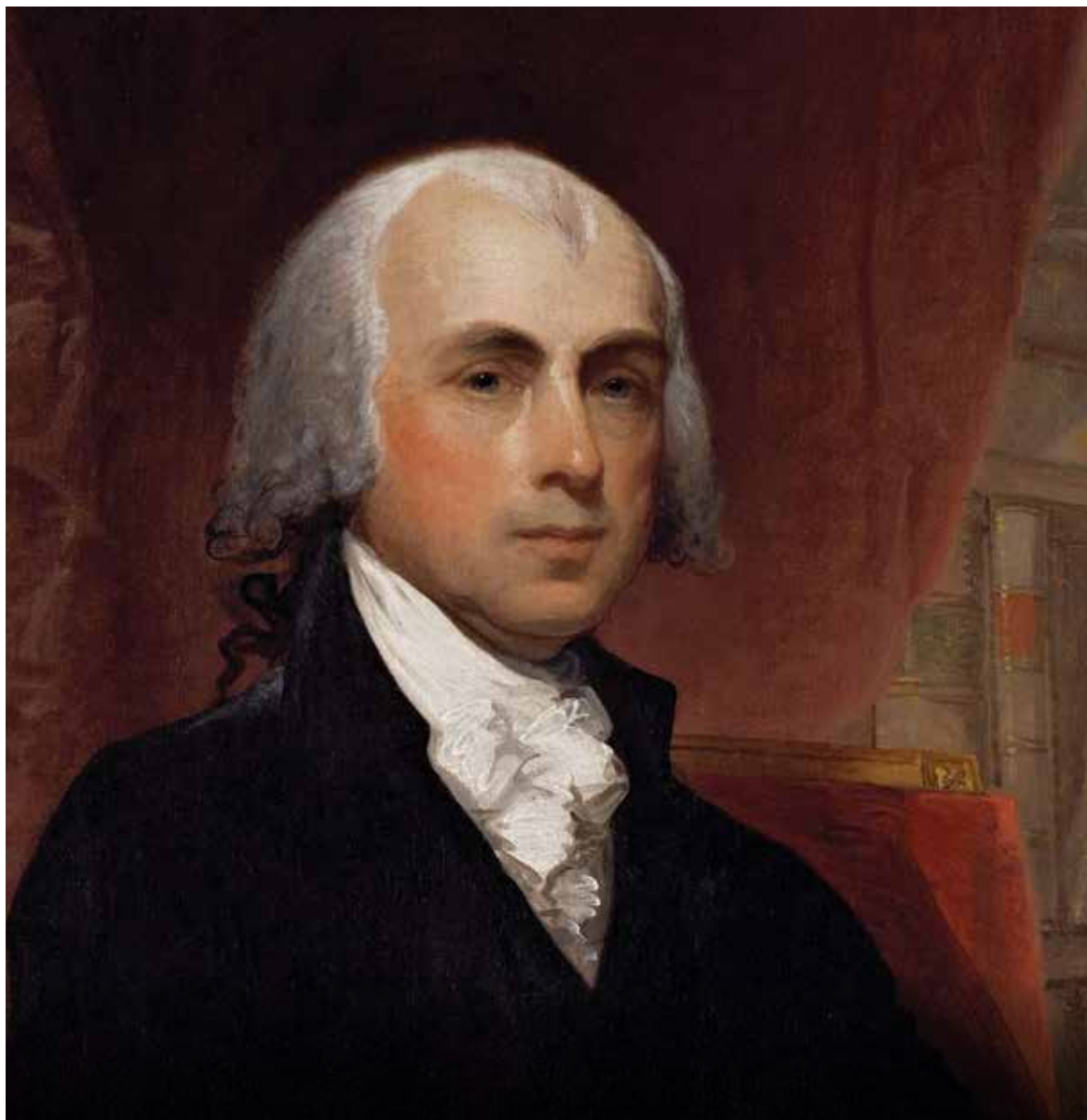


THE JAMES MADISON

Review of Books

№ 1 | FALL 2023

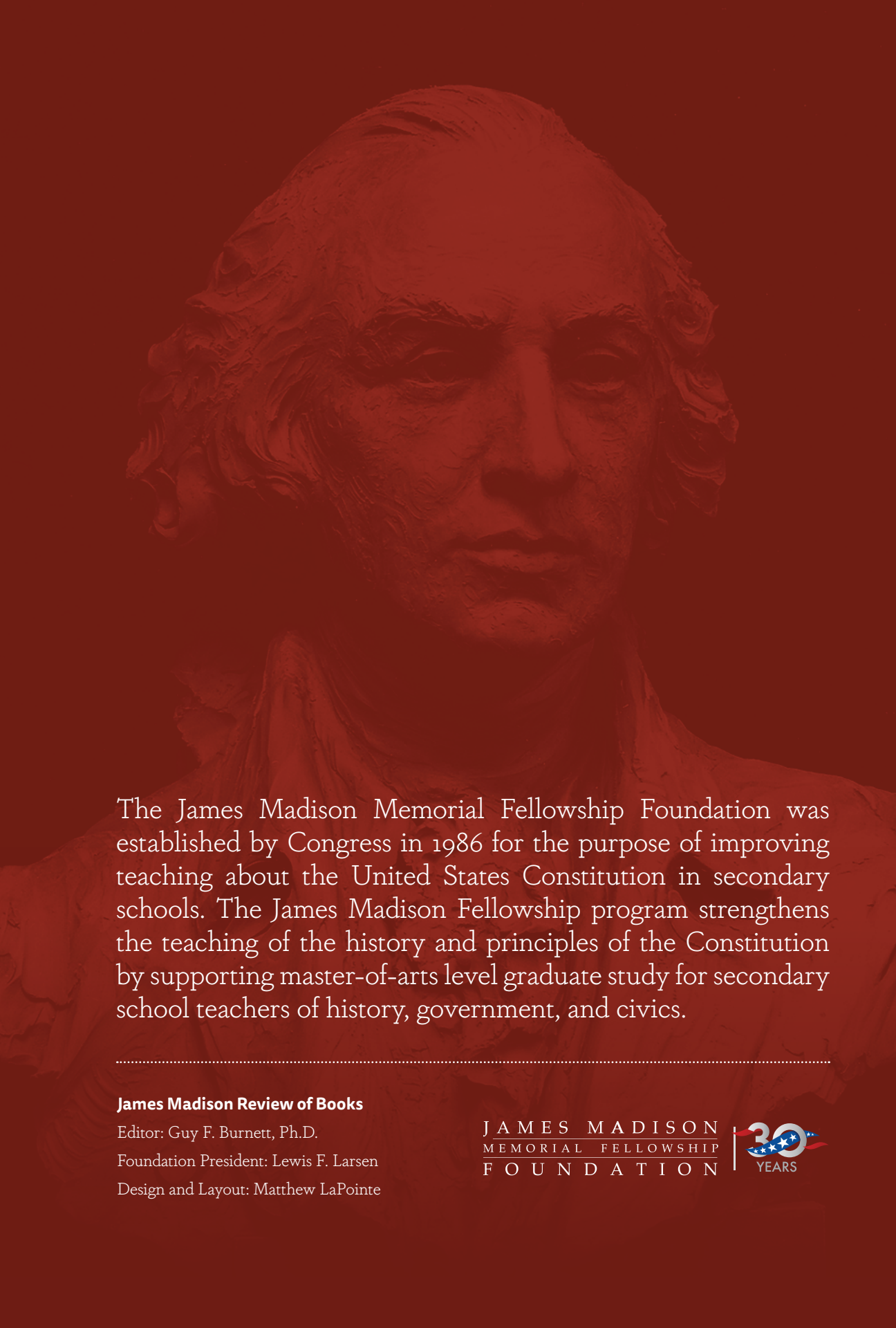


Dr. Alex E. Hindman
Jay Cost's
James Madison

Mark Wiese, '17
Michael Zuckert's
A Nation So Conceived

David Chamberlain, '98
Caroline Dodds Pennock's
On Savage Shores

AN ANNUAL PUBLICATION OF THE JAMES MADISON MEMORIAL FELLOWSHIP FOUNDATION



The James Madison Memorial Fellowship Foundation was established by Congress in 1986 for the purpose of improving teaching about the United States Constitution in secondary schools. The James Madison Fellowship program strengthens the teaching of the history and principles of the Constitution by supporting master-of-arts level graduate study for secondary school teachers of history, government, and civics.

James Madison Review of Books

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JAMES MADISON
MEMORIAL FELLOWSHIP
FOUNDATION



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From the Editor

We begin our newest publication with excitement and enthusiasm. We hope our newly created review, *The James Madison Review of Books*, will be a place for our James Madison Fellows, future Fellows, teachers, professors, researchers, and Constitutionally-minded citizens to explore the latest books in the fields of U.S. history and government. Not only book reviews, however. Each annual issue will also contain essays, poetry, and art from, or about, the early American republic. Submissions or ideas for books, poems, or art, are open to any of our Fellows as well as those in secondary and higher education. Please contact us with your ideas.

This year's excellent selection of book reviews spans a wide range of topics including Native Americans traveling to Europe in the colonial period, an Anti-Federalist constitution, an in-depth look at the Enlightenment, a collection of essays on the vital role of women on both sides of the Revolution, a reconsideration of the presidency of Ulysses S. Grant, the soul and poetry of Phillis Wheatley, the passionate and indispensable John Adams, two reviews examining the heart and mind of Abraham Lincoln, and the political mind of our namesake, President James Madison. The poetry comes from two authors in the Founding Era and both authors have a unique style and a broad range of subjects. Lastly, there are two essays, one on John Dickinson's *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*, and another that serves as a touching tribute to the "real authors" of the Star-Spangled Banner by Francis Scott Key from the 19th-century.

We want this publication to be a voice for the James Madison Fellows for many years to come. The mission of the James Madison Foundation, to improve the teaching of the U.S. Constitution in secondary schools across America, is served by research and a continuing dialogue amongst the nation's educators.

We hope you enjoy our new endeavor.

Sowing the Seeds of Revolution

John Dickinson's *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*

By Guy F. Burnett, Ph.D.

In April 1768, an opinion writer known only as “A Farmer in Pennsylvania” finished the last letter in a series decrying the Townshend Acts and making the case for colonial Americans’ natural rights. His thoughts would be echoed in *A Summary View of the Rights of British America*, the *Declaration of Independence*, and *The Federalist Papers*, among other Founding documents. The “farmer” summarized his position:

Let these truths be indelibly impressed on our minds—that we cannot be happy, without being free—that we cannot be free, without being secure in our property—that we cannot be secure in our property, if, without our consent, others may, as by right, take it away.¹

The letters, available online in many places, and in a handsome volume from Liberty Fund entitled *Empire and Nation*, are masterworks of Enlightenment thought on natural rights and are worth revisiting. Great Britain, the farmer explained to his fellow colonial Americans, was beginning a great experiment to see if the colonies would surrender their natural rights, that were afforded to all British citizens, through the Townshend Acts. Americans must be on their guard, he warned, because, as Montesquieu had taught, “slavery is ever preceded by sleep.”²

The “farmer” was not an actual farmer, but in-

stead a successful 36-year-old Pennsylvania lawyer named John Dickinson. He had studied law in Philadelphia and London, where he immersed himself in the most current thinking on constitutional theory and political philosophy. Although his letters were written for the general public, they were filled with ancient and modern history and theory, including Plutarch, Livy, Machiavelli, Montesquieu, Hume, and Locke. He even used the poet Alexander Pope’s *An Essay on Man* to preface his authorial enterprise. He took a line from the following stanza:

So man, who here seems principal alone,
Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown,
Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal;
‘Tis but a part we see, and not a whole.

He hoped his letters might “[touch.] some wheel” and cause the colonists (as well as Parliament and the Crown) to see, understand, and act against the unconstitutional violation of their rights.

Property

Dickinson was not a firebrand looking to tar and feather tax collectors or sever ties with Britain as others were. “I am by no means fond of inflammatory measures,” he wrote, or anything “which might justly displease our sovereign or mother country.”³ The cause of liberty was a “cause of too

¹ Letter XII

² Letter XII

³ Letter I



J. DICKINSON ESQ.^R

Member of Congress & Author of the Letters of a Farmer of Pennsylvania.

Pub.^d May 25.th 1783, by R. Wilkinson, N.^o 58, Cornhill London.

John Dickinson, B.B. Ellis (1783).

much dignity to be sullied by turbulence and tumult.”⁴ Protesting unconstitutional acts should be accompanied by a “sedate, yet fervent spirit” that led to actions of “prudence, justice, modesty, bravery, humanity, and magnanimity.”⁵ His example of such a people? The ancient Spartans. He calls them “as brave and free a people as ever existed.”⁶ Such an example seems bewildering to the modern ear—as everyone knows, the Spartans are known for their martial excellence and extreme way of life—but to the people of Dickinson’s era who knew and read Plutarch, they were a moderate and prudent people who rejected rash and reckless behavior.

The institutions of the British government and the constitution were worthy of praise because they had recognized natural rights for centuries—including those of the colonists in America. Dickinson wrote, “The first principles of government are to be looked for in human nature.”⁷ Part of that human nature was the principle of owning, securing, and disposing of private property. Quoting the Hebrew Bible, he wrote “they should sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, and none should make them afraid.”⁸ Property was at the core of natural rights, not speech. He called it “that great one, the foundation of all the rest.”⁹

Each person must have control over his or her own property if natural rights are secure. Losing the ability to retain one’s own property is, as he says, slavery. He uses the word forcefully several times throughout the letters. Dickinson owned slaves until 1777 (when he conditionally manumitted them) and then 1786 (when he unconditionally manumitted them). His close connection to the Quaker faith provided guidance when, in 1776, the Quakers of Philadelphia declared slavery unacceptable.

