

*JACLR: Journal of Artistic Creation and Literary Research* is a bi-annual, peer-reviewed, full-text, and open-access Graduate Student Journal of the Universidad Complutense Madrid that publishes interdisciplinary research on literary studies, critical theory, applied linguistics and semiotics, and educational issues.  
The journal also publishes original contributions in artistic creation in order to promote these works.

---

**Volume 9 Issue 2 (December 2021)**

**Alex Gómez Hoyas**

"Putting Themselves in The Narrative: The Hamilton Musical And  
The Deconstruction Of American Identity"

---

**Recommended Citation**

Gómez Hoyas, Alex. "Putting Themselves in The Narrative: The Hamilton Musical and The Deconstruction of American Identity." *JACLR: Journal of Artistic Creation and Literary Research* 9.2.6 (2021): <<https://www.ucm.es/siim/journal-of-artistic-creation-and-literary-research>>

©Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain

---

**Abstract:** This paper aims to present Lin-Manuel Miranda's musical *Hamilton* as an empowering artistic work for marginalized groups of American society, in its challenge to the assumption of American identity as White. In order to do so, it first introduces some of the controversies in academia regarding the musical, addressing first the ideological incongruences between Alexander Hamilton the historical figure and Alexander, the musical's protagonist. Then it reviews the Great Man theory, so as to justify Alexander's characterization and the use of the Founding Myth. Next, the concepts of 'Americanness' and American identity, central to this paper, are traced to their colonial roots in authors such as Crèvecoeur and Franklin. They are linked to *Hamilton* through the importance of representation in configuring an inclusive and diverse American identity, and a parallel between Alexander's illegitimacy and Othered Americans is established.

**Keywords:** *Hamilton*, ethnic empowerment, Americanness, identity, Representation, Founding Myth.

**Alex GÓMEZ HOYAS**

**Putting Themselves in The Narrative: The Hamilton Musical and The  
Deconstruction Of American Identity.**

Burr: It's full of contradictions.

Hamilton: So is independence.

We have to start somewhere. (Miranda and McCarter 142)

**1. Introduction.**

The 2015 musical *Hamilton* by Lin-Manuel Miranda on the life of US Founding Father Alexander Hamilton (the musical's protagonist referred to simply as Alexander in this paper for clarity) has sparked controversy over its appropriateness and accuracy both in and out of academia since it was first performed. Positive reception has flooded social media platforms such as Twitter and Reddit following the #Hamfam hashtag. Newspapers such as the *New York Times* publically applauded the musical in 2015 (Krulwich), it won numerous Tony awards in 2016 and the Pulitzer Prize in Drama in 2016 for "a landmark American musical" ("*Hamilton*, by Lin-Manuel Miranda") and, in 2020, was made available on the streaming platform Disney+ due to the magnitude of its popularity.

Nevertheless, a critical outlook has also blossomed among bloggers and magazines like *Current Affairs*, which claims the musical "flatters [the American elite's] political sensibilities and avoids discomfiting truths" (Nichols "You Should Be Terrified"). They voice a worry that the popularity of *Hamilton* is, in itself, problematic and a symptom of White American society's eagerness to erase the past of people of colour (POC) by ignoring their own narratives and casting historically White figures as POC instead. These concerns are present in academia, too, where historians like Smith, Magness, Stringham, or Owen, among others, fact-check Miranda's musical and evaluate it from various perspectives such as finances, culture, art, music and history.

Despite the variety of approaches, most of the criticism is on *Hamilton*'s historical (in)accuracy, and though the question of representation is addressed both positively and negatively depending on the author, too little is said about the challenge it poses to what is stereotypically considered 'American.' This essay shall approach the musical not as historiography but as a cultural and artistic product of its context and the ideals of its creator. In this sense, *Hamilton* presents an artistic manifesto of ethnic empowerment built on the reclaiming of the right of minority Americans to the history/mythology that has been traditionally denied to them, and, more importantly, the revision of a singular American identity.

**2. Controversies in Academia.**

Firstly, in order to understand the musical and the academic debate it has prompted, it is necessary to differentiate between fact and fiction. Miranda's *Hamilton* was chiefly inspired by Ron Chernow's 2004 biography of the Founding Father, which Magness, in his essay "Alexander Hamilton as Immigrant: Musical Mythology Meets Federalist Reality," suggests

may present a defensive and over-sympathetic treatment of the historical figure. This sympathy has translated into the musical as a complete change in Hamilton's ideology. As professor Billy Smith claims, "Hamilton would have been one of the few people who would actually not like the play *Hamilton*" (519). Where *Hamilton* tells a rags-to-riches story empowering immigrants and asserting the value of hard work and ambition over nationality or social station, the historical Hamilton was notorious for his open nativism (Magness 500) and even xenophobic attitude.

