

Remarks accepting
The Philip Merrill Award
for Outstanding Contributions to Liberal Arts Education

1776: Out of Many, One

by Dr. Gordon S. Wood

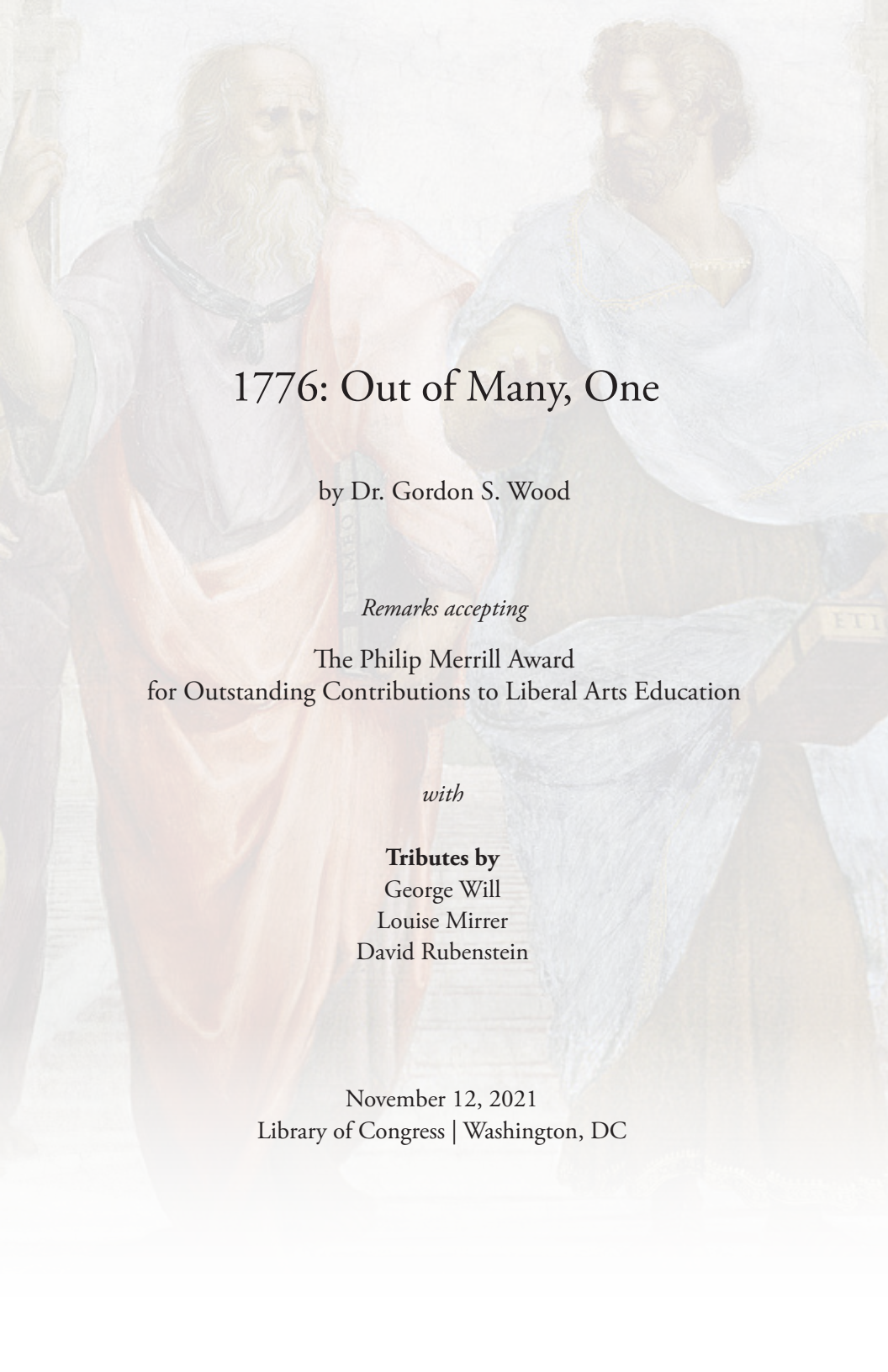
Tributes by George Will, Louise Mirrer, & David Rubenstein



ACTA
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ACTA is an independent, nonprofit organization committed to academic freedom, academic excellence, and accountability at America's colleges and universities. Founded in 1995, ACTA is the only national organization dedicated to working with alumni, donors, trustees, and education leaders across the United States to support liberal arts education, uphold high academic standards, safeguard the free exchange of ideas on campus, and ensure that the next generation receives an intellectually rich, high-quality education at an affordable price. Our network consists of alumni and trustees from nearly 1,300 colleges and universities, including over 23,000 current board members. Our quarterly newsletter, *Inside Academe*, reaches more than 13,000 readers.



