

THE STATESMAN

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Announcements:

We are happy to announce that George Wythe College is now holding classes in its new campus in the Providence Center at 970 South Sage Drive.

On Campus Seminars:

- Mar 4-5 [How to Read a Book](#)
Mar 7-8 [A Grand Strategy for the 21st Century](#)
Apr 25-29 [P.H.D. Statesmanship Invitational](#)
Apr 25-30 [Statesmanship Invitational](#)
May 2-27 [Psychology II](#)
May 30-31 [The Federalist Papers](#)
June 13-15 [Executive Leadership Retreat](#)
July 15-16 [Transition to Scholar](#)
July 11-Aug 3 [Youth for America \(6 seminars!\)](#)
Aug 1-2 [The Bible on Politics](#)

For a Face to Face with Greatness seminar in your area, [click here.](#)

For a Statesmanship Seminar in your area, [click here.](#)

These Plain, Simple Men

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Hebrew

The Language of Liberty

By Oliver DeMille

I was seated at an airport cafeteria in the Eastern United States when I was first asked the question. Although it's been almost ten years since then, I can still remember it well. I was waiting to meet with a world-renowned scholar, and I was excited to tell him about the founding of George Wythe College just a few years prior. I had seen the scholar's resume—he was educated at the Ivy League and Oxford, had taught at the leading schools during a distinguished career, and he had a list of publications several arms long. I was excited to meet him, but a bit apprehensive about telling him I had founded a Great Books college. After all, he was the epitome of the type of scholar George Wythe College was designed to educate.

I'm glad I knew the answer to the question, because it was one of the first he asked. "What is the central language of George Wythe College?" Real scholars of educational history will often ask this, since the answer tells them what your school is all about.

If you answer "Latin," they know that the school was founded to promote Western Civilization as the focal point of an education—such a school will stress the Roman and Medieval readings. The scholar knows that the focus of such a school is to train professionals and business leaders. If you say "Greek," the scholar knows that the school was founded on the Greek classics, with the focus on training scholars, academics, clergy, philosophers and other "thinkers."

If you say, “we teach many languages at our university or college,” the scholar knows that the school is a modern teach-whatever-sells school, which scholars of education often call “Behemeth University” (meaning that the school doesn’t necessarily stand for something specific, but offers lots of majors in many disciplines).

If you say “Hebrew,” which is what I said, the scholar knows you are either a Jewish Yeshiva school or an American school in the tradition of the American Founding Fathers. Upon finding out that I wasn’t Jewish, the scholar sat back in his chair and started rubbing his chin. “This is most interesting, most interesting,” he kept repeating. And to one who knows the history, it truly is “most interesting.” A love for Hebrew swept the American Colonies before, during and after the Revolutionary War, because Hebrew was considered the language of liberty. Hebrew was required at nearly all the Ivy League schools in colonial times. Their goal was to train clergy and statesmen, and that meant the Bible. In fact, until 1817 the annual commencement address at Harvard was delivered in Hebrew. Hebrew was required for all freshmen at Yale, and several early leaders proposed that Hebrew be adopted as the official U.S. language instead of English.

Why? Because all education is based around a central book, a core classic from which all others flow—whichever book the scholars of that tradition deem the most important, the deepest and purest source of truth. The “Latin” schools consider the philosophers of the middle ages (Plutarch, Augustine, Aquinas, Dante, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Descartes, etc.) as the collective library or bible of great works. The “Greek” school considers Homer, Sophocles, Euripides, Herodotus, Thucydides, Plato and Aristotle as the gospels—the accepted Canon, the real fountain of knowledge. And since the originals are in Greek, you can’t be truly educated unless you speak Greek.

“Behemoth University” (which includes the majority of colleges and universities today) speaks the pivotal language of Employment—all the majors in all the departments promote this language. (It is a curious side note that the word “behemeth” is the Hebrew word for “beasts”. I am not sure how this applies.) The colonial Ivy League schools were founded on

Hebrew, because The Law, or Torah, is the basis of free government, economy, politics, law and in short liberty. As the generation of the American Founding Fathers understood it, liberty flows from the principles of the Bible—so a nation of freedom will be rooted in the legal, political, economic and governmental principles taught in it. Which helps explain the early Founding American generation penchant for the Hebrew language.

To sum it up: Latin is the language of the professions such as modern law and medicine, Greek of academia and the clergy, Employment is the language of the modern university system and indeed most of the nation at large, and Hebrew is the language of liberty and freedom.

So if anyone ever asks what George Wythe College’s central ancient language is, you’ll know two things: 1) you are talking to a very erudite person, and 2) the answer is “Hebrew,” the language of liberty—free government, law, politics, communities and economics. This is not to say that other languages aren’t studied at GWC—they are—but rather that the central language of liberty is consistent with the aim of the school to “build statesmen” who “inspire greatness in others and move the cause of liberty.”

Back to the airport restaurant: The knowing smile on the prestigious scholar’s face across the table told me I’d found a new friend. “Hebrew,” he said as he nodded. “Building statesmen . . .” he mused. “Well, it’s about time . . .”

In 3 months George Wythe College will be holding their semi-annual language block. This next language block will feature Hebrew.

April 12-22: Hebrew Language Block:

“Hebrew is not a language; Hebrew is magic.” So wrote Joseph Lowin, the Executive director of the National Center for the Hebrew Language. During the Hebrew Language Block students learn about the history and structure of the Hebrew language, but perhaps more significantly they study the symbolism

and “magic” of this language that continues to shape the world we live in today. During the Language Block students are mentored in the history, the culture, the purpose and the power of the Hebrew language. They experience Hebrew cuisine, Hebrew literature, and Hebrew thought. Three to five hours daily are spent in concentrated, in-class mentoring. This is followed by five to six hours of supplementary class projects, meetings and individual study. Students also spend one-on-one time with a language mentor, who works with the student on fluency and comprehension. By the close of the Language Block students will experience the Hebrew language as powerful tool that provides profound insights into ancient and modern history. The “magic” of the Hebrew language is something that is learned and shared through the Hebrew Language Block. If you have ever considered studying the Hebrew language, this is the perfect way to add a new language and a new dimension to your studies and your life.

April 12-22: Spanish Language Block:

Latin America has been likened to a sleeping giant – a source of influence and power whose potential impact on the world has only been foreshadowed. Her resources – cultural, economic and otherwise – have barely been tapped, and the role she will play in the future can only be estimated. The true Statesman will consider the Latin American influence, and will shape his education to encompass a knowledge of her people, and her language. Spanish is the third most spoken language in the world, with about 380 million native speakers and about 100 million more who speak it as a second language. Because of its international appeal, the demand for Spanish courses in the last ten years has increased significantly. If you have ever wanted to learn Spanish, now is the perfect time to do so, and the Language Block is the perfect way to do it. During the Spanish Language Block you will not only learn the fundamentals of speaking, writing and understanding the Spanish language, you will also learn about and experience the native cuisine, the history of the language, and other historical and cultural insights that will make your language experience come alive. Native Spanish speakers will work with you on an individual and group basis. Your comprehension will

expand, your fluency will increase, and you will see an entirely new world open up to you as you access the world of the Spanish language and culture. The Spanish language adds a powerful dimension to the statesman’s education, and the Spanish Language Block will help you realize how enjoyable and important learning a new language can be.

April 12-22: French, German and Latin Group Study Courses:

Many of us have experienced the challenges and frustrations of trying to learn a new language, and many of us have tried time and again to get those rules, lists of words and tenses to “stick.” The Group Study Courses provide the missing ingredients to a transformational language experience. Group Study Courses are available in French, German and Latin, and follow the Group Study method. Students work in groups of no more than five people, and spend five hours per day as a group using Power-Glide language materials (listening, doing vocal exercises, working in workbooks, testing each other, doing activities and games, etc...). Five to six hours of individual study are also spent in reading, writing, memorization and dialogue practice. During the evenings students have the option of watching two to three movies in the language that they are learning, as well as meeting for dinner to try their hands at cooking authentic dishes, talking, and watching documentaries on the language, culture, people and lands of their chosen language. GWC faculty oversees all aspects of Group Study and facilitates an oral and written exam at the conclusion of the course. All students receive between two and four credits upon successful completion of the course and testing. All students will also be given their own Power-Glide course to keep for review and improvement. The Group Study Courses are a refreshing alternative to individual language study; they keep initiative, desire and productivity high and provide an atmosphere of encouragement and excitement to the language learning process.

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These Plain, Simple Men

Kira Ellingford
January 24, 2005

The currents of thought, events, and the affairs of men seem to change their direction and manner as the result of a few men and women. Our history books are full of the kings, warriors, and clergy men who have commanded, fought and preached, but we hear little of the common people who have lived. Part of the reason for this is because it would be impossible for us to record the lives of every person, but there is another reason.

It is because they follow the kings. They fight for the warriors. They listen to the clergy. They are the water rushing through the river beds made by others. They maintain neutrality and go with the flow – because it's easier.

At the beginning of the Spanish Inquisition the people cheered for their king and queen and did all they could to rid themselves of heretics and infidels. They attended the trials and tortures of its victims. But a change took place. Fear replaced their misguided passion. They saw that the inquisition had gone too far. When they realized what was happening they should have made a stand. They should have been willing to stick out their necks and oppose the proceedings. Instead they hid, they walked quietly, they feared. **The people have the power of might. They have the strength of numbers and courage. If they would only take a stand! But the result of their quiet neutrality meant the death of thousands.**

Another example of this deadly neutrality is shown in the play, *A Man for All Seasons* by Robert Bolt. Sir Thomas More is in prison for taking a stand in his belief that Henry VIII is wrong in deciding to divorce his wife Catherine of Aragon and marry Anne Boleyn. Because he will not sacrifice his character to the wishes of the King, he is sent to prison. When his family comes to see him, the jailor ends their visit even though they beg him for more time. The jailor says, "You understand my position, sir, there's nothing I can do; I'm a plain, simple man and just want to keep out of trouble." Thomas More's response is a plea which deserves to echo through the world. "Oh,

Sweet Jesus! These plain, simple men!"

These average, ordinary, everyday people. They say, "there's nothing I can do." But there is. They say, "I'm a plain, simple man." It's true. They say, "I just want to keep out of trouble." But they don't understand.

They don't understand that they have the ability to stop the inquisition, to release the prisoner, to educate the mind, to change the world. They are allowing the jailor of fear to hold them back in a complacent state of inaction.

Neutrality is the epidemic of our time. It not only quietly follows the decisions of a few purposive individuals, it is also soul destroying. As much as this neutrality helped to kill the heretics and infidels of the Spanish inquisition, it allows leaders of today to go ahead with their agendas. These can be good. This does not mean that the people should revolt against their leaders. They do need to discard neutrality for understanding and take a stand. They should think for themselves and be willing to sacrifice if its worth it.

Helene Holt wrote in *Exiled*, "You must realize that neutrality isn't neutral at all. It always favors the despot, [it] adds to his power."

We are plain, simple men and women. But there is something we can do. It may be hard, but the strength is in our hands. Whether we support our leaders in their stance or find another way, we will be leading ourselves with understanding and courage. Rather than drifting in the current, abandon the river and walk on solid ground. Here it is our own choices and actions which determine our direction and make a difference. Cast neutrality aside, take a stand.

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