Even before then, however, he must have understood the implications of withholding property from human beings, let alone owning men and women as property. As a delegate to the Constitutional Convention years later, he spoke out against the evils of slavery. He understood that a slave’s

ownership of property—that is, the right to enjoy the fruits of his or her labors—is denied. Even a slave’s own body is forfeit to those who rule over him or her. Colonists were hardly slaves in the truest sense of the word, but he understood that the point was important. If allowed to stand, the Townshend Acts would put the British in a position to rule over the colonists by usurping their right to property through unrepresentative taxation.

Taxation

The Townshend Acts had already begun the process of stripping the colonists of their property. The act actually consisted of several individual acts, including the Revenue Act (1767) which placed an indirect tax on glass, lead, and paper, and the New York Restraining Act (1767), which suspended New York’s legislature until it complied with the Quartering Act (1765). The unpopular Quartering Act had upset New Yorkers by allowing the British Army to house soldiers in American barracks, public houses, taverns, barns, and other privately-owned places. Dickinson understood the taxes, and Parliament’s understanding of taxation in general, as “imposition[s] on the subject[s], for the sole purpose of levying money.”¹⁰

In his understanding, taxes are a gift from the people to the government to enact specific services—an idea as old as the Magna Carta itself. Local legislatures who knew the will of the people were the only proper body to levy taxes because they understood the local feelings, desires, and hardships of those they represented and would naturally keep taxation at a sensible level. He writes that in any free society, taxes must be “proportioned as is possible to the abilities of those who are to pay them.”¹¹ The Revenue Act had taken this power out of the hands of the local legislatures—who had been setting limits for years—and placed it in the hands of Parliament which had no American representation.

4 Letter III

5 Letter III

6 Letter III

7 Letter XI

8 Letter V

9 Letter V

10 Letter IV

11 Letter X

If Parliament was allowed to legislate regarding the property of the colonists (through taxation), what were they not able to legislate? Dickinson asks his reader to follow the logic to its conclusion: “When a branch of revenue is once established, does it not appear to many people invidious and undutiful, to attempt to abolish it?”¹² A Parliament allowed to tax the colonies without their consent would never abolish the revenue because, like all legislatures, they would become dependent on the revenue.

Ahead of his time, he explained to his readers the problems of a system of taxation without representation. Representation was essential in a free government because representatives used taxation to check the government in two distinct ways. First, representatives delimited the size of a colony’s government and its administration by the amount of money raised through taxes. To keep the size of government small—that is, adequate but not oppressive—only a specific amount of taxes would be raised. As governments cannot function without financial support, the government would be forced to stay small and operate within its means.

In its prefatory clause, the Townshend Acts stated that the taxes raised by the act would be “for defraying the charge of the administration of justice, [and] the support of civil government.”¹³ The colonies, Dickinson argued, had been collecting their own taxes to pay these costs for decades. What he suspected was an increase in the size and scope of what was essentially a separate government if the funds could be raised through taxation. Since government administrators were Crown-appointed, and Parliament claimed it could force taxes on the colonies, there could be no real check on the size and scope of the government. Taxes, limited by local representatives, acted as a safety valve for the colonies because they were only levied “suitable to [the colonies’] abilities.”¹⁴ Dickinson understood that bureaucracy begets bureaucracy, and British-appointed colonial

ministers would always need more funds for new offices and ministers. There could be no effective check on the British government unless American representatives could control their own taxation.

The second check on the government through representative taxation was to rein in spending. If the local representatives do not increase government funds through taxation, the government cannot spend recklessly on unnecessary things—such as foreign wars. For example, in the same prefatory clause, Parliament had claimed the taxes were also to defray the expenses of “defending, protecting, and securing” the colonies and “dominions” (i.e., not the American colonies).¹⁵ Dickinson points out that the recent French and

There could be no effective check on the British government unless American representatives could control their own taxation.

Indian War was initiated by Britain without consulting representatives in the American colonies. He claims that the American colonies had not needed “defending, protecting, or securing” because they had been fighting and keeping their rivals at bay for years. The colonists had not needed to spend exorbitant amounts of money on British defense when they had decades of experience

defending themselves. Even more absurd was that Americans were being forced to raise taxes to pay for defending other parts of the British Empire—a cost too high to be borne. By having local, colonial representatives control taxes, the government could not embark on foolish spending because its funds would be severely curtailed. Not consulting the colonies on a costly war but having them pay for it *violated the true spirit of taxation*.

What was most appalling to Dickinson, however, was that the British Army was being used inside America to enforce the Act. The army was dangerous because it was not accountable or dependent on the colonial legislatures or the people among whom it operated. He writes, “Is it possible to form an idea of a slavery more complete, more miserable, more disgraceful, than that of a people, where justice is administered, government exercised, and a standing army maintained, at the expense of the people, and yet without the least

12 Letter XI
13 Letter VIII
14 Letter IX
15 Letter II

dependence upon them?”¹⁶ Without a check on spending, Parliament could claim a necessity on anything—even defense—and raise taxes at will. Gradually, the colonists’ property would be lost to a legislature thousands of miles away.

Self-Government

Although he did not think the time for force was at hand, he was not a pacifist and did not rule it out. Pointing to a precise prescription for armed resistance, however, was elusive. The time for “resistance by force” was never “ascertained till [it] happen[ed].”¹⁷ Only when a government unmistakably set as a goal the annihilation of the liberties of its citizens should more drastic action be taken. This measured resistance made its way into the *Declaration of Independence* when it speaks about “light and transient causes” and a “long train of abuses and usurpations.” Thomas Jefferson wrote in his draft of the *Declaration* that the people had “the right ... to alter or abolish [their government].”

Jefferson was undoubtedly well-versed in Dickinson’s assertion of the natural right of self-government and the two men were in the Continental Congress together in 1776 when the *Declaration* was written. Dickinson, however, did not sign the *Declaration*, later saying that the time was not right to declare independence. He was unceremoniously dismissed from the Congress but ever the patriot, he joined the militia. He might not have thought the colonies were ready, but once they declared their right of self-government, he threw himself into the cause. He did not doubt the colonists’ looking to reestablish their natural rights with an entirely new government, but instead the ability of the colonists to carry it through.

Dickinson’s Letters are well worth reading. They are not only a clear look at the political philosophy that influenced the American Revolution—a philosophy that would become enshrined in America’s Founding documents—but they are also a master class in making complex and sublime concepts simple and powerful. Dickinson was one of the first, and certainly the most popular of the early American authors who summarized the burgeoning undercurrent so eloquently and suc-

cinctly (he was only surpassed in readership by Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense* years later which contained none of the measured philosophical thought of the Letters).

It is fitting to remember Thomas Jefferson’s memorial to him in a letter written upon hearing news of his death in 1808. Jefferson was saddened at the passing of the man who had refused to sign his *Declaration* but who later generations would call the “Penman of the Revolution.” Jefferson wrote, “a more estimable man, or truer patriot, could not have left us.” He then summarized his career, saying he was “among the first of the advocates for the rights of his country when assailed by Great Britain, he continued to the last the orthodox advocate of the true principles of our new government, and his name will be consecrated in history as one of the great worthies of the revolution.” The majority of Americans might not remember Dickinson, but the ideas in his *Letters* outlining the natural rights of Americans—indeed of all people—will continue to be read for generations to come.

This article, with minor changes, first appeared on the *Law & Liberty* website.



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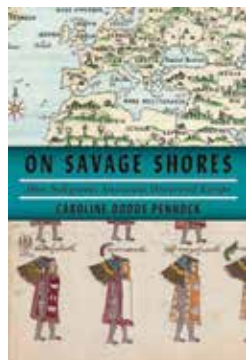
¹⁶ Letter IX

¹⁷ Letter III

BOOK REVIEW

Voyagers to the East

By David Chamberlain, '98 (NH)



On Savage Shores: How Indigenous Americans Discovered Europe

By Caroline Dodd Pennock

Alfred A. Knopf.
302 pgs. | \$23

The late Bernard Bailyn famously observed that “Atlantic history is the story of a world in motion.” The field of Atlantic history rests on the foundational assumption that developments in Europe, Africa, and the Americas during the early modern period are best understood not in isolation but rather as parts of an inter-related regional system. Since its inception, scholars working within this framework have studied topics as diverse as the flow of political ideas, the transmission of diseases, the exchange of goods, and the migration of people—both free and enslaved—across the Atlantic. The scholarship on the movement of people during this period has been largely unidirectional, centering on the immigration of Europeans and the cruel transit of Africans westward to the Americas. However, in her innovative new work *On Savage Shores*, Caroline Dodd Pennock redirects Atlantic history to take into consideration the stories of Native Americans who, for a variety of purposes, journeyed east to Europe in the century that followed Columbus’s expeditions.

Eager to impress his patrons, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, Columbus brought the first Native Americans to Spain as captives in 1493. Over the course of the 16th century, tens of thousands more Native Americans were brought to Europe as slaves. Although their numbers pale in comparison to the millions of Africans brought to the Americas in bondage, the experience of Native Americans was no less brutal or repugnant. Using extensive archival research, Pennock is able to partially reconstruct the lives of some of these Native American slaves. Readers learn, for instance, that young Indian women were the preferred cargo of slavers and they endured unspeakable sexual exploitation at the hands of their owners. Regardless of their gender, the bodies of Native American slaves were subjected to permanent mutilation by their captors as well. Branding, though officially illegal in much of Spain, was widely practiced and it was common to see slaves with the initials of their masters burned upon their faces.

Despite these horrors, Pennock argues that many Native American slaves retained their sense of agency and sought to use the institutions of their oppressors to gain their freedom. In 1500, Queen Isabella declared that the indigenous people of the Americas were her vassals and could only be enslaved if they were cannibals, captured in a “just war” or rescued from a worse fate. Isabella’s decree, coupled with Las Casas’s human rights advocacy, opened the door for Native Americans who had been enslaved outside of these circumstances to advocate for their own manumission in the Spanish legal system. Perhaps the most inspiring of these cases is a Guatema-



Pocahontas, Richard Norris Brooke (between 1889-1907).

lan couple, Francisco and Juana, who successfully gained their freedom and returned to their homeland after proving that they could not have been justly taken as prisoners of war for they had been only children when they were first enslaved.

Not all Native Americans came to Europe unwillingly as slaves. The book breaks new ground by investigating the ambitions of Native Americans who came to Europe for both personal and strategic purposes. In a book chock full of biographical snippets, the story of Francisca Pizarro Yupanqui stands out for the way it captures the cultural complexity of the Spanish Empire. Francisca was the mestiza daughter of the famed Spanish conqueror and Quispe Sisa, an Incan princess. After leaving her homeland in 1551, Francisca suc-

cessfully integrated herself into the upper reaches of Spanish society and managed to secure her inheritance from her father. Even more interesting to historians though are the accounts of Tlaxcalan ambassadors that Pennock brings to light. Due to their alliance with Cortez and their role in the overthrow of the Aztec tributary state, the Tlaxcalan successfully pressed for a favorable position within the Spanish Empire, securing freedom from the *encomienda* system for their people as well as self-governing status for their polity.

Stories like those of the Tlaxcalan ambassadors challenge teachers to rethink long-standing assumptions about diplomacy in the Atlantic world. Admittedly there has been much progress since the days when the account of the Dutch purchase of Manhattan from the Lenape was used to suggest that Native Americans were routinely beguiled by Europeans during negotiations. Most notably, historian Richard White argued that in places like the Middle Ground around the Great Lakes region, Indians prescribed the norms of diplomatic protocol and were canny advocates for their own tribal interests. However, Pennock extends the range of Native American diplomatic influence across the Atlantic and into the very centers of European power and in so doing recasts Native American leaders as cosmopolitan powerbrokers rather than merely regional players.

Those of us in the classroom who have grown tired of using the same primary sources year after year to discuss the Americas during the early modern period, will be delighted by the trove of obscure material included in this book. For instance, in the book there is a graphic source—the letters of Eugenio de Salazar—that describes the conditions of passengers on Spanish caravels. Cockroaches, rats as fierce as “wild boars” and foul olfactory descriptions will likely satisfy students’ curiosity about shipboard life during the Age of Exploration. Pennock also redresses the problem of relying on European sources that observe and often misrepresent indigenous peoples rather than finding Native American accounts of events. Her inclusion and extended analysis of the Nahua “Water-Pouring Song” provides a source that not only explores their spiritual beliefs but also offers a fresh perspective on the cultural collision with the Spanish and how they experienced transatlantic travel.

This provocative and stunningly original book is ultimately a testament to both the durability and the shortcomings of the concept of the Columbian



ABOVE: *The Rocky Mountains, Lander's Peak*, Albert Bierstadt (1863).

BELOW: *The River Thames with St. Paul's Cathedral on Lord Mayor's Day*, detail of *St. Paul's Cathedral*, Giovanni Antonio Canal Canaletto (c.1747-48).

Exchange. Since the publication of Alfred Crosby's eponymous book over fifty years ago, scholars have relied on his model to organize the way they think about how transatlantic flows of people, products, animals and even microbes transformed both the Old World and New. *On Savage Shores* does more than simply point out that people did not travel exclusively to the settler societies of the Americas but also traveled east to Europe. It also asks us to consider whether our teaching about the exchange of products eastward has been stripped of its human dimensions. It is not enough to teach students that products such as chocolate and tobacco from the Americas made their way to Europe. Teachers must emphasize that products and people traveled in tandem, and the way Europeans came to consume and enjoy the bounty of the Americas was bound up with the practices and cultural habits of the indigenous people who found themselves on distant shores.



