

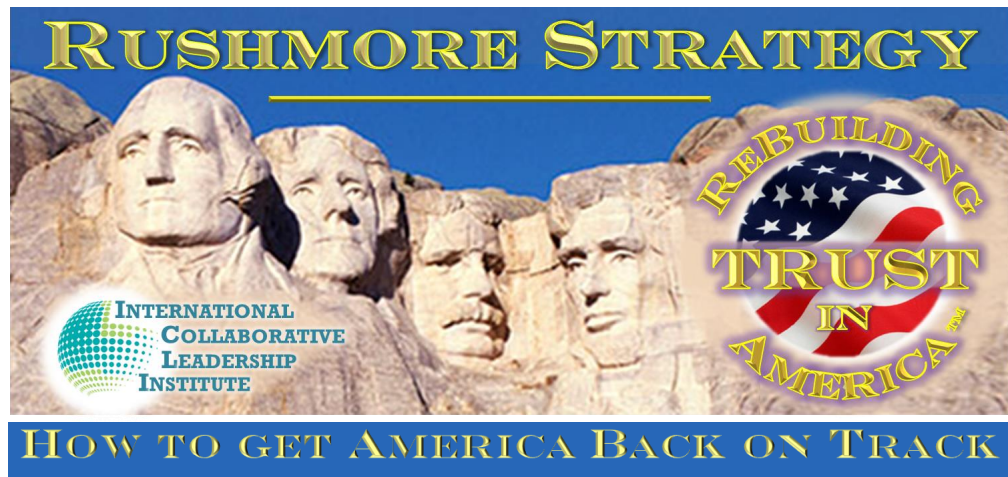
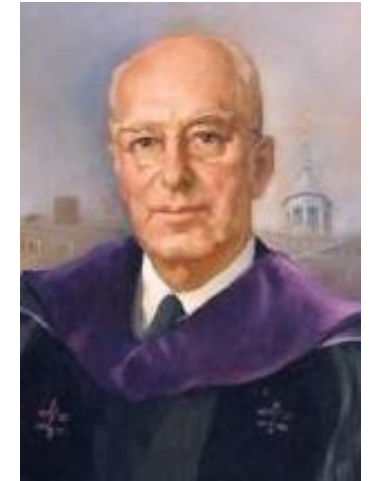
EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY

Henry Merritt Wriston

(1889 - 1978)

Three Themes: Wriston's Liberal Arts Education

- 1. Moral Character Development*
- 2. Education in a Democracy*
- 3. Preeminence of Human Dignity*



NOTICE is hereby given that on the 10th of May the College in this Town will be opened, to receive the Youth who desire to prosecute their Studies under my Direction; paying particular Attention as well to the *Morals* as Instruction of those committed to his Care. JAMES MANNING Brown College Providence April 13, 1780

Presented by Robert Porter Lynch, Brown '69 to Brown Alumni of SW Florida
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Rushmore Strategy

THREE FORCES IN EDUCATION

1. **Skills for Employment – Productive Person**
2. **Personal Development -- Fulfilling Your Best Unique Potential**
3. **Becoming a Citizen in Democracy – Wisdom, Moral Character**

“Your education is wasted if you do not develop morally. If you do not acquire the moral courage to call what is right and wrong and take the consequences.”

“The postulate upon which this University stands is ... the measure of value which puts all the intangibles at the head of the list -- human dignity.”



CHARACTER STANDS AT THE PINNACLE OF HISTORY



Let us remember in the lessons of history. Above sound mind and sound body stands character—the sum of those qualities which we mean when we speak of a man's force and courage, of his good faith and sense of honor.

*I believe in giving to all the people a good education besides book-learning ...
No keenness and subtleness of intellect, no polish, no cleverness, make up for the lack of the great solid qualities:*

- Self Restraint and Self Mastery,
 - Common Sense,
 - Courage and Resolution
 - Power of Accepting Individual Responsibility
yet of Acting in Conjunction with Others,
- these are the qualities which mark a masterful people.*

*Without them no people can control themselves,
or save themselves from being controlled from the outside.*



THE TRIALS OF DEMOCRACY 1940

Democracy seeks to fulfill that ancient ideal:

"The multitude of the wise is the welfare of the world"

[Wisdom of Solomon 6:24]

That ideal can never be attained by training for those skills alone; it may be attained by education for wisdom