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November 12, 2021
Library of Congress | Washington, DC

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by Dr. Gordon S. Wood

It is a great honor to be here to receive the Philip Merrill Award from ACTA. For a number of years, I have been on the nominating committee, but in all those years it never occurred to me that I might become the recipient of this distinguished award. Looking at the previous recipients of this award, I am deeply humbled and grateful for the honor you have bestowed on me.

This is a special year for ACTA, 25 plus one. I realize that decades ago I participated in ACTA affairs before the organization became famous. I only later became aware that I had been present at the creation of something very important. Sometime in the mid-1990s, Jerry Martin, whom I had known from some previous academic business with NEH, invited me to come to Washington and talk about the Founders. I don't recall the details, but I remember that John Patrick Diggins joined us, my first meeting with him. (I miss the moral seriousness and earnestness of Jack Diggins very much. Right now the country needs him.) We were interviewed out of doors and joined by Anne Neal, who later became the second president of this distinguished institution.

I want to make a few remarks about the extraordinary times we are living in, which you know about as well as I. In addition to experiencing a pandemic that has disrupted and changed our lives in many ways, we are undergoing major changes in our race relations and in our understanding of our nation's history. We are going through a massive act of atonement

for the 400 years in which blacks endured the oppressions of slavery and segregation. Colleges and universities, large business corporations, and elite institutions of all sorts have been stumbling over themselves in their eagerness to demonstrate their anti-racist credentials. We have toppled or removed statues of anyone associated with slavery or the Southern Confederacy. The Lost Cause has really become lost, and nobody seems to be publicly defending it anymore.

The culture has radically shifted. Congress has established a new federal holiday commemorating the end of slavery. With the killing of George Floyd and the reinvigorating of Black Lives Matter, our police forces will never be the same.

And as a consequence of what's happening in race relations, neither will our history, it seems, ever be the same. For the past 50 years or more, academic historians have been writing about slavery and race with an unprecedented intensity. In the era of critical race theory, this recovery of the history of slaves and black lives has reached a fever pitch. There is hardly a dissertation in American history now being written, it seems, that doesn't deal with issues of race or marginalized peoples in one way or another.

Since the Revolution is the most important event in our history, much of the revisionist scholarship has focused on it. These revisionist historians have turned the event that founded our nation into something we can scarcely be proud of.

The Revolution, like our progressive politics, has become all about race, gender, and identity. "Those marginalized by former histories," declares one of the most distinguished of recent scholars of the Revolution, "now assume centrality, as our stories increasingly include Native peoples, the enslaved, women, the poor, Hispanics, and the French as key actors."

No doubt it's time for these stories to be told, and they should be told, but if these formerly marginalized people become the leading actors in the story, as they do in the recent narrative histories of the Revolution, these

accounts are bound to emphasize the Revolution's dark and shameful side with little room for any other side. White male supremacy and what is now called the "genocidal" treatment of the native peoples necessarily dominate these recent histories of the Revolution. The Revolution has become an event of white privilege and white supremacy in which blacks, women, and the native peoples were sidelined and suppressed.

These accounts of marginalized people may be necessary, but they are hardly sufficient explanations of what the Revolution was about. These stories do not have much to say about liberty, equality, and democracy—which, when mentioned, are usually dismissed as rhetorical and hypocritical covers to hide the actual inequality and repression that went on.