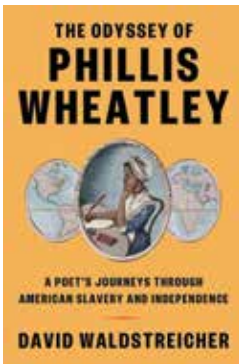
David M. Chamberlain is the 1998 James Madison Fellow from New Hampshire. He currently teaches at Burke Mountain Academy in Vermont. His essays have appeared in Appalachia, Environmental Practice, and The History Teacher. He also contributes to The History News Network.



BOOK REVIEW

Phillis Wheatley: A Product of Her Time and Extraordinary Within It

By Darcy Daniels, '02 (NJ)



The Odyssey of Phillis Wheatley

By David Waldstreicher

Picador

512 pgs. | \$22

In the late 1760s and early 1770s, in salons across Europe and in congregations across the American colonies, one might have heard the question uttered, “What is Liberty?” Initially it was a theoretical question that invited a multitude of answers. However, as the question of American independence loomed ever larger over the consciousness of British citizens on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, the meaning became more pointed. Whom was liberty bestowed upon, and why? Could a group of men and women in the colonies call for liberty while simultaneously owning other men and women, and holding them in bondage? These questions became thornier as time moved toward the question of rebellion and revolution. According to historian David Waldstreicher, this conundrum of liberty was personified in one person, Phillis Wheatley. To Wheatley, a poetess from Boston by way of West Africa, liberty was both life and self-determination.

In a new book, *The Odyssey of Phillis Wheatley*, Waldstreicher positions Wheatley in the center of an epic world struggle of war, money, and slavery that is fought with words as well as with steel. Wheatley was captured in Africa, probably with a stop in the Caribbean, and brought to the city of Boston, a small colonial city in the vast British Empire. She arrived in the middle of a world conflict between England and France, and from the time of her arrival in 1761 to her death in 1784, Wheatley saw all of the major conflicts that happened in that city, and was counted a reliable witness and chronicler of the events through newspapers and broadsides that published her poems. A trafficked person, she could relate to ancient epic poems of shipwrecks, high seas, battles, and slavery, and she used this knowledge and her singular genius to describe it in her place and time. Waldstreicher, a distinguished professor at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, argues that Wheatley was both a product of her time and extraordinary within it.

Her given name lost to history, the young girl was given the name Phillis after the ship upon which she arrived by the family who bought her. Susanna Wheatley was looking for a lady’s maid, and thought the young, sickly girl with missing front teeth could be bought at a bargain and would be trainable. No one is sure how she started learning to read and write, but once she started, Phillis

excelled, learning first English, then Latin, then finally, ancient Greek. Often playing with words and their rhyming sounds, she studied the great epic poems and began to compose her own, starting with elegies and moving to chronicles of current events. She traveled in literary circles with other ministers and poets, often sharing work and influencing one another, but always with the knowledge that she was owned by someone else, that she was to care for the ailing and elderly Mrs. Wheatley, that her life and time were not her own.

Some poems brought events to light in colonial Boston. Published in one of the four newspapers for a population of 15,000 people, Wheatley wrote a poem about the first martyr of the American Revolution, a young boy named Christopher Snyder (or Sneider). He was twelve years old when he was killed ten days before the Boston Massacre, when Ebenezer Richardson, a British loyalist who informed the crown of people who were not paying their taxes, fired into an angry crowd. Young Christopher, son of German immigrants, was the only one to die. Wheatley called him "The First Martyr for the Common Good." The poem was published just before the famous Boston Massacre on March 5, 1770, and may have been a reason that the angry crowd was so agitated at an altercation between teenage boys and a British soldier.

Wheatley's poems brought the bright light of attention and personal stardom in the colonies and across the ocean in Great Britain. She was celebrated not only as a woman poet, but as an African woman poet, one who was enslaved. Her poems had double meanings when it came to questions about patriotism, liberty, equality, and justice. With her eloquence, she smashed through the racial stereotypes that were used to justify enslavement of Africans. Her poems were collected and published in London and titled, *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*. Her book was the first published by a person of African descent in the colonies, the first published by an enslaved person, and the third published by a woman in the colonies. A shipment of the book arrived on the Dartmouth along with a cargo of tea that was to be thrown overboard on December 16, 1773 as part of the now infamous Boston Tea Party.

Poems on Various Subjects became influential in the colonies and to those forging a new national identity. A copy made it into a package addressed to one of the delegates to the First Continental Congress. Poems were written about Lexington and Concord, and then later, Wheatley wrote a

poem and a letter to the new Commander of the Continental Army, George Washington, who wrote to her with an invitation of meeting. In a juxtaposition of what modern days might imagine, Washington used the poem as a popularity bump, sending it into a local newspaper himself to show Wheatley's support in his nomination.

Waldstreicher expertly tells the story of Phillis Wheatly, and of America, through the lens of her poems, with a new eye and interpretation of her poetry. He asks us to seek a different tone when reading the poems, one of sarcasm and with an edge to them. Doing so takes a poem of supplication to be re-read as a poem dripping with irony. But for a woman who was expected to be a literary light and also a personal servant, perhaps this is the best tone to take when reading Wheatley's poems. *The Odyssey of Phillis Wheatley* invites readers to learn about colonial Boston, and the international relations of trade, war, and slavery, through the viewpoint of a woman who experienced all of them and lived to tell their tale.



Darcy Daniels, the 2002 James Madison Fellow for New Jersey, is a high school history teacher in Upton, Massachusetts and a tour guide on the Freedom Trail in Boston.



Phillis Wheatley, Scipio Moorhead (1773).

POETRY

To S.M. A Young African Painter, On Seeing His Works

By Phillis Wheatley (1773)

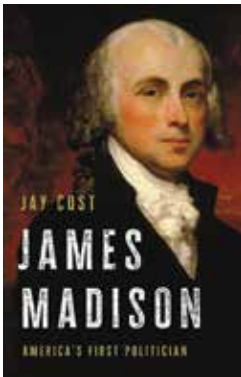
TO show the lab'ring bosom's deep intent,
And thought in living characters to paint,
When first thy pencil did those beauties give,
And breathing figures learnt from thee to live,
How did those prospects give my soul delight,
A new creation rushing on my sight?
Still, wond'rous youth! each noble path pursue,
On deathless glories fix thine ardent view:
Still may the painter's and the poet's fire
To aid thy pencil, and thy verse conspire!
And may the charms of each seraphic theme
Conduct thy footsteps to immortal fame!
High to the blissful wonders of the skies
Elate thy soul, and raise thy wishful eyes.
Thrice happy, when exalted to survey
That splendid city, crown'd with endless day,
Whose twice six gates on radiant hinges ring:
Celestial Salem blooms in endless spring.
Calm and serene thy moments glide along,
And may the muse inspire each future song!
Still, with the sweets of contemplation bless'd,
May peace with balmy wings your soul invest!
But when these shades of time are chas'd away,
And darkness ends in everlasting day,
On what seraphic pinions shall we move,
And view the landscapes in the realms above?
There shall thy tongue in heav'nly murmurs flow,
And there my muse with heav'nly transport glow:
No more to tell of Damon's tender sighs,
Or rising radiance of Aurora's eyes,
For nobler themes demand a nobler strain,
And purer language on th' ethereal plain.
Cease, gentle muse! the solemn gloom of night
Now seals the fair creation from my sight.

Note: "S.M." refers to Scipio Moorhead, an enslaved African artist who drew Wheatley's portrait for her book Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral (1773).

BOOK REVIEW

Madison's Model: Putting Politics into Practice

By Alex E. Hindman, Ph.D.



**James Madison:
America's First Politician**

By Jay Cost

Basic Books
464 pgs. | \$35.00

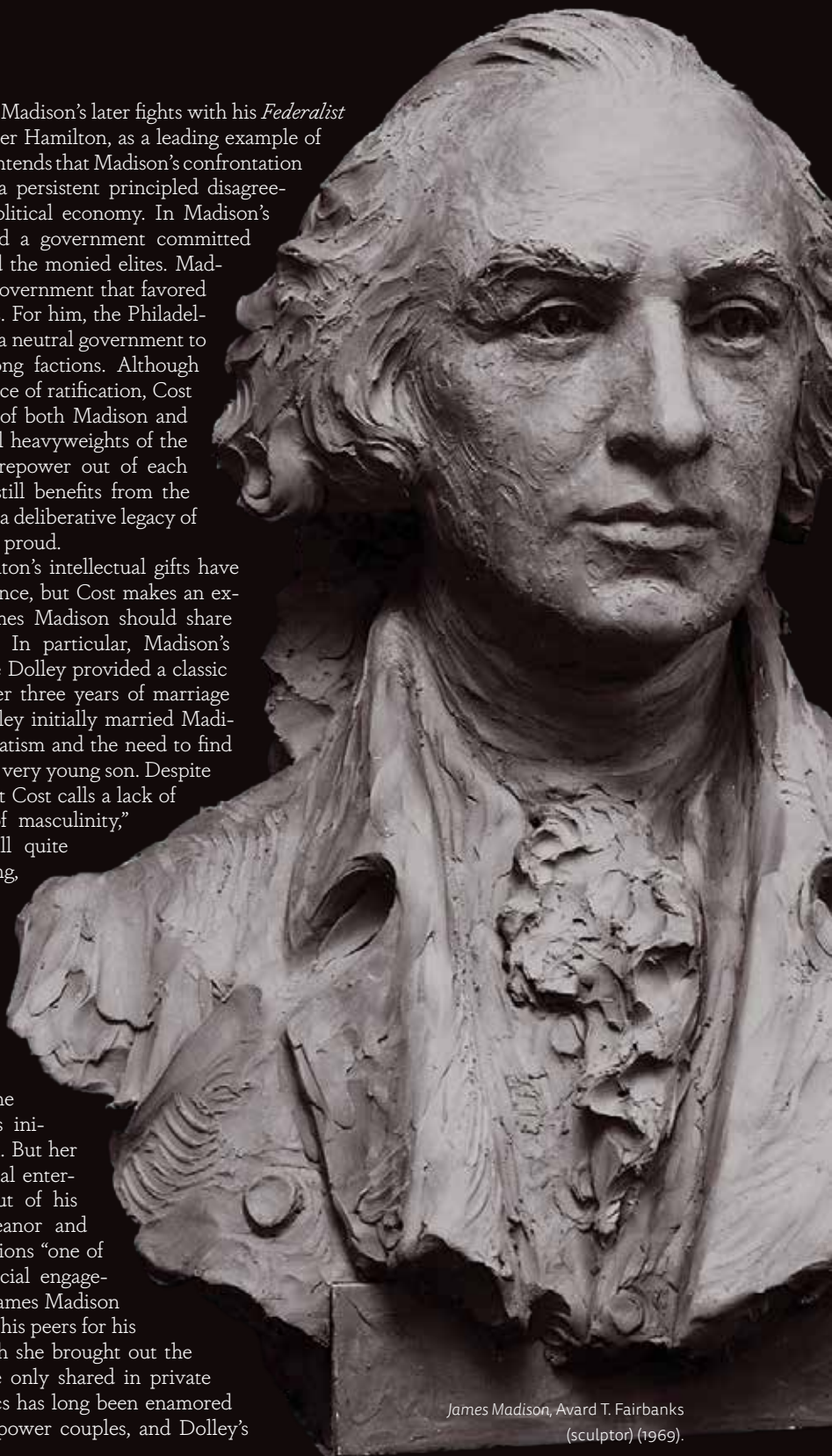
Jay Cost's biography *James Madison: America's First Politician* provides students of the American Founding Era with a clear, insightful view into one of America's most intellectually gifted and politically shrewd Framers. Among many great biographers of James Madison, Cost makes Madison's political theory and practical politics coherent when others have presented him as a contradiction. Cost's perspective on Madison as a professional politician, "one of the first in the nation," helpfully frames the choices of Madison's life as rooted in principle but guided by prudence in pursuit of practical success.

Academics tend to look for intellectual consistency, and from the outside, Madison's shifts on a series of serious questions have led other leading biographers to consider him deeply inconsistent. He initially opposed a Bill of Rights but later spearheaded the amendments through Congress. He strongly advocated for union in the *Federalist Papers* but authored the Virginia Resolutions. Against this backdrop, some see Madison's pragmatic political choices as indicative of a rulerless, unprincipled politics of convenience. However, Cost's work pulls us closer to a more nuanced understanding through the twists and turns of a life that reflected Madison's principles through the politics of the possible.

Cost's narrative aims to understand Madison as he understood himself. Accordingly, Madison's choices are consistent with an enduring political philosophy. Cost argues that Madison believed foundationally that government existed to provide a robust forum for factions to contest divisive public policy questions. Madison consistently made political choices favoring a government that encouraged parity between equal citizens, mixed the interests of a diverse nation, and encouraged deliberative political conflict to forge consensus. He believed that a well-ordered system of politics could encourage meaningful deliberation, and factions could fight passionately but secure a good, productive, and republican form of government. Understood through this frame, seemingly contradictory choices of Madison's life fit a unifying theme. Prudence guided his theory of republicanism, and his theory of republicanism informed the political decisions he made throughout his life.

Other biographers cite Madison's later fights with his *Federalist Papers* coauthor, Alexander Hamilton, as a leading example of his inconsistency. Cost contends that Madison's confrontation with Hamilton rests on a persistent principled disagreement over Hamilton's political economy. In Madison's view, Hamilton preferred a government committed to capital investment and the monied elites. Madison could not accept a government that favored some citizens over others. For him, the Philadelphia Convention created a neutral government to referee competition among factions. Although initially allied in the service of ratification, Cost shows that the presence of both Madison and Hamilton, the intellectual heavyweights of the period, called the full firepower out of each other, and the country still benefits from the positions they defended—a deliberative legacy of which Madison would be proud.

