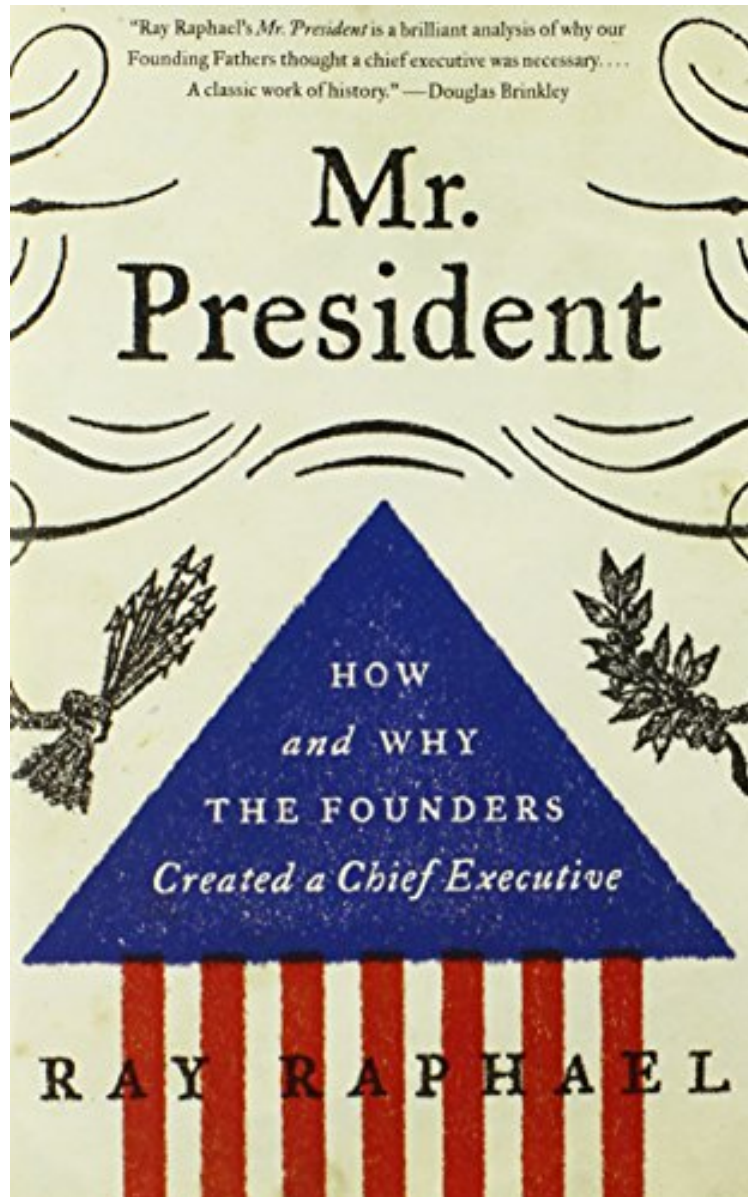


[E-BOOK] Mr. President: How and Why the Founders Created a Chief Executive

Mr. President: How and Why the Founders Created a Chief Executive

Ray Raphael

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Ray Raphael : Mr. President: How and Why the Founders Created a Chief Executive before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mr. President: How and Why the Founders Created a Chief Executive:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Mr. President: How and Why the Founders Created a Chief Executive By Kim Burdick. "In the beginning there were committees." Published during one of the nastiest election cycles since the Election of 1800, Ray Raphael's "Mr. President," is worth reading. Raphael takes us back to our nation's beginnings, reminding us that participating in a democracy is a messy but important responsibility. His conclusion is that "While the presidency has not turned out entirely as the framers intended, we would still do well to embrace the values of governance they expected the chief executive of the United States, in whom they placed great trust, to exemplify." The strongest and most interesting parts of Raphael's book clarify the actions and hostilities of the Election of 1800, Thomas Jefferson's grappling with the balance of democratic principles vs. Executive privileges, and a very fine concluding chapter called, "Then and Now--Translations". This particular chapter should be read by every History 101 student in America. In it, Raphael poses questions related to opinions and interpretations of the past and the pros and cons of past and present expectations of both the presidency and political parties. In this 21st Century era of political anger and mud-slinging, Raphael should have used the proper name for the Democratic-Republican Party. By abbreviating that party's name to "the Republicans," there is room for distortion and misinterpretation by lay readers. The Republican Party developed much, much later in history, and was the Party of Lincoln. This is an excellent book. Kim Burdick Stanton, Delaware 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent history By Benjamin Fabian Wonderful book -- Ray Raphael does an outstanding job of revealing the philosophical differences between the founders and their various conceptions of what a national executive should look like. The story of how the national executive first came to be, as well as how the early presidents shaped the office, is a fascinating tale that Raphael takes the time to explore in detail. Highly recommended. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Ray Raphael is always good. He's the best historian of the American story ... By Shawn McAllister Ray Raphael is always good. He's the best historian of the American story that I've read. Definitely up there with David McCullough.

