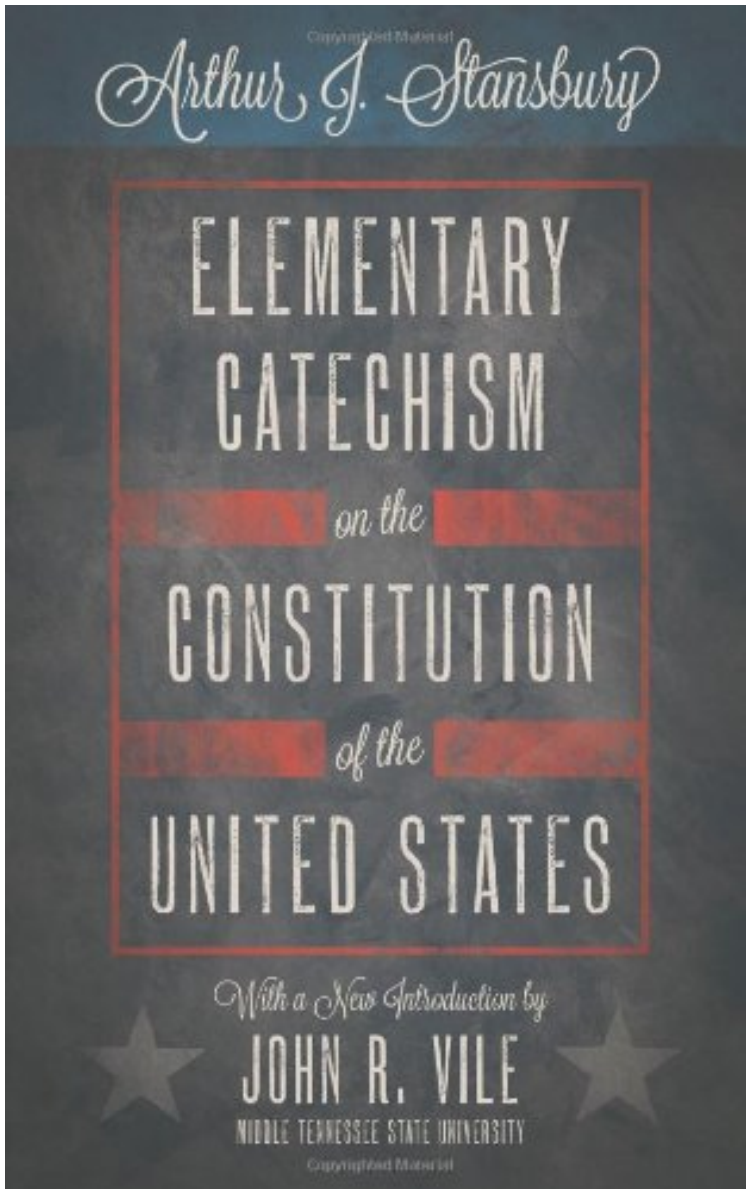


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# Elementary Catechism on the Constitution of the United States



*Arthur J. Stansbury*  
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**Description :** Recognition of the U.S. Constitution's importance increased dramatically in 1826 due to the deaths of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, the election of President Andrew Jackson and the jubilee celebration of the Declaration of Independence. At this time, a period when public schools were increasing in number, educators responded with coursework that promoted the virtues of the Constitution to the nation's youth. Arthur J. Stansbury, a Presbyterian minister known for his political speeches, wrote one of the most popular textbooks used in the schools. Cast in the form of questions and answers in a chronological explanation of the Constitution, his "catechism" endowed patriotism with moral virtues in his depiction of

the nation's "highly favored" birth-right. "It is a tribute to Stansbury, and to the document that he explicated, that so many subsequent scholars have followed the pedagogical path that he blazed." --JOHN R. VILE, XIX-XX ARTHUR J. STANSBURY [1781-1865], a New York Presbyterian minister, often preached on political topics and was known for the patriotic fervor to his addresses. His other publications were addresses and sermons, reports of debates in Congress and trial records of judges and clergymen. He also illustrated children's books, including *The Children's Friend* (1821), a book about Christmas that included an early depiction of Santa Claus.

About the Author John R. Vile is professor of political science at Middle Tennessee State University. He is the author of *Encyclopedia of Constitutional Amendments, Proposed Amendments, and Amending Issues* (1996) and other books. His colleague, Mark Byrnes, associate professor of political science at Middle Tennessee State University, is the author of *Politics and Space* (1994).