In recent years, Hamilton's intellectual gifts have enjoyed a public renaissance, but Cost makes an excellent case for why James Madison should share the Broadway limelight. In particular, Madison's relationship with his wife Dolley provided a classic love story. Widowed after three years of marriage to her first husband, Dolley initially married Madison in 1794 out of pragmatism and the need to find someone to help raise her very young son. Despite his short stature and what Cost calls a lack of "the physical qualities of masculinity," James Madison was "still quite the catch." In Cost's telling, over the next forty years "she would fall deeply in love with him," no doubt in response to Madison's warmth, personality, and "smitten" devotion. Seventeen years his younger, Dolley came on the scene after much of Madison's initial success as a politician. But her youth and skills as a social entertainer, drew Madison out of his more private, shy demeanor and made their dinner invitations "one of the most sought-after social engagements." Prior to Dolley, James Madison had earned the respect of his peers for his work ethic, but now with she brought out the inherent warmth that he only shared in private settings. American politics has long been enamored with dominant political power couples, and Dolley's



James Madison, Avard T. Fairbanks
(sculptor) (1969).

Reopening constitutional questions undermines the veneration that comes from the legacy of laws remaining in force.

influence made the Madisons one of the clearest early examples.

More tragically, Cost details the close friendship lost between Washington and Madison during the first president's term. From the end of the Revolution through the early years of his presidency, Madison served Washington as a close friend and political advisor. Madison helped Washington navigate the Critical Period and would later serve as a presidential advisor while remaining a formidable leader in the First Congress. As Hamilton's influence with Washington grew, Madison and Jefferson felt increasingly sidelined. From that experience, Jefferson and Madison formed closer bonds that would animate the emergence of the First Party System and profoundly influenced the trajectory of the early 1800s. Despite losing his friendship with Washington, Madison quickly came under Jefferson's orbit, and they mutually influenced each other's thinking on various issues. Chief among these issues was the recognition of the injustice of slavery. They also similarly made little tangible effort to change what Cost calls the "racial and cultural chauvinism of his age." While there was a conflict between "his heart and his head" that accepted slavery as an intellectual wrong, slavery for Madison "never seemed to have been a moral dilemma over which he lost sleep." Like others, he accepted it as an embarrassment and that "slavery was a problem to be solved by later generations," an unfortunate blight on many of the nation's leading Framers.

Madison and Jefferson shared many political views, but they did not hesitate to engage each other in their disagreements. Famously absent from the Constitutional Convention, Jefferson nonetheless suggested that constitutional conventions could be regularized to resolve constitutional conflicts. Madison handily rejected that proposition in Federalist No. 49, asserting that reopening constitutional questions undermines the veneration that comes from the legacy of laws remaining in force. Cost could have provided more examples of Madison's moderating influence on Jefferson's excesses, but this is a minor critique of an otherwise excellent book.

Ultimately, Cost's biography clearly and cogently guides his readers through the conflicts that animated Madison's life. Through a well-written, straightforward narrative, Cost takes his readers through the twists and turns of the political combat of America's first politician. Principled but prudent, James Madison modeled steady statesmanship, demonstrating what American political leadership should aspire to become. That Cost does this in such an accessible, dramatic, and insightful way does a great honor to the namesake of the James Madison Foundation and one of America's finest politicians.



Alex E. Hindman is an Assistant Professor at the College of the Holy Cross, where he teaches courses on American constitutional institutions and ideas.

BOOK REVIEW

Founding Fire and Fortitude

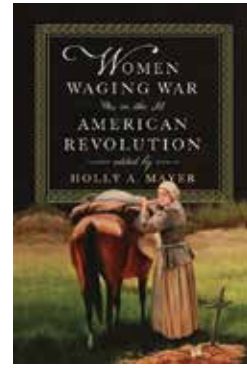
By Jennifer Jolley, '10 (FL)

When we think of women during the American Revolution, we may picture characterizations of “Molly Pitcher,” accounts of Martha Washington, Abigail Adams’s letter to John “remember the ladies,” or perhaps Mercy Otis Warren’s political propaganda. Yet do we give credit to the women who helped found and establish our nation? Eliza Lucas Pinckney said, “fortitude is as much a female as a masculine virtue.” As a widow, Eliza demonstrated political patriotism and strength as matriarch of her family and estate during the war. Women were agents of war who encountered hardships, difficult choices, and sacrifices during the American Revolution. They were matriarchs, entrepreneurs, agitators, widows, warriors, Patriots, Loyalists, wives of soldiers, caregivers, nurses, and victims of war.

Within Holly A. Mayer’s edited book, *Women Waging War in the American Revolution*, thirteen historians unmask the experiences of women in war – named and unnamed – of different regions, ranks or class, and racial ethnic groups. Mayer compiled these essays after a call for presentations for the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) annual conference in June 2019. Mayer dedicated this collection to historian Carol Berkin, who authored numerous books on the subject. Mayer’s book probes deeper into the subject of women as “essential agents, willing and unwilling, in the dynamic theaters – military and political, social and economic.” These essays unearth stories of women who may not have had their names recorded in history but nevertheless contribute to the entire story of the American War of Independence. Private and public spaces blurred, and women walked between the home front and frontlines.

Holly Mayer is a Professor Emerita of History at Duquesne University and the author of two other books including her most recent, *Congress’s Own: A Canadian Regiment, The Continental Army, and the American Union* (2021). The contributors to *Women Waging War in the American Revolution* include Jacqueline Beatty, Carin Bloom, Todd Braisted, Benjamin Carp, Lauren Duval, Steven Elliott, Lorri Glover, Don Hagist, Sean Heuvel, Martha King, Barbara Alice Mann, J. Patrick Mullins, and Alisa Wade.

Each contributor to this edited book brings to light new research. *Women Waging War* is like reading thirteen separate books on the American War of Independence. It is dense and deserves our time. The opening chapter, authored by Benjamin L. Carp, tells the story of



Women Waging War in the American Revolution

Edited by Holly A. Mayer

University of Virginia Press

296 pgs. | \$29



Molly Pitcher at the Battle of Monmouth,
Dennis Malone Carter (1854).

an unnamed revolutionary woman credited with igniting the Great Fire of New York in September 1776 during British occupation. Carp posits that this woman may have been the “first incendiary” in the founding of the nation. Furthermore, when she stepped outside of her traditional gender role, the British threw her into the fire – like a witch or heretic, instead of providing justice under the laws of war. Evidence of this event was published in London’s *St. James Chronicle* “that the first Incendiary who fell into the Hands of Troops was a Woman, provided with Matches and Combustibles.” Carp also recounts testimony from Private George Kerr who captured “five men & a woman” at St. Paul’s Chapel accused with starting this fire. Meanwhile back in London, Edmund Burke recounted this incident but for a different reason

in Parliament. Burke, a critic of the war, believed that the Crown’s troops had acted with tyranny towards the American colonists. Burke focused on the female firebrand instead of her male counterparts, stating that the British had turned this “miserable woman” into a radical who “exalted heroism.” Carp’s thesis is that while women activism in the conventional sense was acceptable (boycotts, committees, home spun cloth, etc.), it was not tolerable when women behaved badly. He writes women were called, “little mischief-making devils” when they stepped outside of traditional gender roles. When this female archetype was captured by the British troops, she was thrown into the fire instead of being provided justice for her seditious actions. Carp suggests perhaps why Americans do not know this story today is because



the Patriots buried it. Americans denied responsibility for starting the fire, therefore it was not exploited in the patriot press. In this case, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich's proclamation, "well-behaved women seldom make history," was determined by who told the story.

The next chapter amplifies the life of Mercy Otis Warren, a "republican sister" (coined by author J. Patrick Mullins), who anonymously published political works to escape charges of libel and sedition. Mullins credits Mercy Otis Warren's *Adulateur*, written in 1774, as a powerful critique of the British Crown and Massachusetts politics through a fictionalized theatrical play. Mullins believes *Adulateur*, and other works by Warren, deserve more acknowledgment for their political impact of prewar propaganda.

Another chapter written by Barbara Alice Mann illuminates "War Women of the Eastern Woodlands." In this essay, Mann unwraps research, and examples of misunderstandings, of Native American cultures and gender. European leaders recoiled from female chiefs, were appalled by women warriors, and did not understand what Woodlands peoples knew as swapping gender roles to complete a task. Primary sources refer to indigenous women as squaws and rarely recorded their names. Mann also interprets the story of Degonwandonti (Molly Brant) who walked between the Mohawk and British worlds.

Other chapters inform readers of new insights on South Carolina's Eliza Lucas Pickney (fierce entrepreneur and matriarch), Loyalist Elizabeth "Betsey" Loring (General Howe's fabled rebuked

mistress), and Catherine “Cathy” Green (the military spouse who traveled extensively during war time with ease). Other essays reveal the struggles of how women navigated the difficulty of quartering troops (friend and foe) in their homes, why Patriot and Loyalist widows would be made to answer for their husbands’ allegiances after the war, and the resilience of British soldiers’ wives who traveled with their husbands to war. Women birthed children, laundered, nursed, and raised children while on the frontlines. Wives were imprisoned, drowned, struck by lightning, and killed in battle. In his essay, Don Hagist explains how British soldiers’ wives were resourceful; they sometimes plundered occupied American cities and sold alcohol to make extra money.

Two chapters stand out in this academic collection – Carin Bloom’s “A Black Loyalist’s Liberty: How Lucy Banbury Took Back Her Freedom” and Lauren Duval’s “A Shocking Thing to Tell Of: Female Civilians, Violence, and Rape under British Military Rule.” Bloom reveals fascinating research, unraveled from the *Book of Negroes* and the Middleton Place Foundation, about a daring woman, Lucy Banbury. A “Black Loyalist,” Lucy was born in Africa, was a slave in South Carolina under Arthur Middleton (signer of the Declaration of Independence), self-emancipated after the Dunmore Proclamation, worked for the British army, lived and owned land in Birchtown, Nova Scotia, and eventually embarked for Sierra Leone in 1792. The *Book of Negroes* recorded that Lucy’s husband, John, fled slavery in 1776 and she followed a year later. From this source, Bloom cites Lucy self-identified as being born in Africa, so the decision to sail to Sierra Leone was a passage back to her homeland. Bloom concedes many missing pieces to Lucy’s story. It is unclear if she and John were together in the British army, what year they reunited, how they acquired land in Nova Scotia, and what happened to her after she landed alone as a widow in Sierra Leone. This incredible story of Lucy Banbury demonstrates courage and choice during this complex time of history.

Conversely, the most difficult chapter to read was Duval’s research on rape. Testimonies from courts martial reveal numerous accounts of sexual assault by British soldiers against American women during the American Revolution. Women changed their daily patterns in occupied cities, for example, not walking alone or barricading their homes. The vulnerability of women was evident wherever soldiers went. Women wrote in their

diaries they were afraid to go to bed. Even though there were laws against rape, Duval writes that soldiers were emboldened by power and the “increased license to rape.” Victimization of violence and terror was not limited to the soldiers on the battlefield. Duval writes of the inequality of justice for women of color, the working class, and native women, who were even more vulnerable than elite white women. Brave women recounted these sexual assaults to juries. Duval points to the fact that more questions were asked of elite white women during these trials even though there were other rape victims testifying. Unfortunately, the shame of recounting rape still resonates today.

While an excellent study, further research could go into the wives who traveled with Hessian (German) and French soldiers. Furthermore, since the focus of most of the essays concentrate on women located in Charleston, New York, and New England, new research could spotlight women who lived in other geographic regions, such as Saint Augustine, Florida.

Women Waging War in the American Revolution contains a balance of stories of women from opposing political allegiances to diverse levels of society. High school students to scholars would appreciate the book, and it could even be included in an American Revolution college course because it supplements a social, economic, and political history. The richness of this book deserves to be read by everyone who wishes to learn more about the American Revolution. The fabric of our nation’s founding is woven with women of fortitude who sacrificed, bled, and survived. Women have always been fire starters.



Jennifer Jolley is the 2010 James Madison Fellow for Florida. She currently serves as the Secondary Social Studies Content Specialist in Brevard Public Schools.

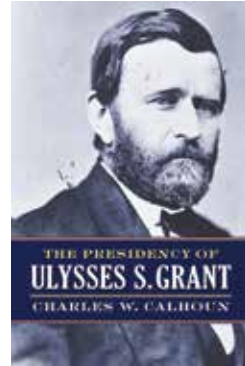
BOOK REVIEW

Rethinking the Past: The Constitutional Genius of President Ulysses S. Grant

By Lois MacMillan, '21 (OR)

Ulysses S. Grant was the country's first four-star general before winning two terms as president. Yet, by the middle of the twentieth century, conventional wisdom branded Grant as a drunk, uncaring butcher and an aimless, corrupt politician. Noting this seeming contradiction, U.C.L.A. history professor Joan Waugh asked, "Why did Grant's star shine so brightly for Americans of his own day, and why has it been eclipsed so completely for Americans since at least the mid-twentieth century?" In the twenty-first century, historians have not only rediscovered Grant's astonishing brilliance as a military leader but also have reassessed Grant's presidency, hailing him as one of the greatest presidents of his era, and possibly one of the greatest in American history. One of those historians, East Carolina University's Charles W. Calhoun, has crafted an adroit, urbane, and comprehensive book on Grant's presidency simply titled *The Presidency of Ulysses S. Grant*. A preeminent Gilded Age historian, Calhoun argued that Grant's continued service to his country was grounded in the determination to preserve "the results of the costly war which we have gone through... opening the possibility for an essential congruence between 'presidential' and 'congressional' Reconstruction." Yet for Grant, "nothing had prepared him for attacks he encountered as the nation's political leader" with his enemies' skewed portrayals defining him, not only during his lifetime, but well into the twentieth century. However, Calhoun rectified the record with meticulous scrutiny revealing a president grounded in the enduring ideals of the Constitution.