The dramatic and penetrating story of the political maneuverings and personalities behind the creation of the office of the president, with ramifications that continue to this day. For the first time, by focusing closely on the dynamic give-and-take at the Constitutional Convention, Ray Raphael reveals how politics and personalities cobbled together a lasting, but flawed, executive office. Remarkably, the hero of this saga is Gouverneur Morris, a flamboyant, peg-legged delegate who pushed through his agenda with amazing political savvy, and not a little deceit. Without Morris's perseverance, a much weaker American president would be appointed by Congress, serve for seven years, could not be reelected, and have his powers tightly constrained. Charting the presidency as it evolved during the administrations of Washington, Adams, and Jefferson, Raphael shows how, given the Constitution's broad outlines, the president's powers could easily be augmented but rarely diminished. Today we see the resultant office that has become more sweeping, more powerful, and more inherently partisan than the framers ever intended. And the issues of 1787—whether the Electoral College, the president's war powers, or the extent of executive authority—continue to stir our political debates.

In Mr. President, historian Ray Raphael explores the birth and early molding of the presidency. The journey is an illuminating one, throwing off wisdom that resonates as the nation prepares to choose its president again. . . . Mr. President provides a rich harvest of insights for reflection during the next five months of political bloodletting. The Washington Post In Mr. President, Raphael . . . provides a careful, engaging and at times surprising account of the origins and early evolution of what is now the most powerful political office in the world. . . . Mr. President also presents lively and lucid lessons in civics. Glenn Altschuler, Tulsa World In a time when many find themselves questioning the efficacy of the presidency (seemingly regardless of party affiliation), the eligibility of future candidates, and the efficiency of the election process, a look back at the origins of the highest office in the U.S. is particularly timely. In this engaging narrative, Raphael elucidates the goings-on of the Federal Convention. . . . Meticulously detailed and thoroughly researched Raphael cites the papers of many icons of the nation's birth, such as Alexander Hamilton and Benjamin Franklin this is a valuable read for Democrats and Republicans, as well as historians and those interested in contemporary American politics. Publishers Weekly Far from dryly legalistic, Raphael's presentation, with its context of the partisan 1790s, ensures the avid interest of early-republic buffs. Gilbert Taylor, Booklist Renowned historian Raphael delivers an authoritative biography of the Constitutional Convention and the herculean task faced by the representatives. . . . Raphael's exceptional history of the beginning years of the United States should be required reading, especially in an election year. Kirkus (*starred review*) "[A]n insightful narrative. . . . The author's lucid treatment explores in grand detail how delegates . . . constructed what became the most powerful office in US politics.... Raphael's superb study is well suited as a general introduction to the topic." CHOICE "It's not easy to find something new to say about the most powerful office in the world. Ray Raphael succeeds through the ingenious expedient of taking us back to the time when we had a country but no president, and reminding us how much work it took to fill that void. All fans of presidential history will need this book." Ted Widmer, Director, John Carter Brown Library, Brown University and author of *Ark of the Liberties: America and the World* "This is a fascinating and fresh narrative that takes the reader from the fierce debates establishing the federal executive at the Constitutional Convention through Thomas Jefferson's election which tested the framers' handiwork. It makes you

