

HST 202: ONLINE U.S. History W19 (Escobar)

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Taking Sides - Election of 1828
by [Joe Escobar](#) - Saturday, January 19, 2019, 4:32 PM

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IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

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No, the 1828 election did not represent a Democratic revolt
by [Jessica Cole](#) - Saturday, January 19, 2019, 10:57 PM

As much as I personally love the romanticized historical notion of our country's citizens coming out in droves to save their nation and elect Jackson from the presidency he had been robbed from in the previous election; overall I don't believe that the 1828 election represented a democratic revolt of the people. One of the reasons that our text deems the turnout of the 1828 election so impressive is because the percentage of voters doubled from 1824 (pg 380). Remini states that Jackson's victory of 56% of the popular vote was a "veritable landslide", and that his electoral vote of 178 to his opponent's 83 was "even more impressive" (pg 2). While the electoral vote for Jackson was indeed impressive; the electoral vote does not necessarily represent the desires of the people - which is why I chose to focus on the popular vote in response. Jackson was obviously favored by the people, however I don't see the popular vote as being the landslide that Remini claims it is. Yes, Jackson absolutely deserved the Presidency - however if the supposedly people poured out in droves to support Jackson as president, a 6% win of the popular vote does not seem to demonstrate a country's sole minded dedication to just one presidential candidate. Instead the nearly equal split in popular vote indicates that there was an almost even divide among the American people for both Jackson as well as his opponent John Quincy Adams. Therefore the impressive doubling of participating voters from the previous election does not show a single minded determination to put Jackson in office - but instead a higher citizen investment from both sides.

I thought at first that I would side with concurring that the 1828 election was a democratic revolt; from both reading the information presented by our class text, as well as the debate put forth by Remeni. I was incensed to read that the 1824 went the way it did after Jackson obviously won the popular vote. I gleefully read that he was "plotting revenge" (pg 377), and anticipated what was coming next as I wanted Adams to be put in his place. The vision of the citizens coming for Jackson's inauguration "like the inundation of the northern barbarians into Rome" (pg 380) - some having traveled 500 miles and celebrating their country being "rescued from some dreadful danger" (pg 381) painted an image in my mind of the entire nation celebrating their victory. This idea was only solidified by Remini's description of the charismatic war hero, a "living authentic legend" (pg 3) who was avenging his rightful place. I went on to read McCormick's debate, expecting to be against his point of view - in fact I was already committed to

be defensive against his side. However, as I continued to read and see his well researched information concerning voter numbers, I was forced to realize that part of the reason I wanted the election to have been a revolt is because the idea of a country coming together to fight for their cause is sentimentally idealistic. The popular champion who was denied his 1824 victory, rose from the ashes and conquered his adversary because of determination and uprising of the American voters is fun and intriguing, and I was pulled in by historic sentimental notions.

McCormick's debated however caused me to admit defeat and turn to his point of view. McCormick proved that instead of a "mighty uprising", the public turnout of the 1828 election actually didn't have that many more voters than previous elections or later elections. Regarding Jackson, McCormick states that "... it is not evident that his partisans stormed the polls any more enthusiastically than did the Adams men. Of the six highest states in voter participation in 1828, three favored Adams and three were for Jackson, which could be interpreted to mean that the convinced Adams supporters turned out no less zealously for their man than did the ardent Jacksonians." (pg 8). This quote gave me pause, as I considered my short life experience concerning elections, and how voting fervor and even hysteria was present in a few of the recent elections I had witnessed. The fervor did not necessarily mean a strong national support for one candidate - but instead strong partisan opposition creating fuel for the fire as tensions built and opposing views came to head. McCormick explains this by stating that because of the long seemingly boring unopposed Virginia reign of the previous elections, the 1828 election brought forth a change with two well backed opponents who essentially started a contest among voters and sparked interest in the masses (pg 8). While of course the public is always invested in presidential elections, some candidates pose more of a threat to a particular voter's ideals, and as a result the elections become more heated versus an election where both candidates might share some of the same platforms. When elections occur where the main candidates both offer mutual ideology overall, it is easier for a voter to not be as invested in the outcome of the election and sometimes not get involved at all.

Because of these points and my personal experience concerning elections, I believe that although Jackson was a strong political leader who was championed for by much of his country - the outcome of the 1828 election was not due to a democratic revolt in favor of him solely. I believe that the election sparked public interest and as a result, voters in favor of both Jackson as well as his opponent Adams turned out in higher numbers than some elections previously. Jackson won the election and was the people's choice - but not in such a high sweep of his opponent that Adam's supporters were insignificant and unworthy of mentioning.

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Re: No, the 1828 election did not represent a Democratic revolt
by [Letitia Hadix](#) - Thursday, January 24, 2019, 12:06 AM

Hello Jessica!

