

# Hamilton vs. Jefferson: Twitter Edition

**Table of Contents:** Primary Sources from *The American Spirit* (p. 207-219)

- [1. Popular Rule](#)
- [2. States' Rights](#)
- [3. Other Miscellaneous Disagreements](#)
- [4. The Bank of the United States](#)
- [5. The French Revolution](#)

## Directions:

In your groups, use the two sets of sources—both from Hamilton and from Jefferson—associated with your assigned topic to construct a Twitter dialogue. The primary sources should inform the tweets so the Twitter dialogue discusses the same issues as the sources; each person should express the same viewpoints on the same issues, just in fewer characters. Final piece: add at least one relevant person to each battle who can “favorite” or “retweet” any of your tweets.

5 Total Topics (Divide according to instructions below)

- 2 Topics
  - Create a Twitter Battle for 2 of the 5 topics\*
  - Each battle must include the following:
    - 3 Tweets from Jefferson
    - 3 Tweets from Hamilton
    - At least one tweet from another person
    - **TOTAL 7 TWEETS FOR EACH TOPIC**

\* For one of your twitter battles, put nicely on one side of sheet of computer paper for potential wall hanging. The rest of the work can be attached to the back.

- 3 Topics
  - For the remaining 3 topics, you must tell me the main differences between Hamilton and Jefferson's Ideas.

# Popular Rule

## Hamilton

All communities divide themselves into the few and the many. The first are the rich and well born; the other, the mass of the people. The voice of the people has been said to be the voice of God; and however generally this maxim has been quoted and believed, it is not true in fact. The people are turbulent and changing; they seldom judge or determine right. Give therefore to the first class a distinct, permanent share in the government. They will check the unsteadiness of the second; and as they cannot receive any advantage by a change, they therefore will ever maintain good government.

Can a democratic assembly, who annually [through annual elections] revolve in the mass of the people, be supposed steadily to pursue the public good? Nothing but a permanent body can check the imprudence of democracy. Their turbulent and uncontrolling disposition requires checks. (1787)

Take mankind in general, they are vicious—their passions may be operated upon. . . . Take mankind as they are, and what are they governed by? Their passions. There may be in every government a few choice spirits, who may act from more worthy motives. One great error is that we suppose mankind more honest than they are. Our prevailing passions are ambition and interest; and it will be the duty of a wise government to avail itself of those passions, in order to make them subservient to the public good. (1787)

Your people, sir, is a great beast. (According to legend, c. 1792)

I have an indifferent [low] opinion of the honesty of this country, and ill forebodings as to its future system. (1783)

I said that I was affectionately attached to the republican theory. . . . I add that I have strong hopes

## Jefferson

Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God, if ever he had a chosen people, whose breasts he has made his peculiar deposit for substantial and genuine virtue. (1784)

Men . . . are naturally divided into two parties. Those who fear and distrust the people. . . . Those who identify themselves with the people, have confidence in them, cherish and consider them as the most honest and safe...depository of the public interest. (1824)

The mass of mankind has not been born with saddles on their backs, nor a favored few booted and spurred, ready to ride them legitimately, by the grace of God. (1826)

Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers...alone. The people themselves are its only safe depositories. (1787)

I have such reliance on the good sense of the body of the people and the honesty of their leaders that I am not afraid of their letting things go wrong to any length in any cause. (1788)

Whenever the people are well-informed, they can be trusted with their own government; whenever things get so far wrong as to attract their notice, they may be relied on to set them to rights. (1789)

I am not among those who fear the people. They, and not the rich, are our dependence for continued freedom. (1816)

I have great confidence in the common sense of mankind in general. (1800)

My most earnest wish is to see the republican element of popular control pushed to the maximum of its practicable exercise. I shall then believe that our government may be pure and perpetual. (1816)

of the success of that theory; but, in candor, I ought also to add that I am far from being without doubts. I consider its success as yet a problem. (1792)

## States' Rights

### Hamilton

A firm Union will be of the utmost moment to the peace and liberty of the states, as a barrier against domestic faction and insurrection. (1787)

A state government will ever be the rival power of the general government. (1787)

As to the destruction of state governments, the great and real anxiety is to be able to preserve the national [government] from the too potent and counteracting influence of those governments. . . . As to the state governments, the prevailing bias of my judgment is that if they can be circumscribed within bounds consistent with the preservation of the national government, they will prove useful and salutary.

If the states were all of the size of Connecticut, Maryland, or New Jersey, I should decidedly regard the local governments as both safe and useful. As the thing now is, however, I acknowledge the most serious apprehensions that the government of the United States will not be able to maintain itself against their influence. I see that influence already penetrating into the national councils and preventing their direction.

