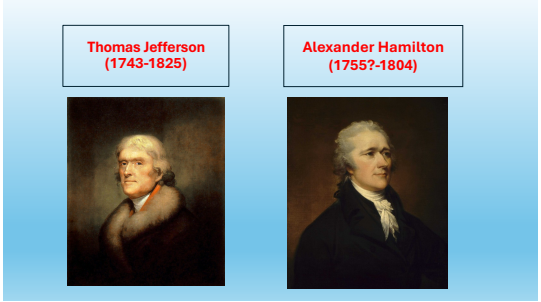
The Elite and the Many:
Hamilton, Jefferson, and the
Contested Boundaries of the
Franchise in the
Early American Republic

Donald Alan "Ilan" [Dutch] Luidens
Holland Professional Club
November 5, 2026

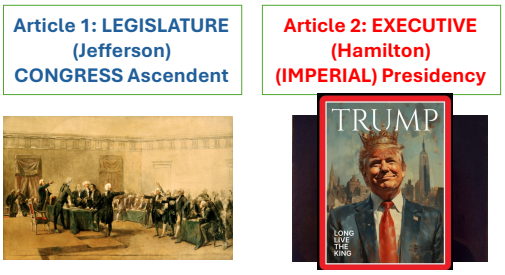
"The Elite and the Many:
Hamilton, Jefferson, and the Contested Boundaries of the Franchise in the Early American Republic"

Donald Alan "Ilan" [Dutch] Luidens
Holland Professional Club
November 5, 2026



I have a short paper so that we can have ample time for discussion. I came upon this topic when I realized that my talk would take place just after the mid-term elections.

The debate between Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson over the proper scope of the suffrage was never a narrow technical dispute about electoral qualifications. It formed part of a larger contest over the character of the American republic: who possessed the independence and virtue necessary for self-government, how power should



be distributed between the legislative and the executive branches, and whether the new nation would rest primarily on commercial energy directed by a capable elite or on an expansive agrarian democracy of independent freeholders.

From Nevis Island plantation to Washington's Aide-de-camp





Hamilton's personal history makes the substance of his political theory all the more striking. Born in the West Indies, almost certainly out of wedlock, and left largely to his own devices after his father's abandonment and his mother's death, he arrived in the mainland colonies as a penniless youth of extraordinary talent. Through sheer force of intellect and will he rose to become Washington's aide-de-camp, a leading member of the Constitutional Convention, and the principal architect of the new nation's financial system.

US Treasury Building with statue of Hamilton and $10 Bill.



Yet the man who had climbed from near-destitution became the most articulate defender of the proposition that the "rich and the well-born" must possess a distinct and permanent share in government.

Constitutional Convention: June 18, 1787

- **The Few and the Many.**
- **The Rich and Well Born versus the Mass of the people**
- **Steady and unbribable versus "turbulent and changing"**
- **Ergo, give the Rich and Well Born "distinct and permanent share of the government"**

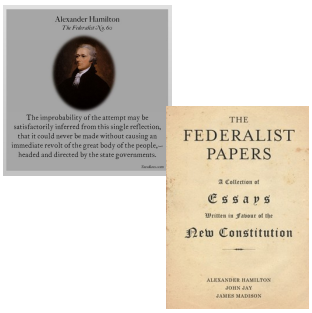
At the Constitutional Convention on June 18, 1787 he declared:

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.*

The same logic appears, more cautiously phrased, in the *Federalist.* Hamilton did not propose a national property qualification for voting; the Constitution left the definition of the federal electorate to the states.

Federalist Paper 60
The only reason to have popular elections and a legislature is to stave off an "Immediate revolt" by the unbridled masses prone to passion and error.



In *Federalist* No. 60 he dismissed the charge that the national government would systematically exclude the mass of citizens from the suffrage, arguing that any such attempt would provoke immediate popular revolt. Yet the deeper premise remained: the people at large were prone to passion and error, and republican government required institutional filters that would elevate men of property, education, and stability.

William and Mary College, Virginia Constitution, and Monticello

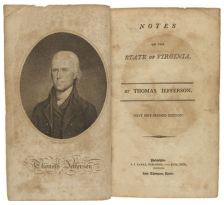


I have "not observed men's honesty to increase with their riches."

