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A Democratic Revolt?

by Joe Escobar – Friday, January 15, 2016, 7:23 PM

Make sure you have read [How Forums are Graded](#). After studying the required materials, address and discuss the various questions with your group members **throughout the week**.

DO NOT attempt to answer every question in a single post. In this class, forums are a place for sharing informed comments having analytical discussions. (Forums are NOT a place for students to publicly display full essays.)

To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post. To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

IMPORTANT – SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post, something that describes which question(s) you are addressing . Do NOT simply leave it RE: A Democratic Revolt? This will help keep the discussion organized.

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Double the voters is a revolt.

by Keefer George – Saturday, January 16, 2016, 1:23 PM

Yes, the Presidential Election of 1828 did represent a democratic revolt of the people. I believe the American people upon seeing the results of the 1824 election in which Adams struck the “corrupt bargain” to win the presidency despite losing the popular vote felt cheated. John Adams underestimated Andrew Jackson and the will of the voters who felt their vote and voice in government had been quashed by the backroom dealings of the political elite. Jackson was able to use his status as a living legend and a man of the people to spread a feeling of betrayal and corruption in the current government across the US resulting in the doubling of voter turnout in 1828, a huge win, and a huge inauguration celebration by the people. If doubling the number of voters from one election to the next doesn’t constitute a democratic revolt I don’t know what does.

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Re: Double the voters is a revolt.

by Keefer George – Saturday, January 23, 2016, 2:38 PM

I’ve changed my mind from yes to no. After the lectures and rereading chapter 12 in the textbook I believe the earlier election in 1828 didn’t represent a democratic revolt of the people even though voter turnout doubled from the previous election for the fact that there weren’t as many serious political issues being talked in public at the time.

Pgs 416–417 in the textbook “Some women also opposed patriarchy, but before 1830, hierarchy based on sex and race was seldom questioned in public, particularly by persons who were in a position to change it.” This shows that the election of 1828 was before people were discussing important issues that directly affected all Americans in profound ways such as abolition, women’s rights, and temperance. This turns the election of 1828 in my view, into more of a strict popularity contest as seen in the very personal in nature attacks on the candidates, such as Jackson being a wife stealer and Adams being corrupt.

Also in the textbook Pg 428 “By the 1830s, most citizens firmly identified with either the Whig or Democratic Party, so much so that party affiliation was a big part of personal identity.” This also shows that the 1828 election was simply too early in history to represent a true democratic revolt of the people, one in which there are multiple important issues at stake that people have aligned themselves with or against as part of their personal identity. I think this is also reinforced in the extremely uncommon and high voter turnout of 1840 which shows a lot of people cared enough to vote.

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the election of 1828 did represent a Democratic revolt

by [Jason Petersen](#) – Saturday, January 16, 2016, 5:43 PM

In my opinion, I think that the election of 1828 did represent a Democratic revolt of the people. So I agree with Robert Remini’s statement that “Jackson himself was the essential issue in the campaign, just as he would be again in 1832, and the people in “vast numbers” crowded to his side." It was less of a revolt, and more of a change in perspective among the people.

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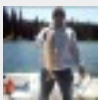


Analytical vs Romanticized data

by [Kamron Bratlie](#) – Saturday, January 16, 2016, 6:11 PM

I am in favor with Richard P. McCormick, or the “NO” side of the discussion. The methods he used for analyzing the data seemed to have a degree of scrutiny and a fair approach to either side. Robert V. Remini, or the “YES” side of the discussion, has a more speculative and sentimental approach to his analysis. Based on the way McCormick interpreted the information, I agree that a true political revolution did not take place until the election of 1840. McCormick even gives merit to some of the ideas supported by Remini, but counters by giving data to show otherwise. For example, Remini mentions “The total popular vote in the election represented an increase of nearly eight hundred thousand over the previous election in 1824.” (Remini p.206). McCormick states and counters that “white males voting soared to 56.3 per cent, more than double the 1824 figure. But this outpouring shrinks in magnitude when we observe that in only six of the twenty-two states involved were new highs in voter participation established.” (McCormick p.211). McCormick also brought the issue of voting participation in presidential elections relative to state elections to light. Something that had failed to be mentioned in Remini’s excerpt. I tend to be skeptical of any data that is given in a romanticized way, so I prefer a more analytical approach.

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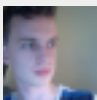


Re: Analytical vs Romanticized data

by [Andrew Kilmer](#) – Wednesday, January 20, 2016, 9:00 PM

While I agree that the "no" side is compelling, I keep coming back to the stat you quoted in the latter part of your message. State voting participation did rise well above the Presidential race. Doesn't that show a power surge of the State sided democrats? Thanks for the post.

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Re: Analytical vs Romanticized data

by [Peter Mixon](#) – Saturday, January 23, 2016, 6:36 PM

Andrew, I don’t think a greater amount voter participation at the state level necessarily has a correlation to the Democratic party. McCormick does point out the possible link between state election turnout and

the democratic (lowercase d) spirit of the voters by saying “In such elections at the state level the “common man” was stimulated by local factors to cast his vote, and he frequently responded in higher proportions than he did to the later stimulus provided by Jackson” (McCormick 211). But it isn’t obvious whether the majority of voters at the state level were Democrats. They could have been Whigs who were intent on electing Whig governors.