To start off, I love how detailed and well thought out your post was! I kind of struggled with my own decision on what side to choose, but I absolutely agree with you about how Andrew Jackson's victory was due to public interest. Specifically, his reason for winning was from the rumors and stories about his time at the frontier. I feel the citizens were impressed with Jackson's life as a "military chieftain, the Napoleon of the woods, a frontier hothead, and, possibly, a robber-bridegroom." (Murrin 374) It appeared that Jackson was more popular due to his life full of action rather than what else he could contribute.

After I read your post, I was able to understand the information better and interpret the book easier.

Much thanks,

Letitia Hadix

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Re: No, the 1828 election did not represent a Democratic revolt
by [Ashley Tippins](#) - Thursday, January 24, 2019, 8:07 PM

Hello Jessica: I loved your post and definitely considered most of these arguments when evaluating the texts. They are all valid points but, in the spirit of debate, I have a few counter arguments.

My first counterpoint is a critique of McCormick’s framing of the democratic revolt in terms of voter turnout. While Remini defends his thesis of democratic revolt with both tangible, voting turnout statistics, and intangible, symbolic impact on individuals, evidence, McCormick only provides arguments relating to voter turnout

statistics. This is a problem because even if we agree that voters didn't turn out in the huge numbers described in the textbook and McCormick's article, there is still a question of the symbolic impact that the election had on the nation. There have been many elections in recent history that can be interpreted as democratic revolts by the "common man" yet didn't have high turnout rates. A recent example is the midterm elections of 2010. The newly formed tea party, developed in response to President Obama's election, came out in record numbers to support their new candidates, but overall the elections had incredibly low voter turnout. This surge of tea party voters launched the party onto the political scene and developed the groundwork of the obstructionist policies that dominated Obama's administration. The low midterm turnout was due to a variety of factors, but they were environmental factors that had to do with the demographics of those voting and their likelihood of voting in a midterm election. This is important because it demonstrates that an election can be a revolt against the current system and impactful on the nation as a whole without having high voter turnout.

My second point is in relation to the statistic regarding the percentage of the popular vote won by Jackson in 1828. According to today's standard 6% might not sound like a significant number, but the textbook describes that it was "a landslide victory unmatched until the 20th Century." (Murrin textbook pg. 380) Remini describes the significance of the voting percentages and areas of support: "In percentages it was unequalled in any election during the nineteenth century. And his total represented substantial support from all sections of this country." Again, I'm left asking if voter turnout rates are the best way to determine if an election symbolized a revolt of the people. Based on the quotes from primary sources, both parties perceived the election to symbolize a dramatic change in the electorate and political system. Additionally, Jackson had won support in areas previously held only by Republicans; this coalition led to the successful development of the Democratic party which was a necessary prerequisite to the development of the two party system. This evidence suggests that voting rates might not be the only indicator of the impact of an election. Thus, McCormick's argument, while persuasive, does not definitively disprove Remini's thesis.

Lastly, while you argue that sentimental notions are not a reason to support Remini's argument, an argument I agree with, I think it's important to note that sentimental notions frequently influence the political system. For instance, the FBI probe into Hillary Clinton's email server found that she had not broken any laws, released any sensitive information, or put American lives at risk. However, the sentimental notion of an evil, rich politician that is out to harm the population was enough for crowds throughout the country to chant "Lock Her Up" at Trump rallies. As Remini says, "what is believed [by] the electorate is frequently more important than the objective reality."

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Re: No, the 1828 election did not represent a Democratic revolt
by [Jessica Cole](#) - Friday, January 25, 2019, 12:11 PM

Hi Ashley,

In response to your second point - I read what Remini had written about the 6% in favor of Jackson being a landslide that hadn't been seen before - however Remini also states that the 1828 election implemented the use of the 2 party vote. (PDF page 2). Unlike previous elections where there were more than two candidates, this election's higher number of votes for each candidate showed not so much an increase in popularity, but instead the lack of votes being split off for other candidates. Jackson was able to establish an undivided base of supporters, because his supporters had no other choice other than a Republican. As you brought up Hillary - Hillary didn't lose any votes to Sanders for example.

As for your third point, I also agree that sentimental notions affect elections. However, I think the sentiment works both ways and doesn't actually reflect the entire nation's temperment. Obama's election is a very valid example of the surge of public interest in the election and the waves of supporters. However, despite the exaltation felt by so many during that victory - I think the state of our nation currently shows that it was not actually the tidal wave it seemed it was. Many of the changes made have been easily overturned by the current administration - and Trumps supporters have made it clear that many traditional Republican values that seemed null and void after Obama's election are indeed still strongly supported by many in our country.

I am not dismissing the importance of sentiment - however I think as you pointed out in the example of Hillary and the emails - sentiment is sometimes nothing more than mob mentality. I think the 1828 election as a whole showed massive pubic interest - there is no denying that Jackson was essentially robbed of of the 1824 election and his supporters were infuriated. However, the numbers for each candidate in the 1828 election didn't show to me a massive democratic uprising; instead they seem to show a pretty even campaign that Jackson did rightfully win - but not by some grand landslide.

