

# Familiar themes in works of hamilton and burr

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## **Hamilton vs. Burr**

In *Hamilton: The Revolution* by Lin-Manuel Miranda and Jeremy McCarter, Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr are very similar in their ambition and life situations. The difference between them lies in how they react to the pressures placed on them. Despite the similarity between Hamilton's character and myself, I identify more with Burr due to our shared reluctance towards publicly disclosing our feelings, in addition to how those views change.

Throughout the musical, Hamilton and Burr are shown to be very ambitious, a characteristic that I have in common with them. During "Non-Stop", both Hamilton and Burr become lawyers, but it is revealed that Hamilton is more successful when Burr admits, "Even though we started at the very same time, Alexander Hamilton began to climb" (137). Whenever Hamilton finds something that he cares about, he puts his heart and soul into it. Similarly, I am a diligent worker when it comes to my passions. For example, I push myself very hard in my studies of music because I enjoy it and wish to do well. Burr is also very ambitious and shows this off in "The Room Where It Happens" when the company asks him "What do you want, Burr?" and he answers, "I wanna be in the room where it happens...I've got to be in that room/In that big ol' room" (189). Burr doesn't have any ulterior motives behind his desire to be a part of the cabinet. His passion is based purely in the fact that he wants to be good at what he is doing, which is human nature. I have questioned why I put so much energy into music and I have realized over the years that like Burr, I do not have any reason for my musical ambition other than the fact that I want to be the best.

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Although I relate to Hamilton and Burr's ambition, the reason why I sympathize more with Burr is because of how they translate their passion into reality. Burr is very ambitious, but he often hides his passions away from people due to social obligations. In "Wait For It", Burr reveals his relationship with the wife of a British officer: "Theodosia writes me a letter every day. I'm keeping her bed warm while her husband is away" (91). It is obvious Burr loves her very much when he says, "But he can keep all of Georgia. Theodosia, she's mine" (91). Although it is not explicitly stated, Burr is unable to marry Theodosia due to the social norms in 19th century America. Because of this, he decides to keep his feelings private, taking into consideration the negative repercussions from sharing their relationship with the public. Like Burr, I sometimes must hide my true feelings due to social obligation. I would like to major in music education, but because of the pressure to go into a STEM career due to me attending IMSA, I hide my passion for music from people to avoid judgement about my ambitions. Later in the story, Burr becomes more public about his passions and even pursues them. In "The Election of 1800", Burr shows his newfound openness during an interaction between him and Hamilton: "I'm chasing what I want...I learned that from you" (259). Throughout most of the musical, Burr is very cautious about sharing his ambitions with other people. However, this song clearly shows his character development in that aspect. Recently, I have started to be more open about my passion for music after meeting other kids at IMSA who also want to major in music. The realization that there are others in my situation has inspired me to go after my passions, rather than keeping quiet about them. Although this may sound like I am more like Hamilton for chasing my passions, I still identify more strongly with Burr.

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Hamilton chased his dreams from the beginning of the musical all the way to the end. On the other hand, Burr went through a long battle with his fear of judgement until he chose to be open with his ambitions. My experiences involving sharing my ambition for music aligns more with Burr's storyline than Hamilton, which is why I identify more with him.

In conclusion, I identify more with Burr's character than Hamilton's despite all of us being ambitious people. Throughout *Hamilton: The Revolution* by Lin-Manuel Miranda and Jeremy McCarter, Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr are put into similar situations which they deal with differently. I relate more to Aaron Burr because of his initial reluctance to share his passions with the public, as well as our change in opinion regarding being open about our ambitions.