

# **From 'Factions' to Attack Ads – A History of American Politics**

Class 2

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# What We Will Cover Today

- Finish up on the Constitution
- From Washington to the Civil War
  - Factions
  - The Origins and Demise of the First Party System
  - The Origins and Demise of the Second Party System
  - Jacksonian Democracy and its Implications
  - Major Trends impacting on Politics

# Problematical Aspects of the Constitution - 4

- While the Articles of Confederation said that the union was perpetual, the Constitution said nothing concerning perpetuity
- Office of the Vice President
- Did not define citizenship
  - Left the definition of citizenship to the states

# “Factions” and the Founding Fathers

# “Factions” and the Founding Fathers

- Founding Fathers viewed themselves as “gentlemen” who
  - Placed public interest ahead of personal interest
  - Saw the Constitution as the way to both ensure liberty and rule by gentlemen
  - Saw a presidency and congress composed of gentlemen as able via due deliberation to reach a consensus on public policy that promoted the public interest and common good

## “Factions” and the Founding Fathers - 2

- Founding Fathers viewed themselves as “gentlemen” who (cont)
  - Saw the common voter as naturally willing to elect “gentlemen” to public office since they were the natural leaders
  - Saw “factions” as groups of individuals who placed personal or small group interests ahead of the general public interest or common good
  - Saw factions as a threat to the body politic and the Constitution

# “Factions” and the Founding Fathers - 3

- Why did the Founding Fathers have such a negative view of “factions”
  - First, their personal experience as local magistrates and legislators showed to them that the interests of the entire community could be determined and acted upon
  - Second, their reading of history gave ample evidence of the baneful effects of factions in the forms of coup d’etats, revolts, corruption, and governmental repression

## “Factions” and the Founding Fathers - 4

- The 1790s were marked by a conflict between:
  - Elite and popular political expectations of civic harmony, selfless behavior, and a consensus of what the public good was AND
  - Deep divisions between the economic interests and political values of the different sections which were aggravated by emerging policy conflicts over fiscal and foreign affairs
    - Also important were the policy and personality conflicts between Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson



# “Factions” and the Founding Fathers - 5

- Policy Divisions
  - Hamilton’s Fiscal Policies
    - National debt
    - Assumption of state debts
    - National Bank
  - The French Revolution
  - The War between Great Britain and France

# “Factions” and the Founding Fathers - 6

- Results of the above conflict:
  - The emergence of two proto-parties – the Federalists and the Republicans
    - Federalists favored a strong central government based upon the Constitutional concept of implied powers
      - Moralistic Republicans
    - Republicans favored a central government limited in its powers to those expressly stated in the Constitution
      - Libertarian Republicans
  - The tendency of each proto-party to see itself as the embodiment of true republican virtue and the other as an illegitimate faction

# “Factions” and the Founding Fathers - 7

- In 1796, the Federalists and Republicans put forward different candidates for president and vice-president
  - The Federalist candidates were John Adams and Thomas Pinckney
  - The Republican candidates were Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr
- While none of the candidates campaigned, their respective partisans began a long-lasting and ignoble tradition - mudslinging

## “Factions” and the Founding Fathers - 8

- The 1796 Election resulted in the election of John Adams as President and Thomas Jefferson as VP
- Neither Federalists nor Republicans viewed the other as legitimate. This view was aggravated by
  - Continued partisan strife
  - The Alien and Sedition Acts

# The Election of 1800 - 1

- The 1800 campaign was marked by an intense amount of mudslinging
  - If you were to believe the extreme partisans, you had the choice between
    - An atheist who would ban the Bible, turn our daughters into prostitutes, and drown the nation in blood and
    - A foolish criminal beset by malignant passions who wanted to reunite Britain and America by having one of his sons marry one of George III's daughters

# The Election of 1800 - 2

- In the election, Jefferson and Burr each received 73 electoral votes while Adams and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney each received 65 votes
- Because of the tie, the election went into the House of Representatives
  - The House was deadlocked until Hamilton broke the deadlock in favor of Jefferson

# The Election of 1800 - 3

- As a result of Hamilton's intervention, Jefferson became President and Burr Vice-President
  - While Hamilton disliked Jefferson, he hated Burr
    - The aftermath of this was an eventual duel between Hamilton and Burr in 1804 which resulted in Hamilton's death and Burr's disgrace
  - Another consequence was the 12th Amendment which provided for separate votes for president and vice-president