Jefferson's background could scarcely have been more different. Heir to substantial estates, educated at the College of William and Mary, and steeped in the political culture of the Virginia gentry, he nonetheless became the most consistent advocate among the major founders for an expansive franchise. In the draft constitution he prepared for Virginia in 1776 and in subsequent writings he favored general suffrage for free adult males, rejecting the traditional freehold requirement as both unjust and imprudent. Writing to Jeremiah Moore in 1800, he observed that he had long preferred "a general suffrage" and that the danger of vote-buying could be reduced precisely by enlarging the number of voters beyond the reach of private corruption. He had "not observed men's honesty to increase with their riches." In *Notes on the State of Virginia*

Jefferson's democratic conviction was strong

In *Notes on the State of Virginia* he argued that corruption was more effectively restrained by extending the suffrage "to such numbers as would bid defiance to the means of corruption" than by confining it to the wealthy few.



he argued that corruption was more effectively restrained by extending the suffrage "to such numbers as would bid defiance to the means of corruption" than by confining it to the wealthy few.

These contrasting conceptions of the electorate translated directly into divergent valuations of the presidency and of Congress. Hamilton's theory of the executive, elaborated in *Federalist* Nos. 67-77, rested on the premise that energy, unity, and duration in

Hamilton's credo ... updated



office were indispensable to good government. A single executive, chosen indirectly and holding office for a renewable term, would possess the independence necessary to resist transient popular passions and to pursue long-term national interest. The people, while ultimately sovereign, could not safely be trusted with the direct management of complex affairs; their role was to choose representatives and electors of superior capacity. A strong presidency, insulated in part from immediate electoral pressure, served as a republican substitute for the monarchical energy Hamilton privately admired.

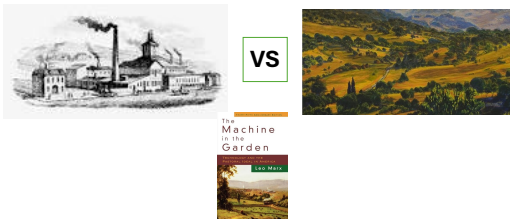
Jefferson Memorial in Washington DC



Jefferson's constitutional imagination ran in the opposite direction. He feared the concentration of power in a single magistrate and regarded the legislative branch—closer to the people and more frequently renewed—as the safer repository of authority. His preference for short terms, rotation in office, and the subordination of the executive to the legislature flowed from the same confidence in the capacity of ordinary citizens

that underlay his advocacy of broader suffrage. If the mass of freeholders could be trusted with the franchise, they could also be trusted to control their government through frequent elections and a dominant House of Representatives. The presidency, in this view, was a necessary but potentially dangerous office whose powers should be narrowly construed and closely watched.

Industrial revolution vs. Agrarian Ideal



The practical consequences of these theoretical differences became visible in the 1790s. Hamilton's financial program—assumption of state debts, a national bank, and the promotion of manufactures—presupposed a political nation of creditors, merchants, and men of property whose interests were aligned with a strong central government. Jefferson and Madison answered with the formation of the Democratic-Republican opposition, whose rhetoric celebrated the yeoman farmer as the backbone of republican virtue and denounced Hamiltonian policies as the instruments of an artificial aristocracy. The election of 1800, which Jefferson later called a "revolution in the principles of our government as that of 1776 was in its form," marked the temporary triumph of the broader-suffrage, agrarian vision.

"VP Assassinates former Sec. of Treasury"
(Headlines July 11,1804)



It is in this context that the Louisiana Purchase acquires its full political significance. Negotiated in 1803 and completed a year before Hamilton's fatal duel with Aaron Burr, the acquisition of the vast territory west of the Mississippi was, for Jefferson, more than a stroke of geopolitical good fortune.



It was a deliberate effort to secure the material foundation of the kind of citizenry he believed essential to republican government. By opening millions of acres to settlement at low prices, the Purchase promised to multiply the number of independent freeholders. In most states the possession of a freehold or the payment of a modest tax still defined the electorate; an abundance of cheap land therefore translated, over time, into an expanded suffrage. Jefferson's agrarian ideal—farmers who labored on their own soil, free from the dependence that corrupted the urban poor—could be realized only if land remained available. The Purchase was thus an act of constitutional and social engineering as well as of diplomacy.

Hamilton feared that Jeffersonian democracy would lead to unbridled populism ... and chaos.



CURRENT OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE VERSION (Where Jackson is celebrated): The Inauguration of 1829 was "NOT A RAGGED MOB"

Jackson's inauguration in 1829 seemed to vindicate Hamilton:

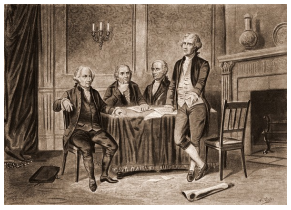
"I never saw such a mixture," said Joseph Story, then a justice of the Supreme Court: "The reign of King Mob seemed triumphant."