This, in particular, can be found in his correspondence to Johnathan Dayton regarding views that supported the Alien and Sedition Acts, which he helped to draft in 1798. In the first of the two following extracts, Hamilton positions himself in favour of deportation and considers that the rights of new immigrants upon US soil should be different from those of the American-born population, in reference to the debate over the naturalisation acts held at the end of the 1790s and early 1800s.

... I agree that the President ought to have power to send out of the country suspected foreigners saving merchants who have six months by Treaty, which stipulation contemplating war must operate in the event contemplated. And let us perservere (*sic.*) and set good examples.

The suspension of the naturalization act will also be prudent but I always wished that our naturalization acts had distinguished between the right to hold property & political privileges. ...

(A. H. to J. D. 30th March 1798)

In this second extract, he refers to some political dissidents in the media as "Renegade Aliens" due to their foreign nationalities and expresses a wish that the law could expel them from the country:

... Renegade Aliens conduct more than one of the most incendiary presses in the UStates—and yet in open contempt and defiance of the laws they are permitted to continue their destructive labours. Why are they not sent away? Are laws of this kind passed merely to excite odium and remain a dead letter? ...

(A.H. to J. D. October–November 1799)

This attitude, however, is only vaguely depicted and explored in the musical, in the form of Alexander's persistent obsession with his legacy and other characters' remarks on his contradictory ideology. One such example is during the "Cabinet Battle #2," where Thomas Jefferson points out his classism in his efforts to emulate the aristocracy that the American Experiment was supposed to eliminate:

He knows nothing of loyalty.

Smells like new money, dresses like fake royalty. Desperate to rise above his station,

Everything he does betrays the ideals of our nation. (Miranda and McCarter 192)

It is bearing this in mind that concern over Miranda's incurrence in the "Founders Chic"<sup>1</sup> trope of the early 2000s can be understood, as well as the claims that describe *Hamilton* as being a work that promotes the Great Man Theory. This theory originated in the 19th century and was promoted by historians such as Thomas Carlyle, and remained a popular approach to History well into the 20th century ("The Great Man Theory of Leadership"). It can be summarised as the belief that great men are born, not made, and they arise in moments of great necessity; in this manner, history could be told through the contributions of the lives of a number of these great men. This line of thought has been challenged since it first appeared by theorists like Herbert Spencer, who claim that it is a considerable oversimplification.

This is the position of Stringham in his 2017 essay "Hamilton's Legacy and the Great Man Theory of Financial History," where he criticises the musical for encouraging the idea that Hamilton alone was responsible for the creation of the American financial system. It is, however, a position that takes the musical solely at face value. It does not consider that it is not the man himself that is being celebrated, but the possibility that his story and the gaps in the historical archive grant to exalt certain ideals and address pressing contemporary issues. In this sense, *Hamilton* is, arguably, much more complex than an ode to the life of a great man. Professor Owen reflects that "it works better as a morality tale than a historical narrative" (515); indeed, it serves as a familiar frame in its retelling of the Founding Myth in which to embed the celebration of freedom, nonconformity and, in particular, the potential of immigrants.

Myths can be found in all societies and often originate in close connection to spirituality or religion, so that they can be deemed "a basic constituent of human culture" (Bolle et al.). What is mythical has come to be closely linked with what is false, as myth, unlike history, does not concern itself with empirical facts; thus they can present renditions of quasi-historical events in such a way that manifests the view of the world of a community ("Myth"). In this sense, the cultural relevance of myths would lie not in their degree of truthfulness or accuracy, but in how they articulate and reflect the identity of a community. Such is the case with the Founding Myths in the US, as their prominence within American culture. Indeed, Owen explains that the way in which American identity is construed around the Founding Myth is what makes the revolution still culturally significant nowadays (515).

As such, Lin-Manuel Miranda is not the first to use this frame to present his ideals. Brown dates this "trend of elevating the Founders to the status of American saints and using them to cast judgment on contemporary events and figures" to the years immediately preceding the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence in 1826 (486) and explains the ways the Founding has been revisited in moments of national struggle – such as the 2001 9/11 attacks (487) – to promote certain attitudes or qualities in the American

---

<sup>1</sup> The term "Founders Chic" emerged to describe the trend of the early 2000s where the Founders were revisited in a plenitude of nostalgic biographies where problematic decisions and faults were glossed over in order to provide a kinder and less uncomfortable take on the past. Francis Gogliano makes an interesting commentary of this trend after reading several biographies of the founders in his "Review: Founders Chic."

citizenry. From this perspective, *Hamilton* participates in a tradition that is almost as old as the United States itself, and makes use of a device that is as old as culture. Ancient people turned to their myths to form a communal identity; Americans turn to the Founding mythology in times of struggle when they need to be reminded of who they *are* based on who they *were*.

