



The Federalists: The Lives and Legacies of George Washington, Alexander Hamilton and John Adams

Charles River Editors

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*Includes pictures of Washington, Hamilton, Adams and important people, places, and events in their lives.

*Comprehensively covers the role each played in the Revolution, the drafting of the Constitution, and the Federalist Party.

*Looks at some of the myths and controversies surrounding each man, including legends about Washington's false teeth and the Hamilton-Burr duel.

*Includes a Bibliography for further reading.

Every American is taught a pristine narrative of the life and legacy of George Washington and can easily recite the highlights of the “Father of Our Country”. He may not have actually chopped down a cherry tree or tossed a silver dollar across the Potomac, but his contemporaries considered his character above reproach. When Washington voluntarily resigned as commander of the armies, he stunned the world. Everyone in the colonies and the world realized that Washington, at the head of the last army standing in the colonies, could have made himself king of the new United States on the spot, and it would have been a move supported by his rank and file soldiers. Instead, Washington became the first Westerner to voluntarily demobilize his army, ensuring civilian control of the new nation. King George III called Washington "the greatest character of the age" for making that decision.

As President from 1788-1796, Washington set every precedent for the executive branch of the new government, from forming a “Cabinet” to limiting himself to two terms. He even set precedents with his farewell address, which helped guide the policies of subsequent presidents. It was also under his watch that his protege, Hamilton, developed the Federalist party.

Unfortunately, one of the best known aspects of Hamilton’s (1755-1804) life is the manner in which he died, shot and killed in a famous duel with Aaron Burr in 1804. But Hamilton started as an orphaned child in the West Indies before becoming one of the most instrumental Founding Fathers of the United States in that time, not only in helping draft and gain support for the U.S. Constitution but in also leading the Federalist party and building the institutions of the young federal government as Washington’s Secretary of Treasury. Hamilton is also well remembered for his authorship, along with John Jay and James Madison, of the Federalist Papers.

John Adams has become one of the more popular presidents in history relatively recently, but it was not always so. For most of his life he was seen as a bit of an outsider, different from his fellow first presidents in his temperament, birth, life and politics. Adams and his son were the only presidents out of the first seven who were born north of the Mason Dixon line, and he was not an easy man to understand or work with. Politically, Adams shared Washington’s preference for Britain as well as his preference of non-interference. However, while he was certainly the more significant man in his work and his governing, he could never seem to move out of Washington’s shadow. Even worse, his presidency was seen as threatening to the very essence of American liberty with the Alien and Sedition Acts, and his loss to Jefferson in 1800 was a repudiation of the Federalists that left Jeffersonians in power until John Quincy Adams was elected in 1824. His presidency is still viewed relatively unfavorably.

The Federalists chronicles the amazing lives and political careers of each man, as well as their contributions to the founding of the country and the Federalist Party. Along with pictures of important people, places, and events, you will learn about Hamilton, Washington, and Adams like you never have before.

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