The titles and subtitles of some books on the Revolution written over the past two decades will give you some idea of the unbalanced and one-sided nature of their interpretations, all designed presumably to offset the heroic and rosy stories these historians mistakenly believe dominate our public mythology about the Revolution. *The Failure of the Founding Fathers; Independence Lost; Unworthy Republic; Slave Nation; The Counter-Revolution of 1776; Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive; The Unfinished Revolution; The Freedoms We Lost; A Slaveholders' Union; Slavery's Constitution; To Begin the World Over Again: How the American Revolution Devastated the Globe; Thirteen Clocks: How Race United the Colonies and Made the Declaration of Independence.*

In many cases, the historians who wrote these accounts were engaging in politics by other means. They are activist historians who want a usable past. When even historians themselves admit that they are trying "to illuminate conditions of the present by casting a harsh light on previous experience" and declare that the Revolution was a failure, producing "more misery than freedom," it's not surprising that activists and journalists became involved in emphasizing the dark side of our history.

This is the context for the introduction of the 1619 Project of the *New York Times* in August 2019.

Forget the Fourth of July, 1776, said the *New York Times*; that was not the real birthday of the nation. August 20, 1619, was the crucial date. That was the date over 400 years ago in which the first Africans were brought to the shores of what became the United States. They were probably bonded servants, not slaves, since English law had not yet worked out the concept of slavery.

This 1619 Project, the *New York Times* said, aims “to reframe American history by considering what it would mean to regard 1619 as our nation’s birth year.” To do so, the *Times* said, “we have to put slavery and the contribution of black Americans at the very center of the story we tell ourselves about who we are as a country.” “Out of slavery,” the *Times* claimed, “and the anti-black racism it required—grew nearly everything that has truly made America exceptional.”

According to Nikole Hannah-Jones, the originator of the project, the American Revolution was a hypocritical example of white supremacy mouthing values that whites violated at every turn. Instead of promoting liberty and equality, white Americans undertook the Revolution largely to save slavery. “Conveniently left out of our founding mythology,” she wrote, “is the fact that one of the primary reasons the colonists decided to declare their independence from Britain was because they wanted to protect the institution of slavery.” (This was later clarified to “some colonists decided,” a momentous change: It could mean a half dozen or it could mean thousands.) In 1776, she says, Great Britain was on the verge of abolishing slavery and the slave trade, thus provoking the colonists into independence.

This claim is false. In 1776, Great Britain was not threatening to abolish slavery in its empire. If it had been, then the British sugar-producing colonies in the Caribbean would have been much more interested in leaving the empire than they were. Few if any British colonists in 1776 were frightened of British abolitionism. If the Virginian slaveholders had been frightened of British abolitionism, why only eight years after the war ended would the board of visitors or the trustees of the College of William

and Mary, wealthy slaveholders all, award an honorary degree to Granville Sharp, the leading British abolitionist at the time? Had they changed their minds so quickly? From being so frightened of abolitionism as to leave the empire to awarding a Briton who promoted abolitionism? The *New York Times* has no accurate knowledge of Virginia's Revolutionary culture and cannot begin to answer these questions.

It was the American colonists who were interested in abolitionism in 1776. While many of the Virginian planters were struggling with manumission and other ways of ending slavery, it was left to the northern states to successfully undertake the immense task of legally abolishing slavery. Far from protecting slavery, the American Revolution inflicted a massive blow to the entire slave system of the New World. Not only were the northern states the first slaveholding governments in the world to abolish slavery, but the United States became the first nation in the world to begin actively suppressing the despicable international slave trade. The *New York Times* has the history completely backwards.

Nonetheless, the *Times* intends its 1619 Project as an “educational outreach” that involves creating a curriculum that will be brought to students in schools throughout the country. “By acknowledging [our] shameful history, by trying hard to understand its powerful influence on the present,” the editor of the *New York Times Magazine* declared, “perhaps we can prepare ourselves for a more just future.”

Right now, it looks as if the desire for social justice is overwhelming the need for historical accuracy, at least with elites. As historian Matthew Karp has recently pointed out, Hannah-Jones and other black intellectuals nowadays “sit not at the margins but near the core of the American cultural elite, writing for the nation's most influential journals, winning its most prestigious prizes, and receiving acclaim from its most powerful politicians.”

No one should ever minimize the importance of slavery and Jim Crow segregation in our history. But to make 1619 the birth date of the nation and to make slavery and segregation the frame for interpreting all of our

turbulent and complicated past is not only false to the totality of our history but it will divide us further and undermine whatever sense of comity and unity we have left. Ordinary Americans seem to be becoming increasingly aware of this.