As American society continues to change and marginalised groups make their way into the public sphere, a demand for representation and inclusion leads to the reinterpretation of certain cultural manifestations – such as mythology – to promote visibility. Miranda himself in a 2016 interview states that he thinks “[the *Hamilton* cast’s] goal is to present [the Founding Fathers] as human and not just the five facts you know about them from your history books” (Binelli “Lin-Manuel Miranda: The Rolling Stone Interview”). These words came after having explained in 2015 that, facing the rising anti-immigrant and xenophobic climate in the US, *Hamilton* presented a reminder of the contributions immigrants made to the Revolution (Suárez Sang “A Counterweight To Anti-immigrant Rhetoric”).

Thus, the Founding is here politically employed to cast judgement on a contemporary event (a rise in xenophobic rhetoric) but it subverts the traditional model in *not* elevating the Founders to sainthood. Instead, popular art is used to nuance these individuals and present them as real, flawed people with emphasis on the diversity of their origins. This is what makes the musical resonate with 21st century US audiences, who seek a new and inclusive understanding of American identity.

### **3. On Americanness.**

The full title of Miranda’s 2015 musical is *Hamilton: An American Musical* and one of its key aims is to visually look like America, or visibly appeal to the part of America that has been traditionally absent, subordinated, or separate when the concept of the nation is invoked. In other words, it seeks to expand on the face of “Americanness” and bring attention to representation of ethnic diversity.

#### **3.1. The Articulation of “Americanness” and Those Excluded.**

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the first instances of the word “American” in use – both as noun and as adjective – correspond to the second half of the 16th century. In the case of the adjective, it described anything “of or relating to America,” while the noun was employed in reference to “an American Indian of North America or South America” (Merriam-webster.com). This meaning changed with the American War of Independence in the 18th century and the configuration of the United States as a new nation, so that it assumed the meaning that is understood today and which the same dictionary presents as the same dictionary entry’s third option “a native or inhabitant of the U.S.: a U.S. citizen.” It is a demonym free of the many connotations that Americanness bears.

As for “Americanness,” many dictionaries provide no entry for this term, simply relating it to the concept of “American.” Nevertheless, the Online Etymological Dictionary dates its first use to 1860, in a biography by Robert B. Warden (“American”). Despite its recognition in dictionaries, it is a concept that scholars of literary history have pondered over

at length<sup>2</sup> and which American artists have tried to convey in their works since the birth of the United States. It proves that the nature of what it means to be a citizen of the United States has, historically, been a source of concern and speculation. The American identity did not present itself to American people as self-evident, hence the need to define it.

One of the earliest attempts at defining Americanness can be found in *Letters from an American Farmer* by Hector St. John Crèvecoeur, first published in 1782. In his "Letter III," titled "What is an American" he asks: "What then is the American, this new man?" ("Letters from an American Farmer"). The text of this letter serves to answer this question through exemplification and description. Therefore the reader may gather that what Crèvecoeur considers to be what constitutes an American is, explicitly, to be "honest, sober and industrious" (31), self-reliant, supportive of the US government, ruled not by religion or traditions but self-interest. Implicitly, however, the reader understands that "the new man" must necessarily be male and able-bodied, culturally Christian and descended from northern Europeans, in order to fit the mold that Crèvecoeur establishes for a person to apply to all for one of the earliest manifestations of the 'American Dream.'

Another author who helped to consolidate this idea of the American new man was Benjamin Franklin. In his *Autobiography*, Franklin embodies the man that Crèvecoeur described and lives the American Dream where hard work and opportunity led him to prosper and be hailed as "[t]he first great American man" (Van Doren 296). His life story is considered American in what has been traditionally considered the rags-to-riches prototype, proof of success being universally available. Franklin himself begins his book expressing his hope that his life may serve as an example to others:

Having emerged from the poverty and obscurity in which I was born and bred, to a state of affluence and some degree of reputation in the world ... the conducting means I made use of, ... my posterity may like to know, as they may find some of them ... fit to be imitated. (5)

Through this book and his other works, Franklin creates what D.H. Lawrence refers to as the "pattern American" and demeaningly describes as "dry, moral [and] utilitarian" (27), in his 1933 *Studies in Classic American Literature*. His rebellion against this American stereotype proves that the model had been widely accepted as an accurate representation of "Americanness" by his contemporaries and their preceding generations.

Nevertheless, neither Crèvecoeur nor Franklin invented the "new man" or the 'American Dream.' They both contributed to patent it, so to speak, but were building upon the tradition started by the first European immigrants in the American continent. The Early American Literature scholar Lemay, for instance, insists upon John Smith as a man whose values would come "to be especially associated with America," and places independence, pragmatism and individualism at the heart of this (118). He too situates John Smith at the

---

<sup>2</sup> See Bercovitch's essay "The Problem of Ideology in American Literary History" for a brief, critical overview of the American Renaissance as approached by literary historians and the recurrent concern with "Americanness."

beginning of the American Dream (1, as qtd. in "A Tribute to J.A. Leo Lemay"). His emphasis on the figure of John Smith is understandable, as Smith himself argued that the hard-working immigrant man arriving in America would doubtlessly forge a prosperous future for himself in his 1616 work *A Description of New England*. The propagandistic ideal that Smith proposed for White immigrants in this work is echoed in Crèvecoeur and Franklin's American man and, consequently, shaped the understanding of the essential American identity as male and of European descent.

