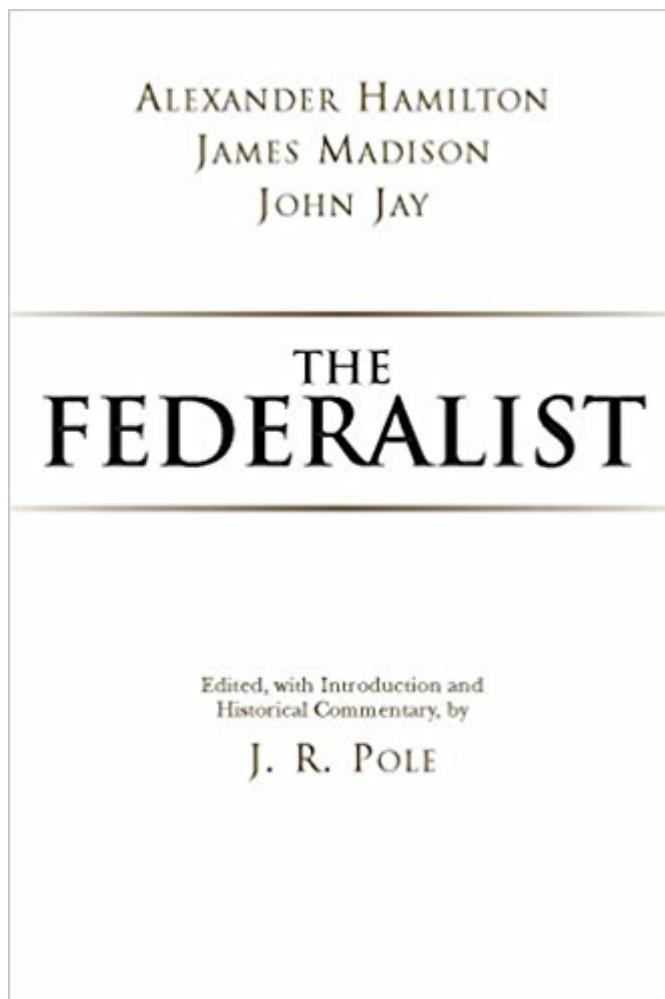


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The Federalist (Hackett Classics)



Synopsis

No competing edition of The Federalist offers nearly as much help in grasping Publius' arguments in defense of the new but unratified United States Constitution of 1787 as this new annotated edition by J. R. Pole. Essay by essay--with ample cross-references and glosses on 18th-century linguistic usage--Pole's commentary lays bare the intellectual background and assumptions of Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay; explicates and critiques The Federalist's central concepts, rhetorical strategies, and arguments; and points up the international, national, and local facts on the ground relevant to Confederation Era New Yorkers, the constituency to which The Federalist was originally addressed. Pole's Introduction, a brief chronology of political events from 1688 to 1791, a brief overview of the themes of the essays, the text of the Constitution cross-referenced to The Federalist, and an index of proper names, concepts, and themes that also functions as a glossary further distinguish this edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Federalist Papers are by far the most significant resource for historical argument in construing the U.S. Constitution. J. R. Pole has given us a new edition that winningly combines his exceptional mastery of the politics of the Federalist period with an acute appreciation of the historical and philosophical background of the Papers. In crisp, lucid English prose he provides guidance for students--including lawyers, journalists, and judges--who want to understand the context within which the Federalist Papers were created. There is no more important work of American political

philosophy; there is no one better to explicate its historical and political sources than J. R. Pole; it is unlikely there will be a better edition than his. --Philip Bobbitt, University of Texas at Austin School of Law
This edition will surely replace existing editions. The quality, accuracy and thoroughness of the annotation is quite impressive. Many notes are nice little essays in themselves. This edition will make a significant contribution to the scholarship on The Federalist. I always thought it a splendid idea and the execution shows off Professor Pole's erudition with subtlety and grace. --Joyce Appleby, UCLAA first-rate edition. Ideally suited for classroom use in colleges, graduate schools, and law schools. The notes are valuable and enlightening, the Introduction is a model of concise and illuminating prose, and the volume is handsomely designed and superbly indexed. This will be the edition of choice for anyone seeking to teach The Federalist. --R. B. Bernstein, New York University Law School

J. R. Pole, formerly Rhodes Professor of American History at the University of Oxford, is an Emeritus Fellow of St. Catherine's College, Oxford.

This review applies specifically to the J. R. Pole edition of The Federalist, published by Hackett. Considering the thorough notes and fine introduction, this should be the preferred edition of The Federalist for the student and general reader. Sadly, I have found, within the first fifteen pages, an unacceptable number of errors in editing or proofreading. Assuming this rate of errors is representative of the text as a whole, it cannot be relied on as the primary edition for studying this important historical work. If you can afford several editions, by all means acquire the Pole edition for its helpful notes, but I would recommend the standard Cooke edition (from Wesleyan U. Press), the Gideon edition (from Liberty Fund), or the inexpensive Signet edition for the text itself. Here are examples of the errors: On p. xlii, the first essay is incorrectly attributed to John Jay, rather than Alexander Hamilton. On pages 4 and 15, footnotes contain inaccurate cross-references to other notes. Most serious is an apparently systematic editing problem with the text itself. The intention of the Pole edition is to present the so-called "McClean" text, which contained revisions (by the authors) to the original newspaper versions of the essays. However, these revisions are inconsistently incorporated in the Pole edition. For example, in the newspaper text of the third essay, a series of sub-arguments is set forth in separate paragraphs that each begin with the word "Because." In the McClean text, a new sentence was added to indicate that a list of reasons follows, and the word "Because" was omitted from the beginning of each paragraph in the list. But in the Pole edition, one of the paragraphs is not revised at all (the word "Because" still appears), and

another is incompletely revised, so that it begins incorrectly with the words "If even if the governing party . . ." rather than "If even the governing party . . ." All this may sound arcane, but, besides being technically inaccurate, it makes the argument confusing and ungrammatical where it is not so, in a correct text of either the newspaper or the McClean versions. I should note that the text was apparently provided by the Intelex Corporation, not prepared by Professor Pole himself.

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