

Super Student

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History 17A

### Final Essay

All throughout the creation and expansion of the United States of America, the relationship held between the states and England was much like that of a relationship that exists between parents and their children. In order to understand this period of time, one must view the United States as an adolescent that has left home in order to gain independence and become an adult. In a struggle for power, the parents may feel that they can claim authority without informing the child. With an arrogant determination to prove them wrong, the child may overlook things and fall into a trap of repeating parental mistakes. Although there may be tension and friction between the parents and the newly independent child, the child must learn from the parents' mistakes in order to make better decisions, build a better foundation, and therefore create a better future.

Parents are responsible for their young child's decisions throughout life. Eventually, that child will grow up and may one day revolt against the parents' demands. Wanting to make decisions for their own self, this desire for independence that children acquire can also be seen in the people of England who eventually make their way to the Americas. Individual wealth in the United States looks very promising and appealing, and many people make their way over for that reason. This same idea occurs when a child has been given a small allowance for a number of years, and when it no longer is enough that child or teen will go out and look for a job that promises more money. Many decisions made by children and teens will reflect their own

upbringing, but with some difference. The difference may even be quite radical. From siblings boycotting leftover night to Americans boycotting English tea, the country of the United States greatly portrays many characteristics that can be found in children and teens.

Children living under their parent's roof will eventually grow up and desire independence. Once they have acquired a taste for independence, they will be overcome with a need to make decisions for themselves and no longer require the assistance of their parents. However, many morals and ideas are ingrained into the character of a child through the parents; therefore, the child is capable of making the same progress as his or her parents, but also is capable of making similar mistakes. If the desire for independence is so strong that it overcomes reasonable logic and reality, the child may overlook the same errors are being made that he or she was trying to avoid in the first place.

This irrational fear of becoming like one's parents can cause the child to overlook important life lessons. The importance of learning from these lessons means that the child has critically looked at situations and experiences that his or her parents have been through, and in result has learned from them. By learning from the parents' mistakes, a child clearly can see the steps that led up to the negative experience and avoid repeating them in the future. By neglecting to critically look at the lives of one's own parents and make rational interpretations of their decisions, one can fall into the trap of fear and ignorance and therefore reenact previous mistakes. This example of a strong desire for independence leading to hypocrisy can also be seen in William Penn's establishing Pennsylvania in the United States of America.

William Penn was a well-brought-up and well-educated man who felt that everyone was equal, and he established the Charter of Liberties in 1681 inviting people to come to Pennsylvania for religious freedom. However, when an enormous amount of multiple religions arrived, Penn feared

that religious intolerance will prevail once again. He failed to recognize that he was making the same mistakes as his parent country, England. With a fear of recreating the intolerance and prosecution that religions faced in England, Penn attempted to keep the Quakers in power. He did so in order to prevent other religions from becoming too powerful and becoming intolerant of other religions. Through this fear and hypocrisy Pennsylvania turned out to be rather intolerant, ironically the exact opposite of what Penn was hoping for. Eventually he allowed the freedom that he had originally planned, and through his understanding of his hypocrisy the dream of Pennsylvania and its tolerance thrived.

This idea that children tend to make mistakes that their parents make is because it is what a child is used to. However, because children can empathize and see more quickly what consequences are arising from their actions, they can see solutions and make changes. These traits of empathy and fluidity can be seen in many aspects of American culture, and one example would be the use of slavery. As something that people had become accustomed to in England, servants and slaves were what the Americans were used to. The owning of slaves built a strong sense of superiority into the hearts of Americans because they had dominance and power over another human being. This ugly trait of America was eventually recognized as something that needed to be changed and through the Emancipation Proclamation and the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments these changes were made. The people that left England refused to be treated as slaves by the crown, and it was hypocritical of them to own slaves themselves in the New World. The Americans eventually opened their eyes to the hypocrisy and inhumane cruelty of owning another human being, and it was with much difficulty that they made the statement “all men are created equal” live up to its true meaning.

Sibling rivalry always involves tough, unbending differences of opinions. With this

conflict of ideas comes much fighting, and in the United States' case much bloodshed. The North and the South acted in such a way of sibling rivalry that it made the establishment of equality between all races very difficult. The South was not willing to conform to the new ways of the North, and was still wearing English clothes, drinking English tea and indulging in English food. The North wore all American-made clothing and were much more rugged than their rather proper southern sibling. The South enjoyed the company and the ways of England, much like one sibling may try to overcompensate in order to win the affection of the parents. The North was against such conformity and humility, ready to rise up against the ways of England and thus get rid of slavery, or at least halt its expansion. These different relationships with their parent country, England, illuminated the arising conflict between the North and the South over the abolishment of slavery.

Many men took action when it came to supporting abolition, such as a man named John Brown. Eventually captured by Robert E. Lee, Brown calmly accepted his death after his trial with a few last words. He proclaimed, "if it is deemed necessary that I should forfeit my life for the furtherance of the ends of justice, and mingle my blood further with the blood of my children and with the blood of millions in this slave country whose rights are disregarded by wicked, cruel, and unjust enactments, -- I submit; so let it be done!" (Marcus 247) These powerful words caught the attention and imagination of the country, furthering his cause for abolition. When Abraham Lincoln won the election of 1860 (Abraham Lincoln) with no support from the South, the southern sibling realized that its power had diminished within the United States. This created tension between the North and the South, each resenting the other. Ultimately, when the Civil War was over and the North had defeated the secessionist Confederacy, the United States of America proved to be stronger when it was united, "united we stand divided we fall."

By standing together the United States of America proved to be capable of having independence and freedom from England. Through the revolutionary war the United States gained their ultimate goal of independence. Having been previously controlled by England with all thoughts and decisions made by the crown, the freedom found in America was a bit overwhelming. It is understandable that there were a few bumps along the way, because the people were attempting to build a New World from the ground up. They had to go back on many occasions and dig up old ways in order to put down entirely new foundations. Through this process our nation was built on a rock instead of sand, so that we stand strong. As a young nation the United States has come far, by maturing over the years from adolescence and breaking away from home to indulge in freedom and independence. Only through admitting errors were the American people capable of learning and building sturdy foundations for their constitution that is still powerful and thriving to this very day.

## Works Cited

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