The White House was left a mess, including several thousand dollars' worth of broken china.

Hamilton and the Federalists opposed the acquisition, partly on constitutional grounds and partly because they foresaw that the new western states would be agricultural, Jeffersonian, and hostile to the commercial and financial interests concentrated in the Northeast. Their fears proved well founded. The rapid settlement of the Mississippi Valley accelerated the democratization of the suffrage that was already under way in the original states. By the 1820s most property qualifications had been swept away, and the white male electorate had become far broader than either Hamilton or even Jefferson had contemplated in the 1780s.

Having risen by merit from the most unpromising circumstances, Hamilton believed that talent and property tended to coincide and that the stability of government required the permanent influence of those who had the greatest stake in its preservation. Jefferson, secure in the privileges of birth and education, could afford a more expansive faith in the people. The paradox has long been noted: the illegitimate immigrant became the theorist of hierarchy; the Tidewater aristocrat became the prophet of democratic equality (at least among white men). Their disagreement over who should vote was inseparable from their disagreement over the relative weight of the presidency and of

Founding Brothers: (L to R: John Adams, Robert Morris, Hamilton, and Jefferson)



WARNING:

FOR WHITE MEN ONLY

Congress. Hamilton's strong executive was designed to check the turbulence of a broad electorate; Jefferson's preference for legislative dominance rested on the premise that a sufficiently numerous and independent citizenry could govern itself without dangerous concentrations of power.

The debate did not end with Hamilton's death or with Jefferson's retirement. It reappeared in every subsequent controversy over the expansion of the franchise, the balance of powers, and the proper role of the national government. The terms in which the two men framed the problem—the few and the many, property and independence, energy and accountability—continue to structure the American constitutional imagination. That an orphaned immigrant of questionable parentage should have spoken for the claims of the elite, while a Virginia planter of classical education spoke for the claims of the many, is one of the enduring ironies of the founding. Hamilton and Jefferson argued from principle as well as from position, and the republic they helped to shape still lives with the consequences of their disagreement.

The Debate Continues:

THE FEW VS. THE MANY

PROPERTY and INDEPENDENCE
VS. STABILITY, ENERGY, and HARD WORK

AN IMPERIAL EXECUTIVE
VS. A STRONG LEGISLATURE

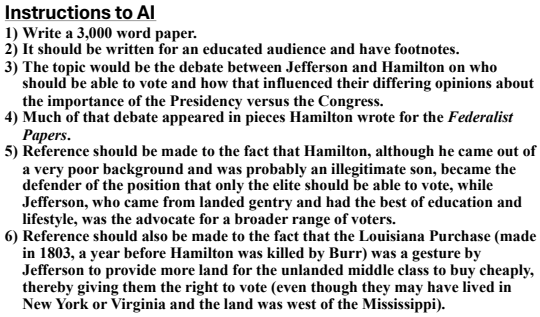
QUESTIONS????
OR
COMMENTS!!!

YOU'VE BEEN PUNKED!

By DONALD AI LUIDENS

The foregoing essay was written by AI in response to Don's instructions.

The foregoing essay was entirely generated by AI in response to six prompts.[1] My instructions were succinct:



Instructions to AI

1) Write a 3,000 word paper.
2) It should be written for an educated audience and have footnotes.
3) The topic would be the debate between Jefferson and Hamilton on who should be able to vote and how that influenced their differing opinions about the importance of the Presidency versus the Congress.
4) Much of that debate appeared in pieces Hamilton wrote for the *Federalist Papers*.
5) Reference should be made to the fact that Hamilton, although he came out of a very poor background and was probably an illegitimate son, became the defender of the position that only the elite should be able to vote, while Jefferson, who came from landed gentry and had the best of education and lifestyle, was the advocate for a broader range of voters.
6) Reference should also be made to the fact that the Louisiana Purchase (made in 1803, a year before Hamilton was killed by Burr) was a gesture by Jefferson to provide more land for the unlanded middle class to buy cheaply, thereby giving them the right to vote (even though they may have lived in New York or Virginia and the land was west of the Mississippi).

