

## Various Authors

# Foundations of Our Democracy: The Documents that Made America

In 1776, the United States of America was born from a document that declared all men created equal and free to choose who they serve in this world. What followed was a difficult fight against a monarchy, a fight that ended with the creation of a powerful country built on the tenets of freedom and equality. These documents are some of the foundational writings from the earliest days of the country that have shaped the United States government for centuries:

**The Declaration of Independence** - This was the formal decree that the 13 colonies wished to separate from the rule of England. This essay declares that the rulership of England had been unjust and did not give the people living in America proper representation in the government, and declared independence from the King of Great Britain.

**The Constitution** - *The Constitution of the United States* was adopted as the supreme law of the country in 1789. This document, along with its amendments, is the instruction manual for running the United States' democracy, from outlining the three branches of government to enacting a protocol for succession of power.

**The Federalist Papers** - *The Federalist Papers* were a series of articles written by Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison. The essays present the reasoning and logic behind each article of the Constitution, and were written to garner congressional support for its ratification. Today, they are used to assist in interpreting the intentions of the original supporters of the Constitution.

**The Bill of Rights** - *The Bill of Rights* is the set of the first 10 amendments added to the Constitution. These amendments outline inalienable and natural rights for individuals, as well as stating that states have the power to create their own laws for matters not addressed in the Constitution.

Narrated by Jason Arnold

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