyond his years of leadership. After his presidency, Washington’s commitment to bettering himself and the country in which he lived may have also culminated in a deeper understanding of liberty through the addition to his will of freeing his enslaved people.



From an early age, George Washington’s ardent desire to learn motivated his actions and eventually his performance in politics and the military. In his formative years, George Washington learned much about familial relations as his family greatly altered his life trajectory. George was particularly close with his father, Augustine Washington, who was a firm believer in men pursuing an education and providing for their families.¹ Consequently, following his father’s death, George had to take on a fatherly role for his younger siblings. His learned independence and nurturing compassion were all directed towards his siblings as he embraced the role thrust upon him.² In school, he was dedicated to his studies and learned the skills of a “practical education” including writing and arithmetic which he excelled at from a young age.³ Washington’s devotion to learning and commitment to exhibiting respect is most obviously exemplified by his repeated copying of *Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior in Company and*

¹James Thomas Flexner, *George Washington in the American Revolution 1775-1783* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1968), 16-17.

² Flexner, *Washington in Revolution*, 20.

³ Flexner, *Washington in Revolution*, 16.

Conversation, through which he learned the importance of respect, the utility of hard work, the necessity of caring for others, and the efficacy of compromise.⁴ These skills would become especially useful to George in his later years as he navigated both war and Congress.

As revolutionary ideals spread throughout the colonies, George Washington clearly defined his priorities and adamantly defended the desires of the movement for independence. In a letter to Robert Cary & Company, Washington wrote, “I have heartily entered into an association...not to import any article which now is, or hereafter shall be taxed for this purpose until the said act or acts are repealed.”⁵ Washington’s outspoken nature towards a company on his refusal to buy taxed goods without representation speaks volumes towards his future leadership, as he could clearly communicate his rationale and had the intentions of fellow patriots in mind. His continual initiative is a cornerstone of leadership. Washington’s willingness to express his opinion independently and unapologetically in support and recognition of revolution is evident repeatedly throughout his writings: “I wish to walk in such a line as will give most general satisfaction.”⁶ Washington’s acknowledgment of the importance of conducting actions in the best interest of the public was commendable. His ability to recognize the necessity for compromise and collaboration when defending a country is characteristic of a greater awareness of what it meant to be a leader; Washington’s prioritization of others’ desires showed a greater understanding of the means necessary to establish a new nation.

George Washington relied heavily on the loyalty and respect he learned to guide his future career in both the military and government. His peers and fellow Founding Fathers revered Washington with high respect. In June 1775, John Adams, after proposing the idea of a Continental Army

⁴ John P Kaminski, *George Washington: A Man of Action* (WI: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2017), 161-167.

⁵ George Washington to Robert Cary & Company, 1769.

⁶ George Washington to Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Reed, 15 December 1775.

of which George was named General, wrote to his wife Abigail to update her on the situation, writing, “the congress have made the choice of the modest and virtuous, the amiable, generous and brave George Washington Sear., to be the General of the American Army.”⁷ His bravery, kind spirit, and modesty were commended by many who had the opportunity to interact with him, whether on a battlefield or in a congressional meeting.

In his political endeavors, George Washington served as an outspoken advocate of independence from Great Britain. Three months before the Treaty of Paris signing, George Washington penned a letter to all the state governors as he stepped back from his service as General of the Continental Army. Washington prepared to “resign [service of the nation] into the hands of Congress,” in doing so, he left a detailed outline for what the independence of a burgeoning nation should look like.⁸ Always looking to the future, Washington highlighted four requirements, on which he believed the “independence” and “well-being” of the United States depended: being united “under one federal head;” keeping “a sacred regard to public justice;” “the adoption of a proper peace establishment;” and lastly, the disposition and willingness “to sacrifice their individual advantages to the interest of the community.”⁹ These principles on which Washington placed emphasis supported a vision that he believed would guide the United States in its independence and would give way for a prosperous nation.

When George Washington took office in 1789 after a unanimous election as the first President of the United States, his work in promoting general welfare had just begun.¹⁰ A strong candidate for a one-party system, Washington outlined his fears that a two-party system would cause states to

⁷ Kaminski, *Washington: A Man of Action*, 4.

⁸ George Washington, *Washington Papers: Basic Selections from the Public and Private Writings of George Washington*, ed. by Saul Kussiel Padover (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955), 204.

⁹ Washington, *Washington Papers*, 206-208.

¹⁰ George Washington and W. B. Allen, *George Washington: A Collection* (Indianapolis, IL: Liberty Fund Inc., 2014), 525-530.

use “self interest [as] their governing principle” becoming dangerous with the potential to hurt the states altogether.¹¹ His unwavering devotion to the longevity of a newly constructed government speaks to his loyalty; in the face of great obstacles Washington maintained his stance on what was best for the freshly independent country.

