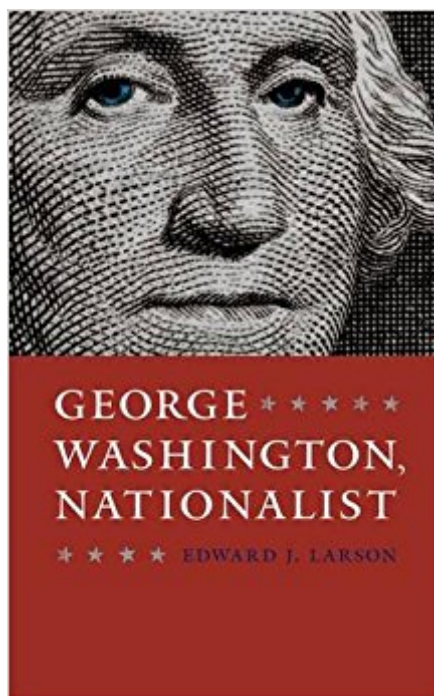


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# George Washington, Nationalist (Gay Hart Gaines Distinguished Lectures)



## Synopsis

George Washington was the unanimous choice of his fellow founders for president, and he is remembered to this day as an exceptional leader, but how exactly did this manifest itself during his lifetime? In *George Washington, Nationalist*, acclaimed author Edward J. Larson reveals the fascinating backstory of Washington's leadership in the political, legal, and economic consolidation of the new nation, spotlighting his crucial role in forming a more perfect union. The years following the American Revolution were a critical period in American history, when the newly independent states teetered toward disunion under the Articles of Confederation. Looking at a selection of Washington's most pivotal acts—including conferring with like-minded nationalists, establishing navigational rights on the Potomac, and quelling the near uprising of unpaid revolutionary troops against the Confederation Congress—Larson shows Washington's central role in the drive for reform leading up to the Constitutional Convention. His leadership at that historic convention, followed by his mostly behind-the-scenes efforts in the ratification process and the first federal election, and culminating in his inauguration as president, complete the picture of Washington as the nation's first citizen. This important and deeply researched book brings Washington's unique gift for leadership to life for modern readers, offering a timely addition to the growing body of literature on the Constitution, presidential leadership, executive power, and state-federal relations.

Gay Hart Gaines Distinguished Lectures

Preparation of this volume has been supported by The Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington at Mount Vernon and by a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Lewis E. Lehrman.

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## Customer Reviews

Edward Larson has written a penetrating and inspiring study of George Washington's outstanding leadership and the critical role he played in rejecting the feeble government under the Articles of Confederation and in fostering the creation of a strong, unifying, and enduring constitutional republic. (Susan Dunn, author of *Dominion of Memories: Jefferson, Madison, and the Decline of Virginia*) Edward Larson is the most nuanced scholar of George Washington on the contemporary scene. Capitalizing on his earlier studies of years that were crucial in forming both the character of George Washington and the character of the United States of America, Larson focuses on the ways Washington's actions—looking westward across the continent, lending his presence to the development of the Constitution, and acceding to be the first president—coalesced with the efforts of Madison, Hamilton, and Jay to establish the American nation. This is a compelling and wonderfully readable study of a crucial facet of the career of our first president. (George R. Goethals, University of Richmond, author of *Presidential Leadership and African Americans: "An American Dilemma" from Slavery to the White House*) In this enticingly titled collection of essays derived from lectures the author gave at Mount Vernon... Edward J. Larson implies that Washington was an exponent of nationalism even before the idea transformed Europe. Washington's interest in Potomac River navigation, his conduct at the Constitutional Convention of 1787, and his support for ratification—the subjects of Larson's essays—illustrate his support for American unification and a robust federal government. (Virginia Magazine of History and Biography) [Larson] examines how George Washington's leadership aided the political, legal and economic consolidation of the new nation in *George Washington, Nationalist*. (Richmond Times-Dispatch)

Edward J. Larson, Professor of History and Hugh and Hazel Darling Chair in Law at Pepperdine University, is the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of numerous books, including *The Return of George Washington: Uniting the States, 1783-1789*.

I like Larson and loved his book *The Return of George Washington*. This book is fine but covers mostly the same territory so it's not essential.

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