At any rate, I think the “democratic revolt” we’re being asked to analyze isn’t so much a rising to power of the Democratic party, but rather the phenomenon of the American people taking individual control of the Federal government through the election and putting in power a leader who they believed would reduce Federal power and give the states back their rights.

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Re: Analytical vs Romanticized data
by [Kevin Smolek](#) – Saturday, January 23, 2016, 7:54 PM

Hello, I'd like to chime in on this. I also found the stats about state voting interesting, but I think that just had to do with the people caring more about local issues then they cared about the presidential race. Thank you for sharing your thoughts.

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1828: Setting the Stage for a Democratic Revolt
by [Peter Mixon](#) – Monday, January 18, 2016, 4:51 PM

The question of whether the 1828 presidential election constituted a “democratic revolt of the people” can be approached in two different ways, both contingent upon the intended meaning of the word “democratic.” The political trend through the first decades of the 19th century certainly appears to be away from the revolutionary image of the common man creating his own destiny and toward the idea of the Federal government attempting to bring to pass its own vision of a prosperous country at the cost of states’ rights. Andrew Jackson, as Democratic candidate for the 1828 election, presented himself as the herald of a return to the old ways; the stalwart leader intent on leading America out of the darkness of Federal power and suspect policies back into the light of the common man’s influence and responsibility. Jackson was the popular favorite, and he was able to attract proponents from all regions of the United States with his everyman quality and staunch proclamations of the need for a return to a government system led by the democracy of the people.

The results of the 1828 election can be interpreted in two ways to answer the question of this forum. Firstly, consider the contrast presented to voters. The two candidates were incumbent John Quincy Adams, already infamous for his “corrupt bargain” with Henry Clay to win the 1824 election, and second–time candidate Andrew Jackson. John Quincy Adams’s term in office had been characterized by attempts to push the nationalist agenda and implement elements of Clay’s “American system”, including a national transportation infrastructure, university, and astronomical observatory (txt. 378). Jackson was a re–embodiment of revolutionary ideals: a war hero, frontiersman, everyman–turned–politician by the urgent need to save his beloved America from its impending shipwreck upon nationalist agenda. Jackson was the voice of the lower and middle classes who were feeling disenfranchised by a powerful minority’s monopoly on government power.

In light of this contrast of ideals represented by the two candidates, Jackson’s overwhelming victory over Adams in the election of 1828, in which he won by over six percent of the popular vote (txt. 380), can rightfully be construed as an uprising of American voters who overthrew decades of precedent and cast their ballots for a government based on ideals which emphasized the common man. In the sense that Jackson’s ideals were “democratic,” that is, they emphasized individual and state rights over the authoritarian power of the federal government, 1828 can be called the year of the democratic uprising of the American people.

But in another sense of the word “democratic,” 1828 is hardly a landmark year in American politics. Although voter turnout in 1828 was around double that in 1824, it was not much higher than turnouts achieved before 1824 (McCormick, 211). It is also important to bear in mind that the voting assembly consisted overwhelmingly of white, adult males. Interestingly, voter participation in 1832 did not carry on the upward surge that marked the election before. Only five states had more voter turnout than before 1824 (McCormick 211). In fact, voter turnout remained constant around fifty percent throughout 1828, 1832, and 1836 (McCormick 212), and when compared with pre–1824 turnout, when at least fifteen states had recorded similar numbers (McCormick 211),

the statistics cast doubt on the assertion that 1828 marked a vast democratic revolution in America.

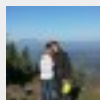
The increase in turnout between 1824 and 1828 can be attributed to a variety of other factors, including the confusion of the population in dealing with four different candidates in the 1824 election, as well as the breakdown of party lines and general insecurity about the direction American politics was taking. However, the details of these elements are not pertinent to the question of the forum. An interesting side note is the voter turnout in the 1840 election (in excess of seventy-five percent), which McCormick argues represents the true democratic revolution of the American people, twelve years later than its generally accepted date.

On one hand, the election of 1828 marked the American people’s turn away from the growing nationalist policy of the previous decades and toward ideals of more democratic government. On the other hand, the enormous increase in voter participation that history books usually tout as evidence of an essential “Democratic revolution” among the American people seems doubtfully accurate at best in light of McCormick’s data. It appears that Jackson’s victory over Adams in 1828 did not, in fact, signify a Democratic revolt in the generally-understood sense of the word. But the seeds of the coming political revolution, which McCormick convincingly argues actually occurred in 1840, are clearly seen in the values of the 1828 voters and their choice of president, Andrew Jackson.

(Okay, admittedly a little long, guys. Sorry if that's a lot to wade through. Let the discussion commence!)