As for your first counterpoint - I completely agree ha ha. There is no doubt that both Obama's election, as well as Jackson's made a huge symbolic statement. 😊 Jessica

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Re: No, the 1828 election did not represent a Democratic revolt

by [Ashley Tippins](#) - Sunday, January 27, 2019, 8:10 PM

Hey Jessica:

Loved your responses -- here are my thoughts:

As to your first point, I think that it is likely that the creation of a two-party system was the more of a factor in the 6% margin of victory for Jackson. However, in regards to your point about an election not representing the totality of the population’s opinion, I think that is an unfair burden to place on Remini. I can’t think of a single US election that did not have those that favored and those that disapproved of the outcome. The question is not whether the entirety of the US in 1828 wanted Jackson to win, but instead the question is whether the election represented a wave of support by “the common man.” I think this is another good chance to examine the written accounts of the people at the time of the 1828 election. Even those who opposed the Jackson victory reported that it was a turning point of the democracy and that it heralded a change to come in the future.

Additionally, I think there is a good argument to be made that the very evidence of a democratic uprising in the next elections indicates that 1828 was most likely a catalyst for such change. There is agreement with both McCormick and Remini that the election of 1828 was the turning point for having only two party candidates, and McCormick argues that the two party system is what propels the democratic uprising of the 1832 election. However, if you examine the timeframe of those arguments it becomes clear that without the precedent of the 1828 election. Thus, the election of 1828 becomes a prerequisite to the statistical democratic uprising of 1832.

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Re: No, the 1828 election did not represent a Democratic revolt

by [Breanna Lindsey](#) - Friday, January 25, 2019, 1:05 PM

Jessica,

Your post was fantastic and actually helped me understand the sides and Jackson’s place in the campaign a little better. I think you make a great point by bringing up the electoral votes and how Remini was very impressed, you also brought up the “veritable landslide” of 56% that Jackson won. I too agree that yes, the amount of electoral votes that Jackson won is impressive, but it doesn’t accurately represent the people and their votes. Although, like you said Jackson was loved by many of the people and praised for the many achievements he has accomplished. I believe 100% he deserved his place as president. Going back to the electoral votes it is important to keep in mind that only a small amount of men from the electoral college voted, and their votes determined the president and spoke for all the states combined together. When you think about it this way, this isn’t really the voice of the people. Jackson won the popular vote with 56% totaling to about 647,286 and Adams with the lose still almost took 50%. Adams had 44% of the popular vote totaling to about 508,064. Jackson still won, but really 12% isn’t really a landslide. It does say that the newspapers estimated that from 15,000 to 30,000 citizens came to Washington to witness Jackson’s inauguration on March 4, 1829 (ebook pg 306). Which are pretty outstanding numbers. I completely agree with you on McCormick’s side as well. I personally agree with McCormick’s view more and I really appreciate how McCormick compared the numbers in voter participation with the 1828 election and previous elections, and elections all the way to the 1840’s. Overall I think your post was very thorough and I enjoyed reading it. I too believe the 1828 election was

not a democratic revolt of the people. I think there are other elections such as the 1840 election that show bigger numbers and possibilities of the democratic revolt happening in that year. (I would like to add I am reading the ebook online of our textbook and hopefully the textbook page numbers aren't too far off from the paperback book.) Thanks!

Sincerely,

Breanna Lindsey

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Re: Yes, why Remini proposes truth

by [Taylor Dotson](#) - Tuesday, January 22, 2019, 3:45 PM

Robert V. Remini proposes valuable evidence in saying the election stood for a democratic revolt. The people wanted someone they could follow and trust. During Jackson’s inauguration the newspaper estimated 15,000-30,00 citizen came to witness his inauguration (Murrin textbook p.380). They crowded the street and came to witness what Jackson was going to propose for the future. During the campaign process they need to market their strategy to not only appeal to the slaveholding states, but to the non-slaveholding states as well. The henchmen of Jacksons had worked hard to slander the other side, which allowed for Jackson to indirectly get his ideas out there. To get the ballots out there the different parties would print and supply the ballot. Through this process it was easier for the parties to target individuals and their vote. Hawkers would hand out these ballots with threats of bodily harm if they did not take the ballots (Democratic Revolt Pdf p.2). Many people believed in Jackson not only for what he proposed, but for what he did a general. Many believe it was a revolt because it gave the common man a voice and opportunity to express their own political voice (Democratic Revolt Pdf p.3).

Sincerely,

Taylor Dotson

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Re: Yes, why Remini proposes truth

by [Jessica Cole](#) - Wednesday, January 23, 2019, 3:24 PM

When I read about the forced ballots being handed out with threats of abuse, I actually thought that this actually helped the opposite side of the debate. Remini used it as a point to prove that the huge voting numbers were the result of a revolt of the people - but wouldn't forced voting actually be evidence that many people who voted only did so under pressure - and not because they were personally inclined to go to vote on their own? Despite the the number crunching back and forth proposed by McCormick to downplay the voter turnout (how the percentage of voters wasn't actually that high and was actually lower than previous years, or how the changes in suffrage laws had allowed more voters for this election, etc) - I, like you, found the mass of people coming to witness his inauguration a very valid point in showing the high volume of support for Jackson from the people.