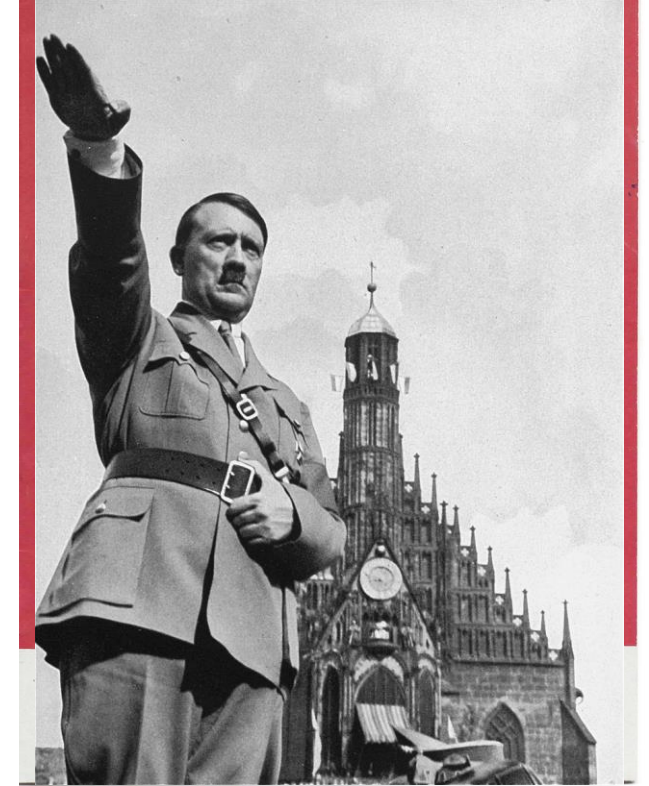
• Wisdom is the Central Objective of Education

Democracy is the most difficult, most dangerous form of government. It achieves progress in the hardest possible way, in the belief that the process is as important as the result.

*That process requires the realization of the fullest potentiality of each individual citizen
-- not merely his most convenient use by the state, but his richest self-realization.*

From Education in a Democracy

-- 1940



ESSENTIALS OF WISDOM



Wisdom is knowledge organized by one's self into meaningful patterns, and controlled by disciplined emotions

- 1. Elevate the “Dignity of the Human Spirit.”** – this is the essence of all wisdom, derived from an Accent on Values
- 2. Perspective** -- broadening and lengthening experience far beyond boundaries, in either time or space, of the lifespan of an individual.
- 3. Disciplined Emotion** -- derives from a Response to Values, the ideal of the conditioned reflex to be sure your "[beliefs] coincide with your attitudes" [perceptions & conceptions] and your "actions" [Integral Alignment].
- 4. Industry – Initiative, Hard Work, Perseverance** -- Learning, the use of the mind [and spirit], is hard work, requiring industry of the courageous kind... What is in books must be remembered and reflected upon until the ideas are digested and become an integral part of the mind, just as food well digested becomes a part of the body ... there is more danger of mistaking laziness for stupidity than of overworking a feeble mind.
- 5. Courage** --One of Wisdom's goals is to "inspire, ... to reawaken courage and the spirit of piety [virtue, reverence, moral character] The emphasis has been shifted from the triumphs [of courage] in American Life to its shortcomings and its failures -- the descent has been from the loftiest ideals to the level of sordid manipulations





BROWN'S COMMITMENT 1940-45

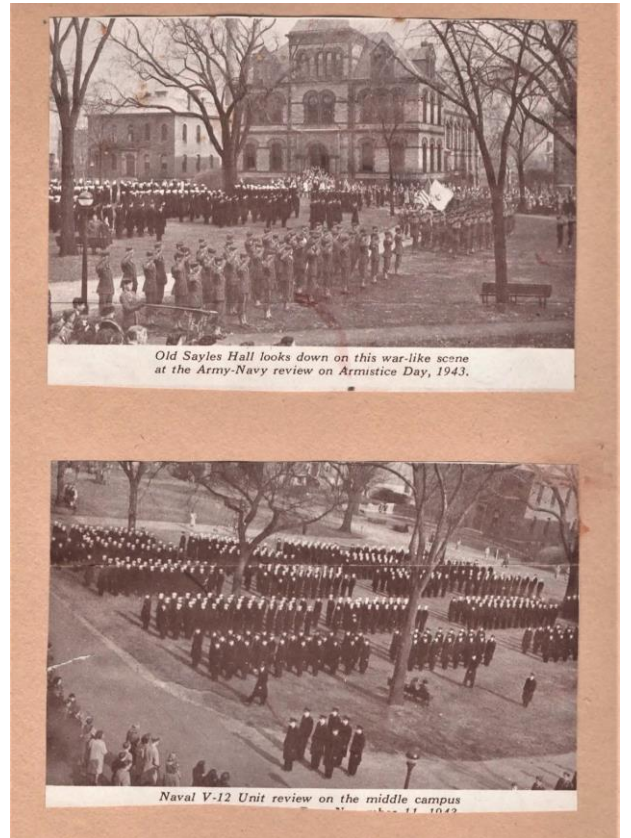
CHARACTER IN ACTION SPEECH - 1941

*“Many of you come to your studies under a cloud of uncertainty.
You should not let that disconcert you.*

*These are not idle words of advice; they are designed to remind
you that throughout life you will be faced by uncertainties.*

Those you now face are only more dramatic than others.

*It is a manifestation of maturity of character to face with stead-
fastness and with courage the hazards which are part of life itself.”*



Armistice Day, 1943

BROWN'S COMMITMENT 1940-45

CHARACTER IN ACTION SPEECH - 1941

Wriston regarded American isolation and materialism as different sides of the same coin, warning:

“The menace to American security [was caused] because disillusionment after the last war drove many to materialism.

Even in high quarters, democracy came to be interpreted as nourishment, clothing; and housing for the underprivileged ... with very little accent upon the intangibles, such as freedom..”