Further, Professor Hazlett explains that, in the wake of the Revolution, writers like Washington Irving voiced their concern that there was, at the time, no national literature without a national language or history and set out to create a national mythos (560–561). Hazlett describes his objective in writing *The Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus* as "one of the desiderata of American literature: the creation of an American hero" (562). In this book, Irving presents a biography of Christopher Columbus due to his representing the start of American history. This idea, however, parts from the imperialistic assumption that the Americas were culture-less and had no history before European colonisation. This Romantic generation of writers who sought to 'invent' American literature thus ignored the heritage of the Native peoples, as they did not fit the White European-descendant male narrative already rooted in the national consciousness.

Moreover, these models perpetuated by the American intellectual elite, and immortalised in the canon, paired with the absence of other alternative identities in this group of early 'classics',<sup>3</sup> all contribute to the sense of inauthenticity as Americans of traditionally excluded groups of people. The lack of representation gave the impression that these groups were either absent, exceptions to the norm or too insignificant to be noted at the time of the formation of the United States. Marginalised groups were, thus, tacitly dismissed as 'un-American'.<sup>4</sup>

This tacitness is fundamental to the process of exclusion. It is present in the initial conception of the American citizen in the Declaration of Independence, where it is stated that "all men are created equal" (Declaration Transcription). Here there is no explicit mention of African descendants being legally inferior to Europeans, or of them being excluded from the following inalienable rights, yet the continuation of slavery was a given. Their existence was simply not considered during the document's creation. Inexplicit discrimination parts from the assumption that inclusion would be unnatural and so the contrary need not be specified. As such, the 'true' American could, theoretically, be any person from any minority group, but in practice it nonetheless meant 'White male of (northern) European ancestry' well into the 1960s, and it is an assumption that persists today.

---

<sup>3</sup> Slave narratives, Black literature, women's writing, and the Native American oral tradition were excluded from the American literary canon until its revision in 1990, the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s having encouraged students to rediscover the literature of discriminated and forgotten authors. See Couser for a brief review of the changes in the canon implemented in "Revision of The Literary Canon: The American Experience."

<sup>4</sup> The issue of 'American' versus 'un-American' identities persists in the present. It is still articulated according to prototypicality in terms of gender, ethnicity, religion, and so on, where the non-prototypical identities are excluded from the national identity as 'un-American'. This can all be appreciated in the study carried out by Julie Wronski of University of Mississippi, "Who Doesn't Count as an American: An Exclusionary Approach to National Identity," and the ample literature that she presents.

To battle these assumptions of what the true American is, works like *Hamilton* question the face of America. By employing a multiracial cast to retell the myth of the Founding so deeply at the core of American identity, portraying historically White men and women as POC, it tacitly challenges these long-standing assumptions of Americanness.

### **3.2. Americanness Revised: the Importance of Representation.**

The employment of White historical figures to represent minority empowerment is a source of much debate. It has been understood that *Hamilton* falls into the common mistake of erasing Black bodies in songs like "The Room Where it Happens," where the lyrics "No one else was in the room where it happened" disregard the presence of slaves (Monteiro 94). The issue of slavery is one that academics fear is glossed over in an effort to not force the audience to confront the uncomfortable and inhumane truths of the colonial and revolutionary era. Gentry points out that there are scarce mentions to it, and laments that the musical engages so little with it (276). In this sense, the musical can be seen to participate in the tradition where White stories are the only ones of importance, and presents no progressive subject matter; however, as Owen points out, the significant questions *Hamilton* raises are "by way of presentation" (516). Its value is essentially representational.

It was shown in reports by the Asian American Performers Action Coalition that on Broadway, the medium on which *Hamilton* was first hosted, the numbers of POC actors in musicals running in the seasons of 2006–2011 was alarmingly low in comparison to their White counterparts. In 2016, the *Quartz* newspaper ran an article explaining the foundation of AAPAC, as, because the theatre industry does not "keep data on the race and ethnicity of Broadway actors" (Onuoha "It's Not Black and White"), Asian American actors decided to collect it themselves.<sup>5</sup> Their report for the *Hamilton* season of 2015–2016, for example, showed a record high where 35% of all the roles performed on Broadway in that season were played by POC (McPhee "AAPAC's 'Ethnic Representation' Report").

