

# What has been the thinking of scholars on beard's thesis 100 years later

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CHARLES A. BEARD'S THESIS 100 YEARS LATER Charles A. Beard's Thesis 100 Years Later For the first century of the United States' history, history scholars admired the work of the founding fathers. Some considered their efforts the most delightful work ever spurred at a certain period by the human brain and a reinforcement of man's determination. However, a hundred years after 1913, Charles Beard's argument became the most widespread explanation and justification of the economic effect of the Civil War. The following paper answers what scholars have been thinking about Charles Beard's thesis a century later. The flaw in Charles Beard's thesis is contrary to that expressed by history and economics scholars during the hundred years after its publication.

An economics and history argument, Beard's thesis was vastly controversial during the early 1900s. Numerous academics have debated over the thesis, its meaning, and eventually questioned its legacy. In this thesis, Beard says that the process of forming the constitution succeeded over the interests of citizens. This is because the drafters of this constitution comprised mostly of federalists, large property owners, bankers, traders, capitalists, and creditors, whom Beard noted as substantial owners of "personality." In contrast, United States citizens largely constituted of farmers, debtors, small property owners, and people of moderate riches. This population demographic still holds almost entirely true a hundred years after the publication of Beard's thesis. As a result, Beard's proof for his thesis has not primarily overturned the claim despite criticisms that have collectively deteriorated it.

Scholars like Harold Faulkner committed two sections to a discussion about

the geneses of this war in his 1943 work “ American Economic History.”

Here, Faulkner says the impacts of the Civil War on America’s industrial, financial, and trading history were great<sup>2</sup>. According to scholars Sparrow and OBrien, Beard does not seem to overdo his hand in his argument about the founding fathers and the constitution of the United States. Rather, Beard underemphasizes his argument in the sense that he abandons the inferences that ensue from his inadequate focus on American citizens, who are largely average property holders<sup>3</sup>.

Economics academic Roger Ransom says Beard exempted the wisdom and commitment of America’s founding fathers from his history. Ransom says the founding fathers overpowered their shallow self-interests to generate a masterful document for a whole nation. Using Robert Morris and Nathaniel Gorham as examples, Ransom says the decisions made by them were incredible since they involved approving and supporting a document that made them lose significant amounts of money in the process. For Ransom, refusing to recognize such noble efforts by the founding fathers makes Beard’s thesis flawed to a significant extent. In comparison to Beard, Morris supported against the nation’s economic integrity against personal financial interests<sup>4</sup>.

The flaw in Charles Beard’s thesis is contrary to that expressed by history and economics scholars during the hundred years after its publication.

Though investigated and presented in a cautious manner, Beard’s thesis overwhelmed the historical profession and turned into a bible for economics classes in colleges during the early 1900s. A hundred years down the line and criticism of this argument has grown from history and economics

scholars. Criticism has largely focused on the thesis' flaw that is opposite to other academics in the same field.

### Bibliography

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