The first president to institute civil service reform, Grant believed that the old spoils system "did not secure the best men, and often not even fit men, for public place...this clumsy method of hiring for civil servants could not meet the needs of a modernizing society." Reformers in both parties recognized the inefficiency and problems with the spoils system, especially after those same reformers "thwarted their ambitions." Always the pragmatist, Grant quipped that, "those who talk of civil service reform in public are the most persistent in seeking offices for their friends." Grant adhered to the Constitutional ideal of cooper-



The Presidency of Ulysses S. Grant

By Charles W. Calhoun

University Press of Kansas

736 pgs. | \$38



ABOVE: *Inauguration of President Grant*, Matthew Brady (photographer) (1869).

LEFT: *The Eighteenth President of the United States, Ulysses S. Grant*, Thomas Le Clear (c. 1880).



ation between the branches knowing the Executive needed to be willing to work with Congress in order to pass legislation. In his second term, Grant sought a way to unify the Republican party through more overt efforts at civil service reform, but often “nine tenths of the warfare upon the President proceeded from his disaffection over patronage...no president has ever gone so far to elevate the civil service, but the reformers generally refused to give Grant credit.”

When Grant took office, he not only inherited “a thick residue of institutional resentment on Capitol Hill” from the tumultuous Johnson years, but he also faced the Herculean task of restructuring a \$2 billion debt left over from the war. Calhoun’s most electrifying chapter, “Brush with Disaster: The New York Gold Corner Conspiracy,” reads like a modern reality show set in the greed of the Gilded Age. Duping Grant’s brother-in-law into a scheme to help them corner the gold market, financial speculators Jay Gould and James Fisk were “not burdened by scruples” and “destitute of moral character.” Shrewdly, Grant smelled the rats and in a letter to his Secretary of Treasury, Grant warned, “you will be met by the bulls and bears of Wall Street...the fact is, a desperate struggle is now taking place, and each party wants the government to help them out.” Testimony ensued at a Congressional investigation on the nefarious manufactured panic providing a myriad “of contradictions and outright lies which defied synthesis into a coherent narrative.” Nonetheless, the Congressional investigation was the first of many scandals that stained Grant’s presidency and provided a Machiavellian backdrop for future biographers to portray Grant as “weak, rudderless, and ethically challenged.”

There is nothing new in Calhoun’s book on Grant’s well-known devotion to secure civil rights for African and Native Americans. Grant strongly believed in the constitutional obligation of the federal government to protect African Americans and used the military in the recalcitrant Southern states without hesitation to enforce his convictions. Brilliantly describing the volatile political environment of post-war America, Calhoun underscored Grant’s moral fidelity and energy battling the raw bitterness of white southerners and many northern Democrats. Grant’s willingness “to dispatch to detect, expose, arrest, and punish the perpetrators of those crimes, and to...spare no effort or necessary expense” to stop violence exacted on African Americans, especially in his efforts at suffrage exemplified his convictions. Calhoun also pointed out that Grant was just as zealous to bring peace and

fairness to Native Americans in the burgeoning West blaming “the encroachments & influence of bad whites.” Calhoun accentuates Grant’s central role and noble efforts in trying to restructure the Bureau of Indian Affairs to eradicate corruption, “yet as matters turned out, persistent antagonism on the frontier would demonstrate how difficult it was to transform white and Indian enemies into friends.”

Calhoun weaves Grant’s enemies through every chapter of the book. Democrats made it their mission to constantly investigate Grant, yet it was his fellow Republican, Charles Sumner, that heaped unrelenting criticism all eight years of Grant’s presidency. Grant completely loathed Sumner noting he “had not the manliness ever to admit an error.” The best parts of Calhoun’s book is the witty, nineteenth-century repartee between Grant and the men in his administration. When Grant’s cabinet argued whether Sumner believed in the Bible, Grant quipped, “of course he don’t, for he didn’t write it.” When Horace Greeley was nominated by the liberal wing of the Republican party to run against Grant, his Secretary of State quipped that Greeley’s nomination lowered, “the standard...for public position near to that which elevated a Roman Emperor’s horse to a Roman Consulate.” Yet, Grant’s enemies never dimmed his view that the Republican party embodied, “the greatest good for the greatest number of citizens” and was committed to the individual’s right to rise where “everyone has the opportunity to make himself all he is capable of.”

Calhoun’s book describes Ulysses S. Grant as an “activist president...[whose] worst sin as chief executive was his assertiveness—his dominance of politics and governance, grounded in his formidable popularity.” Months after he left office, Grant set off on a world tour which was arguably the most important public service of any ex-president. In rendering the impact of Grant’s presidency, Charles Calhoun credited Grant transitioning the executive office into the modern presidency we know today. With his humble genius, Grant remodeled the office of the president while still grounding his pursuits, his challenges, and his achievements within the enduring ideals of the Constitution.



Lois MacMillan is the 2021 James Madison Fellow for Oregon. She teaches U.S. History at Grants Pass High School in Grants Pass, Oregon.

Francis Scott Key on the True Authors of the *Star-Spangled Banner*

The following is a published account of a speech by Francis Scott Key on his poem (and now national anthem) The Star-Spangled Banner. The speech was published posthumously in 1857 in a collection of poetry, letters, and speeches entitled, Poems of the Late Francis Scott Key, Esq., Author of The Star Spangled Banner, edited by Henry V.D. Johns of Baltimore. The account claims to be a newspaper summary of Key's speech "at a Political Meeting."

After the regular toasts had been disposed of — the newspaper says — the following sentiment was offered by the company:

“Francis S. Key — A friend of the administration, and an incorruptible patriot; worthy of being honored, wherever genius is admired or liberty cherished, as the author of “The Star Spangled Banner.”

After it was drunk, and the applause which it elicited, had subsided,

Mr. Key rose and expressed his thanks for the very flattering notice the company had been pleased to take of him. He never had forgotten, he said, and never should forget, that he was a native of the county whose citizens were now assembled upon an occasion so gratifying to his feelings. Though no longer a resident, its people and its scenes had never ceased to be dear to him. His annual visits here had been always anticipated with pleasure, and never, even from his boyhood, had he come within the view of these mountains, without having his warmest affections awakened at the sight. What he felt now in accepting the invitation with which he had been honored, he should not attempt to express.

The company had been pleased to declare their approbation of his song. Praise to a poet could not

be otherwise than acceptable; but it was peculiarly gratifying to him, to know, that, in obeying the impulse of his own feelings, he had awakened theirs. The song, he knew, came from the heart, and if it had made its way to the hearts of men, whose devotion to their country and to the great cause of freedom, he so well knew, he could not pretend to be insensible to such a compliment. They had recalled to his recollection the circumstances under which he had been impelled to this effort. He had seen the flag of his country waving over a city, the strength and pride of his native State — a city devoted to plunder and desolation by its assailants. He witnessed the preparation for its assault, and saw the array of its enemies as they advanced to the attack. He heard the sound of battle; the noise of the conflict fell upon his listening ear, and told him, that “the brave and the free,” had met the invaders. Then did he remember that Maryland had called her sons to the defence [sic] of that flag, and that they were the sons of sires who had left their crimson foot-prints on the snows of the North, and poured out the blood of patriots, like water, on the sands of the South. Then did he remember that there was gathered around that banner, among its defenders, men who had heard and answered the call of their country, from these mountain sides, from this beautiful valley, and from this fair city of his native country; and though he walked upon

¹ Key, Francis Scott, Esq. *Poems of the Late Francis S. Key, Esq., Author of The Star Spangled Banner* (ed. Henry V.D. Johns) (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1857).



Andrew Jackson during the Battle of New Orleans, Frederick Coffay Yohn (c. 1922)

a deck surrounded by a hostile fleet, detained as a prisoner, yet was his step firm, and his heart strong, as these recollections came upon him. Through the clouds of war, the stars of that banner still shone in his view, and he saw the discomfited host of its assailants driven back in ignominy to their ships. Then, in that hour of deliverance, and joyful triumph, the heart spoke; and, Does not such a country, and such defenders of their country, deserve a song? was its question. With it came an inspiration not to be resisted; and if it had been a hanging matter to make a song he must have made it. Let the praise, then, if any be due, be given, not to him, who only did what he could not help doing; not to the writer, but to the inspirers of the song.

He would advert, he said, briefly, to another and still more glorious triumph. To another of our cities assailed by the same army. Before New Orleans, was the flower of the British army, the veteran conquerors of Europe; men who had broken through hosts of disciplined warriors, and the proudest walls that military science could erect. With what scorn must they have looked upon our cotton ramparts and rude militia? And the general who was to oppose, with such forces as these, their skillful and experienced leaders, what would they think of him? They thought of him, no doubt, as his present opponents still profess to think of him, as an ignorant and rash man, unfit for any command.

Yes, he continued, even now, when he has administered the government with unexampled wisdom and success, we are told that he is a man of no learning, of no ability as a writer or a speaker — and the most contemptuous comparisons are made between his qualifications and those of his rivals.

Against such a leader, and such forces, the proud host of the enemy came on. Where are now the great orators and writers? "*Ubi nunc facundus Ulysses?*"² Where shall we find a man to disperse the advancing foes with the eloquence of a proclamation, or overwhelm them with the terrors of a speech? Andrew Jackson was there. He made neither proclamation nor speech; but he put a tongue into the mouths of his guns, and bade them speak to them. There was a speech to be had in everlasting remembrance. It was a moving speech. It

is written on the brightest page of our country's history, and future conquerors who may desire to send their myrmidons to shores defended by free-men, will be wise enough to remember it.

He was not disposed, he said, to undervalue those talents in which it was said, upon what authority he knew not, that General Jackson was so inferior to the favorites of his opponents. The speaker and the writer may render essential services to a country, but there are times which will demand doers instead of talkers; and every friend of his country has rejoiced that we had the right sort of talent at the defence [sic] of New Orleans.

If their services were even equal, all must admit that there was some difference in suffering and sacrifice between the talker and the doer, between him who on soft carpets and to smiling audiences makes speeches for his country, and him whose nights are spent in sleepless vigilance and his days in toil and peril: who offers ease, and health, and life, upon the altars of patriotism. If there was any suffering in speech-making, certain patriots, whose daily labors in that way throughout the last winter had been so extraordinary, were greatly to be commiserated. For himself, he said, that when he had a good subject, as he now had, and saw before him such a company as he now did, and read in their kindling countenances, the warm feelings of approving hearts, he considered it a pleasure and a privilege to make a speech.

But he would return to the song; the company had thought it worthy the honor of a toast. Perhaps they were not unreasonable in placing so high an estimate upon a song. It had been said by one, thought wise in the knowledge of human nature, that "if he could be allowed to make a nation's songs, he cared not who made its laws."³

He would undertake to say, that if a nation's songs were of any importance to it, there was but one way of providing a supply of them. He had adverted to the occasions of which he had spoken, for the purpose of showing that way. If national poets, who shall keep alive the sacred fire of patriotism in the hearts of the people, are desirable to a country, the country must deserve them; must put forth her patriots and heroes, whose deeds alone can furnish the necessary inspiration; when a country is thus worthy of the lyre, she will command its highest efforts.

² From Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (8th century C.E.).

³ Attributed to Andrew Fletcher, a Scottish writer, politician, and poet.



TOP: Francis Rusty Eder, '10 (MD); Laura Wallis Wakefield, '00 (FL); Michael R. Dupont, '16 (NH); BOTTOM: Dave Volkman '99 (OH); Julianna Klein, '18 (MD); Admiral Paul A. Yost, Jr., former President, James Madison Memorial Fellowship Foundation.

But if ever forgetful of her past and present glory, she shall cease to be “the land of the free and the home of the brave,” and become the purchased possession of a company of stock-jobbers and speculators; if her people are to become the vassals of a great moneyed corporation, and to bow down to her pensioned and privileged nobility ; if the patriots who shall dare to arraign her corruptions and denounce her usurpation, are to be sacrificed upon her gilded altar; such a country may furnish venal orators and presses, but the soul of national poetry will be gone. That muse will “never bow the knee in Mammon’s fane.”⁴ No, the patriots of such a land must hide their shame in her deepest forests, and her bards must hang their harps upon the willows. Such a people, thus corrupted and degraded

“Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust from whence they sprung,
Unwept, unhonored, and unsung.”⁵

He again thanked the company for the honor they had done him; but he could only take his share of it. He was but the instrument in executing what they had been pleased to praise; it was dictated and inspired by the gallantry and patriotism of the sons of Maryland. The honor was due, not to him who made the song, but to the heroism of those who made him make it.

He would therefore propose as a toast, the real authors of the song,

“The Defenders of the Star Spangled Banner: ‘What they would not strike to a foe, they will never sell to traitors.’”

4 From James Beattie’s poem, “The Minstrel, or the Progress of Genius” (1771).

5 From Sir Walter Scott’s poem, “Breathes There The Man” (1805).

Photographs taken of the last surviving veterans of the American Revolution in 1864. For more information see Jack D. Warren, Jr.'s *America's First Veterans* (Washington, D.C.: The American Revolution Institute of the Society of the Cincinnati, Inc., 2020).