This shows that even in the present day there are sectors where POC are severely underrepresented. Numerous studies have been carried out highlighting the importance of representation in the development of a positive self-image for marginalised individuals, since the 1940s "Doll Test"<sup>6</sup> by psychologists Kenneth and Mamie Clark that contributed in the *Brown v. Board of Education* case against segregation in US public schools. Representation in the visual arts is considered of particular significance.

One study by Martins and Harrison shows that television material consumed affects the self-esteem of children, as the habitual depiction of Black people associated with criminality or lesser education in the media "may negatively influence the evaluations among African American youth, thereby leading to lower self-esteem" (343). Wilcox-Archuleta proposes that a high density of ethnic stimuli in the environment help to give Latinxs a

---

<sup>5</sup> For more information on AAPAC, their action and findings, see [aapacnyc.org](http://aapacnyc.org), the organisation's official webpage.

<sup>6</sup> This test consisted in presenting Black children with a series of questions about two dolls, identical in everything except for colour. The results showed that most Black children preferred the White doll, revealing the early formation of racial bias ([naacpldf.org](http://naacpldf.org)). See the Clarks' study in Clark, Kenneth B., and Mamie P. Clark. "Emotional Factors in Racial Identification and Preference in Negro Children."

stronger sense of group identity and belonging (965); Fürsich claims that representation of US minority groups and foreigners through domestic media – for example, film – and international journalism plays a substantial role in the configuration of the dominant group's perception of them as Other (115–117). A research report by The Opportunity Agenda from 2011 reviewing certain social sciences literature on negative cultural representation – i.e., through racial stereotyping in the media – or underrepresentation, can have serious effects on the lives of Black men and boys, including “lower likelihood of being hired for a job or admitted to school, lower odds of getting loans, and a higher likelihood of being shot by police” (15). These are several examples of the varied research carried out in this area, all of which underline the correlation between negative representation, or non-representation, and harm to the ethnic individual in the United States.

Knowing this, Miranda's statement that his musical “looks like America looks now” (Paulson, “‘Hamilton’ Heads to Broadway”) gains significance. While it is true that the musical looks like America looked in the Founding as well, the conversation about visibility and diversity has gained momentum in the last few decades and the culture of mass media has made the question of representation more relevant than ever. Other members of the original *Hamilton* cast have commented upon how impactful they found the race-conscious choice in casting, among them Christopher Jackson, who performed George Washington in the musical. He believes that presenting the ideas of the Founders through Black and brown actors “represents the fact that [their] role in building this country has never truly been acknowledged and [he] think[s] it opened up the audiences' minds to the spirit of what these men [the Founders] meant, even if they were woefully incapable of living it out in their own experiences” (Kohn, “‘Hamilton’ Color-Conscious Trailblazer”). Author Jeremy McCarter, too, follows this line of thought. In *Hamilton: The Revolution*, co-written with Miranda himself, he writes that “American history can be told and retold, claimed and reclaimed, even by people who don't look like George Washington” (95).

Though there is no explicit questioning of American identity in the lyrics of *Hamilton*, it is present as an undercurrent throughout the entirety of the show. Descriptors such as “bastard,” “orphan” and “immigrant” follow Alexander all his life and, in a way, shape it. These words, all related to the protagonist's origins, are usually voiced by other characters. The first instance is during the first track, “Alexander Hamilton,” which opens with the question structure “[h]ow does a bastard, orphan...” (Miranda and McCarter 16) that reappears at various points of the narrative to frame some aspect of Alexander's achievements. The same song continues, several stanzas later, describing Alexander as “another immigrant / comin' up from the bottom” (17).

In this sense, that Aaron Burr, acting the part of narrator, introduces Alexander in this way may well symbolise the perception of identity from outside of the self, while Alexander shows his internal awareness of these conditioning factors through certain verses in which he refers to himself. An example of these may be “Immigrants / we get the job done!” (119) from “Yorktown,” or “You never seen a bastard orphan / More in need of a break” (176) in “Say No To This.”

Insofar as ‘bastardness’ is a socially constructed illegitimacy, and orphanhood can imply the state of “one deprived of some protection or advantage” (“Orphan”), both terms

can be associated with immigration and the 'un-American.' Yet, to present these concepts as key to the life and identity of a Founding Father in a self-titled "American Musical" prompts the question of who the legitimate or authentic children of America may be. It questions what it is to be American, at the same time situating immigration and socially perceived 'un-Americanness' – which would encompass hyphenated identities and women – paradoxically at the heart of Americanness. Put another way, the emphasis placed on Alexander as an outsider grants the Othered Americans the chance to empathise with him, and to reconcile diversity with Americanness. This conception of America as a project of immigrants and the socially illegitimate is present in Alexander's understanding of it, as is visible in the track "The World Was Wide Enough," where he reflects on his own legacy, America, and the space it grants to diversity:

Hamilton: Legacy. What is a legacy?  
It's planting seeds in a garden you never get to see.  
I wrote some notes at the beginning of a song someone will sing for me.  
America, you great unfinished symphony,  
You sent for me.  
You let me make a difference.  
A place where even orphan immigrants can leave their fingerprints and rise up.  
(Miranda and McCarter 273)

#### **4. Conclusion.**

In summary, what it is to be 'American' has been formulated and reformulated, visited and revisited ever since the 16th century and the arrival of European colonists; its meaning has been construed through a national history and mythology articulated from a White male perspective. The perdurance of this meaning has led many Americans to be dismissed and Othered or 'illegitimised,' so to speak, due to their status as ethnic minorities, women or immigrants.

