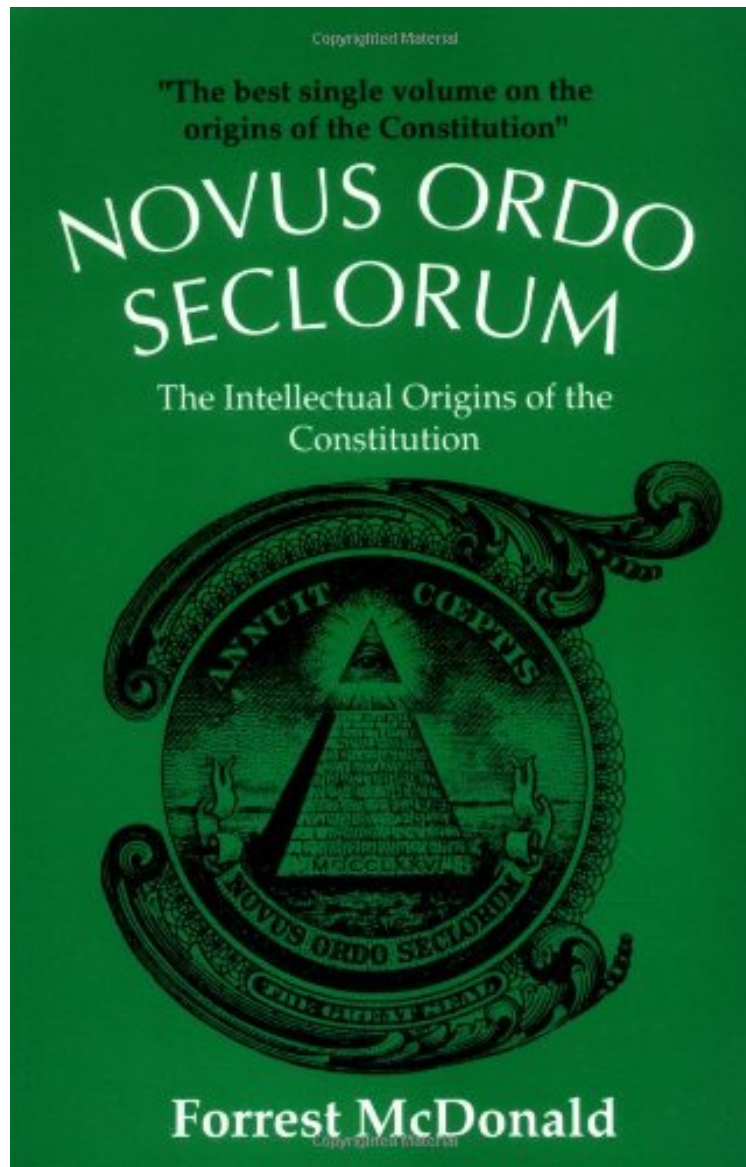


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# Novus Ordo Seclorum: The Intellectual Origins of the Constitution

*Forrest McDonald*

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This is the first major interpretation of the framing of the Constitution to appear in more than two decades. Forrest McDonald, widely considered one of the foremost historians of the Constitution and of the early national period, reconstructs the intellectual world of the Founding Fathers including their understanding of law, history, political philosophy, and political economy, and their firsthand experience in public affairs and then analyzes their behavior in the Constitutional Convention of 1787 in light of that world. No one has attempted to do so on such a scale before. McDonald's principal conclusion is that, though the Framers brought a variety of ideological and philosophical positions to bear upon their task of building a "new order of the ages," they were guided primarily by their own experience, their wisdom, and their common sense. "A witty and energetic study of the ideas and passions of the Framers." *New York Times Book Review* "Bristles with wit and intellectual energy." *Christian Science Monitor* "A masterpiece. McDonald's status as an interpreter of the Constitution is unequalled." *National Review*

"An important, comprehensive statement about the most fundamental period in American history. It deals authoritatively with topics no student of America can afford to ignore." Harvey Mansfield, author of *The Spirit of Liberalism* From the Back Cover "A witty and energetic study of the ideas and passions of the Framers." - *New York Times Book Review* "An important, comprehensive statement about the most fundamental period in American history. It deals authoritatively with topics no student of American can afford to ignore." - Harvey Mansfield, author of *The Spirit of Liberalism* About the Author Forrest McDonald is Distinguished Research Professor of History at the University of Alabama and author of sixteen books, including *States' Rights and the Union: Imperium in Imperio, 1776-1876*; *The American Presidency*; *The Presidency of George Washington*; and *The Presidency of Thomas Jefferson*. He was named by the NEH as the sixteenth Jefferson Lecturer, the nation's highest honor in the humanities.