WILLIAM HUTCHINGS, AGED 100,
ONE OF THE SURVIVORS OF THE REVOLUTION.
Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1864, by
N. A. & R. A. Moore, of Hartford, in the clerk's office of the
district court of Connecticut.



ALEXANDER MILLENER, AGED 104,
ONE OF THE SURVIVORS OF THE REVOLUTION.
Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1864, by
N. A. & R. A. Moore, of Hartford, in the clerk's office of the
district court of Connecticut.

The Last Men of the [American] Revolution,
Nelson Augustus Moore and Roswell A. Moore
(photographers) (1864).



DANIEL WALDO, AGED 102.
ONE OF THE SURVIVORS OF THE REVOLUTION.
Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1864, by
N. A. & R. A. Moore, of Hartford, in the clerk's office of the
district court of Connecticut.



ADAM LINK, AGED 102.
ONE OF THE SURVIVORS OF THE REVOLUTION.
Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1864, by
N. A. & R. A. Moore, of Hartford, in the clerk's office of the
district court of Connecticut.



LEMUEL COOK, AGED 105.
ONE OF THE SURVIVORS OF THE REVOLUTION.
Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1864, by
N. A. & R. A. Moore, of Hartford, in the clerk's office of the
district court of Connecticut.



SAMUEL DOWNING, AGED 102.
ONE OF THE SURVIVORS OF THE REVOLUTION.
Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1864, by
N. A. & R. A. Moore, of Hartford, in the clerk's office of the
district court of Connecticut.

POETRY

A Hymn to the Evening

By Phillis Wheatley (1773)

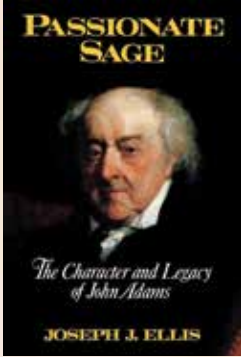
Soon as the sun forsook the eastern main
The pealing thunder shook the heav'nly plain;
Majestic grandeur! From the zephyr's wing,
Exhales the incense of the blooming spring,
Soft purl the streams, the birds renew their notes,
And through the air their mingled music floats.
Through all the heav'ns what beauteous dies are spread!
But the west glories in the deepest red:
So may our breasts with ev'ry virtue glow,
The living temples of our God below!
Fill'd with the praise of him who gives the light,
And draws the sable curtains of the night,
Let placid slumbers sooth each weary mind,
At morn to wake more heav'nly, more refin'd;
So shall the labours of the day begin
More pure, more guarded from the snares of sin.
Night's leaden sceptre seals my drowsy eyes,
Then cease, my song, till fair Aurora rise.

Evening Glow, Albert Bierstadt (date unknown).



BOOK REVIEW

Illuminating Adams



Passionate Sage: The Character and Legacy of John Adams

By Joseph J. Ellis

W. W. Norton & Company
284 pgs. | \$45

By Thomas Noonan, Ph.D., '00 (WI)

“John Adams remains the most misconstrued and unappreciated ‘great man’ in American history. Not only does he deserve better; we will be better for knowing him,” asserts Joseph Ellis in his concise, invitingly readable and thoroughly introspective book: *Passionate Sage: The Character and Legacy of John Adams*. Joseph J. Ellis, now emeritus professor of history, has been at Mount Holyoke since 1972, and is considered one of the nation’s foremost scholars on the American founding. Initially published in 1993, and reissued with an updated preface in 2022, *Passionate Sage* is a retrospective look back over the life of the often overlooked, yet influential founder, John Adams.

Ellis was drawn to scores of modern editions of primary sources rolling off the presses in the early 1990s with respect to the founding era. Two such robust collections, noteworthy even then for their unprecedented eloquence and depth, were *The Adams Papers*, a complete collection of the political writings of Adams, and the *Adams Family Correspondence*, which contains, in part, a series of letters between John and his politically astute and influential wife, Abigail. These collections offered unprecedented and quotable insights. Quips Ellis, “George Washington’s diaries are mostly about the weather. Adam’s diaries are about the winds gusting through his soul.” With the aid of retrospection and peering back from retirement, Ellis addresses the reasons for having written the book, as well as several aspects that he might have handled more insightfully. A few notable impressions from Ellis himself included the desire to have given Adams more credit as an original political thinker, albeit distinct from other Enlightenment philosophers. Adams viewed the virtues of human nature to be emotionally driven versus through the auspices of reason. Additionally, Ellis would have acknowledged Adams for being a more powerful prophetic voice, one cautioning future Americans about the disparities of economic inequality and the vulnerabilities of political demagoguery.

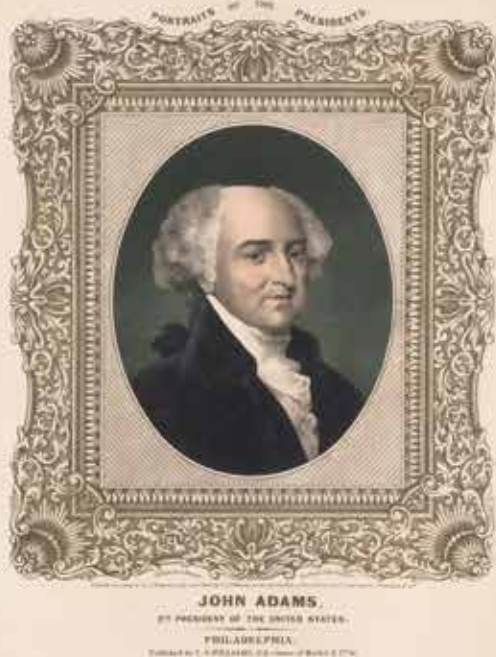
While not a complete biography of Adams nor crafted in a linear manner, there is ample treatment of the totality of his public life, and along with it, setting the record straight. Ellis begins with Adams’ final evening in the White House, not scurrying about signing commissions for federal judges as critics had alleged (historical evidence proves that only two minor commissions were issued earlier in the day), yet rather likely deep in thought about what led to that moment and what was to become of him. Such was the mind of Adams, contends Ellis, simultaneously looking backwards and forwards through the prism of his own classically influenced worldview, locked in the 18th Century, and one that tended to be out of step both then and now. The

organization of the book is retrospective in nature, which appears to be a mirror not unlike the personality of Adams himself. Even an assessment of the education of Adams is done in reverse chronological order. He is often a man looking backwards, and given his penchant for desiring to continually correct the record about both his theorizing and his decision making, Ellis tends to proceed in like fashion or at least providing a broader perspective for the tumultuous thought processes and justifications for action Adams was often engaged in.

Grappling with the passions and challenges of national and worldly politics whether as president or ambassador, or more locally and unknown as a one-time school master, Adams was simultaneously wrestling with internal tensions about purpose, interior motivations, and legacy while at the same time projecting outward certitude. “Adams was obsessed with interior integrity,” writes Ellis, “Humility, piety, self-denial, and other habits of the heart were not just a means to an end for him, but the ends themselves.” Whereas the other great members of the founding era were prone to downplay shortcomings and questions about personal motives, Adams is painfully aware of his limitations and was as apt to question his motivations as much if not more so than others. Such self-awareness, laid bare in his many public treatises, was merely feeding the fire of his critics. Then he could not seem to resist any opportunity to answer his critics, many times looking more petty than statesmanlike in the process. Whereas Adams’ inflamed emotional tendencies caused havoc for him in public life, the candor and face value style of argumentation when exuded privately tended to charm and win over those who directly encountered him.

The clear strength of *Passionate Sage* is the fair treatment it offers Adams, providing cogent analysis of his limitations as well as providing Adams with vindication when circumstances prove him correct. There is, of course, the benefit of hindsight in doing so. The weakness, minor at most, is the need to perhaps have some broader context about the competing ideas regarding the founding period with respect to emergent classical liberalism to better place Adams amid the debate raging within the new nation as well as his own mind.

In all, *Passionate Sage* is an illuminatingly reflective piece on a thoroughly reflective individual, worthy reading for historians and non-historians alike. Ellis approaches the research and sources used with his own sense of reflective bal-



John Adams, 2nd president of the United States, A. Newsam (1846).

ance, noting conventional standards in creating a bibliographic essay. He refrains from noting all the secondary sources referenced; however, Ellis cites all the primary sources utilized and draws richly from the two collections that were instrumental into his reasoning to approach this work in the first place. Central to the primary source usage were scores of letters that assess the legacy of Adams, and here the tension between Adams and Jefferson is fully on display; however, not personally adversarial, yet through the construct of whose ideals would outlast the other. Ellis concludes that were Adams to be afforded a glimpse into the modern day, he would likely “derive a perverse sense of satisfaction in correctly predicting his own relative obscurity.” As such, we should embrace a sanguine approach to John Adams and afford him otherwise.

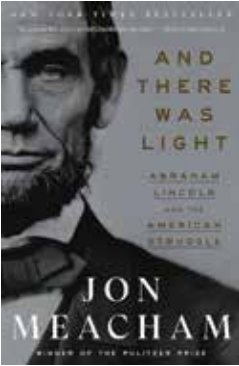


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BOOK REVIEW

The Struggles that Defined Abraham Lincoln

By Tony Perry, '20 (MI)



And There Was Light: Abraham Lincoln and American Struggle

By Jon Meacham

Random House
720 pgs. | \$24

“The short and simple annals of the poor,” is how Abraham Lincoln described his youth in Kentucky and Indiana, truncating, “That’s my life, and that’s all you or anyone else can make out of it.” While this is an accurate picture of his early life, it doesn’t provide the details that help to explain how critical his early experiences were, especially if we are to understand better how Abraham Lincoln was able to navigate through the turbulent waters of Washington DC in the 1860’s without losing his identity or purpose. Pulitzer-Prize winning author Jon Meacham answers this question with his recent book, *And There Was Light: Abraham Lincoln and the American Struggle*. In this fresh new biography of Lincoln, Meacham seeks to “chart Lincoln’s struggle to do right as he defined it within the political universe he and his country inhabited.” In this newest offering, he again proves that he is one of the nation’s most skilled presidential biographers and aims to “illustrate that progress comes when Americans recognize that all, not just some, possess common rights and are due common respect.” He provides a thorough description of the life of Abraham Lincoln and how his experiences on the frontier of Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois shaped him into the man who became the country’s moral compass in a crisis.

W.E.B. DuBois described Lincoln as a “southern poor white... poorly educated and unusually ugly, awkward and ill-dressed...cruel, merciful; peace-loving, a fighter; despising them and letting them fight and vote; protecting slavery and freeing slaves. He was a man-a big, inconsistent man.” While this is an apt description of Abraham Lincoln, in many ways, it begs the question: How did he become such a great leader and president? Meacham answers by laying out new material to evaluate. The following quote provides an example of such an insight from a Kentuckian neighbor named Samuel Haycraft in 1865, who reflects on Lincoln’s early life. He says: “To all human appearance, the early life of Abraham Lincoln was as unpromising for becoming a great man as you could imagine. Indeed, I would say it was forbidding, and proves to me that nature bestowed upon him an irrepressible will and innate greatness of mind to enable [him] to break through all those barriers & iron gates and reach the portion he in did in life.”

OPPOSITE: *President Lincoln and Gen. George B. McClellan in the general's tent* [photograph], Alexander Gardner (1862).



The word “struggle” in the title is a common thread that weaves its way through the entire book. Meacham begins with Lincoln’s struggles in the formative years of his life by relating the familiar stories of his youth. With clear and understandable words, he presents Lincoln’s challenges before becoming an adult and leaving his family to strike off on his own. We may be familiar with the image of Lincoln holding an ax in his hand as a young man and how he grew up; as Lincoln put it, “had an axe put into [my] hands at once; and from that till within [my] twenty-third year [I] was almost constantly handling that most useful instrument-less of course, in plowing and harvest seasons.” But Meacham emphasizes that Lincoln’s formative years were defined by grueling work and survival. In a short poem Lincoln wrote later in life, he describes it as:

“When my Father first settled here,
‘Twas then the frontier line:
The panther’s scream, filled night with fear
And bears preyed on the swine.”

Meacham’s portrayal of Lincoln as a determined and resilient youth whose humility and arrogance are frequently in conflict is nothing new. Lincoln’s ability to look back on his past actions and experiences, evaluate them critically, and adapt is presented and supported throughout the book. Meacham provides a roadmap for readers to see Lincoln’s life and how he became a politician who appeared clueless, unrefined, hyper-aware, and savvy at different times.

Meacham illustrates the traits of Lincoln that make him one of the more approachable historical figures. People may revere Washington and admire Jefferson, but everyone can relate to Abraham Lincoln. He was a man who struggled with depression and self-doubt, had a marriage fraught with challenges, experienced the death of two of

his children, and experienced many political failures before he was elected president. Meacham uses the familiar stories of Lincoln to shine a fresh light on who he was as a person and a politician and how his life experiences helped him to lead a broken nation through a great crisis that threatened to tear it apart.

Meacham’s choice of illustrations throughout the book is superb. The vivid color and discerning subject selection add to the tools Meacham uses to familiarize the reader with Lincoln’s struggles and the influential individuals in his life. However, the strength of Meacham’s book is in the way he uses Lincoln’s past to help the reader understand how a man who, on paper, had little political or managerial experience could become the cornerstone of a nation that had lost its way. To his credit, he does not fall into the trap of heaping praise on Lincoln without discerning his actions. In the epilogue, Meacham states, “Lincoln’s life shows us that progress can be made by fallible and fallen presidents and people—which in a fallible and fallen world should give us hope.”

