

PRAISE FOR
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SCREWED UP AMERICA**

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“Here’s a rule that will serve you well: whenever a political figure is beloved of all sides, he’s always a scoundrel. Brion McClanahan rips the benign mask off Alexander Hamilton, who is presented in American classrooms as a great hero to celebrate. He is, as Brion shows, one of the original villains in the American story. Set a match to your seventh-grade textbook, and get the real story from *How Alexander Hamilton Screwed Up America*.”

—**THOMAS WOODS**, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Politically Incorrect Guide® to American History* and host of *The Tom Woods Show*

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History /
Biography



PRINTED IN THE USA



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McCLANAHAN



**HOW
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AMERICA**

BRION McCLANAHAN
FOREWORD BY RON PAUL

U.S. \$27.99

HOW ALEXANDER HAMILTON SCREWED UP AMERICA

He's the subject of a hit Broadway musical, the face on the ten-dollar bill, and one of the most popular Founding Fathers. But what do you really know about Alexander Hamilton?

Hamilton was no American hero, says author Brion McClanahan. In fact, he spent his life working to make sure citizens and states could not hold the federal government accountable. His policies set a path for presidents to launch secret and illegal wars. And he wanted to make sure American citizens couldn't do a thing to stop the government's overreach. Hamilton was a duplicitous man whose personality and ambition led to an America and a Constitution at odds with the one he publicly supported in 1788 and that the American public bought as a result.

This is the real story of Alexander Hamilton. Despite his gift for rhetoric and high reputation as a Founding Father, he was simply not to be trusted, neither then nor now.

In *How Alexander Hamilton Screwed Up America*, Brion McClanahan examines the dangers of Hamilton's philosophy, introduces readers to heroes and enemies both new and familiar, and—most importantly—explains how we can put power back in the hands of the American people.



BRION McCLANAHAN is the author of *9 Presidents Who Screwed Up America*, *The Politically Incorrect Guide® to the Founding Fathers*, *The Founding Fathers Guide to the Constitution*, and *The Politically Incorrect Guide® to Real American Heroes*. He holds an MA and a PhD in American history from the University of South Carolina. Born in Virginia, McClanahan received a BA in history from Salisbury University in Maryland. He lives with his wife and three daughters near Phenix City, Alabama.

COVER DESIGN BY JOHN CARUSO
DISTRIBUTED TO THE TRADE BY PERSEUS DISTRIBUTION



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ISBN 978-1-62157-635-8
First e-book edition 2017: 978-1-62157-654-9

Cataloging-in-Publication Data on file with the Library of Congress

Published in the United States by
Regnery History
An imprint of Regnery Publishing
A Division of Salem Media Group
300 New Jersey Ave NW
Washington, DC 20001
www.RegneryHistory.com

Manufactured in the United States of America

10987654321

Books are available in quantity for promotional or premium use. For information on discounts and terms, please visit our website: www.Regnery.com.

Distributed to the trade by
Perseus Distribution
www.perseusdistribution.com

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FOREWORD

RON PAUL

The central government has always been the greatest threat to liberty in America, but most Americans don't understand how modern America became the warfare state. How did the president acquire so much unconstitutional power? How did the federal judiciary become, at times, the most powerful branch of government? How were the states reduced to mere corporations of the general government? Why is every issue, from abortion to bathrooms to crime to education, a "national" problem? The people have very little input into public policy. They vote, they rally, they attend "town hall" meetings, but it does very little to stop the avalanche of federal laws, regulations, and rules that affect every aspect of American life. We have a federal leviathan that can't be tamed, and Americans are angry about it. They want answers.

Certainly, the Framers of the Constitution did not design our system this way. They intended the checks and balances between the three branches of government and also between the states and the central

government to limit the potential for abuse, but somewhere along the way that changed. Who or what changed the system? It wasn't Barack Obama or George W. Bush. It wasn't even Franklin Roosevelt, his cousin Teddy, or Woodrow Wilson. They certainly helped, but as Brion McClanahan argues in the following pages, the architects of our nationalist nightmare were none other than Alexander Hamilton and a trio of Supreme Court justices: John Marshall, Joseph Story, and Hugo Black. Identifying the source of the problem is essential for correcting it.

Hamilton has become one of the more popular figures in America for the Left and the Right, so accusing him of making a mess of the United States is certainly shocking. But it is also accurate. Hamilton's constitutional machinations created the outline for literally every unconstitutional federal act, from executive and judicial overreach to the nationalization of every political issue in the country. He lied to the American public about his true intentions before the Constitution was ratified and then used sly doublespeak to persuade others that so-called "implied powers" were part of the plan from the beginning. We would not have abusive unilateral executive authority in foreign and domestic policy, dangerous central banking, and impotent state governments without Hamilton's guidance. Hamilton is the architect of big government in America.

Marshall, Story, and Black certainly acted as co-conspirators. Marshall's landmark decisions could have been written by Hamilton. His reading of the Constitution was at odds with how the document was explained to the state ratifying conventions in 1788. Marshall's interpretation would have led the people to reject the document. His belief in federal judicial supremacy and unchecked national authority has been the keystone to every subsequent outrageous federal ruling, from *Roe v. Wade* to *NIFB v. Sebelius*. Marshall is the reason the Supreme Court now takes center stage in every political debate in America, but he did not accomplish this alone.