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Re: Yes, why Remini proposes truth

by [Taylor Dotson](#) - Thursday, January 24, 2019, 5:25 PM

Dear Jessica,

Although, Remini talks about force voting it is not his main focus to persuade you. The fact is the state did not provide an official ballot (p.2). Since the state did not supply the ballots it was left for the parties to print and supply their own ballots out. It talks about [violence](#) only being used if they did not accept the ballot. If most people accepted the ballots, then there would be no need for [violence](#) and people free to choose who ever with out any pressure. Remini points out it has increased, and he listed several factors that compel me to believe he is right. One being they brought back the two-party system and the second compelling argument was how laws transferred their electors from the legislature to the people. By being transferred to the people it allowed them to have more of an opinion and a voice to say when choosing their elector. (p.2)

Sincerely,

Taylor Dotson

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Re: Yes, why Remini proposes truth
by [Jessica Cole](#) - Friday, January 25, 2019, 11:44 AM

Dear Taylor, While I understand that changes in the voting policies were taking place, I still fail how to see that forced ballots show an increase in voluntarily voter turnout. Remini states "It was not unusual for a person to be accosted by several hawkers at once and threatened with bodily harm unless he accepted the proffered ballot." (PDF og 2), To me, this shows a forced increase in voting versus people voluntarily heading down to get a ballot themselves. And again I think the two party system actually hindered Remini's argument as well. For a vote where there are only 2 candidates available to be nominated - of course both Jackson and Adams will have higher votes than in previous ballots where the votes were distributed among more presidential choices.

Overall, I think it is very easy to see both sides of the debate and I liked your response. I just thought it was interesting that when reading Remini's article, it actually pointed out issues for me in his debate.

Sincerely, Jessica

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Re: Yes, why Remini proposes truth
by [Taylor Dotson](#) - Saturday, January 26, 2019, 6:48 PM

Jessica,

I can see where you are getting the forced voting and it would be a downfall. The way I read it was they did not have a centralized location handing out ballots as the state did not supply them. The harm was only seen if the person was unwilling to take the ballot. In this case if they did not take this approach to hand out ballots there might be a smaller chance of people willing to vote. I do not see it as them forcing their vote in any way since they are only handing out the ballots. The voter themselves will have the choice to vote whether or not they were handed the ballot. After they are handed the ballot, they take it with them and can deliberate amongst themselves before casting their vote and electing who they believe regardless of how they got the ballot. I have not read anywhere about the hawkers forcing them to vote a certain way it was only to get them to take the ballot in the first place.

-Taylor Dotson

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Re: Yes, why Remini proposes truth
by [Brianna Caridio](#) - Thursday, January 24, 2019, 11:30 PM

Taylor,

I found that Remini's essay, which I read first, was very moving on an emotional level. He does a great job describing the 1828 Election in a way that pulls the reader in, giving a glimpse into the excitement of the "common man" during this time. Your point about the incredible attendance at the inauguration is a great example of this. The aftermath of the inauguration was quite humorous as well, the excited crowd followed Jackson to the White House, causing a big ruckus and making a terrible mess. Jackson had to retreat to avoid being crushed. Only once the staff had brought the punch and liquor to the lawn could they get the crowd vacate the house (Murrin pg. 382). People were very excited about Jackson, he was a self-made man, someone who represented states and people's rights (white men people at least), someone with whom they could relate with unlike previously elected Presidents. And, as you said, someone they could follow and trust.

McCormick's analysis of the numbers tells another story though, while voting was double what it had been in the 1824 Election, record high percentages were not set nor beat in most states. He contradicts the idea that the "common man" was not interested in voting prior to Jackson's Election, in fact, these men had been voting already, but for their governor, state legislations, and members of congress (McCormick). More common men voted in state elections than they did for Jackson. I do believe that it was largely due to Jackson's political stance of supporting state's rights that more people who had not previously voted in the Presidential Election decided to do so in his support.

Average voter turnout was 56.3% in 1828 (McCormick), yet the campaign of 1840 brought out 78% of the eligible voters, with the turnout remaining as high for the rest of the century (Murrin pg. 399).

In conclusion, I think that there is great importance in the 1828 Election for its effect upon the public’s view of and involvement in voting. This effect should not be understated in the least. I really had to put consideration into which side I agreed with most, you've brought up many of the reasons for which I wanted to take Remini's side. However, ultimately I would agree more with McCormick, a genuine political revolution did not take place until 1840.

Nice to be in class with you again!

Brianna

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Re: Yes, why Remini proposes truth
by [Taylor Dotson](#) - Friday, January 25, 2019, 5:24 PM

Brianna,

McCormick’s use of voter number in the 1840’s does make a compelling argument that the democratic revolution came after the election of 1828. The statistic you pulled from the reading does compel me to believe there was a greater increase after the 1828 election. Although, McCormick makes a compelling argument he also talks about the common mans newly won political privilege. (P.5) He proposes it as a commonest explanation which has to do with the common man. It allows me to believe he could reach a wider audience, which would help him gain momentum and a following.