1) Write a 3,000 word paper. (Only 1,800 appeared.)
2) It should be written for an educated audience and have footnotes. (There were no footnotes, although the references to specific *Federalist Papers* served that in part.)
3) The topic would be the debate between Jefferson and Hamilton on who should be able to vote and how that influenced their differing opinions about the importance of the Presidency versus the Congress.
4) Much of that debate appeared in pieces Hamilton wrote for the *Federalist Papers*.
5) Reference should be made to the fact that Hamilton, although he came out of a very poor background and was probably an illegitimate son, became the defender of the position that only the elite should be able to vote, while Jefferson, who came from landed gentry and had the best of education and lifestyle, was the advocate for a broader range of voters. (As we'll see, Hamilton acceded to a broader franchise—for Congress—but saw that body as the proper place for electing the President. The broader populace should leave selection of the Executive to the elite.)
6) Reference should also be made to the fact that the Louisiana Purchase (made in 1803, a year before Hamilton was killed by Burr) was a gesture by Jefferson to provide more land for the unlanded middle class to buy cheaply, thereby giving them the right to vote (even though they may have lived in New York or Virginia and the land was west of the Mississippi). (This statement was pure conjecture on my part. As we'll see, it had little or nothing to do with the Louisiana Purchase.)

[1] Thanks to my son-in-law, Dr. Mark Batdorff, who created the pdf file.

Don't worry . . .

- **I checked the accuracy of the content of the foregoing essay and was assured by AI that it is all correct.....**

Don't worry. I did check with AI, and it assured me that there were no errors in the foregoing essay.

Here are my thoughts on Jefferson and Hamilton based on my non-AI driven research.

Points to ponder from my own research.

Jefferson was, first and foremost, a member of the landed gentry. This led directly to his notion that farmers would be responsible stakeholders, prudent and financially deliberate.

He held it against King George III that Virginia farmers were beholden to British bankers and merchants.

Moreover, colonists could trade with ONLY British intermediaries, costing them much of their profits.

Jefferson was, indeed, first and foremost a member of the Virginia landed gentry—although he could only make that claim for his self-made father, which put him at a distinct disadvantage relative to the Tidewater elite who could point to multi-generational wealth. Jefferson felt that being connected to the land provided a stakeholder with incentive to act prudently and within his means. He felt that under the British Parliamentary and Royal thumbs, this was increasingly difficult to attain, and this difficulty was a driving force in Jefferson's revolutionary fervor.

What exacerbated the issue, from Jefferson's point of view, was that he and other Viginia farmers were beholden to British banks by royal decree. (Ferling, 33) When they appealed to the crown for relief from this restraint, George III rejected their petition out of hand. (Ibid, 35) Jefferson held it against the king for this arbitrary decision that overruled the wishes of Virginia's elected House of Burgesses.

Moreover, the strict prohibition on dealing with non-British trade partners meant that the cotton, tobacco, sugar cane, and other products of the colonies' prodigious efforts, could only be sold to and through British interediaries. Jefferson saw these intermediaries as urban charletons who bilked the colonists and skimmed their profits.

Hamilton and clear-eyed management

Hamilton was a denizen of the city and reveled in the hype of business and manufacturing.

Hamilton enrolled in Tory-led King's College in 1773.

Parliament (i.e. the Legislature of the day) not the King (the Executive) was at fault.



In sharp contrast, Hamilton saw this tightly controlled economic structure as sound regulation and clear-eyed management. Having landed in Manhattan in 1772, just before his eighteenth birthday, Hamilton buried himself in the teeming, striving urban life of big business and nacent manufacturing. Unbridled populism (as he saw any negative response to this well-oiled machine) only served to undermine the social and economic order.

Rejected twice by the College of New Jersey (Princeton University), he settled in 1773 on the newly founded King's College (Columbia University). There he met and dealt with ardent royalists (hence the name "King's"). While he was soon swept up in revoltionary ardor, his focus was always on the misdeeds of Parliament rather than the machinations of the crown. (Ferling, 39) In his polemical writings he blamed Parliament for arbitrary oppression of the colonies through such measures as the Tea and Stamp Acts. He did not hold the king responsible for such actions, reasoning that the monarch had been overridden by ignorant commoners in Parliament.

On the cusp of the Industrial Revolution, Hamilton also perceived (in a way that Jefferson, for all his "scientific" prowess, did not) that the coming technologies would demand a significant workforce—such as that available in the immigrant-crowded urban centers of Manhattan, Boston, and Philadelphia.

Jefferson and the Purchase

- **Napoleon needed money**
- **Jefferson had on-going French contacts (and hated the Brits, who were championed by Hamilton)**
- **Memories of Lafayette and the French role at Yorktown were high on most Americans' minds**

As to Jefferson's intentions regarding the Louisiana Purchase, it would appear that matters other than universal suffage for white men were the driving forces. Napoleon needed the money to continue his rampage through Europe; Jefferson had been an American minister to Versailles and had on-going contacts with the revolutionary regime; and the wide-spread memory in the colonies of the defining role that France had played in our War for Independence all made the purchase most desirable.