Marshall's protégé and right hand man Joseph Story codified Marshall's vision for federal judicial supremacy as a popular legal scholar and law professor. Even today, law students across the country are taught

Story's version of federal power. Story's message is simple: the federal government is supreme (even if it isn't), the state governments are subservient to the central authority, and the federal court system is the final arbiter in all constitutional questions. When these law students become lawyers and judges, they echo Story's teachings. With a legal profession so infested with a version of American political history contradictory to the actual record, it is no wonder the federal judiciary has become a mere rubber stamp in the expansion of federal power.

Black put the finishing touches on the Hamiltonian coup. As a member of the Supreme Court in the mid-twentieth century, Black participated in the final transformation of America from a federal union that respected state powers to a unitary state with unlimited control over the lives of individual Americans. You can't pray in public schools, control who uses public bathrooms, regulate pornography, or keep common standards of public decency because of Hugo Black. His insistence that the majority of the people of the states had very little influence over the social standards of their own communities delivered a death blow to the original Constitution. Thanks to Black, Americans now believe every issue is national, no matter how local in scope.

McClanahan has done a service to those who love liberty and respect the original Constitution as drafted and ratified by the founding generation. By knowing how we went wrong and who drove America off the rails, Americans can begin to repair the damage done to our political system. Unrestrained nationalism is a curse, but there is an antidote: liberty and federalism. If we start to cultivate liberty and freedom in our own communities and insist that our elected officials pursue the same agenda by disengaging the general government from Hamilton's desire for unchecked national power, we could salvage real America from the ruins of Hamilton's America. Education is the first step, and reading this book is a nice place to start.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THINK LOCALLY, ACT LOCALLY

Alexander Hamilton and his acolytes did more damage to the American government than any other group in the history of the United States. “Nationalism” turned the founding on its head and created conflict where none existed. Contrary to what most Americans have been taught in school, states’ rights, once the cornerstone of the American federal union, *prevented* conflict. Once every issue became national in scope, Americans lost the ability or the desire to directly confront problems that were considered local issues for much of American history. Americans whine about education and look for the president or the Congress to “solve” that issue. The same holds true for crime, healthcare, marriage, gun ownership, the environment, or a host of other matters that most of the members of the founding generation considered to be off-limits for the general Congress.

Americans are angry, and after every election half of the population feels alienated. There are clear winners and losers in a “national” plebiscite. The bare majority will spend the next four to eight years rolling

out a “national” plan of government that the other half of the population will hate. The winners gloat and the losers pout, uncertain about their future in an America they don’t recognize.

But that is not how the Constitution was designed. What if it didn’t matter who won the presidential election, or which party controlled Congress, or how the Supreme Court ruled on a particular issue? If we adopted a more Jeffersonian approach to American government that would certainly be the case. Men like Spencer Roane, Abel Upshur, Philip Barbour, John Taylor of Caroline, St. George Tucker, and Thomas Ritchie offered an alternative to the nationalist approach to American government. This Virginia school focused on decentralization as a way to protect political minorities from abuse at the hands of the majority. If we adhered to a central government led by Virginia and not New York, one of Jefferson and not Hamilton, Americans would be less concerned about who led Congress and more concerned about who occupied their statehouses.

This would not only be the correct way to interpret the original Constitution, it would produce a happier population. America is too big, its population too vast, and its political representation too limited to have the national government in Washington, DC make decisions that should be left to the people of the states. Our representative ratio in Congress, once pegged by George Washington at 30,000:1 now stands at a whopping 735,000:1 and growing! Washington said that the original ratio of 40,000:1 was too large for a representative government. What would he think about 735,000:1? The fact is we have lost the ability to control the government in Washington, DC. The Jeffersonians could see the writing on the wall in the early federal period. “National” power could be more dangerous to liberty and the stability of the federal republic than decentralization.

California, Washington, and Oregon have openly spoken of secession following Donald Trump’s election. The same thing happened in 2008 when Barack Obama was elected president, only then it was the South and the Mountain West that led the charge. This is a symptom of the disease of Hamilton’s America. Americans don’t want to be governed

by a foreign people, and what most people realize, though they won't admit it, is that the "one people" theory pushed by every nationalist from Hamilton forward is not only historically inaccurate, it is detrimental to the political welfare of the constituent parts of the union. Why should Californians be subjected to the laws of Alabama or vice-versa? At the heart of each of these secession "movements" is a realization that local communities are better equipped to handle the social and cultural issues of the day. It has always been so.

Wouldn't it be more responsible for the local school board to make decisions for the people of the state or for the people of the community to have a government and society that better reflects their social and moral values? Think locally, act locally should be the political slogan of the twenty-first century. Hamilton's America, the "one nation indivisible" beaten into our heads since we were five, would work well for a homogenous population, but Americans have never—never—enjoyed that. From the colonial period to the present, Americans have been a diverse lot. Cavalier Virginians and Puritan Massachusettians never saw eye to eye on government policy. They in fact hated each other, but a union with very limited power in the central authority allowed each people to develop their political community as they saw fit. It would be immoral for one group of people to tell another how to live, yet this type of cultural imperialism is foisted upon Americans, both left and right, on a daily basis in Hamilton's American "nation."

We live in Hamilton's America, but if we want an America that reflects who we are and have been as a people, Hamilton's America needs to be buried next to the bastard from Nevis. The only way to "make America great again" is to rid the people of the states of Hamilton's curse and take government into our own hands at the state and local level. Maybe then, Hamilton, Marshall, Story, and Black could cease screwing up the original federal republic.