Throughout the 1828 campaign Adams and Jackson played a dirty hand in in campaigning. Adams attacked Jacksons private life and spread the word about his marriage to Rachel Donelson. This back fired and many believed it enhanced his image as a melodramatic hero who battled, shrewd, unscrupulous, legalistic enemies by drawing on his natural nobility and force of will. The campaign caught the public imagination. (Murrin P.379-380) Even with the voting not being higher than it was in 1840 it did have an increase over the voter turnout of 1824.

Sincerely,

Taylor Dotson

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Election of 1828- Opinion on who/what side I agree with more and why
by [Breanna Lindsey](#) - Tuesday, January 22, 2019, 8:45 PM

Did the Election of 1828 Represent a Democratic Revolt of the People?

This is the popular question people are having these days and taking the time to study and research the election of 1828. I read two very descriptive and in depth analysis of both sides to this question. The yes and no facts and opinions of two experts Robert V Remini and Richard P. McCormick. Remini says yes to the question, “Did the Election of 1828 Represent a Democratic Revolt of the People?” and McCormick says no. They both gave well supported facts and answers. I personally agree with McCormick’s answer “no” to this question. While Remini’s possession still had great points, I didn’t think his argument was as compelling. His argument was wasn’t compelling, it was harder to follow, and it seemed that it needed more facts. McCormick’s argument was very persuasive and it had strong facts to backup all of his evidence. He used numbers and percentages and compared the elections of 1840, 1828, and the many elections that occurred before 1824. The voter participation was high before the 1824 elections. Then there was around a four year period that voter participation dropped do to electoral votes, lack of candidates etc. McCormick goes on to say that the voter participation was so high in the 1828 election because it was the first decent candidate Washington had in a while. Jackson had compelling arguments and fought well for most of the people. Around Jackson’s third term the people began to lose interest and voter participation began to fall again. Until the 1840 election where voter participation began increasing. “Roaring flood of the new democracy" reached its crest and it engulfed the Jacksonians. The flood receded only slightly in 1844, when 74.9 percent of the estimated potential electorate went to the polls. Indeed, nine states attained their record highs for the period. In 1848 and 1852 there was a general downward trend in voter participation, followed by a modest upswing in 1856 and 1860. But the level of voter activity remained well above that of the Jackson Elections.” This is a fact stated by McCormick showing how the election of 1828 was not the new democracy and how in fact it

came later in the 1840 elections. I think it is fascinating how McCormick goes and explains why the voter participation in 1824 was so low and the earlier and following years it helped his facts appear stronger and supported. Overall I agree with McCormick and the points he said and I think overall his possession is more accurate and well supported by evidence.

Works Cited

"Democratic Revolt of the People YES-NO.pdf." Google Drive, Google,
drive.google.com/file/d/1kEDGQX8A34AIC1NW7Vvuv2uYBfUGUcc8/view.

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Re: Election of 1828- Opinion on who/what side I agree with more and why
by [Jessica Cole](#) - Wednesday, January 23, 2019, 3:32 PM

As mentioned in my original post - I also thought that McCormick's facts showed a clearer cut case for the answer of "no", versus Remini's debate of "yes". I think the story of the Jackson sweeping into the hearts of the masses is a grander historical notion showing the people taking charge of their country - however like you I don't think McCormick actually used that many facts that supported his case. The throngs of citizens coming to watch him swear in could simply be a result of the excitement caused by the election. I do think many citizens were enraged that Jackson, who had won the popular vote in the previous election, had his victory stolen in 1824. 1828 therefore showed a much more involvement in the election than 1824. However, as McCormick points out - it was not simply a landslide of votes pouring in just in support of Jackson - the votes were almost equal in count for Adams (50%) and Jackson (56%). Personally, that shows me that there was just a tense, higher stake election with supporters for both sides instead of a revolt of the people supporting Jackson in solo. I didn't use the argument of the 1840 election in my original posts - but I thought that was also a very good example to show true voter unification and involvement of the masses.

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Re: Taking Sides - Election of 1828
by [Ashley Tippins](#) - Wednesday, January 23, 2019, 5:40 PM

Between Remini and McCormick’s articles, I find Remini’s position the most persuasive. Remini makes the argument that the election of 1828 was the beginning of the “rise of the common man” in American history in both tangible and symbolic ways. He describes the unique political scene leading up to the 1828 election. Van Buren and Calhoun’s campaigning, a tenuous two-party system emerging, and several states opening voting rights to all white men regardless of land ownership created a unique situation for a shift in the American voting demographics. Without a crowded Presidential candidate field, common folks who just earned the right to vote could choose between two clear ideological choices -- the National Republican party or the newly formed Democratic party. Because Van Buren and Calhoun went out and spoke with the folks that would be voting, the population that might normally vote for several different parties was encouraged to vote with the Democrats and elect Jackson. Cooperation between the plain northerners and southern planters during the election of 1828 created the Democratic party and the political landscape that solidified the two-party system regardless of the numbers of voters that turned out to vote.

