

A382_2017AbstractBruceNicole

Abstract

As one of the most well known figures in American history, Thomas Jefferson left behind a legacy full of accomplishments on a personal, state, and federal level. On his gravestone, he requested that he be remembered for three of those accomplishments: the writer of the Declaration of Independence, the writer of *the Virginia Statute for religious freedoms*, and the father of the University of Virginia. This choice highlights his unwavering commitment to liberty, and his actions point to firmly rooted beliefs in the natural rights of every person. By way of his public papers and private letters, I review Jefferson's beliefs on government, religion, and education, examining how those beliefs propelled him to change his state and his country through his chosen greatest accomplishments.

Honors College
Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306