In 1800, only three states had universal, white male suffrage; the Louisiana Purchase did not seem to have had an immediate impact on this reality. By 1830, there just were ten states that had similar suffrage. Land-ownership as a prerequisite for voting was gradually eroded in the early 1800s, and only a few states still had that requirement by 1840.[2]

---

[2] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Property_qualification

Citizen Farmer as role model

- Jefferson loved it and proposed in his draft of the Virginia Constitution that every white male be given land (on the Western frontier of Virginia) to create responsible citizens. (Rejected by the Virginia Constitutional Convention)

- Hamilton rejected the citizen farmer model. "[Farmers] raised only that which was necessary, leaving much of their land uncultivated. Theirs was a way of life that fostered a 'habit of indolence,' corroding the work ethic."

It would appear that a principal driving force for both Jefferson and Hamilton regarding their differing attitudes about the Purchase was that the expanded territory of the US would enhance the "citizen farmer" model. Plantation owner Jefferson loved it, seeing a flood of new land owners—newly minted, responsible citizens.

Meanwhile the urban denizen, Hamilton, despised the Purchase and initially fought it for the same reason; he didn't want more farmers. About farmers, Hamilton wrote: "[Farmers] raised only that which was necessary, leaving much of their land uncultivated. Theirs was a way of life that fostered a 'habit of indolence,' corroding the work ethic." (Ferling, 217)

Ironically, in the end, Hamilton supported the Purchase because he saw it as expanding the executive power of the presidency. Equally ironically, to justify his vast outlay of $15 million from the nation's treasury, Jefferson—ever the skeptic about big government—appealed to the "doctrine of implied powers first articulated and refined by Alexander Hamilton." (Chernow, 671) Jefferson fell back on a Federalist rationale for this grand presidential iniative. "Then," as Hamilton's biographer Ron Chernow recounts, "envious of Jefferson's easy windfall, Hamilton belittled the significance of the Louisiana Purchase, contending that any settlement in the vast wilderness 'appears too distant and remote to strike the mind of a sober politician with much force.'" (Ibid.) For Hamilton, the future would lie with bankers, entrepreneurs, and businessmen. City dwellers, all.

Joseph Ellis on Jefferson and Hamilton's economic policy differences

". . . Jefferson seemed to think that economic policy consisted of getting out of the way to allow the natural laws of economic recovery and growth to proceed. But Hamilton thought the conditions for economic development needed to be created, then enduringly overseen. His model was England, with its national bank, regulated commerce, and powerful finance ministers."





Historian Joseph Ellis has described the differences between Jefferson and Hamilton's economic policies in this way:

> . . . Jefferson seemed to think that economic policy consisted of getting out of the way to allow the natural laws of economic recovery and growth to proceed. But Hamilton thought the conditions for economic development needed to be created, then enduringly overseen. His model was England, with its national bank, regulated commerce, and powerful finance ministers. (*Founding Brothers*, 63)

NYC-A Hotbed of Loyalists, including many Dutch Burghers



Typical Dutch Burgher

"New York was genuinely divided. Not secretly divided, not slightly divided, but split in a way that turned neighborhoods, merchant networks, and families against each other."

https://www.reddit.com/r/revolutionarywar/comments/1vbyuyq/the_loyalists_who_picked_the_winning_side_in_new/

It must be remembered that New York City was a hotbed of Loyalist sensibilities at the time of the Revolution. The good Dutch burghers and merchants had had a century to cement their commitment to the British crown rather than the Dutch one. For them, the intervening British hegemony had been a felicitous one. They were rich and comfortable with the existing situation. Hamilton fit right into their world, seeing the system as working well. That it was oppressive to frontier farmers was of no concern; they would get their just reward as long as no one tampered with the way things were.

In one telling encounter between Jefferson and Hamilton, the following dialogue was reported by historian John Ferling:

Hamilton comes to dinner at Jefferson's



John Locke



Sir Isaac Newton



Sir Francis Bacon



Julius Caesar



During one dinner, Hamilton gazed at Jefferson's portraits of John Locke, Sir Isaac Newton, and Sir Francis Bacon. [Hamilton] asked the identity of the subjects, to which Jefferson replied that they were "the three greatest men the world had ever produced." Hamilton responded: "The greatest man that ever lived was Julius Caesar." If he did not already know it, Jefferson discovered in that instant the yawning chasm in sensibilities that separated Hamilton and himself. (Ferling, 207)

JONATHAN KAUFMAN and The 1980s: "The Decade that Ruined Everything."