Additionally, Jackson’s status as a “man of the people” was completely unique in the political landscape thus far in American history. Regardless of the voter turnout numbers, primary sources describe the onslaught of supporters during the March 4, 1829 inauguration. Daniel Webster describes the scene: “I never saw such a crowd here before,...Persons have come five hundred miles to see General Jackson, and they really seem to think that the country is rescued from some dreadful danger.” (Remini) A Democratic newspaper reported: “General Jackson is their own President... He was greeted by them with an enthusiasm which bespoke him the Hero of a popular triumph.” (Murin textbook pg. 382) What makes these accounts most persuasive to me is that these examples are not dependent on the number of voters that turned out and are, therefore, not implicated in McCormick’s critique of Remini’s historical interpretation. Remini’s argument is based, primarily, on the symbolic impact of the election. Even if, as McCormick presents, voters didn’t really turn out in droves until 1840, the election of 1828 was a significant event to those alive at the time. Remini says it best, “no matter how the statistics are analyzed or interpreted the people themselves who lived at the time believed that Jackson’s election represented a great surge of popular support for the General.”

This presents a few problems for McCormick’s argument. The first, and in my opinion most damning, problem is that McCormick is arguing against a strawman argument. He is set to prove that there was not a “mighty democratic uprising” during the election of 1828. However, Remini’s argument is not that there was a huge uprising of voter turnout, but instead that there was a hugely symbolic shift in the American electoral process that started with the election of 1828, with voter turnout being a small part of Remini’s overall argument. If McCormick had presented a warrant for his claim that current historians’ notion of a “democratic uprising” is exclusive to voting statistics, then I would find his entire argument more persuasive because it would provide some competition between his argument and other historians. As it stands, McCormick’s argument is not in competition with Remini’s argument; you can incorporate the voting statistics into Remini’s argument without changing the fundamental basis of the argument. Remini concedes that the election of 1828 was only a mere beginning of the two-party system that would come of age in the 1830’s and 40’s. I find Remini most persuasive because if you got rid of all the arguments he makes about voter turnout being significant, he would still have a strong, well-warranted justification for why the election of 1828 was incredibly significant to American politics. Remini has primary sources that indicate that even if the statistics do not support the notion of a huge democratic wave of voters in relation to previous and future elections, the American people alive at the time certainly believed it was a huge shift from the status quo. This is important because, as Remini says, “what is believed [by] the electorate is frequently more important than the objective reality.”

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Re: Taking Sides - Election of 1828
by [Taylor Dotson](#) - Saturday, January 26, 2019, 6:55 PM

Ashley,

I found Jackson’s position as a “man of the people” compelling as well. I believe it was the main attribute in both Remini and McCormick’s argument that lead me to believe the democratic revolt happened during the 1828 election. (P. 3 and 5) It is true Remini does not focus to much on statistic because he conveys his argument by the amount of people who followed him. It was an uprising of people having a saying and they backed someone who gave them right to say and express their political opinion. It was not a matter of getting a single-minded man. The campaign was to get not only slaveholding states but non-slaveholding states as well. By targeting a wide audience, they were able to reach and gain many followers who would take part in creating the new democratic party. (Murrin P.379) What solidified the democratic revolt for me was in part the inauguration as well. The number of people who showed up was in part one of the reasons, but another was because many had traveled as much as 500 miles to see him. A democratic newspaper reported “General Jackson is their own president... he was greeted by them with an enthusiasm which bespoke him the hero of a popular triumph.” (Murrin P.382) In fact this helps me to continue to believe what Remini proposes is truthful because he had backing from a wide amount of people across the states.

-Taylor Dotson

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Agree with Richard P. McCormick
by [Mahealani Kurosawa](#) - Wednesday, January 23, 2019, 9:05 PM

Forum #1:

Did the election of 1828 represent a democratic revolt of the People?

I agree with Richard P. McCormick on his argument of why the election was not a democratic revolt for the people of that time. As Richard states in New Perspectives on Jacksonian Politics, “that in most states either Jackson or his opponent had such a one-sided advantage that the result was a foregone conclusion. Consequently there was little incentive for the voters to go to the polls” (5). Although the 1828 election gave citizens new political responsibility and the two-party system that became more prominent in the 1830s, the real revolution did not occur until 1840 when there were two political parties in almost every state (7).

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Re: Agree with Richard P. McCormick



by [Letitia Hadix](#) - Wednesday, January 23, 2019, 11:49 PM

Hello Mahealani,

It is certainly true that the two-party system had become more prominent in the 1830s and that it wasn't until later years when they were on more equal footing in each state. I found it interesting that in this time period there were some states that had both parties present but was surprised that the Democrats were localists (pg 399 Murrin) when up to that point I expected them not to be.

Sincerely,

Letitia Hadix

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Re: Agree with Richard P. McCormick

by [Breanna Lindsey](#) - Sunday, January 27, 2019, 12:30 PM

Hello there!

