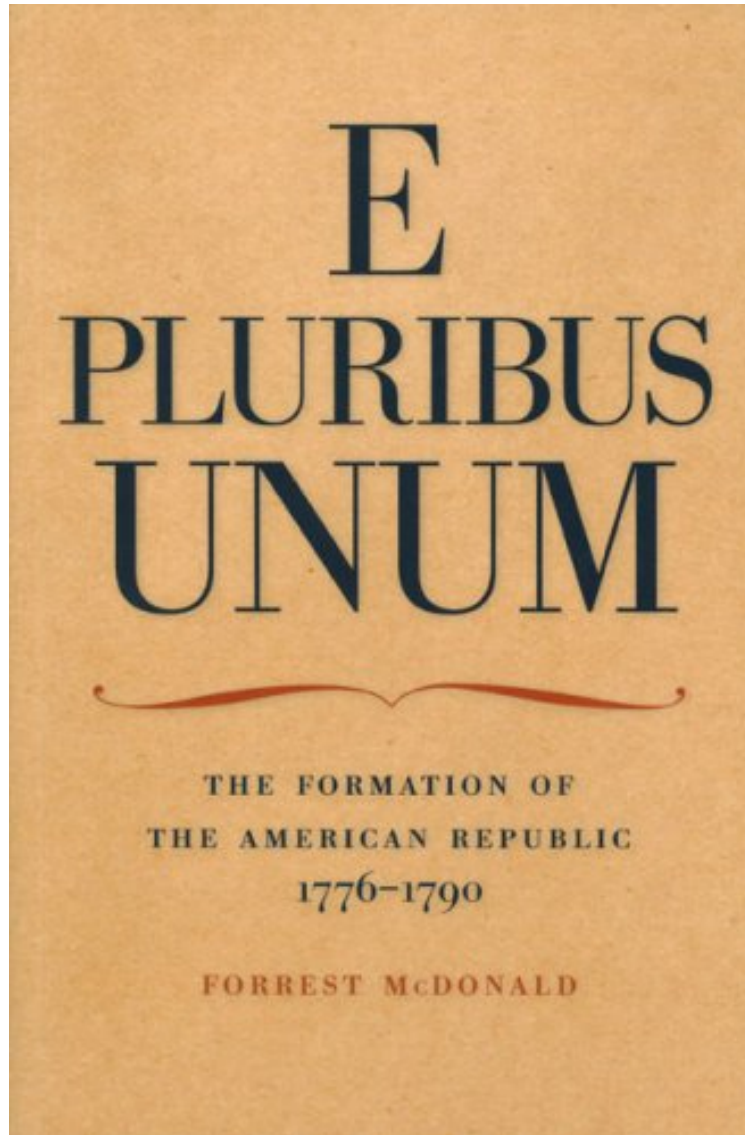


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E Pluribus Unum

Forrest McDonald

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Forrest McDonald : E Pluribus Unum before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised E Pluribus Unum:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Lively, provocative history about how the American Republic came into existenceBy E. JakseticIn this book, the author discusses the various personalities, competing ideologies, and political maneuvering involved in the American Revolution and the post-Revolutionary period leading up to the adoption of the U.S. Constitution. The author offers an interesting perspective on how 13 discordant, independent

States struggling under the failing Articles of Confederation wrestled with the problem of reconciling political principles with political realities, made difficult compromises to resolve their various differences, and united into an American republic framed by the U.S. Constitution. In doing so, the author does not present a sanitized, storybook narrative of the founding of the American Republic, but rather a lively, provocative history that makes the reader understand how close the 13 States came to not uniting into a single country. I recommend this book for anyone interested in the early history of the United States.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A NOTED HISTORIAN'S INTERPRETATION OF THE ORIGIN OF OUR NATION By Steven H. Propp Forrest McDonald (born 1927) is an American historian, who has also written books such as *We the People: The Economic Origins of the Constitution* (Library of Conservative Thought) and *Novus Ordo Seclorum: The Intellectual Origins of the Constitution* [Paperback]. This book was originally published in 1965, and revised in 1992. He wrote in the Preface to the first edition, "And so, in the period under inquiry in this book, there was also only one meaningful question: Would this be politically one nation, or would it not?" He later suggests, "In this resistance some opportunists saw opportunity, and their doings led to civil war. In the civil war other opportunists saw larger opportunity, and their doings led to the creation of the American nation." (Pg. 226) About the Philadelphia Constitutional Convention, he wrote, "The list of distinguished Americans certain not to come was large. Only one of the great diplomats of the Revolution, Franklin, would be there. John Jay of New York and Henry Laurens of South Carolina had not been chosen, and Thomas Jefferson and John Adams were in Europe as ambassadors. Most of the great republicans would likewise be missing... Neither Sam Adams and John Hancock of Massachusetts nor Richard Henry Lee and Patrick Henry of Virginia chose to come (Henry did not because, he said, 'I smelt a rat')." (Pg. 259-260) He observes that although the delegates spoke as if the issue were "what kind of national government would be created... The real issue, throughout, was whether there would be a national government---and therefore a nation---at all." (Pg. 276) He reports that "almost by accident, was created the magnificent system of checks and balances of the United States Constitution... (and) resulted in a form of government more peculiarly adapted to the nature of the animal than anything devised before or since." (Pg. 304) This fascinating and thought-provoking book is an "essential read" for anyone interested in the early history of our nation.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Founding Era Book By Steven Regan I have read a number of books about the founding era and the founding fathers and found *E Pluribus Unum* to be no more difficult to read or understand than any other similar book. You do not need to be a history major to read and comprehend it. What the negative reviews reflect is a complete failure of our educational system. How can high school or college students not be able to understand anything about the founding of this country? Note to all such students, Wikipedia and the History Channel are not substitutes for a real education in the history of this country.

"An extraordinary book." Gordon S. Wood, Brown University Having won independence from England, America faced a new question: Would this be politically one nation, or would it not? *E Pluribus Unum* is a spirited look at how that question came to be answered. That the American people introduced a governmental system adequate to check the very forces unleashed by the Revolution, this, writes Professor McDonald, "was the miracle of the age. . . . The French, the Russians, the Italians, the Germans, all the planet's peoples in their turn, would become so unrestrained as to lose contact with sanity. The Americans might have suffered a similar history had they followed the lead of those who, in 1787 and 1788, spoke in the name . . . of popular 'rights.' But there were giants on the earth in those days, and they spoke in the name of the nation. . . ." Forrest McDonald is Professor of History at the University of Alabama.