# The Election of 1800 - 4

- While Jefferson and the Republicans allowed the Alien and Sedition Acts to expire and repealed internal taxes, they otherwise continued Federalist policies and adopted the Hamiltonian view of implied powers
- Thus, Jefferson
  - Purchased the Louisiana territory from France
  - Sent the Navy to fight the Barbary pirates
  - Imposed a trade embargo in 1808



# Election of 1804

- Jefferson's policies and actions proved popular
- The Republican congressional caucus nominated Jefferson and George Clinton of NY
- The Federalists agreed to back Charles C. Pinckney and Rufus King of NY
- Despite Federalist attempts to exploit the Sally Hemmings issue, Jefferson won reelection easily

# Election of 1808 - 1

- After the attack on the *Chesapeake* in 1807, there was a clamor for war with Britain
  - Rather than war, Jefferson decided to embargo trade with Britain and France
  - This aroused a great amount of resentment in New England
- The big issue in the 1808 election was the embargo

# Election of 1808 - 2

- Republicans nominated James Madison, Jefferson's secretary of state, and George Clinton
- Federalists again nominated Charles C. Pinckney and Rufus King
- Madison won with 122 electoral votes to Pinckney's 47
  - All of New England except Vermont voted for Pinckney

# Election of 1812

- The Republicans nominated James Madison and Elbridge Gerry of MA in May 1812
- War was declared on June 12, 1812
- The Federalists nominated DeWitt Clinton of NY and Jared Ingersoll of PA after they had been nominated by a group of dissident Republicans opposed to the war
- Madison won reelection with 128 electoral votes to Clinton's 89

# War of 1812 and its effects

- By cutting off U.S. trade with Europe and England, the War fostered the development of American industry
  - New England merchant capitalists began investing in industry
- The Battle of New Orleans made Andrew Jackson a national hero and a future presidential candidate
- The Federalist opposition to the war effort and the secession threats of the Hartford Convention basically destroyed the Federalist Party

# End of the Federalists

- With the demise of the Federalist party, most Federalists joined the Republicans and aligned themselves with those sections of the Republican party that favored a national bank, internal improvements, and protective tariffs
- This increased factionalism within the Republican party and eventually led to the emergence of the Second Party System

# 1824 Election

- Monroe favored his secretary of war William H. Crawford of GA as his successor
- In February 1824, Crawford received the congressional caucus nomination
- The legislatures of several New England states nominated secretary of state John Quincy Adams
- The Tennessee legislature and several state conventions nominated Andrew Jackson
- The Kentucky and other state legislatures nominated Henry Clay

# 1824 Election - 2

- Crawford's nomination by the caucus became an issue in the campaign
- Right after his nomination, Crawford suffered a stroke
- This boosted the fortunes of the other candidates
- Except for the caucus issue, personalities rather than issues dominated the campaign



# 1824 Election -3

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# 1824 Election -4

- This put Clay in the position of kingmaker
- Clay felt that Crawford's stroke ruled him out and that Jackson lacked experience and was too headstrong to be president. This left Adams whom Clay thought was eminently qualified to be president
- The key to Adams' victory in the House was the vote of New York
  - The key to New York was the vote of GEN Stephen Van Rensselaer

# 1824 Election - 5

- Jackson was disappointed to lose, but he went ballistic when Adams appointed Clay to be his secretary of state
- To Jackson and his followers, this appointment seemed *prima facie* evidence of a corrupt bargain between Adams and Clay.
- In a sense, the 1832 election campaign began with Jackson's defeat in 1828 and Adams' appointment of Clay as secretary of state

# 1828 Election - 1

- Adams' presidency was stymied by a Congress controlled by his political enemies and by his own lack of political skills
- The attack of the Jacksonians led the Adams-Clay people to coalesce into a party of their own
  - They began calling themselves the “National Republicans” to distinguish themselves from the Jacksonian Democratic Republicans

# 1828 Election - 2

- The National Republicans nominated John Quincy Adams and Richard Rush
- The Democratic Republicans nominated Andrew Jackson and John C. Calhoun
- The 1828 election was marked by a large amount of mudslinging
- If you were to believe the extreme partisans, you had a choice between
  - \_ A murderous, illiterate bigamist who was totally unfit by temperament and lack of experience for high public office
  - \_ A corrupt, anti-religious , extravagantly reckless spendthrift monarchist who pimped for the czar of Russia

