



The Revolutionary Writings of Alexander Hamilton (NONE)

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As one of the Founding Fathers of the United States, Hamilton occupies an eccentric, even flamboyant, position compared with Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, Adams, Madison, and Marshall. Hamilton's genius, forged during his service in the Continental Army in the Revolution, brought him not only admiration but also suspicion. As the country he helped to found grew and changed, so did his thinking.

Consistency with earlier positions was never a hallmark of Hamilton's thought, which changed as the country changed from thirteen breakaway British colonies to a single independent nation. Alexander Hamilton's thought has, for over two hundred years, been noted for its deviations from American revolutionary Whig orthodoxy. From a conventional Whig at the beginning of his career, Hamilton developed a Federalist viewpoint that liberty depended above all on the creation of a powerful central government.

In this collection, we find the seeds of this development, as Hamilton's early optimistic confidence in the triumph of American Whig principles begins to give way, under the influence of his experience during the Revolution, to his mature Federalism. Hamilton's political philosophy reflected his vision of the central government as the protector of individual liberties, in sharp contrast to the popular democratic sentiments of his archrival Jefferson.

This comprehensive collection of his early writings, from the period before and during the Revolutionary War, provides a fuller understanding of the development of his thinking.

Hamilton wrote to persuade, and he had the ability to clarify the complex issues of his time without oversimplifying them. From the basic core values established in his earlier writings to the more assertive vision of government in his mature work, we see how Hamilton's thought responded to the emerging nation and how the nation was shaped by his ideas.

Alexander Hamilton (1755–1804) was a trusted military aide and secretary to General George Washington during the American Revolution and was later appointed inspector general of the army, with the rank of major general. He was an attorney and politician, a member of the Continental

Congress in the 1780s, and a representative of New York at the Annapolis Convention and the Constitutional Convention. He supported the new Constitution in *The Federalist*, with Madison and Jay. As the first U.S. Secretary of the Treasury, Hamilton was an advocate of sound public credit, development of natural resources and trade, and establishment of the first national Bank of the United States. The opposition to his policies led to the factional divisions from which developed the system of political parties.

Richard B. Vernier is an Adjunct Professor of American History at Purdue University at Calumet and a specialist in the field of Anglo-American ideas of political economy. He obtained his doctorate from St. Catherine's College, Oxford.

Joyce Appleby is Professor Emerita of History at UCLA. She obtained her doctorate from Claremont University.



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