**Alex Burger**

“Constitutional Adjudication: A digital examination of the use of *The Federalist* in the opinions of the Supreme Court of the United States”

As the final interpreter of the Constitution, the Supreme Court of the United States is tasked with the duty “to say what the law is,” by providing rationale of its decisions, in written opinions[[1]](#footnote-1). When making his or her decision and crafting the respective rationale, each individual Justice holds his or her own theory of how to interpret the text of the Constitution. *Originalism*, an influential, and widely acknowledged theory of Constitutional interpretation, is an umbrella term constructed on the original intent, original meaning, or contemporary use of the text to the writers of the Constitution. This research project will analyze how Justices have referenced *The Federalist*, a series of newspaper editorials written in support of the ratification of the Constitution, in the context of *Originalist* interpretations of the Constitution.

My research project distinguishes itself due to the methodology and question in focus. Using XML-based computational technologies, my project will effectively collect quantitative data on the use of *The Federalist*, and could allow for the analyzing of over 30,000 Supreme Court opinions in search of non-explicit references. As other scholars focus on how important *The Federalist* was to Supreme Court opinions, a concept of dubious answerability, this project will seek to identify *why* the papers were cited, in an effort to classify the role that *The Federalist* serves and have served in the historical process of Constitutional adjudication.

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1. *Marbury v. Madison,* 5 U.S. 137 (1803)  [↑](#footnote-ref-1)