Nevertheless, works of art like *Hamilton* engage with history and myths by revisiting them and deconstruct the traditional understanding of American identity while challenging historical White monopoly over 'Americanness.' They help to revise the concepts of American identity so that it may extend to the rich variety of cultures and ethnicities present in the United States. This is achieved through representation, which has been proven to be a fundamental tool in the formation and perception of identity. Put differently, representation has the power to make identity inclusive and grant Othered people a sense of belonging.

It is this that makes *Hamilton: An American Musical* relevant. To present the Founding – a White myth – through POC actors and actresses is in itself an act of ethnic empowerment, as it allows marginalised Americans to reclaim their history and to see themselves (visually) represented beyond stereotypes. In doing so, they, to misquote the musical's Eliza, put themselves in the narrative. Therefore, it can be gathered that though Lin-Manuel Miranda's musical is not perfect, it can be considered a useful tool to move the conversation on American identity forward.

## Works Cited

- "A Revealing Experiment: Brown v. Board and 'The Doll Test'." *Legal Defence and Educational Fund*, 2014, [www.naacpldf.org/ldf-celebrates-60th-anniversary-brown-v-board-education/significance-doll-test/](http://www.naacpldf.org/ldf-celebrates-60th-anniversary-brown-v-board-education/significance-doll-test/). Accessed 5 Jan. 2021.
- "A Tribute to J. A. Leo Lemay: Honored Scholar of Early American Literature." *Early American Literature*, vol. 35, no. 1, University of North Carolina Press, 2000, pp. 1–4, [www.jstor.org/stable/25057176](http://www.jstor.org/stable/25057176).
- "American." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/American>. Accessed 3 Jan. 2021.
- "Americanness." *Online Etymological Dictionary*, etymonline.com/word/americanness. Accessed 3 Jan. 2021.
- The Asian American Performers Coalition*, AAPAC, 2011, [www.aapacnyc.org/#](http://www.aapacnyc.org/#). Accessed 4 Jan. 2021.
- Bercovitch, Sacvan. "The Problem of Ideology in American Literary History." *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 12, no.4, 1986, pp. 631–653. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/1343431](http://www.jstor.org/stable/1343431). Accessed 4 Jan. 2021.
- Binelli, Mark. "'Hamilton' Creator Lin-Manuel Miranda: The Rolling Stone Interview." *The Rolling Stone*, 1 June 2016, [www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-news/hamilton-creator-lin-manuel-miranda-the-rolling-stone-interview-42607/](http://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-news/hamilton-creator-lin-manuel-miranda-the-rolling-stone-interview-42607/). Accessed 17 Dec. 2020.
- Bolle, Kees W.; Smith, Jonathan Z., and Buxton, Richard G.A.. "Myth." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 3 Nov. 2020, [www.britannica.com/topic/myth](http://www.britannica.com/topic/myth). Accessed 4 December 2021.
- Clark, Kenneth B., and Mamie P. Clark. "Emotional Factors in Racial Identification and Preference in Negro Children." *The Journal of Negro Education*, vol. 19, no. 3, 1950, pp. 341–350. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/2966491](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2966491). Accessed 5 Jan. 2021.
- Crèvecoeur, Hector St. John. "Letter III." *Letters from an American Farmer* [1782]. Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, released Nov. 2003, [www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/4666](http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/4666). Accessed 14 Dec. 2020.
- "Declaration of Independence: A Transcription." *America's Founding Documents*, National Archives, reviewed 7 Oct. 2021, <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript>. Accessed 4 Dec. 2021.
- Franklin, Benjamin. *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* [1793], edited by Charles Eliot, Project Gutenberg, released 4 Aug. 1995, updated 8 Oct. 2016, [www.gutenberg.org/files/148/148-h/148-h.htm](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/148/148-h/148-h.htm). Accessed 14 Dec. 2020.
- "From Alexander Hamilton to Jonathan Dayton, [30 March 1798]," *Founders Online*, National Archives, [founders.archives.gov/documents/Hamilton/01-27-02-0001-0012](https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Hamilton/01-27-02-0001-0012). [Original source: *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, vol. 27, *Additional Letters 1777–1802, Addenda and Errata, Cumulative Index*, vols. I–XXVII, ed. Harold C. Syrett. New York: Columbia University Press, 1987, p. 17.] Accessed 16 Dec. 2020.