The Revolution and the principles that it articulated—liberty, equality, and the well-being of ordinary people—are really the only things that hold us Americans together and make us a single people. We are not a nation in any traditional meaning of the term, that is, a people with a common ancestry, and we never have been. John Adams doubted at the outset that we could ever be a real nation. In the United States, he said, there was nothing like “the Patria of the Romans, the Fatherland of the Dutch, or the Patrie of the French.” All he saw in America was an astonishing diversity of religious denominations and ethnicities. In 1813, he counted at least 19 different religious sects in the country. “We are such an Hotch potch of people,” he concluded, “such an omnium gatherum of English, Irish, German, Dutch, Sweedes, French, &c. that it is difficult to give a name to the Country, characteristic of the people.”

During the antebellum decades, the United States became even more diverse, as European immigrants poured into the country and the difference between the free and the slave states became more palpable and more contentious. We became even less of a traditional nation, and we were certainly not very united. In the antebellum period, Americans rarely referred to themselves as a nation. The Union became a substitute for the word “nation,” and since the individual states commanded most of people’s loyalties, that Union was not very strong. The breakup of the Union in 1861 was not unexpected.

It was Lincoln’s genius to grasp the peculiar and fragile nature of the United States and to see that a nation of immigrants and diverse states needed something other than an ethnic basis for its nationhood. He found the words and the ideas to make us a single people and to justify a nation

that had never been a traditional nation. It was Lincoln who almost single-handedly turned the Revolutionary leaders into the Founding Fathers.

Throughout the antebellum period, most Americans applied the term Founding Fathers not to the Revolutionary leaders but to the 17th-century founders of the colonies, such as John Winthrop, John Smith, William Bradford, Lord Baltimore, and William Penn. After Lincoln and the Civil War, the Revolutionary leaders and the framers of the Constitution became the Founders.

For Lincoln, Jefferson became a proxy for all the Founders. When he said in 1858, “all honor to Jefferson,” he paid homage to the Revolutionary leader who had written the document whose words best bound the different peoples of America together and demanded the ending of slavery.

Half the American people, said Lincoln in 1858, had no direct blood connection to the Revolutionaries of 1776. These German, Irish, French, and Scandinavian citizens either had come from Europe themselves or their ancestors had, and they had settled in America, and amazingly, they found “themselves our equals in all things.” Although these immigrants may have had no actual connection in blood with the Revolutionary generation that could make them feel part of the rest of the nation, they had, said Lincoln, “that old Declaration of Independence” with its expression of the moral principle of equality to draw upon.

This moral principle, which was “applicable to all men and all times,” made all these different peoples one with the Revolutionaries, “as though they were blood of the blood and flesh of the flesh of the men who wrote that Declaration,” a biblical image that continues to take my breath away. This emphasis on liberty and equality, he said, switching metaphors, was “the electric cord . . . that links the hearts of patriotic and liberty-loving men together, that will link those patriotic hearts as long as the love of freedom exists in the minds of men throughout the world.”

Lincoln used the phrase in the Declaration that all men are created equal in order to make a nation out of an ethnically and racially diverse people who lacked a common ancestry. And as he came to realize by the end of the Civil War, all those black slaves who had been freed by the war could now be included among those peoples connected by this electric cord and made one with the Revolutionaries, as though they were blood of the blood and flesh of the flesh of the men who wrote the Declaration.

This is why the Founding has so much meaning for us Americans. The Revolution and the documents and ideals that came out of it are the bonds, the adhesives, that make us a nation. Without these bonds, we would be a very different country. That's why the Founding became so important to us and why we spend so much time writing about it. Without the Founding of 1776, we will never be the "one People" the Declaration says we are.

* * *

Tributes

The following are tributes given in honor of Professor Wood at the presentation of the Philip Merrill Award on November 12, 2021.

George Will

Author and Columnist

This library speaks to our nation's pedigree, which runs through books, back to the Enlightenment, of which the American Republic is the finest and most lasting consequence.

This magnificent space is a reminder, in an age besotted with new media, that books remain the primary carriers of ideas, and that ideas remain the most consequential human creations.

It is altogether right that we meet here to honor Gordon Wood, whose books have taught this nation that ideas—good ideas—created this nation.

Gordon Wood could hardly have imagined at the outset of his luminous career that, six decades later, his ideas would be sent into a political battle over the meaning and virtue of our Republic.