This new biography of Lincoln is well worth the time to read. It is a standalone volume that does a superb job of including the foundational story of Lincoln’s life while also contributing new insights into what led him to make the decisions he made as president. While Lincoln remains a mystery in many ways, despite the thousands of works dedicated to understanding who he was, Meacham’s book is a valuable addition in the quest to better understand one of the country’s most consequential leaders.

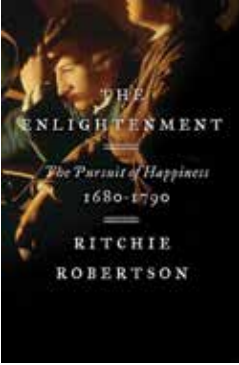


Tony Perry is the 2020 James Madison Fellow for Michigan. He teaches U.S. History and Geography at West Lutheran High School in Plymouth, MN.

BOOK REVIEW

The Enlighteners

By David Reader, '07 (NJ)



The Enlightenment: The Pursuit of Happiness 1680-1790

By Ritchie Robertson

New York: Harper Perennial
2023 | \$25

Thomas Jefferson knew the complexity behind the meaning of happiness in 1776 when he wrote in the Declaration of Independence; “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.” Jefferson’s sentiments and words are the culmination of several Enlightenment movements that shaped not only Europe, but the world. Oxford University professor Ritchie Robertson’s new book, *The Enlightenment: The Pursuit of Happiness 1680-1790*, is an informative and well-balanced work on the Enlightenment that sheds light on the issues, beliefs, and disputes that shaped a critical period of world history. He substitutes the common belief in an “Age of Reason” with an emphasis on the emotions that society experienced in their quest for happiness. His usage of the Greek term eudaemonism for the attainment of happiness builds upon the long-standing Quarrel of the Ancients and Moderns about the value of literature, philosophy, poetry, and history. Robertson’s happiness is not the simple definition of an intense joy or positive feeling, but a journey to be fulfilled through relationships, security, and a greater sense of freedom.

Robertson’s erudite work examines the Enlightenment through fourteen thematic chapters that range from the “Scientific Revolution” to the “Practical Enlightenment” and provides an overview of the numerous “Enlighteners,” their works, and the events that shaped the era. Unlike most historians, he expands the time frame of the Enlightenment to include the accomplishments of both the Scientific Revolution and the early Industrial Revolution in Great Britain to highlight the universal growth of emotions across a wide spectrum of societal beliefs and social hierarchies. He traces the development of scientific advancements and discoveries to erode cultural superstitions and religious dogmatism. For example, Edmond Halley’s observations and calculations based on Isaac Newton’s new theory of gravity confirmed the trajectory of the soon-to-be-named Halley’s comet and began to undermine traditional beliefs across Europe.

The nuanced approach used by Robertson in applying the principles of the Enlightenment to the early phases of the Industrial Revolution are best represented in his study of Josiah Wedgwood’s pottery business in England that became a catalyst for canals, manufacturing centers, and most notably for creating the emblem that became the famous abolitionist motto: “Am I not a man and a brother?” The Enlightenment was a web that connected the people with the ideas of the period and fostered the emotional basis for the greater good of



Reading of Voltaire's L'Orphein de la Chine, in the Salon of Madame Geoffrin, Anicet Charles Gabriel Lemonnier (1812).

humanity. Robertson does not simply rely on the standard Enlightenment works of David Hume, the Baron de Montesquieu, and Adam Smith (those who had a great influence on the Founding Fathers), but also through the literature and poetry of the period that conveyed the feelings of empathy or compassion for humanity. The emergence of a shared sense of humanity came from such authors as Johann Wolfgang Goethe, William Shakespeare, François-Marie Arouet Voltaire who collectively contributed to the development of empathy and compassion through their works and their characters. The gradual increase in literacy and the popularity of theater productions allowed for the easy dissemination of ideas and sentiments for public consumption. Robertson uses analysis on the growth of newspapers, art, and the increased number of fraternal organizations that reinforced the everyday emotional aspects of European society that were instrumental in shaping public opinion during the period.

Well-known authors of the Enlightenment such as Immanuel Kant, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau are mixed together with the lesser-known authors of Joseph Addison, Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, and Gotthold Lessing to illus-

trate the transition of society away from the dictates of the monarchy and the church towards a greater sense of happiness for the individual and for society through the advancements of religious and political freedom. His final two chapters; "Forms of Government" and "Revolutions" are the most useful for courses on United States History or United States Government. These two chapters elaborate on the ways the Enlightenment influenced the gestalt of colonial life in North America in the mid-eighteenth century with an emphasis on republican government, religious freedoms, and rights of the people to participate in society with greater individual freedoms. His decision to date the Enlightenment from 1680 to 1790 coincides with the history of the British colonies in North America and their growth into an independent nation. The parallels between the ideals developed during the Enlightenment in Europe foreshadow the fundamental principles found in the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. He strengthens his argument with several pages dedicated to the contributions of Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Paine in the areas of science, philosophy, and political theory during the



A Philosopher Giving that Lecture on the Orrery, in which a Lamp is put in place of the Sun, Joseph Wright of Derby (c. 1766).

Enlightenment. Robertson credits these Enlighteners for being active in the transatlantic intellectual discourse leading up to the American Revolution that helped to sway the people of France and the Netherlands to recognize the colonists' cause for Independence.

Robertson also stresses the value of women in the intellectual and cultural infrastructure created through the Republic of Letters with their salon discussions, advancements in education (earning doctoral degrees in Germany and Italy), and the rule of Imperial Russia. His vast knowledge of the literature and the history of the period are displayed throughout his work recognizing such women as the educated poet Elizabeth Graeme from the Philadelphia area who hosted salon-style gatherings at her colonial estate to the well-known female Enlighteners Mary Wollstonecraft and Tsarina Catherine the Great. Robertson's analysis of David Hume's and Catherine Macaulay's two separate histories of England is an interesting subchapter found in chapter eleven on "Philosophical History." Both works were published within five years of each other between 1778 to 1783 and reflected the different political leanings of Hume and Macaulay. Macaulay's focus on liberty and her more radical political leanings of the time found a larger audience in the colonies of North America. Her celebrity status was confirmed while touring the United States in 1784 when she stayed with George and Martha Washington at Mount Vernon. Her histories, as well as Hume's histories, were essential reading for the Revolutionary Generation in the colonies. Robertson's reference notes and selected bibliography reinforce his claims that women had a far greater role during the Enlightenment than acknowledged in many secondary level textbooks.

Robertson examines the emergence of racial hierarchies stemming from the anthropological studies of Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon and Johann Gottfried von Herder during the Enlightenment. Their works were based on observations, second hand reports from travelers, and the European consensus on race dating back to Aristotle. Buffon and Herder attributed racial differences to climate and geography, but they also believed in the ability of all diverse groups to potentially develop into a civilization. Robertson sees a change in racial thought occur through the works of Kant, Hume, and Jefferson who used racial hierarchies to further the notion that Northern Europeans were superior over all

other groups. Their works contributed to the justification of slavery and the common eighteenth century belief that non-Europeans were unable to advance as a society. Throughout the Enlightenment the issue of race was debated in the courts, benevolent societies, and through works of fiction and nonfiction. Robertson points to the creation of abolitionist societies in Europe and later in the colonies for the changes towards race in society. He uses the Quakers as an example of a religious group that slowly accepted the abolitionist cause throughout the world. Unfortunately, however, he does not thoroughly develop the contradictions of Jefferson's writings and actions as a slave owner.

The Enlightenment is a comprehensive tome that is best suited for graduate students or educators looking to supplement their lessons on the Enlightenment with greater detail. At 780 pages, it is an exhaustive study of the contributions that men and women made to the studies of science, philosophy, theology, history, political economy, society, and so many more aspects of eighteenth-century life that are generally overlooked. His chapters can stand alone to challenge the generic descriptions of the period found in any United States History or European History textbooks. Robinson's education, experience, and eloquent prose convey his love of the thinkers, writers, and people of the Enlightenment, and the book is a refreshing reminder of the principles, the ideals, and the virtues that shaped the quest to attain happiness throughout the Enlightenment.

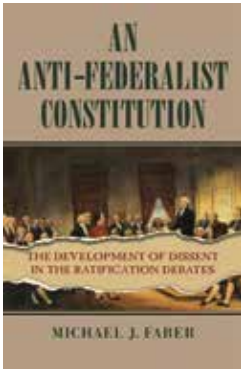


David Reader is the 2007 James Madison Fellow for New Jersey. He currently teaches Advanced Placement United States History and College Preparatory U.S. History at Haddonfield Memorial High School in Haddonfield, N.J. He also contributes to The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia and Social Education.

BOOK REVIEW

The Forgotten Founders

By Richard Vanden Bosch, '03 (CA)



**An Anti-Federalist Constitution:
The Development of Dissent in the
Ratification Debates**

By Michael J. Faber

University Press of Kansas
536 pgs. | \$33

OPPOSITE: *Delegates at the New York Convention to Ratify the Federal Convention, Gerald Foster (1987).*

Students are generally informed about the creation of the Constitution from one perspective, delving deep into The Federalist Papers as the final authority on the ratification debates, and dismissing the dissenting opinions of those who feared consolidation and usurpation of individual liberties. The extralegal nature of the Convention itself, far exceeding its mandate of “revising the Articles of Confederation,” produced a document that did not require all the states to ratify it to go into effect, unlike the requirement of the document it replaced. The secrecy of the deliberations in Philadelphia added fuel to the skepticism that fueled the Anti-Federalists.

Michael Faber does a brilliant job of illuminating issues that have been marginalized in academia. The Anti-Federalists stood for something, not just against something, but they lacked the organizational skills and coherent position from which to argue. Anti-Federalists preferred to be called Republicans, but that term has different connotations today, and thus Anti-Federalists must remain. Faber also includes 68 pages of exhaustive citation notes articulating leading historians’ opinions about the derivations of the Anti-Federalists’ ideologies.

Faber deftly disaggregates the diverse Anti-Federalists arguments into three primary camps that occasionally cross-pollinate: “Rights” Anti-Federalists, “Power” Anti-Federalists, and “Democratic” Anti-Federalists.

Rights Anti-Federalists centered around the aversion to government tyranny over the individual that would necessitate a bill of rights articulating the natural rights upon which Congress may not encroach. Power Anti-Federalists were focused on the usurpation of federalism, since states served as the greatest defenders against the aggrandizing power of the consolidated government. These Anti-Federalists were the true “federalists,” protecting the autonomy of existing state and local political units against the national government’s threat of top-down policy edicts. The Democratic Anti-Federalists were concerned about the aristocratic nature of Constitution.

Faber does an eloquent job of highlighting the different Anti-Federalist arguments. Brutus is considered to have the most articulate arguments against Publius, especially the Necessary and Proper Clause and the Supremacy Clause. Brutus considered the power of taxation as being the road to consolidation, and a standing army as a threat to liberty. Centinel believed that the only legitimate form of govern-

ment was localism and frequent elections. Federal Farmer was particularly concerned about the lack of a bill of rights and the aggrandizing nature of the national government, especially the powers of the purse and the sword. These powers could effectively swallow up the states, and subsequently the people's liberties.

Faber breaks down each state ratifying convention. Some of the Federalists' victories were logistical in nature, according to Faber: "Had Anti-Federalist New York called a convention immediately, the opposition there might have rejected the Constitution before the Federalists in Massachusetts secured their critical compromise." While Pennsylvania was in a heated discussion about efficacy of the new Constitution, Delaware quickly ratified by a unanimous vote becoming the first state to do so, and New Jersey followed shortly after. Georgia ratified reasonably easy because it needed the assistance of its fellow states to help combat issues with the Creek nation and its Spanish neighbor to the south. There was little resistance to ratification in Connecticut, and those opposed were labeled as "narcissistic, self-serving men."

The Anti-Federalists in New York were patient to see what unfolded in Massachusetts before they proceeded. In New York, the only delegate to the Constitutional Convention to sign the Constitution was Alexander Hamilton, and he was far from the mainstream opinion in his state. Most New Yorkers felt that the Constitution created a national government that was too energetic, and

they questioned the sovereignty of the states in this new form of government. Anti-Federalists held the majority in New York, where talks of secession were rampant, and discussions of New York City breaking off with New Jersey or Connecticut were discussed. Those opposed to the Constitution were in a conundrum because it was clear that the Articles of Confederation were unworkable and the Constitution would, in fact, go into effect. Virginia's ratification would ultimately break the will of New York's Anti-Federalists, and the state voted to ratify.

Massachusetts marked a procedural shift in the ratification debate. It became the first state to formally propose amendments as a condition of ratification. Changing national governments would also require changes to their state constitution, and this infringed upon the principle of the inviolability of political compacts. The Federalists were seen as circumventing legal channels in advocating for constitutional change.

In New Hampshire, there were roughly twelve Federalist essays printed for each one in opposition to the Constitution. The judiciary received much more extensive discussion than in many of the other states. New Hampshire elected to adjourn their convention to a future day to allow the delegates to go down back to their home districts and solicit the input of their constituents, thus posturing it to be the deciding vote later.

There was strong opposition to the constitution in Rhode Island, and some people, including Francis Dana (grandfather of celebrated author Rich-



ard Henry Dana, Jr.), hoped that the state would refuse to send delegates to Congress, thus setting up the potential of the state being dissolved and split up between Massachusetts and Connecticut. The state was politically divided between the mercantile seaport elites versus the poor inland farmers, and the repayment of debt bogged down the state.

The debate in Virginia was incredibly intense. The Rights Anti-Federalists led the way, although the Power Anti-Federalist arguments blended with them in opposition to ratification.

