



War of Two: Alexander Hamilton, Aaron Burr, and the Duel that Stunned the Nation

John Sedgwick

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The “insightful [and] entertainingly irreverent”* account of Alexander Hamilton, Aaron Burr, and the rivalry that ended in murder.

In the summer of 1804, two of America’s most eminent statesmen squared off, pistols raised, on a bluff along the Hudson River. Why would two such men risk not only their lives but the stability of the young country they helped forge?

In *War of Two*, John Sedgwick explores the long-standing conflict between Founding Father Alexander Hamilton and Vice President Aaron Burr. Matching each other’s ambition and skill as lawyers in New York, they later battled for power along political fault lines that would decide—and define—the future of the United States.

A series of letters between Burr and Hamilton suggests the duel was fought over an unflattering comment made at a dinner party. But another letter, written by Hamilton the night before the event, provides critical insight into his true motivation. It was addressed to former Speaker of the House Theodore Sedgwick, a trusted friend of both men, and the author’s own ancestor.

John Sedgwick suggests that Hamilton saw Burr not merely as a personal rival but as a threat to the nation. It was a fear that would prove justified after Hamilton’s death...

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