

THE FEDERALIST PAPERS

The Federalist Papers are an important historical document for Americans as well as a classic statement about the proper role and structure of government for political theorists and anyone who loves liberty. They were a series of articles written under the pen name of Publius by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay. Hamilton would go on to lead the High Federalists in opposition to Republicans like Jefferson, while Madison would return to the Republican fold. But they, along with Jay, were allies in the struggle to ratify the Constitution.

The Federalists needed arguments against the Anti-Federalists who opposed ratification, and in making the case for a federal government contributed importantly to political philosophy and public choice economics. Publius succeeded in showing how liberty depends on the institutions that restrain and refine majority sentiment, such as federalism, the separation of powers, and whole machinery of limited government which the Constitution established.

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