**[Worth a Look: Book Reviews on Self-Determination & Secession](http://www.phibetaiota.net/2009/01/worth-a-look-book-reviews-on-self-determination-secession/) [Full Reviews at** [**http://phibetaiota.net**](http://phibetaiota.net) **& Amazon]**

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***UPDATED 9 January 2016 to add image, preface and paragraph extracts.***

*As a high school honors student at the Singapore American School, I wrote a paper on the causes of the US Civil War and made the same mistake most adults make today: I thought it was about slavery and I never realized that a War of Secession is not the same as a Civil War. A War of Secession seeks to restore the independence that was compromised to voluntarily join a Union. A Civil War is a war for dominance over the whole. I now understand that the “Civil War” was a bankers war, a war to give the North the right to occupy and loot the South, a war where the only long-term winners were the banks. It was not about slavery — Lincoln “emancipated” only the slaves in the South, not in the North and West, and he did so “with grave reluctance.” In some ways the Civil War — despite the onerous nature of slavery at its foundation — was a cultural war, between the agrarian communities of the south and the industrial non-communities of the north. Today the United STATES of America is beginning to break up — calls for a Constitutional Convention are mounting, e.g. from the Governor of Texas as well as Mark Levin, while secessionists in Hawaii, Vermont, Texas, Alaska, Washington, Oregon, and California continue to labor away legally and ethically. There is also the matter of federal corruption, federal war-wongering, federal taxation of STATE citizens, and federal ownership of land. Absent unifying leadership able to restore integrity to how we elect and govern on behalf of the STATES, I anticipate a break-up of the United STATES of America.  Below are a few books I have reviewed, with one paragraph from each review brought forward, click on the title to read the entire review.*

**Self-Determination & Secession**

[Review: A Constitutional History of Secession](http://www.phibetaiota.net/2009/01/?p=236)

Published in 2002, this book summarizes all the reasons the individual US states may today freely contemplate secession from the United STATES of America. The author has special authority apart from his scholarship–he was among those who served as counselors to the high court of Canada that decided in 1998, irrevocably, that Quebec has the right to secede.

[Review: Is Secession Treason?](http://www.phibetaiota.net/2009/01/?p=246)

This book, self-published in 1866 (Eighteen Sixty Six) is a treasure. The author did such a good job that his work was used in defending Jefferson Davis against charges of treason. I am impressed on every page with the diligence that went into looking at the original papers, the early drafts of the Constitution, the records of the debates, and the personal correspondence of the Founding Fathers thereafter.

The book centers on three questions:

1) Was the Constitution a compact–a voluntary agreement?
2) Were the STATES the parties to the compact?
3) If so, did the STATES reserve the right to withdraw from the compact?

[Review: One Nation, Indivisible? A Study of Secession and the Constitution](http://www.phibetaiota.net/2009/01/?p=243)

The two books dovetail perfectly with three bottom lines:

1) The Declaration of Independence, the Treaty of Paris, and the Constitution are all compacts among STATES, and the Union is a plurality of STATES, not a unity of one people.

2) Secession is not treason; secession is in fact the only moral legal option open to any state when the federal government becomes both lunatic and pathologically dangerous to the well-being of the citizens that each state represents.

3) The federal government is an administrative entity created primarily to help the STATES be competitive in commerce, and was never intended to be a “national” government with authority over the states. The author cites Thomas Jefferson on more than one occasion reiterating that the federal government is in no way its own “decider” and is always the creature of the states, in no way superior over any of them.

[Review: Secession, State, and Liberty](http://www.phibetaiota.net/2009/01/?p=10690)

2. When is Political Divorce Justified? (Steven Yates). This chapter hinges on consent of the governed and the right to withdraw when the government either ignores its levitate functions and/or undertakes tasks it should not perform and is not authorized to perform. Anticipates tyranny in the USA, and points out that Lincoln’s bloodshed while not quite equal to that of Hitler’s or Stalin’s, was easily unjustified and clearly associated with an attempt to impose a tyranny on the South that the North had no right to impose.

[Review: Secession–How Vermont and All the Other States Can Save Themselves from the Empire](http://www.phibetaiota.net/2009/01/?p=249)

The book moves to a conclusion in observing that Alaska, Hawaii, Texas, and California (the latter with three secessionist movements calling for three separate republics to be made out of the state, the eighth largest economy on the planet per the author), are all ripe for activism.

[Review: The Nine Nations of North America](http://www.phibetaiota.net/2009/01/?p=869)

The nine nations, each unique, are:

1. The empty quarter (which global warming will open up)
2. Quebec
3. Ecotopia (a model for the rest of us)
4. The breadbasket (which wastes water on excess foot and grows corn for fuel and cattle that is inedible and wastes more water)
5. New England
6. The Foundry (mid-Atlantic coast)
7. Dixie
8. MexAmerica
9. The Islands (of the Caribbean, where Cuban sugar cane sap could power 30-35 million cars, while Cuban health care would inform our own).

[Review: The Secessionist States of America – The Blueprint for Creating a Traditional Values Country … Now](http://www.phibetaiota.net/2014/10/review-the-secessionist-states-of-america-the-blueprint-for-creating-a-traditional-values-country-now/)

It breaks my heart to see reasonable credible cries from the heart on secession put forward, and to then see critics commenting on this material without thinking — in some cases obviously without reading the book at all, just reacting in a Pavlovian (unthinking instinct) manner to the title. This is a five-star book. Yes, it has many weak-points but at root this is a patriotic book that is highlighting the criminal insanity of the totally corrupt federal government (all three branches), and the wanton destruction of the USA — of the middle class, of the blue collar master class, of the rising youth and declining old guys like myself, and of the veterans where suicide now kills more serving military in the field than combat action, and 22 veterans a day commit suicide at home in the USA.

[Review: The Vermont Manifesto (Paperback)](http://www.phibetaiota.net/2009/01/?p=6357)

The US federal government is failing to serve the people, and according to the precepts of the American Republic, that gives the people the right to abolish the government. In the case of the Second Vermont Republic, the author and his very thoughtful colleagues are proposing instead to succeed from the Federal Union that is not Federal anymore–the federal government is now a “hired hand” for Wall Street and a servant to dictators of Saudi Arabia as well as the Israeli lobby.