His ideas are deployed in books that will be read as long as American history is read.

Today, however, many hectoring faux historians who fancy themselves radicals cannot fathom the radicalism of the American Revolution, which, as Gordon Wood has said, “made slavery a problem for the world.” Slavery, and all other forms of tyranny.

So, Bismarck was right. There really is, as he said, a Providence that looks after drunks, babies, and the United States.

How else can we explain this wondrous fact: Today, when the creation of the American Republic is loudly regretted by some Americans—some tenured Americans—Gordon Wood's scholarship is not merely a necessary, it is a sufficient, refutation of fashionable tendentious.

Some of the tendentious argue, for example, that the American Revolution was fought in response to a November 1775 British offer of freedom for any slaves who would join the British army.

But that offer was made four months after George Washington assumed command of the Continental Army, and five months after the battle of Bunker Hill, and seven months after the battles of Lexington and Concord.

Now, we hardly need Gordon Wood's heavy intellectual artillery to demolish the ludicrous proposition that the Revolution was caused by a British proclamation that was issued in response to an already raging Revolution.

Rather, we need, and we honor, Gordon Wood because he teaches not merely that ideas have consequences, but that ideas are humanity's longest-lasting consequences. And that the Revolution was a consequence of admirable ideas.

Gordon Wood's ideas about the nation's ideals are today having this consequence: They are ready refutations of all those who believe, or pretend to believe, that the nation was at its birth, and remains, a retrograde influence on the world.

Henry Adams was correct in saying that a teacher attains a kind of immortality because one never knows when a teacher's influence ends. For a very few teachers, of whom Gordon Wood is one, their influence radiates with increased velocity and impact as the years pass.

We Americans are an argumentative lot. If you don't like arguing, you picked the wrong country.

Today, however, Americans are arguing with unusual vehemence about the contribution of this Republic's Founding to humanity's story.

Some ideological ax-grinders say the contribution was negligible, even negative.

We know the high stakes of arguments about the writing of history. We know, because George Orwell told us in *1984*. He said: He who controls

the past controls the future, and he who controls the present controls the past.

The present contest between those who admire this Republic and those who don't is—happily—not a fair fight because the admirers have Gordon Wood on their side.

It is said that, as a rule, no prophet is honored in his own country. Ladies and gentlemen, tonight we refute that rule as we honor Gordon Wood.

Louise Mirrer

*President and CEO of the New-York Historical Society and
2014 recipient of the Philip Merrill Award*

It is an honor for me to pay tribute to Gordon Wood tonight and to congratulate him on winning the Philip Merrill Award. Gordon is, of course, no stranger to winning awards. He's won very many of them, including New-York Historical's own American History Book Prize for his *Empire of Liberty: A History of the Early Republic, 1789–1815*. Still, the Merrill Award is special. It honors Gordon for the contribution he has made to the advancement of liberal arts education at a time when the common core of learning typically entailed by the rubric liberal arts is very much under fire.

It takes courage these days to follow only the agenda led to by scholarship, to give history the agency it deserves so that it helps us to understand the difficult questions, including those that haunt us today with the proviso that, and I quote Gordon here, "One of the big lessons of history is to realize that the past doesn't know its future." There's so much that we've learned from the brilliant scholarship and remarkable insight that Gordon has so generously shared in a writing style that's beautiful, elegant, and clear. How audacious our American forebears were, how against all odds they established the institutions and habits of our democracy, how they

improvised time and again, confronting deep dissension at home as well as abroad.

As tumultuous and complex as our early American years were, we're lucky for Gordon's unmatched ability to present a nuanced portrait and to show us embedded in our foundational documents that the Constitution above all is the recipe for righting our greatest wrongs. Democracy gives us that chance.

Thank you so much, Gordon, for all you have done for the liberal arts and for history, and congratulations.

David Rubenstein

Business Leader and Philanthropist

I'd like to thank this organization for having the wisdom to honor Gordon Wood at the Library of Congress. The idea for a Library of Congress was actually originally that of James Madison. It was proposed in the Articles of Confederation Congress in 1783, and Congress decided only 17 years later that it did need some books. And so John Adams finally signed the legislation to create the Library of Congress in 1800. It was an appropriation of \$5,000 to buy Congress 740 books and three maps. Congress, of course, moved with the federal government down to Washington, and the Library of Congress was in the Congress for most of its history.