I found your response very interesting. I agree as well that yes, the 1828 elections did give voters a new responsibility and the people were getting more familiar with the two-party system. I think the 1828 elections offered a lot of new politics, but overall I believe the democratic revolt happened in the 1840 elections. Like you said, in the 1840 elections there were two political parties in almost every state. Having at least two political parties in every state proves that the democratic revolt happened in 1840. McCormick analyzes the elections of 1836 through 1844. "Voter participation in the 1836 election remained near the level that had been established in 1828 and 1832, with 55.2 per cent of the adult white males voting. Only five states registered percentages in excess of their pre-1824 highs" (7). Although some may believe voter participation isn't thorough or gives enough evidence, I think voter participation is crucial because it is showing who voted and how many people voted. In elections every vote counts and the numbers coming from voter participation is important. In the Harrison or Van Buren elections four out of five white men casted their votes, that is 78.0% (7). "This new electorate was greater than that of the Jackson period by more than 40 per cent. In all but five states - Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Kentucky and Alabama— the peaks of voter participation reached before 1824 were passed. Fourteen of the twenty-five states involved set record highs for voting that were not to be broken throughout the remainder of the antebellum period" (7). These numbers prove that the 1840 election was soaring and numbers peaked higher than the elections of 1828 ever did. McCormick continues to show me why the 1828 elections were not a democratic revolt, but in reality it was the 1840 elections.

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Opinion and Experience or Fact?

by [Brianna Caridio](#) - Wednesday, January 23, 2019, 10:21 PM

Richard P. McCormick’s essay “New Perspectives on Jacksonian Politics” provides extensive analysis and comparison of the Election of 1828 with elections prior to and after 1828. It is clear from his essay that there is not sufficient evidence to believe that there was a “‘mighty democratic uprising’ during the Jackson era” (McCormick). The emergence of the Second Party System may have begun around 1828, but it was not complete until the Election of 1840.

McCormick provides evidence of the percentage of voter turnouts from the pre-1824 elections through the 1840 election to support his position on the actual influence of Jacksonian Democracy on the American voting system. His comparisons of the figures results in similar findings to those in *Liberty, Equality, Power* (Murrin).

Robert V. Remini, in his essay “Election of 1828” acknowledges some of the arguments against the vastness of the voter turnout in 1828, in his retort he claims that “...the fact remains that no matter how the statistics are analyzed or interpreted the people themselves who lived at the time believed that Jackson’s election represented a great surge of support for the General.” Remini tends toward using the personal experiences and opinions of people as the primary basis for arguments in his essay. According to McCormick average voter turnout in 1828 was 56.3% which, was over double the turnout in 1824, did not even match or exceed the previous records in most states.

In at least one instance, Remini’s account of events doesn’t match up with those in *Liberty, Equality, Power*. Remini states that when Van Buren went to Calhoun, that Calhoun was already openly allied with Andrew Jackson. According to *Liberty, Equality, Power* Van Buren visited Calhoun to convince him to support Jackson.

Remini claims that the rise in popular vote in 1828 was because the two-party system had been reestablished. However, McCormick and Murrin agree that the completion of the Second Party System occurred in 1840 when every state had “balanced, organized parties” (McCormick). “...Harrison and Van Buren contested the election in nearly every state and they received nearly equal levels of support in the slave and free states” (Murrin pg. 398).

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Re: Opinion and Experience or Fact?
by [Ashley Tippins](#) - Sunday, January 27, 2019, 8:26 PM

While I do think that there is a discrepancy between the description of Van Buren and Calhoun’s first interactions, I don't think that is enough to completely discredit the account given in the Murrin text. The Murrin text aligns with Remini’s accounts of the impact of the inauguration. Citizens of Washington D.C., especially the National Republicans, were shocked by the outpouring of support by the “common man masses.” This indicates that the Murrin text, while out of sync with some of Remini’s accounts, validates the article by Murrin as opposed to disproving it.

I understand the interpretation of Remini’s argument to be attributed to the two-party system however, Remini’s argument is based on much more than that. There is the character of Jackson himself, the industriousness of Van Buren, and the huge outpouring of positive public sentiment for Jackson that leads Remini to his conclusion that the 1828 election was a turning point for American democracy.

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Yes to Political Responsibility of the People
by [Letitia Hadix](#) - Wednesday, January 23, 2019, 10:31 PM

In the words of Professor Robert V Remini, I believe that the 1828 presidential election symbolized the people’s arrival at political responsibility and began a genuine, nationally organized, two-party system that came of age in the 1830s. The reason I find merit in this statement is because that election was the start to the era of commoners. People who did not own property could then vote on who they wanted as a national leader instead of relying on the choices of the richer members of society. At this point, it was and is their duty and privilege to vote for our president as they have the power to do so. The presidential candidates from both then and now always try to win over the populace and in 1828, Andrew Jackson’s life of action did that. According to the book *Liberty, Equality, Power* on page 381, “The 1828 presidential contest was a clear result of the organizing efforts that were building a national Democratic Party under the name of Andrew Jackson.” The Republican Party was already present at this time and with the formation of the new Democratic Party, led to a time period where both parties coexisted for a period of time leading up to the civil war where our political system underwent drastic changes.