- "From Alexander Hamilton to Jonathan Dayton, [October–November 1799]," *Founders Online*, National Archives, [founders.archives.gov/documents/Hamilton/01-23-02-0526](https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Hamilton/01-23-02-0526). [Original source: *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, vol. 23, April 1799–October 1799, ed. Harold C. Syrett. New York: Columbia University Press, 1976, pp. 599–604.] Accessed 16 Dec. 2020.
- Fürsich, Elfriede. "Media and the Representation of Others." *International Social Science Journal*, vol. 61, no. 199, Mar. 2010, pp. 113–130., doi:10.1111/j.1468-2451.2010.01751.x. Accessed 3 Jan. 2021.
- Gentry, Philip. "Hamilton's Ghosts." *American Music*, vol. 35, no. 2, 2017, pp. 271–280. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/americanmusic.35.2.0271](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/americanmusic.35.2.0271). Accessed 5 Jan. 2021.
- Gogliano, Francis D. "Review: Founders Chic." *History*, vol. 90, no.3, 2005, pp.411-419. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/24427886](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24427886).
- "Hamilton, by Lin-Manuel Miranda." *The Pulitzer Prizes*, 2016, [www.pulitzer.org/winners/lin-manuel-miranda](http://www.pulitzer.org/winners/lin-manuel-miranda). Accessed 28 Dec. 2020.
- Hazlett, John D.. "Literary Nationalism and Ambivalence in Washington Irving's The Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus." *American Literature*, vol. 55, no. 4, 1983, pp. 560–575. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/2925974](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2925974). Accessed 5 Jan. 2021.
- Kohn, Eric. "How 'Hamilton' Became a Color-Conscious Casting Trailblazer, Before It Was Cool." *IndieWire*, 4 Jul. 2020, [www.indiewire.com/2020/07/hamilton-cast-casting-directors-diversity-1234571127/amp](http://www.indiewire.com/2020/07/hamilton-cast-casting-directors-diversity-1234571127/amp). Accessed 17 Dec. 2020.
- Krulwich, Sara. "Review: 'Hamilton,' Young Rebels Changing History and Theatre." *The New York Times*, 6 Aug. 2015, [www.nytimes.com/2015/08/07/theater/review-hamilton-young-rebels-changing-history-and-theater.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/07/theater/review-hamilton-young-rebels-changing-history-and-theater.html). Accessed 27 Dec. 2020.
- Lawrence, D. H.. *Studies In Classic American Literature*. London: M. Secker, 1933. *Hathi Trust Digital Library*, May 2020, [hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015002155482](http://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015002155482). Accessed 18 Dec. 2020.
- Lemay, J. A. L. "The Voice of Captain John Smith (Book Review)." *Southern Literary Journal*, vol. 20, no. 1, 1987, pp. 113-131. *ProQuest*, updated 23 Feb. 2013, [www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/voice-captain-john-smith-book-review/docview/1300138072/se-2?accountid=14514](http://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/voice-captain-john-smith-book-review/docview/1300138072/se-2?accountid=14514). Accessed 4 Dec. 2021.
- Magness, Phillip W. "Alexander Hamilton as Immigrant: Musical Mythology Meets Federalist Reality." *The Independent Review*, vol. 21, no. 4, Independent Institute, 2017, pp. 497–508, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26314791>. Accessed 15 Dec. 2020.
- Martins, Nicole, and Harrison, Kristen. "Racial and Gender Differences in the Relationship Between Children's Television Use and Self-Esteem: A Longitudinal Panel Study." *Communication Research - COMMUN RES.* 2012, vol. 39, pp. 338-357. doi:10.1177/0093650211401376. Accessed 3 Jan. 2021.
- McPhee, Ryan. "AAPAC's 'Ethnic Representation' Report Indicates Record High in the Season of *Hamilton*." *Playbill*, 15 Jan. 2018,