Hence, a disposition on my part towards a liberal construction of the powers of the national government, and to erect every fence to guard it from depredations which is, in my opinion, consistent with constitutional propriety. As to any combination to prostrate the state governments, I disavow and deny it. (1792)

### Jefferson

I am not a friend to a very energetic government. It is always oppressive. It places the governors indeed more at their ease, at the expense of the people. (1787)

If ever this vast country is brought under a single government, it will be one of the most extensive corruption. (1822)

Our country is too large to have all its affairs directed by a single government. Public servants, at such a distance and from under the eye of their constituents, must, from the circumstance of distance, be unable to administer and overlook all the details necessary for the good government of the citizens; and the same circumstance, by rendering detection impossible to their constituents, will invite the public agents to corruption, plunder, and waste. . . .

What an augmentation of the field for jobbing, speculating, plundering, office-building, and office-hunting would be produced by an assumption of all the state powers into the hands of the general government. The true theory of our Constitution [strict construction] is surely the wisest and best—that the states are independent as to everything within themselves, and united as to everything respecting foreign nations. Let the general government be reduced to foreign concerns only, and let our affairs be disentangled from those of all other nations, except as to commerce, which the merchants will manage the better, the more they are left free to manage themselves. And our general government may be reduced to a very simple organization and a very unexpensive one: a few plain duties to be performed by a few servants. (1800)

## Other Miscellaneous Disagreements

### Hamilton

A national debt, if it is not excessive, will be to us a national blessing. (1781)

If all the public creditors receive their dues from one source...their interest will be the same. And having the same interests, they will unite in support of the fiscal arrangements of the government. (c. 1791)

Real liberty is neither found in despotism or the extremes of democracy, but in moderate governments. (1787)

Beware, my dear sir, of magnifying a riot into an insurrection, by employing in the first instance an inadequate force. 'Tis better far to err on the other side. Whenever the government appears in arms, it ought to appear like a Hercules, and inspire respect by the display of strength. (1799)

I believe the British government forms the best model the world ever produced, and such has been its progress in the minds of the many that this truth gradually gains ground. (1787)

It must be by this time evident to all men of reflection . . . that it [Articles of Confederation] is a system so radically vicious and unsound as to admit not of amendment but by an entire change in its leading features and characters. (1787)

Let me observe that an Executive is less dangerous to the liberties of the people when in office during life than for seven years. (1787)

Standing armies are dangerous to liberty. (1787)

[Jefferson is] an atheist in religion and a fanatic in politics. (1800)

It was not long before I discovered he [Washington] was neither remarkable for delicacy nor good temper. . . .

The General [Washington] is a very honest man. His competitors have slender abilities, and less integrity. His popularity has often been essential to the safety of America. . . . These considerations have influenced my past conduct respecting him and will influence

### Jefferson

...No man is more ardently intent to see the public debt soon and sacredly paid off than I am. This exactly marks the difference between Colonel Hamilton's views and mine, that I would wish the debt paid tomorrow; he wishes it never to be paid, but always to be a thing wherewith to corrupt and manage the legislature [Congress]. (1792)

...Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter. (1787)

. . . A little rebellion now and then is a good thing, and as necessary in the political world as storms in the physical. . . . It is a medicine necessary for the sound health of government. (1787)

...It is her [England's] government which is so corrupt, and which has destroyed the nation—it was certainly the most corrupt and unprincipled government on earth. (1810)

But with all the imperfections of our present government [Articles of Confederation], it is without comparison the best existing or that ever did exist. . . . Indeed, I think all the good of this new Constitution might have been couched in three or four new articles, to be added to the good, old, and venerable fabric. . . . (1787)

I disapproved, also, the perpetual re-eligibility of the President. (1789)

A naval force can never endanger our liberties, nor occasion bloodshed; a land force would do both. (1786)

I am a Christian, in the only sense in which he [Jesus] wished anyone to be: sincerely attached to his doctrines, in preference to all others. (1803)

His [Washington's] integrity was most pure, his justice the most inflexible I have ever known. . . . He was, indeed, in every sense of the words, a wise, a good, and a great man. His temper was naturally irritable and high toned; but reflection and resolution had obtained a firm and habitual ascendancy over it.