# 1828 Election -3

- The 1828 election campaign saw some interesting innovations
  - The campaign biography
  - The “smear” biography
  - Organized parades, barbecues, dinners, and street rallies
  - Campaign paraphernalia
- Voting took place on a statewide-basis over a two-month period rather than on a single election day
  - By 1828, 22 of the 24 chose presidential electors by popular vote

# 1828 Election - 4

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# Jacksonian Democracy and its Implications



# Jackson

- Saw a leader as one who engaged in bold and decisive acts
  - Was a Take-charge-of-things kind of guy
  - Not afraid of physical confrontations
- Had a charismatic appeal to followers
- Demanded extreme personal loyalty
- Had a violent antipathy to all who disagreed with him
  - Was intensely partisan

# Jackson

- Jackson was a characteristic borderland-frontier type of leader
  - His personality and his policies both were polarizing
  - His personality and style of leadership appealed to the South, the West, and the working classes of the Eastern cities, but grated elsewhere

# Jackson's Political Views

- Saw a national debt as an evil
- Saw large concentrations of power as a threat to both democracy and liberty
  - Opposed to the Bank of the United States
- Supported states rights
- Strongly opposed nullification
- Opposed federal funding of internal improvements
- Supported Indian removal
- Believed the role of the Federal government should be restricted to those specifically mentioned in the Constitution

# Jackson's Political Views - 2

- Favored the spoils system
  - Reflected his belief in term limits for bureaucrats
    - Believed that an entrenched permanent bureaucracy would serve itself rather than the public
  - Believed that most federal jobs were so simple that anyone could do them

# Jackson's Political Innovations

- Built up a campaign organization unlike any seen before
  - Won support of, or established, a chain of newspapers to publicize Jackson and his views
  - Established a network of financial supporters who subsidized pro-Jackson newspapers, and published campaign-related pamphlets and paraphernalia
  - Established links with Tammany Hall in New York

# Key Events of Jackson's Presidency

- The Battle of the Petticoats
- Indian Removal
- Veto of the Rechartering of the BUS
- The Maysville Veto
- Resistance to Nullification
- Paying off the National Debt
- Appointment of 6 Supreme Court justices, including Chief Justice Roger B. Taney
- Institution of the Spoils System

# The Battle of the Petticoats - 1

- Margaret “Peggy” Eaton was the well-educated, vivacious daughter of the owner of the Franklin House, a Washington boarding house
- In 1828, Peggy married Senator John Eaton, soon to be Jackson’s Secretary of War
- This and Peggy Eaton’s past led Cabinet wives and Washington socialites to snub Mrs Eaton

# The Battle of the Petticoats - 2

- Jackson had lost his wife, Rachel, months before his inauguration
  - He blamed her death on the vicious attacks made upon her
  - He saw Peggy Eaton as an innocent victim of the same type of slanderous allegations
- Since Martin Van Buren, a widower and Secretary of State, was kind to Mrs Eaton, he rose in Jackson's favor



# The Battle of the Petticoats - 3

- Since Floride Calhoun had led the attack on Mrs Eaton, Jackson, who felt that the Vice President gave at least tacit approval to the attacks, became alienated from his Vice President
- The controversy led Jackson to demand the resignation of his cabinet
  - He then named Van Buren as Ambassador to Britain
- The vote on Van Buren's confirmation was a tie, allowing Calhoun to cast the deciding vote against Van Buren
  - This caused Jackson to go ballistic

# The Battle of the Petticoats - 4

- The break between Jackson and Calhoun led Calhoun to resign the vice presidency and seek election to the Senate from SC
  - His presidential ambitions destroyed, Calhoun began his transformation from American nationalist to Southern sectionalist
- The Peggy Eaton affair led to Jackson choosing Van Buren as his Vice Presidential nominee in 1832

# Bank of the U.S.

- Bank served as the Federal Government's fiscal agent even though it was a private bank
  - Handled its deposits (including tax receipts) and payments
  - Could issue its own currency notes
    - Issued 40% of all bank notes in circulation
    - By changing its demands on state and local banks for specie, it could regulate the whole economy
  - Conducted normal commercial bank functions

# Bank of the U.S. - 2

- Jackson with his strict constructionist views saw the BUS as constitutionally illegal
  - When Congress created it, it asserted a power not given to it by the Constitution
- Jackson saw the BUS as having a corrupting influence
- Jackson believed that specie constituted the only legitimate currency and that banks had no business issuing paper currency

# The End of the BUS - 1

- While the BUS charter did not expire until 1836, Henry Clay in 1832 had Congress pass a bill to recharter the Bank
  - Clay saw it as a win-win issue
    - If Jackson approved the bill, the BUS's future was secure
    - If Jackson unexpectedly vetoed the bill, Clay would have an issue he could use against Jackson in the 1832 election
- Jackson vetoed the bill
  - Claimed that it was unconstitutional
  - Denounced the BUS as an instrument of special privilege that favored rich at the expense of the “humble members of society – the farmers, mechanics, and laborers”

# The End of the BUS - 2

- After the veto
  - Jackson withdrew Federal deposits from the BUS and deposited them in pet state banks
  - Biddle worked to defeat Jackson
    - Subsidized anti-Jackson newspapers
    - Distributed anti-Jackson pamphlets, tracts, and journals
    - Made loans to pro-Bank congressmen
- The BUS veto became a major point of political polarization in the electorate
  - Broke the Republican party into two distinct factions – the Jacksonian Democrats and the anti-Jacksonian National Republicans (soon to be Whigs)

# Effects of the BUS veto

- Ensured the reelection of Jackson in 1832 and of his chosen successor, Van Buren, in 1836
- Led to a lending bubble on the part of the pet state banks
- When the bubble burst, the result was the Panic of 1837
- By destroying the BUS without providing a substitute for it, the veto left the U.S. banking system in a chaotic state
  - It was not until the creation of the Federal Reserve system in 1913, that the U.S. had an entity that could do what the BUS could do

# Maysville Road Veto

- Vetoed the Maysville Road project
  - Road between Maysville and Lexington KY
  - Advocates saw it as part of future Federal road system
  - Jackson vetoed the bill on grounds that federal financing of internal state improvements was not authorized by the Constitution
  - Was willing to enable states to construct roads and canals by distributing surplus federal funds to the states



# Tariffs - 1

- Apart from slavery, the tariff was the most heated political issue in the 19th Century
  - Manufacturers in New England and the mid-Atlantic states favored tariffs to shield themselves from foreign competition
  - Westerners favored tariffs as a source of funds for internal improvements that would link the West to the rest of the nation
  - Southern farmers and planters saw tariffs as punitive legislation that forced them to subsidize Northern manufacturers

# Tariffs - 2

- In 1789, Congress enacted a tariff law to raise revenue for the new government
  - Rate of 15% on iron, nails, hemp & glass and 5% on everything else
  - Hamilton saw tariffs as way to enable American manufacturers to undersell their foreign competitors
- In 1816, Congress enacted the first protective tariff – with the goal not only of raising revenue but also protecting American manufacturers from foreign competition
  - The average tariff rate was raised to 20%

# Tariffs - 3

- In 1828, in the so-called “Tariff of Abominations,” the average rate was raised to over 60%
  - This was higher than even the Smoot-Hawley Tariff of 1930
- Its enactment was the result of a political ploy by Jackson’s supporters that backfired

# Nullification - 1

- The Tariff of Abominations raised the issue of where sovereignty lay
  - Led to the Nullification controversy
- Nullification provoked by
  - Jackson's proposed tariff bill of 1832
  - Calhoun's change of view
  - Calhoun's break with Jackson as a result of the Peggy Eaton affair

# Nullification - 2

- SC legislature
  - Declared the tariffs unconstitutional and thus null and void
  - Barred collection of the tariff in SC
  - Threatened secession if the Federal government attempted to intervene
- Jackson responded vigorously
  - Dispatched warships to Charleston harbor
  - Issued a proclamation stating that no state has a power to annul a law of the United States
  - Asked Congress to enact a “force bill” authorizing use of the military to enforce the tariff law in SC

# Nullification - 3

- While Jackson believed in states rights, he also believed that the Federal government had legitimate constitutional powers
  - This included the right to enact a tariff
- Thus any attempt by a state to nullify a Federal law was both unconstitutional and incompatible with the existence of the Union
- Jackson also believed that in a democracy the majority had a right to govern

# Effects of the Nullification Episode

- The Nullification episode was a portent of eventual disunion and civil war
- It provided a precedent for Lincoln's actions in the Secession Crisis of 1861
- It led many Southern planters and states rights advocates to abandon the Jacksonian Democrats in favor of the Whigs
  - This led to a Whig Party with two very disparate wings that had little in common except opposition to Jackson and the economic linkage of Southern cotton producers and Northern textile manufacturers