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Re: Yes to Political Responsibility of the People
by [Brianna Caridio](#) - Friday, January 25, 2019, 1:10 AM

Letitia,

I would have to disagree with your point about the Democratic and Republican parties being the start of a genuinely organized, two-party system wherein they coexisted until the civil war. The Election of 1832 had Jackson running as a Democrat, Clay running as a National Republican, Wirt running for the Anti-Masonic Party and Floyd running as an Independent Democrat (Murrin pg. 393). After 1832 the National Republican coalition along with others, including southerners and John C. Calhoun, formed the Whig Party, which made a unique decision to run three sectional candidates in the Election of 1836, with poor results. A Republican Party did not resurface and organize again until 1854. Each election in between was host to different numbers of parties, with continual reorganization of factions of each. Even in the 1840 Election, which *Liberty, Equality, Power* refers to as the completion of the Second Party System, the main two parties were the Whigs and the Democrats, yet the Liberty Party had a candidate in the race as well. In 1848 the Conscience Whigs, the Liberty Party and antislavery Democrats formed the Free- Soil coalition (Murrin pg. 444).

An important milestone, 1828 was an introduction and precursor to the later established two-party system. Comparing the competition in the 1828 election in which each state clearly supported one candidate or the other with the candidates carrying states by an average of 36% to 1840 in which the average dropped to 11%, "Neither the Democrats nor Whigs could take any state in the Union for granted" (Murrin pg. 398). McCormick states in his essay that the imbalance in 1828 was associated with the immature development of the national parties and that once balanced, organized parties were established in all states, "voters were stimulated by the project of a genuine contest, a marked rise in voter participation occurred" (McCormick).

Sincerely,

Brianna

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Re: Yes to Political Responsibility of the People
by [Letitia Hadix](#) - Sunday, January 27, 2019, 5:24 AM

Hi Brianna!

I completely see where you are coming from! One of the things I was iffy about when choosing a side was that very thing. I knew that according to our textbook each state at that time had a few groups or people from each party, but not a totally organized two-party system. Although both parties at the time existed together, it was often in disagreement. So instead of "coexisting together until the civil war" I should of said something more along the line of, "At the time of Jackson's era there was a two-party system consisting of the Old Hickory Democratic Party versus the Whig Party (Paragraph 4 end)." Also, on page one of the "Democratic Revolt" article, Van Buren "called for a revival of the two-party system..." which shows that there was indeed a two-party system around at that period of time.

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Conclusion
by [Jessica Cole](#) - Friday, January 25, 2019, 12:36 PM

Age of Jackson opinions concerning Jackson's presidency:

Common people were concerned about the government or the elite having power over them, and wanted more control over economic decisions. Their distrust in the government lead to huge support of Jackson in the 1824 and following 1828 campaign as he was supported their ideology in his Grassroots movement. I think the most important aspect that the video pointed out though is that this movement for democratic freedom only benefited free white men. For females and other minorities - the democratic movement of Jackson actually resulted in a loss of freedom for many. Essentially Jackson's policies caused detriment to so many, despite the good he tried to leave behind. Watching the Age of Jackson video actually reminded me quite a bit of our split nation right now concerning our current president.

After reading the debate of Remini vs McCormick, our text reading, my classmate's response and watching the Age of Jackson videos, I think I would still have to side with No, I don't think the Jackson victory of 1828 showed a Democratic revolt on the nation's people. I think obviously as he won, it shows a strong handed victory. But I don't think it shows the overall sentiment of the nation. The 56% vote for Jackson during the 1828 election that is lauded as a "landslide" by Remini is probably most simply the result of the fact that this election only had 2 candidates to choose from - and thus both Jackson and Adams had much higher voter percentage than previous elections. The crowds of rooting supporters following Jackson to the white house paints an image of strong Democratic suport - but again personally, no matter what president has won the election since I have been alive - there have been people having riots in the streets in both support and against the win. I think the Jackson vs Adams election of 1824 was a time of high contest between the two emerging parties. It was a time where the nation became more interested in the outcome of the election, and I do think that it was of course a very important win for Jackson and his supporters. But the truth of it is, it was simply a win for mainly lower and middle class free white men. It was a grassroots campaign, loud and very vocal - who only had the interest of some at heart.

3/14/2019

HST 202 W19 (Escobar Meta 30769 30800): Taking Sides - Election of 1828

Honestly what tempted me to sway my opinion the most was the arguments of classmates that I read. As I posted in my original post - I really did want to side with Remini that yes Jackson's victory was a revolt - so when I would read posts many of them would cause me to think "Yeah, that was what I was thinking!". It was hard to come back with a response in defense of my debate when I often agreed in theory with what they wrote. Overall, though for reasons mentioned above I will side with No. I think no matter how much you debate back and forth on the support of the public - McCormick's layout of numbers and reasoning behind them was too clear cut for me to deny.

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