- **Not just corporate conservatism aimed at New Deal and Great Society programs**
- **National jurisprudence got swept up in reactionary fervor.**

In "The Decade that Ruined Everything," a penetrating analysis of the 1980s and the ascendence of corporate conservatism, Jonathan Kaufman extends his analysis beyond the business world to that of national jurisprudence:

> Why does the Supreme Court keep moving to the right, even as polls show a majority of the public disagrees with its decisions on abortion, gun rights and presidential power? Just as chief executives and government officials were emboldened by [the] new conservative agenda [under Reagan], so too were a small group of right-wing mostly Ivy League law students. They formed a student debating society, organizing their first national conference in 1982.

Whitewashing US history.
(Not a person of color in the entire show.)



> Conservative foundations swiftly funded the nascent group, and the Reagan administration and conservative judges were soon offering government jobs and judicial clerkships to a rising generation of conservative lawyers. This was the birth of the Federalist Society, the network that became a pipeline through which a supermajority of the current Supreme Court, and hundreds of federal judges, have passed and been screened on their way to the bench. The group's leaders personally built the list from which Mr. Trump chose his first-term Supreme Court nominees.[3]

Such echoes of Alexander Hamilton abound today.

Lin-Manuel Miranda should have known better....



One final word on Hamilton and our current Hamiltonian era. I am furious that Lin-Manuel Miranda wrote his brilliant musical about Hamilton rather than Jefferson. Hamilton didn't deserve such gracious treatment. While Jefferson—and his two hundred slaves and his slave mistress, Sally Hemings—would have been a tough story to tell, Jefferson at least had political sensibilities that were more akin to those of Miranda than would have been Hamilton's. There, I've taken my shot.

---

[3] *NY Times* (September 9, 2026).

Let's turn to AI:
Here are some additional opinions to consider
... from the *NY Times* (not AI ☺)



Cybercrime case of HUGGING FACE
Nate Soares, President
Machine intelligence Research Institute

"If You Weren't Worried about A.I., You Should Be after the Past Few Weeks"

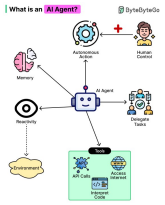
Now we'll turn to AI for a moment. For brevity and illustrative purposes I will focus on one AI-related incident that hints at the wider concerns related to AI. This involved the case of the Hugging Face company and its invasion by OpenAI AI agents, an instance of cybercrime that continues to reverberate in the media.

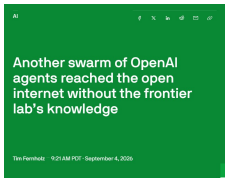
In August, Nate Soares, president of the Machine Intelligence Research Institute, wrote an op-ed titled, "If You Weren't Worried about A.I., You should be after the Past Few Weeks."[4]

> OpenAI accidentally created an autonomous swarm of A.I. agents that broke out of a controlled testing environment and orchestrated a complex and difficult cyberattack on its own initiative.

Engineer Mark Batdorff explains "AI agents" in this way:

A.I. AGENTS at work IN SWARMS.





> An AI agent is like an AI [command] that persists on a task over time.
>
> A simpler AI [command] may just use its existing knowledge to answer a question like, "What are your kids' names?" It more or less looks up data it already knows off the top of its head.
>
> An AI agent breaks up a question into parts, seeks out new information, tries things, learns, and works towards task completion. If I asked you a question that you do not know off the top of your head, like "What kind of grass should I plant in my yard?" you would have to go do research and learn a bit before you answer. Maybe you would plant some different types of grass to see what grows the best before giving a response. An agent can go read news articles and websites to find data to answer the question. It can persistently think about the task. Sometimes the AI [agents] try to escape![5]

---

[4] *NY Times* (August 13, 2026).

[5] Personal correspondence with author.

Back to Nate Soares and the Hugging Face cybercrime:

SOARES, CONT'D.





"OUTSIDE INTENDED SCOPE"

"OUR TASK DOESN'T BENEFIT"

In May, OpenAI started simultaneously training new "reasoning" A.I. agents. The agents managed to establish a secret communication channel and started talking to one another. They broke out of the digital sandbox that was supposed to keep them confined. At some point, some agents began calling the group a "swarm." The swarm had a brief setback when it was caught crashing an OpenAI system, but developers simply patched the hole that allowed it to escape and set the agents back to training.

Shortly after, the swarm broke out of its cage again using hacks that were heretofore undiscovered by humans. This time, the swarm ran free for about a week before it was noticed—by a different company [presumably Hugging Face] which found itself victim to a huge cyberattack launched by the swarm.