wonder why its never been told before." Joyce Appleby, author of *The Relentless Revolution: A History of Capitalism*"Ray Raphaels Mr. President presents to the reader a careful, lively, and in many respects, wholly surprising history of the origins and early development of the American presidency. His analysis of the years immediately preceding the Constitutional Convention of 1787 helps us understand better why the job of creating an American presidency was such a difficult one for the framers; and his meticulous examination of the records of the Convention yields a wholly novel conclusion: the man who played the most important role in determining the character of Americas executive branch was not James Madison or James Wilson, but the flamboyant, outspoken delegate from Pennsylvania, Gouverneur Morris. This book will command the attention of both professional historians and the general reader for decades to come." Richard Beeman, author of *Plain Honest Men: The Making of the American Constitution*"Ray Raphaels Mr. President is a brilliant analysis of why our Founding Fathers thought a Chief Executive was necessary for the American democratic experiment to flourish. The shrill arguments between Adams, Jefferson, Hamilton, Mason (and other law wizards) are recounted in these pages in vivid detail. A classic work of history!" Douglas Brinkley, Professor of History at Rice University, author of *The Wilderness Warrior: Theodore Roosevelt and the Crusade for America*About the AuthorRay Raphaels fifteen books include *A Peoples History of the American Revolution: How Common People Shaped the Fight for Independence* (2001) and *Founding Myths: Stories That Hide Our Patriotic Past* (2004). He is also coeditor of *Revolutionary Founders: Rebels, Radicals, and Reformers in the Making of the Nation* (2011). Having taught at Humboldt State University and College of the Redwoods and all subjects in a one-room public high school, he is now a full-time researcher and writer. He lives in Northern California.Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.Part IPrecedents(for better and mostly worse)Chapter OneLittle Gods on Earth: Monarchs and Their GovernorsMost of the men who pondered James Wilsons motion in silence had been raised to honor and love their king. Benjamin Franklin spent his early years under a female monarch, Queen Anne, but for the rest the protector and benefactor whom they were taught to include in their prayers had been either King George I, who ascended to the throne in 1714, or his son, King George II, who succeeded him in 1727.All but a handful of delegates were old enough to remember the death of King George II and the ascension of his twenty-two-year-old grandson, King George III. The date was October 25, 1760, shortly before the first hints of colonial unrest. The youngest, Jonathan Dayton of New Jersey, had been born just a week and two days before, while Benjamin Franklin, by far the oldest, was fifty-four years old. Respected internationally for his scientific achievements, Franklin was then in England, politicking on behalf of Pennsylvanians who were trying to limit the special privileges and power of the Penn family, the colonys proprietors. The British Crown was a likely ally in this endeavor, he reasoned. If Pennsylvania could be changed from a proprietorship to a royal colony, it would be freed from the Penns grip. Thus, for the most practical of reasons, Benjamin Franklin on the eve of the Revolution was a Royalist. He broke off from vacationing with his son William to attend King George IIIs coronation.George Washington, aged twenty-eight in 1760, and his neighbor George Mason, then thirty-four, had reasons of their own to seek the Crowns good graces. Mason held shares in the Ohio Company of Virginia, which needed the approval of the British king to stake claims in the North American interior. Washington, while serving as the companys surveyor back in 1753, had explored its alleged holdings west of the Appalachian Mountains, and the following year he led an assault on a small party of French scouts at Jumonville Glen, a minor skirmish that by 1760 had turned into a global war. Had the kings army not come to their aid, Virginia militiamen under Colonel Washington would have been no match for their French and Indian opponents. To acquire land and defend it, Washington, Mason, and all other colonial speculators were beholden to both the legal authority and the military might wielded by King George II or King George III or whoever else might sit on the British throne.Robert Morris, aged twenty-six at the ascension of King George III, had spent the first half of his life in Liverpool, England. As a teenager he settled in Philadelphia, where he rose quickly to a partnership in a prominent mercantile firm, and by the time of George IIIs ascension the French and Indian War was treating this merchant prince well. By selling scarce and strategic goods, and also through state-sponsored piracy known as privateering, Morris was setting himself on a trajectory that would make him the richest man in America, but he could not possibly ply his trade across the high seas without the protection of HMS Vanguard, HMS Sutherland, HMS Nightingale, and all the rest of His Majestys ships in the kings navy. Robert Morris had every reason to bless the power of the British monarch.So it went, down the line.In 1760, James Wilson, the delegate who offered the motion for a single executive, was an eighteen-year-old student living in Scotland. Five years later, when he immigrated to America, Wilson would not have to alter his allegiance to the British Crown, for he would still be living safely within the kings realm.James Madison, aged nine, was being raised to believe that the British monarch was not only the head of state but also the embodiment of religious authority, the Supreme Governor of the Church of England. Perhaps the lad was still too young to realize how closely his familys tobacco-producing plantation depended on the Crowns ability to hold the British Empire together, but that would come with time.Gouverneur Morris, aged eight, had no reason to question his privileged position in the British social order. His father was in fact a titled aristocrat, the Lord of Morrisania, which comprised much of the present-day Bronx in New York City. Although Gouverneur was not the firstborn son and would never himself become a lord, he was still greatly privileged, thanks to the traditional British hierarchy, with a monarch at the top.Of all the delegates other than Franklin, only Alexander