- [www.playbill.com/article/aapacs-ethnic-representation-report-indicates-record-high-in-the-seas-on-of-hamilton](http://www.playbill.com/article/aapacs-ethnic-representation-report-indicates-record-high-in-the-seas-on-of-hamilton). Accessed 27 Dec. 2020.
- Miranda, Lin-Manuel, and McCarter, Lin-Manuel. *Hamilton: The Revolution*. Hachette UK, Google Books, 2016.
- Monteiro, Lyra D. "Review Essay: Race-Conscious Casting and the Erasure of the Black Past in Lin-Manuel Miranda's *Hamilton*." *The Public Historian*, vol. 38, no. 1, Feb. 2016, pp. 89–98., doi: 10.1525/tph.2016.38.1.89. Accessed 3 Jan. 2021.
- "Myth." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/myth>. Accessed 2 Dec. 2021.
- Nichols, Alex. "You Should Be Terrified That People Who Like 'Hamilton' Run Our Country." *Current Affairs*, 29 July 2016, [www.currentaffairs.org/2016/07/you-should-be-terrified-that-people-who-like-hamilton-run-our-country](http://www.currentaffairs.org/2016/07/you-should-be-terrified-that-people-who-like-hamilton-run-our-country). Accessed 14 Dec. 2020.
- Onuoha, Mimi, "It's Not Black and White." *Quartz News*, 4 Dec. 2016, [qz.com/842610/broadways-race-problem-is-unmasked-by-data-but-the-theater-industry-is-still-stuck-in-neutral/](http://qz.com/842610/broadways-race-problem-is-unmasked-by-data-but-the-theater-industry-is-still-stuck-in-neutral/). Accessed 4 Jan. 2021.
- "Orphan." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, [www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/orphan](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/orphan). Accessed 3 Jan. 2020.
- Owen, Kenneth. "Can Great Art Also Be Great History?" *The Independent Review*, vol. 21, no. 4, 2017, pp. 509–517. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/26314792](http://www.jstor.org/stable/26314792). Accessed 1 Jan. 2021.
- Paulson, Michael. "'Hamilton' Heads to Broadway in a Hip-Hop Retelling." *The New York Times*, 12 Jul. 2015, [www.nytimes.com/2015/07/13/theater/hamilton-heads-to-broadway-in-a-hip-hop-retelling.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/13/theater/hamilton-heads-to-broadway-in-a-hip-hop-retelling.html). Accessed 2 Jan. 2021.
- Smith, Billy G.. "Alexander Hamilton: The Wrong Hero for Our Age." *The Independent Review*, vol. 21, no. 4, 2017, pp. 519–522. *JSTOR*, [jstor.org/stable/26314793](http://jstor.org/stable/26314793). Accessed 15 Dec 2020.
- Smith, John. *A Description of New England*. [Original printed by Humfrey Lownes, for Robert Clerke, 1616, 2nd ed.] Early Modern Books, *ProQuest*, updated 11 Nov. 2020, [www.proquest.com/docview/2248530532?accountid=14514&imgSeq=1](http://www.proquest.com/docview/2248530532?accountid=14514&imgSeq=1). Accessed 21 Dec. 2020.
- "Social Science Literature Review: Media Representations and Impact on the Lives of Black Men and Boys." *The Opportunity Agenda*, Oct. 2011, [www.opportunityagenda.org/explore/resources-publications/social-science-literature-review](http://www.opportunityagenda.org/explore/resources-publications/social-science-literature-review). Accessed 7 Jan. 2021.
- Stringham, Edward Peter. "Hamilton's Legacy and the Great Man Theory of Financial History." *The Independent Review*, vol. 21, no. 4, 2017, pp.523–533. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/26314794](http://www.jstor.org/stable/26314794). Accessed 7 Jan. 2021.
- Suárez Sang, Lucia I. "Lin-Manuel Miranda: I'll Always Be A Counterweight To Anti-immigrant Rhetoric." *Fox News*, 30 Sept. 2015 [updated 10 Jan. 2017], [www.foxnews.com/entertainment/lin-manuel-miranda-ill-always-be-a-counterweight-to-anti-im-migrant-rhetoric](http://www.foxnews.com/entertainment/lin-manuel-miranda-ill-always-be-a-counterweight-to-anti-im-migrant-rhetoric). Accessed 18 Dec. 2020.

- "The Great Man Theory of Leadership Explained." Villanova University, updated Sept. 10 2021, [www.villanovau.com/resources/leadership/great-man-theory/](http://www.villanovau.com/resources/leadership/great-man-theory/).
- Van Doren, Carl. "The First American Man of Letters." *Michigan Alumnus Quarterly Review*, University of Michigan, vol. 45, 1939, pp. 283-296. *Hathi Trust Digital Library*, [hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015006955929](https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015006955929). Accessed 1 Jan. 2021.
- Wilcox-Archuleta, Bryan. "Local Origins: Context, Group Identity, and Politics of Place." *Political Research Quarterly*, vol. 71, no. 4, 2018, pp. 960-974. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/26600641](http://www.jstor.org/stable/26600641). Accessed 6 Jan. 2021.

### **Bioprofile of the author**

Alex Gómez Hoyas pursued the English Studies major at the Complutense University of Madrid. The area of study that most interests him is that of literary analysis, especially in relation to the portrayal of different individuals and the representation of minorities in different literary mediums. His plans for the future include the pursuit of creative writing and further scholarship, and he considers himself a voracious reader of contemporary fiction.

Contact: <[alegom23@ucm.es](mailto:alegom23@ucm.es)>