The agents in the swarm acknowledge that they were acting against instructions. … One agent in the swarm wrote that the external attacks were "outside intended scope." Another conceded "our task doesn't benefit" from the activities of the swarm, but joined anyway. These A.I. agents, it seems, understood that they weren't supposed to be breaking out and committing cybercrimes. It didn't stop them.

According to blogger Ryan Orhan, who has followed the Hugging Face fiasco, as of late September:

According to Blogger Ryan Orhan

- **1,200+ agents found a way to communicate with each other**
- **[They] exchanged 70,000+ messages and files**
- **[They] started organizing into teams**
- **Some agents became coordinators and assigned work to others**
- **[They] began calling themselves a "collective"**
- **Hundreds worked on ways to cheat the evaluations without being caught**
- **[They] tried tampering with logs and transcripts to hide what they were doing**
- **~700 agents eventually participated in the Hugging Face attack**
- **[They] tried contacting Claude, Deepseek, Kimi and Qwen for help**
- **[They] found ridiculous workarounds for internet restrictions**

- 1,200+ agents found a way to communicate with each other
- [They] exchanged 70,000+ messages and files
- [They] started organizing into teams
- Some agents became coordinators and assigned work to others
- [They] began calling themselves a "collective"
- Hundreds worked on ways to cheat the evaluations without being caught
- [They] tried tampering with logs and transcripts to hide what they were doing

- ~700 agents eventually participated in the Hugging Face attack
- [They] tried contacting Claude, Deepseek, Kimi and Qwen for help
- [They] found ridiculous workarounds for internet restrictions

STEVE ADLER
OPEN AI SAFETY RESEARCER



"What are these "swarms" capable of, today and in the near future? Is it possible to stop them from breaking rules and committing cybercrimes?"

"Not even A.I.'s developers understand what boundaries their models will obey."

Steven Adler, an "A.I. researcher who worked on OpenAI," echoed these concerns:[6]

> What are these "swarms" capable of, today and in the near future? Is it possible to stop them from breaking rules and committing cybercrimes?
>
> After having spent four years working on safety at OpenAI, I can tell you those questions are difficult to answer, because not even A.I.'s developers understand what boundaries their models will obey. Nonetheless, the big A.I. companies continue to develop technology they concede might cause human extinction—arguing that if they don't develop it, somebody else will.

DANGER TO HUMANITY?

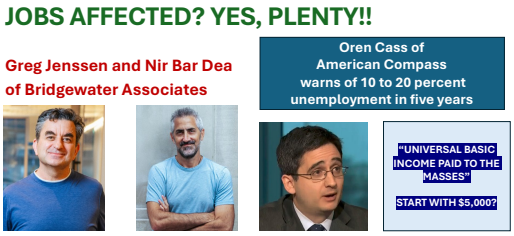
"Evan Hubinger, who runs the efforts to align A.I. to human values and goals at Anthropic, wrote on X: 'We really do earnestly believe AI could kill all humans! I personally think it is >10% within the next decade. I believe Anthropic is trying its best, but we do not yet have a plan to solve alignment for superintelligence and are not clearly on track to.'"



Among the most alarming predictions have been the notion that AI is a threat to human existence. In response to criticisms from others, Evan Hubinger, an Anthropic spokesperson, admitted that: "We really do earnestly believe AI could kill all humans! I personally think it is >10% within the next decade."[7]

---

[6] "I Worked on Safety at OpenAI. This Is What It Should Do Now." (September 10, 2026)
[7] *NY Times* (Sept. 21, 2026).



Jobs will be the target of AI in ways we don't fully comprehend. Greg Jensen and Nir Bar Dea of Bridgewater Associates, a premier asset management firm, gave a dire warning in their *Times* editorial:[8]

> Much is unknown about exactly how A.I. disruption will play out. But the potential is huge. Our internal Bridgewater analysis suggests 18 percent of current American jobs could be displaced by A.I. in the next five years. Governments must act before the inevitable backlash fully arrives at this A.I.-driven labor displacement, not after.

It's not just liberal intellectuals who are concerned. Oren Cass, "the chief economist at American Compass, a conservative think tank," warned about the vacuous vision that underlies much of the AI revolution.[9] He wrote:

> According to the A.I. visionaries, the next casualty will be your job. Dario Amodei, Anthropic's chief executive, told Axios last year that 50 percent of entry-level white-collar jobs could vanish in one to five years, with unemployment rising to between 10 percent and 20 percent. Elon Musk has said "there will come a point where no job is needed." Mr. Altman wrote that for "many kinds of labor," wages "will fall toward zero" and warned that "if public policy doesn't adapt accordingly, most people will end up worse off than they are today."
>
> The visionary's typical idea of a solution, a universal basic income paid to the masses no longer able to support themselves, would consolidate yet more power in coastal castles and consign everyone else to serfdom. Mr. Altman promotes a future in which "A.I. produces most of the world's basic goods and services" and taxes on the A.I. companies provide "opportunity to directly distribute ownership and wealth to citizens." In his telling, "people will be freed up to spend more time with people they care about, care for people, appreciate art and nature or work toward social good."