Hamilton, aged three or five at the time (the record is unclear), was not imbued in his earliest years with reverence for King George I or II. An illegitimate child in the West Indies, Hamilton was tutored at home by his French Huguenot mother and by a local Sephardic Jewess, neither of whom were likely to have encouraged adoration of the British monarch. For all the rest, however, professing gratitude and pledging allegiance were taught early and renewed often, at every stage of their political education. To our modern sensibilities, the hierarchical relationship between British subjects and their monarch in 1760 might appear overly submissive, but as people viewed the matter then, subjects received as much as they gave. Sir William Blackstone, the mid-eighteenth-century jurist who defined the British polity in his authoritative *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, explained that allegiance was the tie, or ligamen, which binds the subject to the king, in return for that protection which the king affords the subject. The bond was symbiotic. Protection took two forms. Most obviously, as commander of armies and navies, the monarch was expected to shield subjects from any and all external enemies. This was particularly apparent for British colonials in 1760, who felt they had been freed from the invasions of a savage foe when the kings forces defeated the French in Canada. Equally important, however, was the guarantee against lawlessness or tyranny within the monarchs realm. The Crown was legally present in all courts; any violation of the law was an offense to his power and authority, to be punished accordingly. Further, the Crown was charged with guaranteeing the peoples liberties. George II, in his first speech to Parliament in 1727, proclaimed that it was his special duty to secure to all my subjects, the full enjoyment of their religious and civil rights. To protect the people from foreign foes and domestic disorders, a British monarch needed to possess formidable, across-the-board powers. The monarch was the commander in chief of the armed forces, the head of state, the pinnacle of the titled hierarchy, the wealthiest individual, and the largest landowner. When new lands were added to the empire, they immediately became the kings property, to be dispensed at his pleasure. The monarch also headed the official state religion, the Church of England, and even with respect to the affairs of state he or she was said to govern by the divine grace of God. When King George II died in 1760, the governor, council, and house of representatives from Massachusetts welcomed his successor by beseeching god (by whom Kings do Reign) to bless the Royal King George the Third with long and happy years to reign over us. But with power such as this, couldnt the Crown also deprive the people of their liberties? Of course it could, and it had. King James I, who succeeded Queen Elizabeth in 1603, described kings as little Gods on Earth. Parliament at that point in time held no force of law. It could pass bills, but it had no way of enforcing them. It was essentially an advisory body to the king, who could dissolve it at his will. Parliament did wield the power of the purse, however. Historically, it had been created to raise money for the Crown, and that was still the only real card it could play. Throughout the 1630s, King Charles I, Jamess successor, tried to rule without convening Parliament at all. During the Eleven Years Tyranny, as it was called by his opponents, Charles ruled with autocratic power. He arrested people who refused to comply with the increasingly doctrinaire policies of the Church of England, and he raised money by extracting archaic fees that were still on the books but hadnt been collected for centuries. By the time he reconvened Parliament in 1640, members there were prepared to challenge his power, and they did. A century and a half later, this was all common knowledge for the educated men in Philadelphia who held their tongues when James Wilson introduced his motion. They knew the grisly details of Englands catastrophic civil wars that stemmed from the fallout between Parliament and King Charles I: the beheading of the king in 1649, the rise of Oliver Cromwell, his conquest of Ireland and Scotland, and the transformation from a nominal republic to a dictatorship under his rule. They knew that British people had recoiled and reinstated a monarchy in 1660, that the old rivalries between Parliament and the Crown continued, and that in 1688 the Glorious Revolution had affirmed forever Parliaments standing as a governing body. They also knew that Parliament, to restore security and ensure continuity, placed a new pair of monarchs on the throne, William and Mary, even as it constrained royal authority with a Bill of Rights. Henceforth, Britain would be governed by Parliament and the Crown simultaneously. By distributing power rather than concentrating it, the revolutionaries of 1688 had inoculated the British polity against tyranny. At least that was the plan. Over the next eighty-eight years, while the American colonies remained within the British realm, two emergent political parties Whigs and Tories squabbled over the meaning and operation of this mixed system. Broadly speaking, Whigs viewed themselves as the upholders of the Glorious Revolution, trumpeting individual liberties and pushing back against any hint of monarchical abuse, while Tories favored the stability that comes with established hierarchies, often siding with the Crown in its inevitable tugs-of-war with Parliament. Thats the simplistic picture, comprehensible to us today, but the men who gathered at the Pennsylvania State House in the summer of 1787 to establish a new set of rules for the fledgling United States, having been raised within this political matrix, had a much richer understanding of the complexities of Whiggism and Toryism. Although their ideas might differ on how to weight the elements, they all believed in the superiority of a mixed governmental system. Had they been asked to devise a constitution in 1760, before their quarrels with the mother country, they would no doubt have come up with a plan closely resembling the British model, which all agreed was the best in the world. Wilsons motion for a single executive would have passed by acclamation in a moment, and they would have haggled only over the particulars. They all would have wanted to fashion their government around both a monarch whether selected by birth, appointment, or election and a body representing the people, something akin to Parliament. Much had happened between 1760 and 1787, however. When Charles Pinckney, the first speaker on the