While looking towards the future, Washington grappled with his vision of what freedom would entail for everyone in the new nation. George Washington’s life was heavily reliant on slave labor; at age eleven, after his father’s passing, Washington inherited ten enslaved people.¹² The prominent role enslaved persons played in Washington’s life is exemplified most clearly by William Lee, a slave Washington purchased in 1768.¹³ Lee worked very closely with Washington for over twenty years.¹⁴ Washington thought very highly of Lee’s work ethic and his skills as a horseman, he was even invited on several of Washington’s fox hunts.¹⁵ Washington, aware of his reliance on Lee as well as Lee’s unrelenting service, included in his will that Lee was to be freed immediately upon George’s death and given an annual payment as a show of appreciation.¹⁶ Although Washington’s owning of enslaved people is inexcusable, his dying notion that William Lee and the rest of his enslaved persons should be freed is evidence of his commitment to learning and hints at a greater understanding of freedom and the future end of slavery in the United States.

The commemoration of George Washington’s legacy at High Point University reflects his leadership, devotion to his country, and future-oriented attitude. At High Point University, the mission is to “equip

¹¹ Washington and Allen, *Washington: A Collection*, 540-542.

¹² Flexner, *Washington in Revolution*, 16-18.

¹³ “William (Billy) Lee,” George Washington's Mount Vernon, accessed February 20, 2022, <https://www.mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital-encyclopedia/article/william-billy-lee/>.

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¹⁶ “William (Billy) Lee,” George Washington's Mount Vernon, accessed February 20, 2022, <https://www.mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital-encyclopedia/article/william-billy-lee/>.

graduates for success and significance” by preparing them with the skills to adapt and react in an ever-changing and competitive world.¹⁷ Washington’s willingness to embrace leadership roles in unexpected circumstances, his compassion, and sense of obligation to the prosperity of a nation is a testament to the necessity for students to be prepared for a changing world.

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John Wesley

Mac Mollins 2025

Born in 1703, John Wesley was born in the small town of Epworth in England to Samuel and Susanna Wesley. Samuel, a graduate of Oxford University and poet, served as a rector for Epworth's church. Susanna, was the granddaughter of Samuel Annesley who is known for his work as a Puritan and nonconformist pastor. In 1714, at the age of 11, Wesley was sent to the Charterhouse School in London, where he was provided the usual education for a middle class English child during the 18th Century- reading, writing, and mathematics were the most prevalent topics. Following his education at the Charterhouse, Wesley was admitted into Christ Church at Oxford where he earned his Master's degree in theology. On September 25, 1725, he was ordained as a deacon in the Church of England.



Following this, Wesley was unanimously elected to serve as a fellow at Lincoln College in Oxford. While there, along with being granted housing and a salary, he took part in teaching Greek and philosophy while also delving into lecturing on the topic of the New Testament. In 1727, Wesley began serving as a curate for his parish in Epworth. During this time, his younger brother Charles also attended Christ Church as his older brother had. During this time, he and a few of his peers would form a club dedicated to a more meticulous worship. After serving as a curate, Wesley returned to Oxford and would assume leadership of this group which was derisively called by peers at the time the "Holy Club." Over time, the group began referring to itself as the Oxford Methodists.

In October of 1735, James Oglethorpe, the founder of the British colony of Georgia, asked both John and Charles Wesley to lead a parish in the newly founded town of Savannah. Upon arriving in Savannah, Wesley

found himself struggling to both tend to his parish while converting and evangelizing to the other colonists due to the limited number of priests in the area. Despite difficulties in evangelizing, Wesley did find his parish steadily growing over the two years that he lived in Savannah. His time in the fledgling city, however, would ultimately come to an unfortunate end as he found himself embroiled in controversy. During his time in Savannah, Wesley courted a young woman named Sophia Hopkey. Wesley did not continue courting her, though, due to him worrying that it would conflict with his duties to his parish. Following Hopkey's marriage to another man, Wesley deemed that Hopkey's devotedness to God had waned, causing him to refuse to give her Communion. Because of this the priest became embroiled in a vicious court case which would ultimately lead him to flee the colony and return to England.

Downtrodden and disappointed, Wesley found himself turning to the Moravians. During his time with the Moravians, an event known as the "Aldersgate Experience" occurred. On May 24, 1738, Wesley attended a service on Aldersgate Street in London, during which he found himself revitalized in his faith, coming to the conclusion that personal salvation was only possible through faith and faith alone. Following his revitalization, Wesley began working with the Moravians at their headquarters in Herrnhut, in modern day Germany, in 1738. Following these studies, Wesley returned to England and began preaching in a wide variety of places that varied from small chapels to fields and small cottages if churches would not permit him to preach. He also began publishing his writings. Following this, Wesley ultimately broke with the Moravians over a dispute over the doctrine of quietism- the belief that stillness and silence should be emphasized over vocal prayer to God. From this breakaway, Wesley and his followers became what is now known as Methodists.

As Wesley's following began to grow, he appointed other ministers to speak on his behalf while beginning to build churches that could hold larger amounts of parishioners. As the church continued to grow, Wesley

continued writing, advocating for the abolition of slavery, and advocating for women clergy. It is important to note, however, that despite Wesley's writings and new ideas, he and his followers were still members of the Church of England and practitioners of Anglicanism. This changed in 1787, however, when Wesley made the bold step in personally ordaining Methodist priests when the Bishop of London refused to do so. From this, the official breakaway between the Methodists and the Anglicans occurred. From that point on, the Methodist Church and the Anglican Church were separate. Following this separation, Wesley's health would begin to decline. On March 2, 1791, John Wesley passed away, surrounded by friends and family. After his death, he was buried in a chapel constructed by him on City Road, London.

