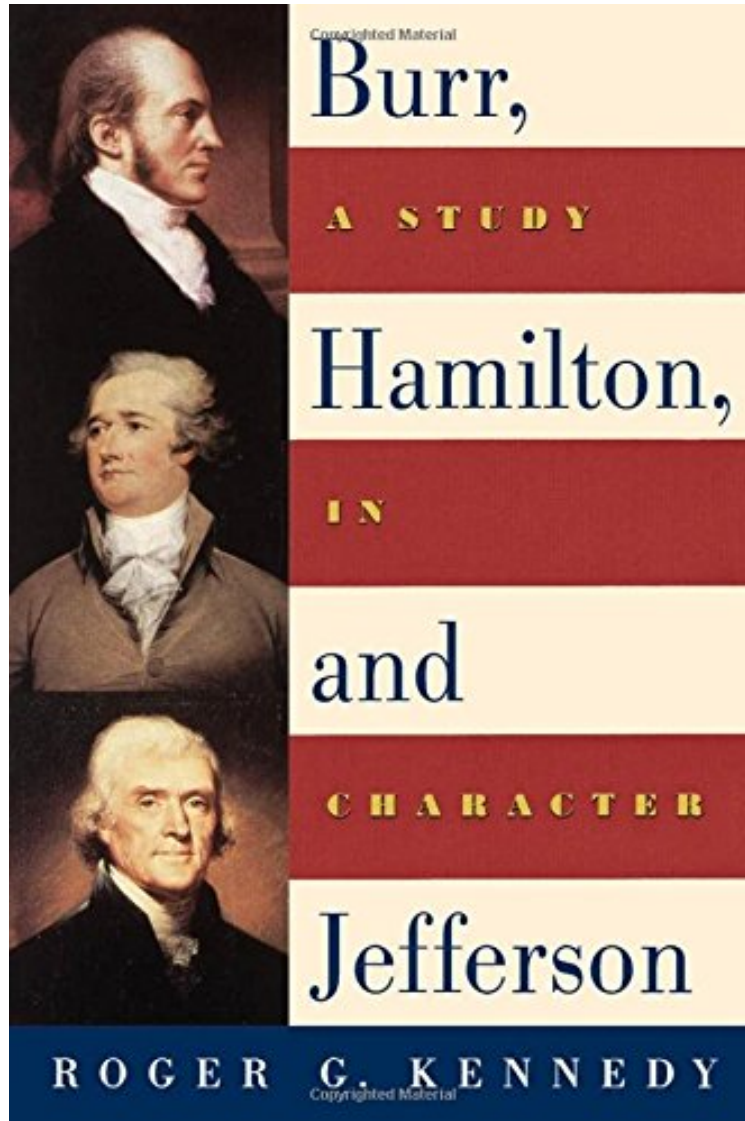


(Pdf free) Burr, Hamilton, and Jefferson: A Study in Character

Burr, Hamilton, and Jefferson: A Study in Character

Roger G. Kennedy

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Roger G. Kennedy : Burr, Hamilton, and Jefferson: A Study in Character before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Burr, Hamilton, and Jefferson: A Study in Character:

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. If You Want History Without Halos---This Is It!By James L. SrodesUnlike the current flood of Founding Father hagiography, Roger Kennedy's look at the fractious ties between Jefferson, Hamilton, and Burr gives you the sense of these characters as their contemporaries knew them. Kennedy writes the way your favorite college professor lectured---with humor and a profound grasp of how motrals act in the

political trenches. His insights into the early struggle over slavery at that early stage in our history is worth the price of admission alone. Kennedy offers clearly stated conclusions on a take-it-or-leave-it basis. But the reader comes away with confidence that those opinions are come by after lengthy research and thought. If you have a friend who is addicted to early American history, this is the gift.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A little bit of a let down

By Scott Oliphant I wanted to like this book. I really did. I am fascinated with the dynamic between these 3 polarizing figures, Burr, Jefferson, and Hamilton and this book has a ton of worthwhile information laced throughout its pages. I appreciate any author that gives an even-handed view of Colonel Burr which is often difficult to find and Kennedy achieved this. However, I was often left frustrated with the author's style and overall execution of the book. The prose is often rambling and seemingly without structure and a couple misstatements as pointed out by other reviewers. About two thirds of the way through the book I found myself skimming pages to filter out some of the areas I found of lesser importance, something I rarely do. I feel like if it was 150 pages shorter and tied together a little better it would have been a more effective book. In the end, despite its faults, it really is a worthwhile read for anyone who has an interest in these three great men. Just know it might try your patience from time to time.

