

America: Constantly Striving to the Envisionment of our Forefathers  
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It is very easy to look at the state of America and see the awful. But I believe it is always easier to see the darkness and sadness in the world than it is to see the beauty and hope. Lately I have tried to focus more on these things, and it has changed my worldview. There are so many small freedoms I have that bring happiness to my life, and while these things could happen anywhere, I see them as uniquely American experiences. America is the oldest democracy and has always had a vision of letting the people grow and choose the world that they live in. Throughout the entirety of the 19th and 20th centuries the United States of America held free elections (although they were not always fair) while the majority of the world was still being held back by theocracies and monarchies that gave them little choice in their world. American laws were voted on by Americans that were chosen by the people. The American Constitution was approved by a majority of the states and the people in them. This direct connection between the people of a nation and the said nation's founding has yet to be matched and is a part of the beauty of the United States. The same beauty that lets women drive and play sports, does not censor music or books, and allows all its children to attend school for free. And these rights were not bestowed by an aristocracy or as an appeasement to the lower class, but were key principles instilled in this nation that were chosen as the people of this country grew and changed. The United States has stretched, grown, and fractured in its 244 years, but has remained a nation that embodies what our founding fathers envisioned.

The founding fathers were not a monolithic group and came from a diverse background. There were poor immigrants like Alexander Hamilton, wealthy planters like Thomas Jefferson, inventors and scientists like Benjamin Franklin, diplomats like John Adams, and military commanders like George Washington. These are just a few but all came from unique positions in society and the colonies. They all had different experiences but were united in their desire to form a new kind of nation in which there was no monarch and the people were able to vote for

their representatives. Despite their disagreements as to how a government like that should work, there are many documents written by these individuals which inform my opinion that this is the nation our founders envisioned. The first of these is Federalist Paper No. 70, written by Alexander Hamilton. In this key document the founding father and first treasury secretary argues the positives of having a strong executive branch led by one person. This ideal has only grown in the centuries since then, as America's population and influence has increased exponentially and so has the power of the President. This is influential because many say that the founding fathers did not mean for the government to be so large, but this provides an example of how a founding father supported a large federal authority. Another is the 9th amendment of the Constitution, which protects personal rights not included in the Bill of Rights. This amendment is beautiful and recognizes the fact that the founding fathers could not predict the future and the future protections needed by the American people. This has been used to establish the right to privacy of the American people, this seems like a small amendment and hasn't had to be used much in the history of the United States, but the fact that it is there gives great protection to the American people and shows that the founding fathers expected America to grow and experience growing pains. These are just two of many documents that show the founding father's ability to predict how the nation might grow and change, becoming closer to the nation that they envisioned.

The America of today may be very similar in its intentions, protections, and systems to the one set up by the founding fathers, but in its history and reality it cannot be hidden that it is different than they may have intended. In the Monroe Doctrine, President James Monroe set up a key US position of foreign policy. This was a document by a founding father and it established the idea that the United States should not be over-involved in world politics and wars but just be strong in our own hemisphere. However, this ideal has not been carried out and the United States has been involved in many wars in Europe, Asia, and around the world. This is not an aspect that I believe the founding fathers envisioned, and it is certainly a big one. The biggest

counter-argument, however, to my thesis is Washington's Farewell Address. This beautiful speech was given to try to lead America further in the ideals it was based on after Washington left office. It pointed out the need for Americans to be united and not divide into factions. Unfortunately, America was never ever able to live up to this expectation and we have become a country largely divided by politics and factions. I believe that this is very contrary to the founding father's intentions and if I'm being honest this is the hardest part of America to reckon with my idea that this is the nation which the American founders envisioned. But my optimism must prevail, and I will close with the point which won my personal argument on how to write this paper.

America was formed as an experiment. We were the first real major democracy and it was a huge task for the founding fathers to undertake, they were controlling the lives of millions and the future of the world. There were no precedent and huge expectations from both inside the new nation and outside. For a very long time we were the only democracy on the world stage and we kept the ideals of freedom that we were born with at all times, despite our faults. Since our conception I truly believe that we have only gotten better as a nation. We have become a more equal nation for people of color, women, and people of the LGBT community. We have become a more prosperous nation for all and we aren't planning on stopping anytime soon. We are still looking onwards and upwards forward into the future, trying to prove our experiment a success, continuing our paths to a society where everyone is created equal.