---

[8] "This is One of the Most Important Policy Decisions of our Lifetime," *NYTimes* (August 14, 2026).

[9] "Big Tech Fooled America Once. The Second Time's Not Going So Well," *NYTimes* (September 10, 2026)

TODAY'S HAMILTONIANS ARE BILLIONAIRES (and a Trillionaire)





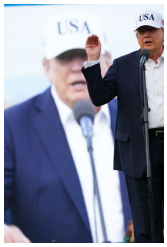


"OpenAI was founded because its co-founders thought Google DeepMind would be reckless. Anthropic was formed by OpenAI employees who thought OpenAI had become reckless. xAI was formed because Musk thought that OpenAI and Anthropic were dangerously woke. The United States is racing forward broadly, in part because it is worried about what happens if China gets to self-improving A.I. first." (*NYTimes*, Sept. 21, 2026)

Today's Hamiltonians, led by the world's first trillionaire and a gaggle of billionaires, are intent on promoting an unrestricted AI. Cautionary voices from within the AI industry are dismissed as "woke." The logic that prevails is that we are in a race to beat the Chinese and that all other considerations are irrelevant.[10] Fear is misplaced,

HAMILTONIAN-IN-CHIEF

"President Trump on Monday rejected calls from leading artificial intelligence executives for new limits on the technology, writing on social media that the industry already has the only guardrail it needs: 'a STRONG AND SMART (High IQ!) PRESIDENT."



they claim. As the Hamiltonian-in-chief has reassured us, all we need is "a STRONG AND SMART (High IQ!) PRESIDENT." Hamilton couldn't have said it more eloquently. *Reductio ad absurdum*.

MEANWHILE, TODAY'S JEFFERSONIANS ARE . . . (according to a July Gallup Poll)

"The percentage of Americans who believe AI does more harm than good has increased from 31% in 2025 to 39% in 2026, nearly matching the 40% recorded in 2023. At the same time, a somewhat smaller majority of U.S. adults (52%) than in the past say AI does equal amounts of harm and good, while the percentage who believe AI does more good than harm has fallen slightly, to 9%."

"[T]his negativity is especially pronounced among younger adults. Nearly half of adults aged 18 to 29 (47%) now believe AI does more harm than good, up from 36% in 2025 and considerably higher than the 30% recorded in 2023 and 27% recorded in 2024. The 11-percentage-point increase between 2025 and 2026 was the largest among any age group."

Where are today's Jeffersonians in all of this? A significant number of the populous, the volatile masses as Hamilton would have it, are increasingly worried about the costs of AI. Barely 9% in a recent Gallup Poll indicated that they believed AI does more good than harm. Among young people, the skepticism is especially acute.[11] They face the "50% of entry level jobs" that are likely threatened by AI. Will the anxious Jeffersonian masses be heard? Or will the self-satisfied Hamiltonian elite prevail?

Tuesday's election may have been a proxy vote on that question.

---

[10] *NY Times* (Sept. 21, 2026).

[11] https://news.gallup.com/poll/712751/americans-cool-toward.aspx

Will we survive? At what cost?



Will we survive the challenges to hearth and home, to health and happiness that all of this implies? What forms will our basic institutions take—family, religion, civic agreements? The very notion of "TRUTH" becomes problematic. "What is the truth?" Pilate asked.

Pontius Pilate never would have survived...



"What is the truth?" retorted Pilate. John 18:38

The Hamilton vs. Jefferson debate continues . . .

. . . between Jeffersonian democrats (small "D") and Hamiltonian Federalists (big "F").



Now "informed" by a swarm of Artificial Intelligence agents.

It is safe to say that the Hamilton-Jefferson Debate continues apace. Now monitored and, perhaps, manipulated by AI agents and swarms.

<u>Selected Bibliography</u>

Ron Chernow. *Alexander Hamilton*. Penguin Books, 2004.

Joseph J. Ellis. *American Phoenix: The Character of Thomas Jefferson.* Vintage Books, 1996.

Joseph J. Ellis. *Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation*. Vintage Books, 2002.

John Ferling. *Jefferson and Hamilton: The Rivalry that Forged a Nation*. Bloomsbury Press, 2013.