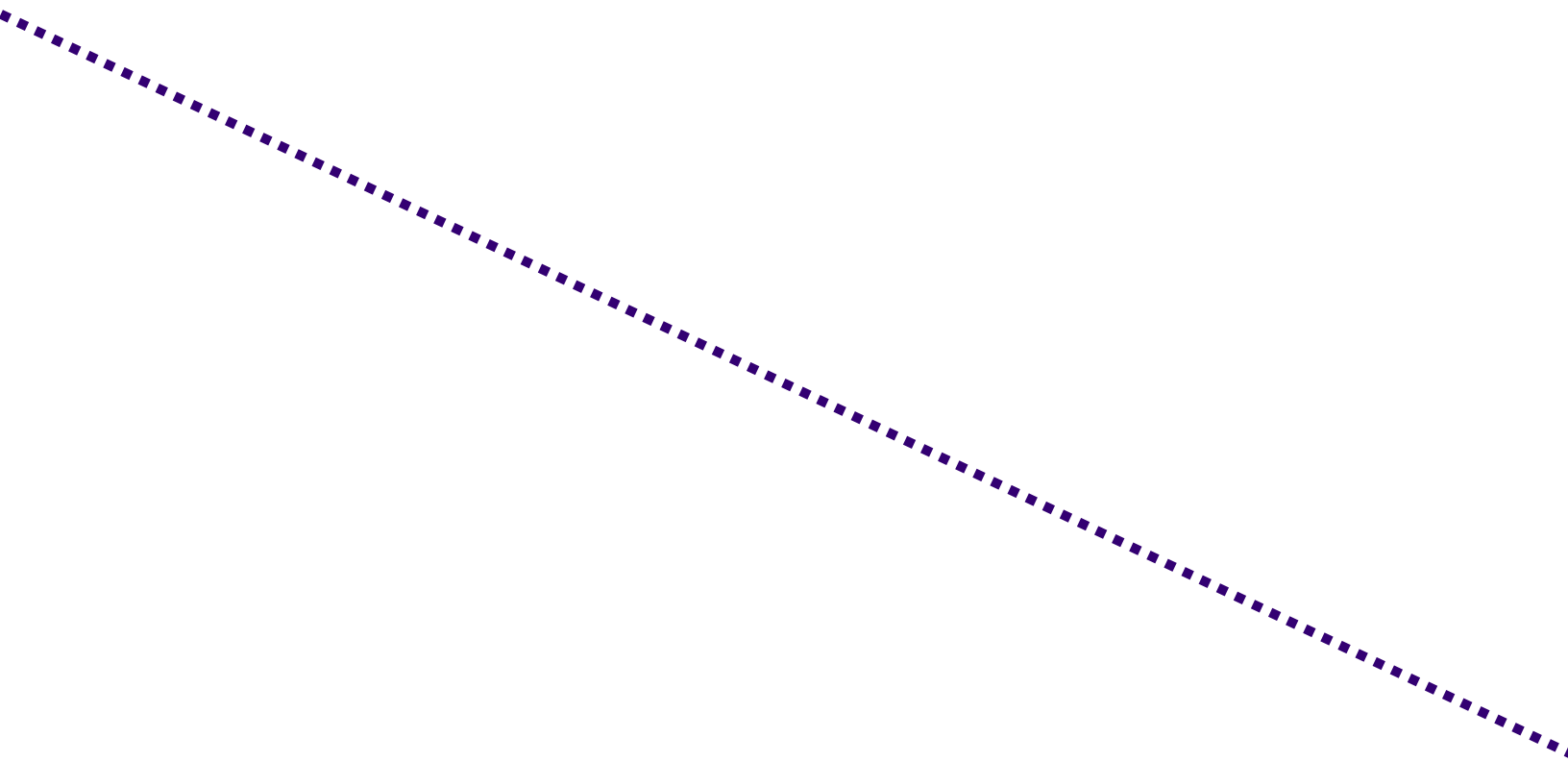
Following his death, the Methodist movement continued to thrive. The Methodist movement would spread across the world, especially finding a place within the newly formed nation of the United States of America. Wesley's teachings continued to be passed down from generation to generation, with some members taking part in important movements in American history such as the abolitionist movement. American Methodists Orange Scott, LaRoy Sunderland, and Jotham Horton advocated for the freedom of slaves in the South, for example. Today, the Methodist Church spans across the globe, consisting of roughly 80 million practitioners, making it one of the largest Christian denominations in the world. The church is known for its dedication to performing good works such as establishing soup kitchens, hospitals, and schools. With this in mind, it is easy to see just how great of an impact John Wesley made on the world: beginning as a priest, to a leader of a movement dedicated to the pursuit of a closer relationship to God, and to the building of a forward thinking community that continues to benefit the world around it.

Further Reading in HPU's Library

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