And then, of course, as you may know, the British burned down the Capitol in 1814, and as a result, all the books were burned. The Library of Congress had no books. Thomas Jefferson said, "I'll sell you my library." He had the best library in the United States, and he sold it to the Library of Congress, and that became the Library of Congress. Unfortunately, in 1851, another fire occurred and a large part of that collection was burned as well, but ultimately, Congress decided to make sure the Library of Congress became the greatest library in the world, and it is. And in the late 1800s, it

decided to finally give the Library of Congress its own building. Amazingly, this building was built for under \$10 million, under budget, and on time. A modern example of infrastructure shovel-ready programs.

I should add, though, that in the 1980s, Congress appropriated \$81.5 million to refurbish it. But this is, without doubt, the most beautiful single room in Washington, DC. There's no doubt about it, it's an extraordinary building, and the Library of Congress is an extraordinary thing.

Now, earlier today, I received on my iPhone, iPad really, a letter that I was asked to read tonight from people that are admirers of Gordon's. The people that sent this jointly are George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, and James Madison. And they asked me to read this to Gordon.

"Dear Gordon, we're sorry that we cannot be with you tonight to watch you receive the Philip Merrill Award in person, but we will be following what happens somewhat remotely.

"We did, though, want to convey to you directly our appreciation for all that you have done for the country with your excellent research and extraordinary writing. Your books are always in great demand here, far more than books of other authors. We lived through the events you have typically written about, and sometimes we did not know exactly what was happening and who was doing what to whom, and why and how. From your books though, we have learned a great deal, and we have been surprised to learn some things. Like some of the deceit practiced by a few of our colleagues or the lack of courage or wisdom shown by a number of our other colleagues. Your books have prompted a fair number of discussions here, sometimes heated, among us, but nothing too serious.

"Our most important observation is that without your work, the American people would know far less about the time in which we live or about how American democracy came into being with its many flaws and errors. And we believe it is vitally important that Americans learn more

about their roots and history if they are to improve the democracy they inherited from our own efforts. So congratulations on your much deserved award, and please keep up the great work you are doing for our country. We hope to convey more in person a few decades from now, but for the present, rest assured that you have done a real service for our country and even taught us a few things about the time in which we live.” So, that’s from some of our Founding Fathers.

I wouldn’t try to compare my statement with their eloquence, but let me give my own words about Gordon, if I might. When all of us were growing up, we had in grade school history books and they taught us that the Founding Fathers were like religious figures. No flaws. George Washington won the Revolutionary War almost by himself. The other Founding Fathers did wonderful things. They won a Revolutionary War. They created a government. They gave us the Constitution. They gave us the Declaration of Independence, and that’s what we all learned. And it’s more or less right. But in recent years, we have learned some other things about our Founding Fathers. They were slave owners, which was not emphasized when we were younger. Some of them had children with their slaves, which wasn’t emphasized when we were younger. Some of them had enormous other personal flaws, which we didn’t really learn about when we were younger.

And they gave us a country which had slavery in the Constitution. They gave us a country where women didn’t have the right to vote. And they gave us a country where many other situations were not really allowed to happen in terms of real democracy. For example, the presidential election process was not entrusted to the people. It was entrusted to the electoral college, and they didn’t really believe that people should vote for the senators; that was allowed only by the state legislatures. So we now know much more about the Founding Fathers. They had some flaws. They made some mistakes. And now many people say, “Well, because of this, we should take

down the Washington Monument. George Washington was a slave owner. Get rid of the Jefferson Memorial. Thomas Jefferson was a slave owner.”

Well, there has to be a balance, and the person who has done a wonderful job of creating a balance, who has been writing about the great things the Founding Fathers did, and also the flaws of the Founding Fathers, in a cerebral, intelligent way, is Gordon Wood. Gordon Wood has been able to do something that I think very few other authors or historians have been able to do, which is to provide balance to the Founding Fathers and balance to the early days, giving us the true story, but also recognizing the problems that the Founding Fathers had and also some of the extraordinary things they did despite the circumstances they were in. And he's done this in a very unique way. There are some people who write about American history, and they are so scholarly that nobody but scholars read these books. If a tree falls in a forest, does anybody hear it if nobody's there? So some of the scholarly works are wonderful, but they are beyond the reach of the average person.

