

The Consent of the Governed: Celebrating America's 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence

Constituting America's 2026 History Holds the Key to the Future Online Study

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Key

Pink = Reserved

All others are available

Purpose: To draw out the principle of popular rule and consent in the Declaration of Independence.

For each topic, three essays will be written addressing the following related to the topic:

1. An essay about the topic focusing on how it supports the idea of popular consent by the people in a republic.
2. An essay focusing on a hero associated with the topic and how their diligence and other virtues resulted in the outcome of supporting popular consent and self-rule.
3. An essay focusing on how the topic was related to the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and American founding documents.

Topics

1. The Declaration of Independence and the Lockean idea of popular rule/popular sovereignty and government by consent. Examine the popular support for American independence.

Essay 1A - The People

Guest Essayist: Bob Pence

Essay 1B - Hero - Reverend Thomas Hooker

Guest Essayist: Ronald Meier

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Essay 1C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: Will Morrisey

2. The Stamp Act and the dramatic popular resistance in the colonies as the people protested the oppression of taxation without representation.

Essay 2A - The People

Guest Essayist: Scot Faulkner

Essay 2B - Hero - Patrick Henry

Guest Essayist: Jason Stevens

Essay 2C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: Joseph Knippenberg

3. The Boston Tea Party and the dramatic protest of thousands in Boston that resisted taxation without representation with the Tea Act and led to the Coercive Acts.

Essay 3A - The People

Guest Essayist: Jonathan Den Hartog

Essay 3B - Hero - Samuel Adams

Guest Essayist: James Best

Essay 3C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: Elizabeth Amato

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4. The Battles of Lexington & Concord and Bunker Hill in which the colonists bound themselves together, armed themselves, and marched to Boston to defend their sacred liberties.

Essay 4A - The People

Guest Essayist: Jay McConville

Essay 4B - Hero - Captain John Parker - please mention Prince Estebrook under Captain Parker's command

Guest Essayist: Kirk Higgins

Essay 4C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: Elizabeth Kaufer Busch

5. The freedom suits and freedom petitions by enslaved and free blacks in New England during and after the Revolutionary War for freedom, natural rights, and civil rights of citizenship such as the right to vote.

Essay 5A - The People

Guest Essayist: C.C. Borzilleri

Essay 5B - Hero - Elizabeth Freeman (Mumbet)

Guest Essayist: Lucas Morel

Essay 5C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist Tony Williams

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6. The ratification debate over the Constitution among the people and their representatives in popular state ratifying conventions as an expression of the sovereign people to make the Constitution fundamental law.

Essay 6A - The People

Guest Essayist: Randolph May

Essay 6B - Hero - James Madison & (correlates that amendment process can be done by people calling their own conventions) George Mason

Guest Essayist: Tom Hand

Essay 6C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: Christopher Burkett

7. The Northwest Ordinance and settlement of the West as settlers rushed westward in the wake of the Revolutionary War and quickly created new states with townships, farms, and the self-governing institutions of civil society such as local government and churches.

Essay 7A - The People

Guest Essayist: Scot Faulkner

Essay 7B - Hero - Manasseh Cutler

Guest Essayist: Dan Cotter

Essay 7C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: Will Morrisey

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8. The spread of universal male suffrage in the states in the early 1800s as America became more democratic and white men, regardless of wealth and property, were able to express their consent. Led to very high political participation rates and enthusiasm.

Essay 8A - The People

Guest Essayist: Joerg Knipprath

Essay 8B - Hero - Andrew Jackson & The Common Man

Guest Essayist: Edward Lee

Essay 8C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: Jon Schaff

9. Seneca Falls Convention and the arguments and movement for women's suffrage as the basis for equality, self-rule, and consent by participating in government and having a voice.

Essay 9A - The People

Guest Essayist: Heather E Yates

Essay 9B - Hero - Belva Lockwood

Guest Essayist: Janine Turner

Essay 9C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: Troy Kickler

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10. John Quincy Adams and others fight the Gag Rule in Congress attempting to ban abolitionist petitions and their struggle to defend free speech and constitutional liberties and self-rule.

Essay 10A - The People

Guest Essayist: Stephen Tootle

Essay 10B - Hero - John Quincy Adams

Guest Essayist: Scot Faulkner

Essay 10C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: William Allen

11. The invention of the mechanical reaper and the rise of mechanical farming that made life easier for farmers.

Essay 11A - The People

Guest Essayist: Tony Williams

Essay 11B - Hero - Cyrus McCormick

Guest Essayist: Jim Pinkerton

Essay 11C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist:

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12. The telegraph and railroad made communications and travel much easier and faster and connected local and distant markets together to benefit individuals and businesses as well as provide a greater sense of national identity.

Essay 12A - The People

Guest Essayist: James C. Clinger

Essay 12B - Hero - Samuel Morse

Guest Essayist: Andrew Langer

Essay 12C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: Gary Porter

13. The Homestead Act passed during the Civil War in 1862 that provided free land for settlers and encouraged westward expansion and settlement after the Civil War.

Essay 13A - The People

Guest Essayist: Alex Tokarev

Essay 13B - Hero - Actual Settlers - Women

Guest Essayist: Libby McNamee

Essay 13C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: Adam Carrington

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14. Morrill Act passed in 1862 that allowed the creation of land grant colleges that have provided public colleges to give a broad part of the American population an affordable education and an opportunity to participate in the American Dream and offer social mobility and prosperity with an educated populace.

Essay 14A - The People

Guest Essayist: John Kitch

Essay 14B - Hero - Hero - Justin S. Morrill

Guest Essayist: Matt Van Hook

Essay 14C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: Joerg Knipprath

15. Black male suffrage in the Fifteenth Amendment and consent based upon fighting in the Civil War and fighting for their country.