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This book restores Aaron Burr to his place as a central figure in the founding of the American Republic. Abolitionist, proto-feminist, friend to such Indian leaders as Joseph Brant, Burr was personally acquainted with a wider range of Americans, and of the American continent, than any other Founder except George Washington. He contested for power with Hamilton and then with Jefferson on a continental scale. The book does not sentimentalize any of its three protagonists, neither does it derogate their extraordinary qualities. They were all great men, all flawed, and all three failed to achieve their full aspirations. But their struggles make for an epic tale. Written from the perspective of a historian and administrator who, over nearly fifty years in public life, has served six presidents, this book penetrates into the personal qualities of its three central figures. In telling the tale of their shifting power relationships and their antipathies, it reassesses their policies and the consequences of their successes and failures. Fresh information about the careers of Hamilton and Burr is derived from newly-discovered sources, and a supporting cast of secondary figures emerges to give depth and irony to the principal narrative. This is a book for people who know how political life is lived, and who refuse to be confined within preconceptions and prejudices until they have weighed all the evidence, to reach their own conclusions both as to events and character. This is a controversial book, but not a confrontational one, for it is written with sympathy for men of high aspirations, who were disappointed in much, but who succeeded, in all three cases, to a degree not hitherto fully understood.

From Kirkus s

In a study of three Founders, Kennedy, director emeritus of the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History and a prolific author (*Hidden Cities*, 1994, etc.), demonstrates his devotion to underdogs, in particular Aaron Burr. New York attorney general and vice president of the US, Burr was once tapped as Jefferson's successor to the presidency, but his political career shriveled when he lost a gubernatorial election, and in 1806, Jefferson accused him of treason. His papers were lost, and his daughter, his most promising hagiographer, died before beginning a biography of her dad. That 19th-century notables including Harriet Beecher Stowe and John Quincy Adams maligned Burr as a womanizing rascal didn't help Burr's reputation. A spin doctor's nightmare? In Kennedy's hands, Burr appears admirable: a proto-feminist, taken with Mary Wollstonecraft's writings; a defender of Kennedy's other favorite underdog, Native Americans; and a committed abolitionist. Kennedy explores the careers and characters of Hamilton and Jefferson as well, arguing that they cannot be understood without first knowing Burr. If Burr is the hero of this book, neither Jefferson nor Hamilton is quite the villain each was "ambitious," each "on occasion noble, generous, and touching in [his] willingness to express [his] affections." Kennedy has a penchant for unsubstantiated psychobabble. Pause critically when he waxes Oprah-esque about the psychic damage done to Burr and Hamilton by traumatic childhoods; raise a quizzical eyebrow at his suggestion that Jefferson's vitriol was stoked by Burr's matchmaking in introducing James Madison to Dolley Payne, Burr no doubt altered the relationship of "the great little Madison" and the Sage of Monticello, two "brilliant and lonely men" who had toiled together as "bachelor partners" for 14 years after the death of Jefferson's wife, though that's hardly grounds for branding your VP a traitor. Kennedy is no Gore Vidal, yet, in an engaging and lightly ironic tone, he offers a worthwhile portrait of powerful politicians in early America. (30 photos) (First printing of 40,000; Book-of-the-Month Club and History Book Club alternate selections; author tour) -- Copyright 1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. "Kennedy's style is

refreshingly conversational and direct.... Kennedy succeeds in demonstrating that all three men were flawed giants and that Burr deserves more credit than most authors have given him. Recommended for university and large public libraries."--Library Journal"It's hard to conceive of three more absorbing characters than Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, and Aaron Burr. Standing alone, each would have fascinated any age in which he lived. Thrown together by the tempests of history and personal ambition, they struggled desperately to prevail over one another, even unto death. Roger Kennedy's book brilliantly illuminates a trio of passionate actors on the early American stage."--Harry McPherson, Counsel to President Johnson, and author of *A Political Education*"This is a masterful, iconoclastic portrait of three founding fathers with a surprisingly fresh assessment of Aaron Burr that makes for provocative and important reading."--Hedrick Smith, author of *Rethinking America*"A worthwhile portrait of powerful politicians in early America."--Kirkus s"Roger Kennedy comes out of a lengthy political career and writes with the authority of a man who has walked the corridors of power. In *Burr, Hamilton, and Jefferson: A Study in Character* he ranges over the career of the three men and over the history of their era, exploring their behavior and puzzling out their motives."--Men's Journal

About the Author Roger G. Kennedy has served as Director of The National Park Service, as Director of The Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, and as Vice President, Finance, of the Ford Foundation. He has written nine books, has appeared in his own series on the Discovery Channel, and was a White House correspondent for NBC. He lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico.