

Political Eras and Important Events

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Political Eras

Important Events

1788-1824 Elections England's Political Influence Finally Ends and the South Has Some Success in Controlling Northern Business Interests. The [causes of the American Revolution](#) began with a disagreement over the way Great Britain treated the colonies. Americans wanted the rights of Englishmen. Federalists favored unity through a strong central government, close ties to Britain, a centralized banking system, and close links between government and men of wealth who should run government.

Republican party of Jefferson, Madison and Monroe strongly opposed [Alexander Hamilton's](#) Federalist agenda of a strong central government. Instead they wanted more states rights in our developing [Democratic Federalist Republic](#). See [Characteristics of Market System Capitalism and Political Economy](#).

1828-1852 Elections Federalism vs. State's Rights then Democracy vs. Republic The [Democratic-Republican Party](#) of the Jefferson became factionalized in the 1820's so Jackson supporters began to form the modern [Democratic Party](#). It hoped to pass political power from established elites to ordinary voters by ending the [spoils system](#). They continued the [Bank War](#) against eastern business interests by opposing the renewal of the [Second Bank of the United States](#). Democrats also opposed Whig sponsored modernizing programs that they felt would build up industry with [protectionism](#) at the expense of [taxpayers](#). These battles continue today! Democrats fought the revival [Adams](#) and [Anti-Jacksonian](#) factions which soon emerged as the [Whig Party](#). They were led by [Henry Clay](#) who advocated the primacy of [Congress](#) over the [Executive Branch](#) as well as policies economic protectionism of Northeastern industry. **The battle of presidential versus congressional power continues today.**

1856-1896 Elections Civil War, Northeast Takes Control, Gilded Age Wealth Built on the backs of the poor, women, children, immigrants, and former slaves. The civil War was followed by massive transportation industrialization which involved railroads, canals and steamships. Massive wealth was created. Farm mechanism lowered the cost of food and this coupled with science made for a somewhat more prosperous middle class. Immigrants suffered.

- 1) [Executive privilege](#) was created by President Washington to keep [Jay Treaty](#) documents from Congress. Other Presidents would claim the right and courts would sometimes have to decide legality. **Think NSA data spying.**
- 2) [Hamiltonian economics](#) outlined a coherent program of national mercantilism with government-assisted economic development. **Think business expansion, infrastructure investment, Japan, and China.**
- 3) [1791 Whiskey Rebellion](#) against federal taxes failed. It was the first of many disagreements concerning government taxes. **Think Tea Party.**
- 4) Democracy caused anarchy caused much fear among Oligarchs as liberal revolutionary ravaged Europe. A [Quasi-War](#) with France was not escalated by Adams despite the desires of his cabinet. He used the [Alien and Sedition Acts](#) to limit a citizen's right to disagree. A few opposition leaders were jailed. It was the first of many attempts by U.S. President to ignore the Constitution in the name of national defense. **Think the Pentagon Papers, War on Terror...**
- 5) [First Barbary War](#) was the first fought on foreign soil. It stopped payment of tribute to Mediterranean pirates. War on Terror Begins.
- 6) The [1800 cutthroat election](#) made Adams was a one-term president and ended the twelve-year Federalist reign of increased federal government.

- 7) The 1803 [Louisiana Purchase](#) and [1819/1821 treaties with Spain](#) more than doubled the size of the U.S. Later U.S. would force a war with Mexico to expand into the Southwest.
- 8) [War of 1812](#) protected freedom of the Sea and ended hostilities with Britain.
- 9) [Missouri Compromise](#) of 1820 admitted Maine as a free state and Missouri as a slave state. It postponed the coming pain. **Does the 12/15 climate agreement postpone pain from expected climate change?**
- 10) [Monroe Doctrine](#) of 1823 kept U.S. out of European politics and vice versa until WWI.
- 11) 1828 "[Tariff of Abominations](#) resistance slowed expanding business interests. It caused the [Nullification Crisis](#) as states wanted to declare federal laws unenforceable Tariffs continued as the main source of federal revenue until surpassed by post WW II income tax revenues. **Have Free Trade Agreements replaced tariffs as a way to help business at worker expense?** See 1994 [North American Free Trade Agreement \(NAFTA\)](#) and maybe the 2015 [Trans Pacific Partnership](#).

- 1) [Panic of 1857](#) was caused by over-consumption of goods from Europe which lowered the [hard currency](#) supply. Also overbuilding by competing railroads and rampant Western land speculation caused problems. **Think bubbles!**
- 2) [Civil War](#)
- 3) [Enforcement Acts](#) of 1870-71 was designed to protect blacks from the [Ku Klux Klan](#) and to protect Indians. It failed.
- 4) [Panic of 1873](#) was caused by the hard currency [Coinage Act of 1873](#). It lowered the money supply. Workers blamed [cheap foreign labor](#). Called the [Long Depression](#) until the 1930's when it was superseded by the Great Depression, it caused severe hardship. It would not be the last time immigrants were blamed for problems. **See [Mexico, United States barrier](#). Think Great Recession.**
- 5) [Pendleton Civil Service Reform Act](#) of 1883 added merit to federal hiring and began replacement of the [spoils system](#) though who you know continued.

- 6) [Chinese Exclusion Act](#) of 1882 lasted until 1942. [Scott Act](#) of 1888 expanded the restrictions on Chinese immigration. **See [Japanese American 4 Year Internment](#).**
- 7) [Interstate Commerce Act of 1887](#) began an attempt to regulate business trusts and harness their use of monopoly power.
- 8) [McKinley Tariff](#) of 1890 set a record for high rates. Profits increased as did the price of consumer goods.
- 9) [Panic of 1893](#) resulted in a severe depression. Reluctantly, [J.P. Morgan](#) bailed out the gold standard with \$60,000,000.
- 10) The [1894 Wilson-Gorman Tariff](#) lowered tariffs slightly & created a 2% income tax on over \$4,000 (\$88,100 in 2010 dollars). It was declared unconstitutional by the 1895 Supreme Court. **Think taxes on the top one-percent.**
- 10) Harrison appoints four conservative S.C. judges to fight coming progressive movement.