Essay 15A - The People

Guest Essayist: Mark Shubert

Essay 15B - Hero - Frederick Douglass

Guest Essayist: Eric Sands

Essay 15C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: Dorothea Wolfson

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16. Newspapers that were mass printed and distributed in major cities and small towns provided for an informed citizenry by learning the news.

Essay 16A - The People

Guest Essayist: Michael Johnson

Essay 16B - Hero - Harken back to importance of print in revolutionary times? Ben Franklin?

Guest Essayist: Gary Porter

Essay 16C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: C.C. Borzilleri

17. Interstate Commerce Act and Sherman Antitrust Act were acts passed by Congress based upon popular dissatisfaction and anger about the monopolistic practices by corporations as trusts and the railroads. Whatever contribution to the growth of the regulatory state, they were popular measures and were constitutional powers for Congress to regulate the marketplace.

Essay 17A - The People

Guest Essayist: Alex Tokarev

Essay 17B - Hero - Theodore Roosevelt or research more

Guest Essayist: Colin Hanna

Essay 17C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: Joerg Knipprath

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18. Meat inspection Act passed by Congress and signed by Theodore Roosevelt after Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* exposed the unhealthy and gross practices of the meatpacking industry to protect public health.

Essay 18A - The People

Guest Essayist: Reeve Bull

Essay 18B - Hero - Upton Sinclair

Guest Essayist: Andrew Langer

Essay 18C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: Peter Roff

19. The discovery and application of electricity and how much it improved public life and ran factories to promote prosperity. Perhaps something with Tesla.

Essay 19A - The People

Guest Essayist: Caleb Franz

Essay 19B - Hero - Nikola Tesla

Guest Essayist: Jim Pinkerton

Essay 19C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: Amanda Hughes

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20. The invention of the telephone by Alexander Graham Bell that connected private individuals with family and friends and facilitated instant communication in businesses.

Essay 20A - The People

Guest Essayist: Ken Cuccinelli

Essay 20B - Hero - Alexander Graham Bell

Guest Essayist: Stephen Puleo

Essay 20C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: James Clinger

21. World War I soldiers' experience in the trenches as expressed by wartime poetry and the dissatisfaction of the Lost Generation.

Essay 21A - The People

Guest Essayist: James Robbins

Essay 21B - Hero - Alan Seeger

Guest Essayist: Caleb Franz

Essay 21C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: Dominic Aquila

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22. The Battle over the Versailles Treaty by Wilson and Lodge because Lodge wanted to preserve the consent of the people and their representatives in Congress to preserve American national sovereignty and the power to declare war, not an international organization.

Essay 22A - The People

Guest Essayist: Ben Peterson

Essay 22B - Hero - Senator Henry Cabot Lodge

Guest Essayist: John Bicknell

Essay 22C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: Eric Schmidt

23. The invention of the mass-produced car that was simple and affordable by Henry Ford that facilitated greater mobility that Americans wanted and gave them greater freedom to enjoy leisure with travel and live where they wanted in relation to work.

Essay 23A - The People

Guest Essayist:

Essay 23B - Hero - Henry Ford

Guest Essayist:

Essay 23C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist:

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24. D-Day and the courageous battle by American citizen-soldiers defending the United States and fighting for freedom against totalitarianism and tyranny.

Essay 24A - The People

Guest Essayist: Stephen Puleo

Essay 24B - Hero - John Trippon - D Day - collective essay - threw his body down to make a bridge - Bedford Boys - 19 boys

Guest Essayist: Ronald Meier

Essay 24C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: Tom Brusino

25. The Manhattan Project and the secret project to develop a nuclear weapon in which hundreds of thousands of Americans participated to defeat the tyranny of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan.

Essay 25A - The People

Guest Essayist:

Essay 25B - Hero - Leslie Groves

Guest Essayist:

Essay 25C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: Benjamin Slomski

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26. The GI Bill and the opportunity for millions who served their country to earn an education, start a business, or own a home that provided millions with opportunity and mobility.

Essay 26A - The People

Guest Essayist: Phillip Bunn

Essay 26B - Hero - Harry W. Colmery & John Henry Stelle

Guest Essayist:

Essay 26C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist:

27. The National Highway Act that linked the American nation with a system of interstate highways that facilitated travel, tourism, mobility, and prosperity as Americans drove to destinations together.

Essay 27A - The People

Guest Essayist: Jeff L. Scott

Essay 27B - Hero -

Guest Essayist:

Essay 27C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist:

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28. The Apollo Project and moon landing by NASA and countless members of industry and science as hundreds of thousands of Americans contributed to this national endeavor of discovery and a space race against the Soviets.

Essay 28A - The People

Guest Essayist: Andrew Langer

Essay 28B - Hero - Katherine Johnson Dorothy Vaughan Mary Jackson - emblematic of 400,000 people who worked on the project

Guest Essayist:

Essay 28C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist:

29. The Civil Rights Movement with several dramatic events such as the Montgomery Bus Boycotts, Little Rock Nine, CORE freedom rides, Birmingham, the March on Washington, and the Selma Marches leading to the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act.

Essay 29A - The People

Guest Essayist:

Essay 29B - Hero - Martin Luther King - Letter from a Birmingham Jail

Guest Essayist:

Essay 29C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: Tim Schantz

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30. The Twenty-Sixth Amendment and eighteen-year-olds voting after fighting in Vietnam.

Essay 30A - The People

Guest Essayist:

Essay 30B - Hero - Jennings Randolph

Guest Essayist: George Landrith

Essay 30C - Founding Documents

Guest Essayist: