



# ***Rodney's Take***

July 5, 2021

## **A Glimpse of Greatness**

Building on the ideas of philosopher John Locke, the Founding Fathers devised a system of government that recognized both the inherent dignity of every person and the fallibility of man. They pointed to the same breath that gives life to every person as proof that no one is inherently above another and said that government should not exist to control people, but to do their bidding in ordering society. However, these leaders also recognized that wielding power over others often causes people to want even more power, so they specifically and severely limited the role of the national government and made each of the three branches of government accountable to the other two.

Their approach to government was a break from anything that came before it. There were no kings, no aristocracy, and, at least in their view at the time, no privileged class. It was a great experiment and a tremendous leap forward for humanity.

Reading the Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution with modern sensibilities, it's easy to call out the men of the 1770s for their blind spots. How could any form of government that allowed slavery or that didn't allow half of the population (women) to vote be thought of as viewing all men as created equal?

That's an easy question to answer.

These men were not operating in 2021, they were creating a new form of government in 1776, breaking away from a monarchy that competed with other monarchies and dynasties for world domination. To incriminate the Founding Fathers for their failings without acknowledging that they laid the groundwork for personal freedom here and abroad for the generations that followed isn't just small thinking, it's willful blindness. By our standards, they didn't do everything right. But then again, by our standards, we still don't do everything right.

The ideals they put on paper, to which they pledged and for which they risked their lives, remain some of the most cherished notions in history. It seems we often take them for granted, and certainly many people today mock them, but I've no doubt that when we read those words, we're glimpsing greatness. Those words are the bedrock on which we stand when demanding equal opportunities for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, as we see fit. May we all strive to live up to those noble ideals, and may future generations look upon us with more mercy and understanding than we show today when they judge our current actions by their future moral codes.

Enjoy your Fourth of July holiday!

Rodney

*Got a question or comment? You can contact us at [info@hsdent.com](mailto:info@hsdent.com).*