<p>my future. (1781)</p> <p>That gentleman [Jefferson] whom I once <i>very much esteemed</i>, but who does not permit me to retain that sentiment for him, is certainly a man of sublimated and paradoxical imagination, entertaining and propagating opinions inconsistent with dignified and orderly government. (1792)</p>	<p>If ever, however, it broke its bonds, he was most tremendous in his wrath. (1814)</p> <p>Hamilton was indeed a singular character. Of acute understanding, disinterested, honest, and honorable in all private transactions, amiable in society, and duly valuing virtue in private life, yet so bewitched and perverted by the British example as to be under thorough conviction that corruption was essential to the government of a nation. (1818)</p>
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## Bank of the United States

<p><u>Hamilton</u>: February 23, 1791</p> <p>If the <i>end</i> be clearly comprehended within any of the specified powers, and if the measure have an obvious relation to that <i>end</i>, and is not forbidden by any particular provision of the Constitution, it may safely be deemed to come within the compass of the national authority.</p> <p>There is also this further criterion, which may materially assist the decision: Does the proposed measure abridge a pre-existing right of any state or of any individual? If it does not, there is a strong presumption in favor of its constitutionality. . . .</p> <p>. . . “Necessary” often means no more than needful, requisite, incidental, useful, or conducive to. . . . [A] restrictive interpretation of the word “necessary” is also contrary to this sound maxim of construction: namely, that the powers contained in a constitution . . . ought to be construed liberally in advancement of the public good.</p> <p>A hope is entertained that it has, by this time, been made to appear to the satisfaction of the President, that a bank has a natural relation to the power of collecting taxes—to that of regulating trade—to that of providing for the common defense—and that, as the bill under consideration contemplates the government in the light of a joint proprietor of the stock of the bank, it brings the case within the provision of the clause of the Constitution which immediately respects [relates to] the property of the United States. [Evidently Art. IV, Sec. III, para. 2: “The Congress shall have power to . . . make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States. . . .”]</p>	<p><u>Jefferson</u> February 15, 1791</p> <p>I consider the foundation of the Constitution as laid on this ground— that <i>all powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states, or to the people</i> (12th [10th] amend.). To take a single step beyond the boundaries thus specifically drawn around the powers of Congress is to take possession of a boundless field of power, no longer susceptible of any definition.</p> <p>The incorporation of a bank, and the powers assumed by this bill, have not, in my opinion, been delegated to the United States by the Constitution.</p> <p>The second general phrase is “to make all laws <i>necessary</i> and proper for carrying into execution the enumerated powers.” But they can all be carried into execution without a bank. A bank therefore is not <i>necessary</i>, and consequently not authorized by this phrase.</p> <p>It has been much urged that a bank will give great facility or convenience in the collection of taxes. Suppose this were true; yet the Constitution allows only</p>
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# The French Revolution

## Hamilton

In France, he [Jefferson] saw government only on the side of its abuses. He drank freely of the French philosophy, in religion, in science, in politics. He came from France in the moment of a fermentation which he had a share in exciting, and in the passions and feelings of which he shared, both from temperament and situation. . . . He came electrified with attachment to France, and with the project of knitting together the two countries in the closest political bands. (1792)

. . . The cause of France is compared with that of America during its late revolution. Would to heaven that the comparison were just. Would to heaven we could discern in the mirror of French affairs the same humanity, the same decorum, the same gravity, the same order, the same dignity, the same solemnity, which distinguished the cause of the American Revolution. Clouds and darkness would not then rest upon the issue as they now do. I own I do not like the comparison. (1793?)

. . . There was a time when all men in this country entertained the same favorable view of the French Revolution. At the present time, they all still unite in the wish that the troubles of France may terminate in the establishment of a free and good government; and dispassionate, well-informed men must equally unite in the doubt whether this be likely to take place under the auspices of those who now govern . . . that country. But agreeing in these two points, there is a great and serious diversity of opinion as to the real merits and probable issue of the French Revolution. (1794)

None can deny that the cause of France has been stained by excesses and extravagances for which it is not easy, if possible, to find a parallel in the history of human affairs, and from which reason and humanity recoil. . . . (1794)

## Jefferson

But it is a fact, in spite of the mildness of their governors, the [French] people are ground to powder by the vices of the form of government. Of twenty millions of people supposed to be in France, I am of opinion there are nineteen millions more wretched, more accursed in every circumstance of human existence than the most conspicuously wretched individual of the whole United States. (1785)

You will have heard, before this reaches you, of the peril into which the French Revolution is brought by the flight of their King. Such are the fruits of that form of government which heaps importance on idiots, and of which the Tories of the present day are trying to preach into our favor. I still hope the French Revolution will issue happily. I feel that the permanence of our own leans in some degree on that; and that a failure there would be a powerful argument to prove there must be a failure here. (1791)

In the struggle which was necessary, many guilty persons fell without the forms of trial, and with them some innocent. These I deplore as much as anybody, and shall deplore some of them to the day of my death. But I deplore them as I should have done had they fallen in battle. . . . But time and truth will rescue and embalm their very liberty for which they would never have hesitated to offer up their lives. The liberty of the whole earth was depending on the issue of the contest, and was ever such a prize won with so little innocent blood? (1793)

My own affections have been deeply wounded by some of the martyrs to this cause, but rather than it should have failed I would have seen half the earth desolated; were there but an Adam and an Eve left in every country, and left free, it would be better than it now is. (1793)