George Mason was concerned about the usurpation of natural rights and the dangerous consolidation of power. Edmund Randolph had refused to sign the Constitution at the end of the Philadelphia Convention, but he understood that disunion would be a far greater calamity, and ultimately signed on. Virginia sat poised to be the final state needed to ratify, but New Hampshire beat them to it.

Anti-Federalists were strong in North Carolina, and they were deeply suspicious of most of the states north of them. North Carolina echoed the sentiments of Virginia as it related to an addition of a 20-point bill of rights and 26 amendments. 20 of these amendments were identical to Virginia's proposals, plus six additional amendments unique to North Carolina. The North Carolina Anti-Federalists were determined to join the union on their terms or not at all.

In Maryland, there were a few hotly contested elections for the state ratifying convention, but Anti-Federalists only procured majorities in three counties.

For South Carolina, the Federalists insisted that the Constitution's protection of the institution of slavery was sufficient to justify ratification of the document. Anti-Federalists argued that the delegation to the Constitutional Convention had not protected slavery comprehensively, such as allowing the slave trade to be regulated after 20 years, but the majority of delegates supported ratification.

According to Faber, even after ratification and implementation, there was still a push for a second convention led by New York, Virginia and North Carolina. By allowing amendments to be proposed, the Federalists could win over Rights Anti-Federalists and a few Power Anti-Federalists without conceding major changes to the Constitution or allowing for a second convention. North Carolina eventually acquiesced when Anti-Feder-

alist opposition broke down after the other states compromised and confirmed the Constitution. People in Rhode Island had thought that the Anti-Federalists in New York would prevail, emboldening their cause. But with the loss of New York, opposition dwindled, especially after the state debts were liquidated with paper currency, and the issue seemingly was behind them. Rhode Island came in last of the thirteen original states.

In the end, the Anti-Federalists never really made their case well enough to secure victory. The Federalists had the Constitution, and the opposition was on the defensive during the entire debate. There were a small handful of Anti-Federalists, such as Maryland's Luther Martin, who truly believed that the Articles of Confederation should remain with a few modifications, but most preferred a revised Constitution as a new starting point, suggesting amendments and improvements to the Articles.

In a fascinating thought experiment, Faber introduces a counterfactual Anti-Federalists Constitution that may have been acceptable to the majority of the Anti-Federalists, analyzing arguments of advocates for these changes. He concludes that "preserving the republican spirit of the people may not have been possible, so the Anti-Federalists set out to preserve the freedom of the people instead. . . . the Anti-Federalist spirit moderated the implementation of the new constitution and prevented the consolidation of too much power too fast. It seems unlikely that any alternative they might have offered could have done anymore."

Faber's scholarship is sound, and his conclusions are profound. His work adds new arguments for the inclusion of the Anti-Federalists as a critical part of the founding generation and the impetus for the Bill of Rights.



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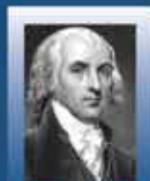
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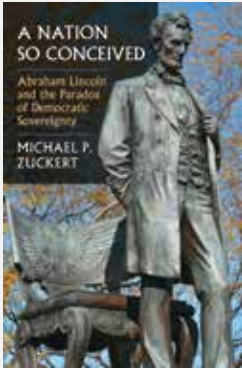
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BOOK REVIEW

Lincoln's Mind

By Mark Wiese, '17 (MN)



A Nation So Conceived: Abraham Lincoln and the Paradox of Democratic Sovereignty

By Michael P. Zuckert

University Press of Kansas
416 pgs. | \$30

Abraham Lincoln has always loomed large in American History. Many of us have seen the memorial on the National Mall, have read at least one of the numerous books written on Lincoln, or have seen countless depictions of him in popular culture. As a young boy I remember being enthralled by Abraham Lincoln's story. I still have a four-inch-tall statue of Abraham Lincoln sitting on my desk in my classroom that I got from my grandparents. Lincoln's image is spread across the nation, and we live in the shadow cast by his decisions over 160 years ago. One could spend a lifetime trying to understand the struggles faced by Abraham Lincoln and the stress he endured trying to navigate the most difficult crisis America has ever faced. Lincoln fundamentally put America on a new path towards realizing the true equality and freedom written about in the Declaration of Independence.

Michael P. Zuckert in *A Nation So Conceived: Abraham Lincoln and the Paradox of Democratic Sovereignty* goes beyond just the imagery of Lincoln that dominates America and skillfully gets into the mind of Lincoln as he navigates a critical period of American History. Zuckert is an emeritus Professor of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame and currently teaches at Arizona State University's School of Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership. He has written extensively on political philosophy, constitutionalism, and constitutional history. He weaves all of his expertise into his book on Lincoln and presents an in-depth analysis that bridges the gap between political philosophy and history.

Lincoln's mind was consumed by the basic paradox born in the founding of the nation. America was a nation conceived with the proposition of equality but within that very statement it also created a threat to its survival. Zuckert asserts that "the problem of perpetuation loomed so large for Lincoln because he considered that proposition, properly adumbrated, to capture the true foundation of political right but at the same time to be the source of various threats to the survival of the regime." Zuckert's analysis of Lincoln's attempt to find a solution to the basic problem of democratic sovereignty over the course of his life allows the reader to peer even further into Lincoln's mind, providing a sense of discovery. Not only is the reader able to better understand Lincoln's decision making and thought process when he is faced with an immense crisis but there is also a glimpse into the lessons for our world today.

Zuckert takes a holistic approach to understanding Abraham Lincoln. His unique technique to break down Lincoln's thoughts and what drives him as a political actor is one of the characteristics that makes this book stand out. The breadth of topics covered span Lin-



First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation, Francis Bicknell Carpenter (1864).

coln's complex life from his early appearance on the political stage to the unexpected twilight of his life. Zuckert takes the reader through these stages of Lincoln, surveys his critical and formative speeches and puts them in context of the historical events of the day. The book is organized in chronological order starting with Lincoln's "Perpetuation" Address of in 1838 and concluding with his Second Inaugural Address in March of 1865 just over a month before is assassination. Although this approach illustrates the development of Lincoln's thoughts of the paradox of democratic sovereignty, Zuckert notes that it "has the disadvantage of disaggregating some of the main themes of his thought and action". To his credit, Zuckert takes care to correct this shortcoming in the conclusion of the book.

The analysis of Lincoln's mind shows the lessons to be learned from how he developed his thoughts on the fundamental principles of republican gov-

ernment. Historical empathy and understanding events of the past can unlock strategies to deal with current crises. This is what makes studying history truly impactful and what drives many educators. While reading *A Nation So Conceived*, I found myself not only having a greater understanding of the motivations behind the actions of Lincoln, but feverishly highlighting passages that jumped off the page and exclaiming "that just happened last week!" For example, of this is Lincoln's observation of "lullaby arguments" during the famous Lincoln-Douglas Debates. These are arguments made to distract bread apathy towards a critical issue. Zuckert writes about an event where Lincoln calls out Douglas's belief during the debates that nature/climate will limit the spread of slavery as a lullaby. Lincoln sees the issue of slavery as an issue that could possibly destroy America and it needs to be addressed. Douglas's arguments would disarm those concerned about the expansion of slav-



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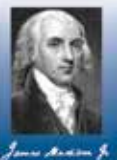
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Lincoln at Gettysburg, Matthew Brady (photographer) (1863).

ery by allowing the problem to be “solved” in the future. Zuckert writes, “In a democracy, these lullaby arguments are a particular temptation in the first instance for the people...Can the leader who refuses to sing the lullaby survive?” The danger of the lullaby is it allows for the easy route and usually the popular option. The American people today face many different “lullabies” and politicians are drawn to their simple rhetoric. Lincoln identifies the danger for democracy and the paradox of providing freedom but ensuring that does not destroy the nation. Zuckert’s precise analysis of this event and Lincoln’s thought process arms us today with the awareness to better fight against the temptation and solve the critical questions of our day.

Abraham Lincoln’s mind is a mammoth topic to attempt to cover, especially in just over 350 pages, but Zuckert achieves it by being very specific in his goal to cover the essential question that drove Lincoln. A weakness of the approach, however, is that its narrow focus omits important figures of the day that might have influenced Lincoln’s mind. Most noticeably Frederick Douglass is missing from the book. Douglass was a titan of the era and Zuckert’s omission of this individual leaves a hole in his work.

Overall, Zuckert’s book does an impressive job distilling the complexities of the era and unlocking

Lincoln’s mind. The analysis is impactful not only to better understand the era of Lincoln, but also in helping us better navigate the critical issues of today. This book is accessible for the average reader of historical non-fiction and wants to get a clear and precise understanding of his thoughts and how they developed over his lifetime. For those who already know a great deal about the topic, Zuckert’s approach and organization is very helpful because it is a valuable and unique perspective that will allow for a deeper understanding of Lincoln’s mind. Lincoln’s words of July 4, 1861 to a special session of Congress illustrate the question America will perpetually have to try to answer and find the proper balance; “Must a government, of necessity, be too strong for the liberties of its own people, or too weak to maintain its own existence?”



Mark Wiese is a social studies teacher at Mankato West High School in Mankato, Minnesota primarily teaching Government/Civics, and he is the 2017 James Madison Fellow for Minnesota.

POETRY

Petition for a Habeus Corpus

By Francis Scott Key (1857)

To the Honorable James Sewall Morsell, one
Of the Judges of the county of Washington:

May it please your honor to hear the petition
Of a poor old mare in a miserable condition,
Who has come this cold night to beg that your honor
Will consider her case and take pity upon her.
Her master has turned her out in the street,
And the stones are too hard to lie down on, or eat;
Entertainment for horses she sees every where,
But, alas! there is none, as it seems, for a mare.
She has wandered about, cold, hungry, and weary,
And can't even get in the Penitentiary,
For the watchmen all swear it is more than they dare,
Or Mr. Edes either, to put the major there.
So she went to a lawyer to know what to do,
And was told she must come and lay her case before you,
That you an injunction or ha. cor. would grant;
And if that means hay and corn, it is just what I want.
Your petitioner, therefore, prays that your honor will not fail,
To send her to a stable and her master to jail;
And such other relief to grant as your honor may think meet,
Such as chopped straw or oats, for an old mare to eat.
With a trough full of these and a rack full of hay,
Your petitioner will ever, as in duty bound, pray.

Note: This poem was published posthumously by Henry V.D. Johns in a book entitled Poems of the late Francis S. Key, Esq., Author of the Star-Spangled Banner, in 1857. The exact date of creation remains unknown.



Old Horses with a Dog in a Stable,
George Morland (1791).



Le dernier mot

In 2023, the National Assessment of Educational Progress reported a decline in assessment scores in both history and civics among eighth graders across the nation. The assessment, called “the nation’s report card,” showed that scores in history declined 5 points since 2018. Particularly alarming, eighth grade students also scored 2 points lower in civics 2022 than 2018 – a small number, but the first decline in civics since the question was introduced in 1998.

More bad news came from the American Bar Association’s (ABA) annual Survey of Civic Literacy that found in 2023 that 44% of U.S. residents who responded to the question “What federal document begins with the words ‘We the People’?”, incorrectly answered that it was the Declaration of Independence. Only 41% were correct that it was the U.S. Constitution. In the same survey, the majority (53%) of respondents believed America was “not very informed” when asked about how much the public knew about how the government operates. The next closest response was “somewhat informed” at 20%. The same survey noted that 85% of respondents believed “civility in today’s society” was worse than ten years ago. Social media was seen as the biggest culprit in the erosion of civility (29%), while, 24% blamed the media, and 19% blamed public officials. Only 8% blamed the educational system, but in a Gallup poll taken earlier this year, 63% of respondents were “somewhat dissatisfied” or “completely dissatisfied” with the quality of education in the U.S.

As the old saying goes, every dark cloud has a silver lining, and in this case, the silver lining is bright. Americans may have soured on the perceived quality of education, but an overwhelming majority of Americans still have faith in school teachers. When asked about the performance of their own children’s teachers, 73% of respondents believed that

they were “excellent” or “good.” Only 27% believed teacher performance was “fair” or “poor.” Teachers, it seems, are being recognized by parents for their hard work.

The ABA survey also reported positive findings about the state of civics and history education. Looking at basic Constitutional knowledge, the survey found that 87% of residents knew that the Bill of Rights was the first ten amendments to the Constitution, 64% knew that the right to vote was not part of the First Amendment, and 78% knew that the Speaker of the House of Representatives was next in line for the Presidency if the president and vice-president died or left office. Other similar questions were answered correctly by most respondents. Many Americans still know their civics after they had left school.

Although there is a lot of work to do, the outlook is not so bleak after all. A majority of Americans have a basic understanding of the Constitution and its provisions - and that’s a good start. Most Americans were dissatisfied with the quality of education in the country, but an overwhelming majority of parents still believe their own children’s teachers were doing a great job. Teachers are making a difference. It is disheartening to see civility on the decline, and even though a majority are not satisfied with the quality of education, most Americans believe that it is social media, the media, and public officials that are to blame – not education.

The nation’s history and civics teachers have a looming task before them, but what else is new? They know the challenges facing them and they persevere each day to save the nation from fractiousness, ignorance, and self-destruction. We owe a debt to those teachers who are trying hard each day to teach young people about the republic they live in and, one day soon, will lead.



SUBMISSIONS

The James Madison Review of Books encourages James Madison Fellows, teachers, academics, researchers, and the Constitutionally-minded public, to submit ideas for book reviews, essays, art, and poetry.

Book reviews should be focused on a book published within the last five years on the subjects of the U.S. Constitution, the Colonial Era, the Founding Era, the Civil War, or other political and historical topics centered around the Constitution.

Please contact the editor, Dr. Guy F. Burnett, at gburnett@jamesmadison.gov for more details.





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