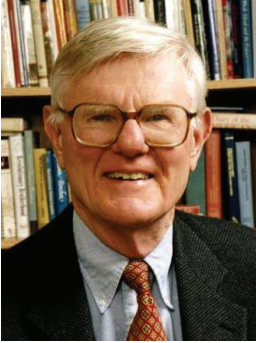
There are other people who are great popularizers, who learn how to write books that will sell well, but the scholars won't read them or actually think they're very significant. Gordon Wood, among the people who specialize in this area, is the one person who has written books that the scholars actually praise and that are best sellers as well because people actually enjoy reading them. It's a very unique style, very unusual to find somebody who's respected as a scholar and respected for his ability to explain things in simple ways that the average person can understand as well. So, because of all that, we know much more about the Founding Fathers, the Revolutionary War period, than we ever knew before, in large part because of Gordon Wood's efforts.

And I should add that I've had the privilege of interviewing Gordon Wood right here, at the Library of Congress. I have a program that I've started with the Library of Congress to try to educate members of Congress about American history. Now, that is one of the most daunting things I've

ever tried to do. And Gordon Wood has participated in that effort, and when he came here, members of Congress flocked to talk to him and to see him and to hear him because they knew that he could explain the American Revolution and the other things that we talked about in a better and clearer way than other people who have come before him. So because of that, I've really come to respect Gordon Wood for everything he's done, and I want to thank him for educating people and not only educating the members of Congress and the readers, but educating students.

For decades, the students at Brown University and other schools where Gordon has taught were mesmerized by his extraordinary teaching abilities, and for that as well, we are all in his debt. As somebody who admires people that understand American history, who teach American history, I am joining all of you in saying we are all in the debt of Gordon Wood for the great job he has done explaining American history to scholars and to the average person, and doing it in a way that makes it clear that the Founding Fathers were not ideal, not perfect, but they created an incredible country for which we're all grateful. Thank you.

Dr. Gordon S. Wood



For six decades, Gordon Wood's scholarship has advanced the understanding of the formative years of our nation. His work on the American Revolution and the creation of the American Republic is not only renowned for its meticulous accuracy and groundbreaking insight, but also for its elegant and effective presentation, which has made it resonate among professional historians and a much wider public.

He has generously given of his time to guide secondary school teachers and to engage the public in the enduring importance of the nation's Founding and Founding principles. In entering into the controversies that arise over America's past, he has exemplified the historian's craft. In his own words from his Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, "There is a time for understanding the particular, and there is a time for understanding the whole."

Gordon Wood is the Alva O. Way University Professor and Professor of History Emeritus at Brown University. Over his distinguished career, he has also served on the faculty of Harvard University, the University of Michigan, William & Mary, and Cambridge University.

In addition to the 1993 Pulitzer Prize for History, he received the Bancroft Prize in 1970 for *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1787*. He has held a Guggenheim Fellowship, and in 2010, Dr. Wood was awarded the National Humanities Medal by President Obama.

The Philip Merrill Award for Outstanding Contributions to Liberal Arts Education



ACTA is most pleased to present the 16th annual Philip Merrill Award for Outstanding Contributions to Liberal Arts Education. The awarding of this prize, made with the advice of a distinguished selection committee, advances ACTA's long-term goal to promote and encourage a strong liberal arts education.

The Merrill Award offers a unique tribute to those dedicated to the transmission of the great ideas and central values of our civilization, and it is presented to inspire others and provide public acknowledgment of the value of their endeavors.

The prize is named in honor of Philip Merrill, an acclaimed public servant, publisher, businessman, and philanthropist who served as a trustee of Cornell University, the University of Maryland College Park Foundation, the Aspen Institute, the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, and the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. Throughout his career, Mr. Merrill was an outspoken proponent of academic excellence and an articulate spokesman for the importance of historical literacy in a free society. Mr. Merrill was a founding member of ACTA's National Council.

Traditionally, threats to higher education have stemmed from outside academia. Today's challenges, it seems to me, stem more from an interior hardening of the arteries.

—Philip Merrill, in an early correspondence urging support for the newly founded ACTA



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