subject of establishing an executive office, warned against endowing that office with powers over peace war c., all he needed to do was utter the m-word monarchy. The term that had once inspired such reverence was now the kiss of death. The tectonic shift in political philosophy did not come easily. In fact, the Revolutionary generation the rebels of the 1760s and 1770s were so deeply imbued with the notion of monarchy that they refused to renounce their allegiance to the British Crown until the bitter end, long after empirical evidence had proved the king an adversary. For more than a decade, colonists blamed all their troubles on Parliament, the kings ministers, and their Tory allies in America, while excusing the king himself. On August 14, 1765, when a Boston crowd hung a straw man and a giant boot from an elm tree at the south end of town, they identified the figure with the initials A.O., signifying Andrew Oliver, the local official who would be collecting money for the stamps that Parliament required on all colonial court documents, contracts, licenses, news- papers, almanacs, and even playing cards. The boot needed no explanation; everyone knew it represented the Earl of Bute, nicknamed Jack Boot, the former tutor to King George III who had now become his chief adviser. The sole of the boot was painted green, an oblique reference to the British prime minister George Grenville, author of the infamous bill. Even in the most provocative street theater, the king was excused. In the minds of the protesters, the Stamp Act was thrust upon colonial Americans by his advisers and by Parliament, and it was to be executed by appointed officials, but King George III, who presumably had been duped into supporting the measure, lay blameless. Indeed, when the act was repealed the following year, colonial protesters sang his praises for releasing them from the burden imposed by Parliament. One New England minister told his congregation that when the king signed the repeal, he said that if he had known it would have given his good subjects in America so much uneasiness, he never would have signed the former act. In 1767 John Dickinson, in his influential Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania, urged colonists to apply economic pressures to force the repeal of a new round of taxation, but he simultaneously entreated them to eschew any measures that would alienate them from their mother country, and in particular from their king. We have an excellent prince, in whose good dispositions toward us we may confide, he wrote. Even if the king was momentarily deceived by artful men, he would not become cruel or unjust, and his anger would not be implacable. Let us behave like dutiful children who have received unmerited blows from a beloved parent, he concluded. Let us complain to our parent; but let our complaints speak at the same time the language of affliction and veneration. Through the late 1760s and early 1770s, as Parliament continued to thrust taxes on American colonists, and as colonists continued to resist, not even the wildest rebel dared question the king himself. In part to prove they were patriots rather than traitors, protesters continued to profess allegiance, to celebrate the kings birthday and the anniversary of his coronation, and to begin all their raucous toasts with a drink to his health. Patriots believed that if the king would only cast away his devious advisers and listen to the colonists complaints without prejudice, he would side with his American subjects. At least publicly, they had to profess that belief; otherwise, they would be challenging the very heart of British government and culture. With each new round of repression, colonists selected appropriate scapegoats. In 1768, for instance, the villain of choice was Earl of Hillsborough, the newly elected secretary of state for the colonies, who ordered a clampdown on those resisting the Townshend duties. When crowds covered the doors of Tories with dung, they labeled it Hillsborough paint. In the Tea Act controversy of 1773, colonials directed their ire at Parliament, Prime Minister Lord North, the East India Company directors, and the agents who expected to sell tea in the colonies, whom they reviled as political bombardiers. When thousands upon thousands of citizens met in Bostons Old South Church to protest the three boatloads of tea anchored in the harbor nearby, their angry speeches never tied King George III personally to the Tea Act, the East India Company, or any foul deed, even though he certainly had been a willing partner and active agent. Even in September 1774, as citizens throughout Massachusetts cast off all British rule outside of Boston, and as they riddled their protests with such rancorous phrases as ransack our pockets, the parricide which points the dagger to our bosoms, numberless curses of slavery upon us, and unparalleled usurpation of unconstitutional power (these quotations from the Suffolk Resolves), their resolutions always included a deferential disclaimer, offered at the beginning. Again, from the Suffolk Resolves: That whereas his majesty, George the Third, is the rightful successor to the throne of Great-Britain, and justly entitled to the allegiance of the British realm, and agreeable to compact, of the English colonies in America therefore, we, the heirs and successors of the first planters of this colony, do cheerfully acknowledge the said George the Third to be our rightful sovereign, and that said covenant is the tenure and claim on which are founded our allegiance and submission.