“The decision is inexorably being made; however slowly, however haltingly. Its achievement is much more than a mark of intelligence; it is a triumph of character.



COMMENCEMENT FEBRUARY 1944



While the battle for primacy between the spirit of freedom and heroic materialism had been a standoff prior to the war, the glory of righteousness now prevailed over its arch-nemesis (from the speech given to the Graduating Class at Brown University in 1944 in the middle of WWII – my father was in attendance):

“The triumph of character...means that-sacrifice is to take the place of plenty; hardship is chosen over comfort; the things of the spirit are preferred over the pleasures of the moment. It demonstrates that not the short run alone, but the long run, have meaning for the American people. They have not lost their sensitiveness to concepts of right and justice and human dignity.

“The greatest gift of this University is ... its accent upon values.

“The college would never have been founded, it would never have survived, it would never have grown and prospered, without the sense of value epitomized in the motto upon our seal: "In 'Deo Speramus." [In God We Hope/Trust]. It is a measure of value which puts all the intangibles at the head of the list -- human dignity... “From that central postulate flows the demand for freedom, for justice, for truth. If that scale of values is valid, then other things may have to be sacrificed to maintain them.

COMMENCEMENT FEBRUARY 1944

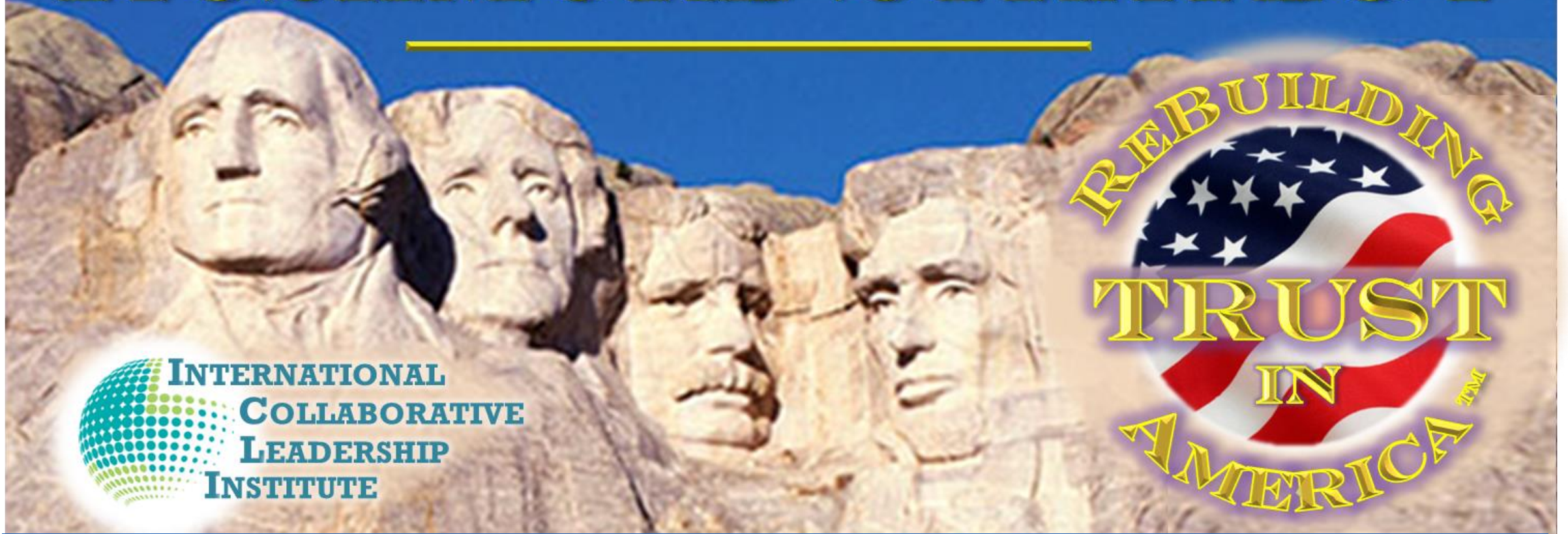
“Your predecessors [from the American Revolution] had no wish ...to give up their studies, their comforts, such fortunes as they had... in the War for Independence. But their studies would have been useless if they had not led them to express their mature characters in action which vindicated the values educated men have always held most precious.... Then students of Brown turned from books to guns with the same reluctance as you do today, and only when it seemed necessary to vindicate in action the fundamental values for which the University itself stood....

“What we now witness is the essential character of the American people manifesting itself in a determination to vindicate those values which are most precious”



The University should have a "soul" which aimed at Lifting the Dignity of the Human Spirit for the purpose of building a stronger foundation for civilization itself.

RUSHMORE STRATEGY



HOW TO GET AMERICA BACK ON TRACK



EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY

by

DR. HENRY MERRITT WRISTON
President of Brown University

Delivered at
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Meeting
of the Unitarian

Layman's League

American Unitarian Association

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Wriston Speaking



Selected Addresses by

HENRY M. WRISTON

The Nature of a Liberal College

Henry M. Wriston

