**Main Arguments For and Against the Constitution: Federalists vs. Anti-Federalists**

The creation of the Constitution entailed hours of debate and compromise, and even when it was completed, some delegates were unhappy with it. The task of fixing the ailing Confederate government was not complete yet; each state had to ratify, or approve, the Constitution. Basically, people divided into two groups, the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists. Each of their viewpoints is worth examining, as they both have sound reasoning.

The **Anti-Federalists** did not want to ratify the Constitution. Basically, they (Samuel Adams, Patrick Henry, James Winthrop argue that:

* It gave too much power to the national government at the expense of the state governments.
* There was no bill of right. One is needed to secure the minority from the usurpation and tyranny of the majority.
* The national government could maintain an army in peacetime.
* Congress, because of the `necessary and proper clause,' wielded too much power.
* The executive branch held too much power.

Of these complaints, the lack of a bill of rights was the most effective. The American people had just fought a war to defend their rights, and they did not want a intimidating national government taking those rights away again. The lack of a bill of rights was the focus of the Anti-Federalist campaign against ratification.

The **Federalists**, on the other hand, had answers to all of the Anti-Federalist complaints. Among them: (Alexander Hamilton wrote 50 essays, James Madison wrote 30 essays, John Jay 5)

* The separation of powers into three independent branches protected the rights of the people. Each branch represents a different aspect of the people, and because all three branches are equal, no one group can assume control over another.
* A listing of rights can be a dangerous thing. If the national government were to protect specific listed rights, what would stop it from violating rights other than the listed ones? Since we can't list all the rights, the Federalists argued that it's better to list none at all.
* James Madison felt that the large size of the US was a source of political stability

Overall, the Federalists were more organized in their efforts. By June of 1788, the Constitution was close to ratification. Nine states had ratified it, and only one more (New Hampshire) was needed. To achieve this, the Federalists agreed that once Congress met, it would draft a bill of rights. Finally, New York and Virginia approved, and the Constitution was a reality. Interestingly, the Bill of Rights was not originally a part of the Constitution, and yet it has proved to be highly important to protecting the rights of the people.

**FEDERALIST PAPERS:**  
<http://www.constitutionfacts.com/us-articles-of-confederation/the-federalist-papers/>

**WHAT:**

* 85 Essays written to support the ratification of the US Constitution
* Originally, these were published in New York newspapers between 1787 - 1788 to encourage voters to ratify it
* Supported a Strong National Government

**WHO:**

* Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, John Jay
* Alexander Hamilton wrote a majority of essays.
* Hamilton headed the project and recruited the others

**VIDEO BIOGRAPHY:**

1. Alexander Hamilton (3:44)   
   <http://www.biography.com/people/alexander-hamilton-9326481>  
   <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NP2a1xkbLgU>
2. James Madison (3:25)  
   <http://www.biography.com/people/james-madison-9394965>  
   <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EivTHLKaa9s>
3. John Jay (3:19)  
   <http://www.biography.com/people/john-jay-9353566>  
   <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j4S1ussrlks>