

I am a member of The Constitutionalist Society in Lubbock. Our website contains copies of many of our historical documents for you to research and study. In our Historical Documents section are downloadable text of many of our founding documents. The Articles of Confederation, The U.S. Constitution, The Bill of Rights, The Federalist Papers and The Anti-federalist papers. Alongside the text are LibriVox recordings. LibriVox is a depository of volunteer recordings of non-copyrighted material.

The Constitution is the blueprint of how the government is to operate and the responsibilities of the government to the people. It is a document filled with a whole lot of rules and procedures. What is equally important is the reason for the particular rules and procedures. The core function of our government according to the Constitution is to protect its citizens and their rights.

The US Constitution is like nothing else. It is a radical departure from previous forms of government. The men who wrote the Constitution, chief among them James Madison (known as the father of the Constitution) studied history and understood previous forms of government from all over Europe and other parts of the world, many of which were monarchies and feudal systems. Some were city state republics or democracies. Some were empires. Madison and Hamilton wrote specifically about the failures of these other forms of government in the Federalist Papers. Our Founding Fathers were men of learning; they had studied the great philosophers: Aristotle, John Lock, Thomas Aquinas, William Bradford. They understood Natural Rights, and English Common Law. They established a government based on individual freedom and private property rights. They were God fearing. Many of them were Christians and men of high integrity. Their vision was for self-government a "Government of the people, by the people, for the people" (Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg Address - November 19, 1863).

In order to promote their ideals of self-government, our fathers took the 3 basic functions of government and split them up. Under the King all of the functions were under one umbrella. The King was the chief administrator, the law maker, and the judge, jury and executioner. Our fathers separated these powers. The Legislature, creates law. The Legislature is made up of two houses, the House and the Senate. The Executive Branch implements the law and the Judicial Branch interprets the law. These three branches have a check and balance on each other so that one branch does not become too powerful and over-rides the other two. A quick observation. The term "An Act of Congress" is symbolic of something that takes a lot of time and great effort to get accomplished. This is intentional. The founding fathers wanted only the most important things to become law. Making the law making process difficult was their way to accomplish this.

The Federalist Papers was a group of 85 essays appearing in several New York papers in 1787 and 88. They were written by three different individuals: Alexander Hamilton, John Jay and James Madison. These three used the pen name Publius, in order to keep their identity secret

and in honor of a Roman aristocrat who lived during the time of Rome becoming a Republic. The purpose of these three Federalists was to convince the State of New York to ratify the newly written Constitution. New York State was the ninth state to ratify the Constitution and meet the minimum requirement for its adoption. They specifically were answering the objections of an opposing group known as the Anti-Federalists. The Federalist believed that the United States needed a stronger central government than what the Articles of Confederation provided. The Articles of Confederation were written in 1777, they proved to be inadequate for keeping the union together. The Anti-Federalists wanted a less powerful central government, a bill of rights and they felt that the Constitution provided the Executive Branch with too much power and they feared the Executive Branch might become a monarchy and fall into despotism. As you know there is a "Bill of Rights", the first ten amendments. George Mason (principal author of the Virginia Declaration of Rights) was there at the Constitutional Convention of 1787. He was one of the top 5 most frequent speakers. Another prominent Anti-federalist was Patrick Henry (give me liberty or give me death) Patrick Henry. Patrick Henry also there at the convention, argued vehemently against it. He believed that the Constitution would take away individual freedom.

Patrick Henry, George Mason and other anti-federalist may have been the opposition, but their contribution made the constitution better.

The rest is history, eventually all 13 states ratified the constitution and I am proud of it.

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