Please Note: You are not required to ready any of these, and even if you were in a college class, I would not expect you to try to read all of them. I have barely scratched the surface of the books that are available and welcome any suggestions that you might have.

Formative documents:

I took most of my first lecture from a book that I wrote for ABC-CLIO entitled *Documents Decoded: The Founding Period*

The best account of the actual deliberations at the Constitutional Convention of 1787 is a 4-volume work (available in paperback), edited by Max Farrand, entitled *The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787* (New Haven, Ct: Yale University Press, 1966). The backbone of these volumes consists of notes that James Madison took at the Convention, and these are available in a number of one-volume paperback books.

Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay. *The Federalist* or *The Federalist Papers*. These were originally published in 1787-1788 in advocacy of the Constitution. They are now available in a variety of paperback editions. There are also numerous collections of Anti-Federalist writings, many in paperback. The best summary is probably Herbert A. Storing, *What the Anti-Federalists Were For: The Political Thought of the Opponents of the Constitution* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981). He also published several volumes of Anti-federalist writings.


Marvin Meyers, ed. *The Mind of the Founder: Sources of the Political Thought of James Madison* (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc. 1978). I do not think that Madison should be identified as the Founder, but this is an excellent collection of his writings, including those prior to the Convention.


The U.S. Constitution is easily accessible on the internet.

**Declaration of Independence**


**Historical Analysis:**


**The Delegates to the Constitutional Convention:**

There are many excellent treatments of the subject. A recent addition to the literature, which is relatively cheap, is Denise Kiernan and Joseph D. Agnese, *Signing Their Rights Away* (Quirk Books, 2011). I object strongly to the title (I think the Convention enhanced protection of rights), and this does not include the contributions of non-signers, but it is cheap and reads well.


One of you asked about Benjamin Franklin. For a great story of Franklin’s fall from grace in Great Britain, by a local author, Kenneth Penegar. see *The Political Trial of Benjamin Franklin: A Prelude to the American Revolution* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2011).


**Deliberations at the Constitutional Convention**


John R. Vile, *The Constitutional Convention of 1787: An Comprehensive Encyclopedia of America’s Founding*, 2 vols. (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2005). This is far too expensive to buy but it will give you an idea how obsessed I am with the topic!

The U.S. Constitution


There are numerous books on the U.S. Constitution. I would advise against getting any that try to weave giant conspiracies and stick to those that give a historical or a clause-by-clause analysis.

U.S. Supreme Court Decisions

Especially as we get to the text of the Constitution, we will be talking about Supreme Court decisions.


The Bill of Rights


Subsequent Constitutional Amendments


Kris E. Palmer, Constitutional Amendments, 1789 to the Present (Detroit, MI: Gale Group, 2000).