# Trends that Worked for Jackson

- Jackson's election was in part the consequence of three interlinked long-trend trends
  - Democratization
  - Westward movement
  - Printed Media revolution
- These trends continued long after Jackson



# Democratization and its Consequences

# Democratization - 1

- Most of the colonies had established either a property or taxpaying qualification for voting
  - Actual enfranchisement, however, was fairly high.
- During and soon after the Revolution, two factors extended the franchise
  - The shift in a number of states from a property qualification to a taxpaying qualification
  - Inflation which imposed 'bracket creep' on statutory qualifications

# Democratization - 2

- States also enacted other reforms in the 1780s and 1790s which increased the number of voters
  - Increasing the number of polling places – one in each township as opposed as few as one in each county.
  - More frequent elections
  - More offices being elective rather than appointive
    - Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and state senators became elective offices

# Democratization - 3

- In the 1820s, the states abolished the remaining property qualifications for voting
  - No state admitted after 1815 had a property requirement for voting
    - Territories seeking statehood saw voting liberalization as a means of increasing population to qualify for statehood
    - New territories and states saw increased settlement as a means of raising land values, increasing the tax base, and promoting economic development

# Democratization - 4

- By 1824, 18 of the 24 states had decided that presidential electors should be chosen by the voters rather than by state legislators
- By 1828, 22 of the 24 states had their presidential electors chosen by the voters

# Effects of Democratization - 1

- Democratization of the electorate had several consequences
  - Vastly expanded the number of voters
    - This made the political party a necessary intermediary between the voters and the candidates for public office
  - Along with immigration, gave rise to the political machine
  - Along with the political party, gave rise to the political convention as the means and forum for selecting presidential candidates

# Effects of Democratization - 2

- In the American electoral system
  - There was a strong push toward a national two-party system
    - This meant that American politics would not see a number of ideologically-united or ethnically-based parties as was common in Europe
    - With democratization, this meant that each party contained several factions
      - While these factions might share common values (or common dislikes), they often differed on ideological, policy, issue, and candidate grounds.
  - While third parties would have little impact unless they had a strong geographic base

# Effects of Democratization - 3

- Left American politics with a two-party system of ritual politics
  - Parties existed primarily to win elections and enjoy the spoils of office and only secondarily to enact specific policies
    - Avoided commitments on specific policies
    - Focused on issues of high emotional content
    - Stressed personalities rather than issues
    - Engaged in “negative campaigning” and mudslinging



# Effects of Democratization - 4

- Helped turn political campaigns into forms of mass entertainment
  - By 1840, campaigns featured giant barbecues, parades, torchlight processions, sing-alongs, posters, and rallies
- Led to political campaigns designed to foster a spirit of group loyalty in voters rather than voters' rational evaluation of the candidates and issues

# Notes About Democratization

- The change from the 18th century to the 19th century represented:
  - A shift from the concept that property qualifications were necessary for a voter to exercise independent political judgment to the concept that voting was a right of all adult white males
  - A shift from the personal authority of gentlemen to the impersonal authority of party
  - From a voter's personal knowledge of the candidate to a knowledge of the opinions of the party and its most active partisans

# A Key Point About Democratization -1

- In the U.S., democratization occurred before large numbers of either white, male wage workers or immigrants appeared
  - This meant that the white working class had the right to vote so that they:
    - Joined existing political parties and saw politics through the prism of ethnic, religious, racial, and cultural differences rather than class differences

## A Key Point About Democratization - 2

- In Europe, the working classes did not gain the right to vote until after an industrial proletariat had been created
  - This meant that European workers had to struggle to gain the right to vote
  - This struggle created a strong sense of class consciousness and a consequent propensity to vote for Socialist and/or politically radical parties

# A Key Point About Democratization - 3

- In Europe:
  - Socialist parties became major factors in late-19th and 20th century politics in Great Britain (under the name of the Labor party), France, Germany, Italy, and elsewhere
    - In some countries, even a Communist party became a major factor in electoral politics
- In the U.S.:
  - Socialist parties were only marginal factors in politics
    - They elected a few mayors, state legislators, and a handful of Congressmen

# Notes About Jacksonian Era Voting

- Political leaders, except for some local offices, are not personally known by the voter. You vote for a candidate because you support his political party
- Elections are the culmination of a months' long campaign involving banners, torchlight parades, and election hoopla
- The voter's connection to a party is based less on its stand on public policies and more on a strong sense of partisan loyalty
- The act of voting is an act of solidarity