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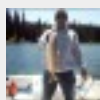
The Will of the People

by [Dan Johnson](#) – Monday, January 18, 2016, 7:08 PM

I think that in many ways the Election of 1828 was a voter revolution. It showed the people's will to elect their desired officials would not be taken away without a fight from the populous. It also showed that the American people had truly created they're own culture which held their American identity firmly and revolved it around their rights and powers. It laid many significant tracks in displaying the authority of the electorate and cemented it as a powerful force that people who want to gain power would have to navigate around.

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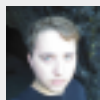
McCormik's take on State vs. Presidential voting

by [Andrew Kilmer](#) – Monday, January 18, 2016, 7:45 PM

I tend to side with Remini on this subject. One point that McCormik makes in his piece made me question his point of view. McCormik compares presidential votes in 1828 against state elections. McCormik ask the question "did Jackson's personal popularity attract voters to the poll in unprecedented proportions?" His conclusion is that he did not, (213) He also states that election returns show conclusively that throughout Jackson's term state voting turnouts show more participates than the presidential contest. (212) McCormik says this means Jackson did not draw the voter turnout. Everything I have learned about the Jacksonian democracy tells me that state government should have the main interest of the voters, who believe in state powers. I believe it actually supports the claim of the party’s interest. I also believe that interest was reflected in the election of 1828.

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Yes to a Democratic Revolt

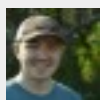
by [Samuel Figura](#) – Monday, January 18, 2016, 8:40 PM

On the subject of the Democratic Revolt of 1828, I agree the most with Robert V. Remini. He believes that the Election of 1828 represents a Demographic Revolt of the People. He really stresses in his writings that "in 1828 there was the beginning of a genuine, nationally organized, two party system, a system that came of age in the 1830s..." (p. 205) Another reason why I agree is because of the voter's turnout. Andrew Jackson won the election by a staggering amount! So, the revolt of the old democratic ways were changed in a manner by having a new president. Robert V. Remini said in his writings, "Andrew Jackson won 647,292 or just a little better than 56

percent of the entire vote." (p. 206) This is really astounding! Also historically, Robert said about what people wanted in a president was described as Andrew Jackson, "He was a living, authentic legend, the victor of New Orleans, the man who won over the British, the greatest feat of arms in American history." This made the people want to revolt from Adams to Jackson, and just the entire Democratic Revolt of 1828. I feel very strongly with the position of "Yes" just as Robert V. Remini. His observation of the 1828 election seemed most logical and analytical in my opinion.

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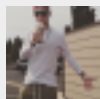
A new democracy? I think not

by [Kevin Smolek](#) – Monday, January 18, 2016, 8:58 PM

Was the common man more motivated, and as such turn out in previously unheard of numbers for the presidential election of 1828? Richard P. McCormick makes many strong arguments, which I believe provides compelling evidence that proves the above statement wrong. His use of the percentage of white males that were voting, seems like the most reliable method. Using these numbers, McCormick states that "...there was in 1828 a voter turnout that approached—but in only in a few instances matched or exceeded – the maximum levels that had been attained before the Jackson era."(pg: 211).

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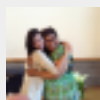
The 1828 elecection

by [Zachery Brown](#) – Monday, January 18, 2016, 9:32 PM

On the question, "Did the election of 1828 Represent a Democratic Revolt of the People?" I personally do not believe that it did. I have to take Mr. Richard P. Morgan's side on this particular issue. After reading both "yes" and "no" answers, although Mr. Remini had many valid argumentative points, Mr. Morgan was more successful when convincing me. Some of the main points that Morgan brought up that grabbed my attention was that it was so universally agreed upon that there was some, 'mighty democratic uprising', and that their was virtually no effort put into anything that challenges the theory. That is a big claim to go unchallenged. I agreed and liked with much of the information he presented as well. Like when stating that the textbooks had said that there were no reliable election statistics before 1824 government. But yet presented that their is a lot of information on pre 24 elections. It also caught my attention when Mr. Morgan concluded that, "None of the Jackson elections involved a "mighty democratic uprising" in the sense that voters were drawn to the polls in unprecedented proportions. When compared with the peak participation recorded for each state before 1824, or with contemporaneous gubernatorial elections, or most particularly with the vast outpouring of the electorate in 1840, voter participation in the Jackson election was unimpressive. The key to the relatively low presidential vote would seem to be the extreme political imbalance that existed in most states as between the Jacksonians and their opponents." So, when it comes to deciding a yes or no answer after being asked this question, I definitely have to side with the one that provides me the more convincing information. I am sure others find the 'yes' answer to be more appealing. I am excited to see those opinions as well.

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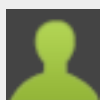
Re: A Democratic Revolt?

by [Angelina Rivas](#) – Monday, January 18, 2016, 10:42 PM

Although Jackson had a big influence on the democratic party, I don't think he started the Democratic revolt. He might have been the catalyst for the revolt, but there was stuff happening before he entered the scene. The democrats have been around for a long time and there has been changes in the name before they identified themselves as the Jacksonian Democrats.

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Re: A Democratic Revolt?

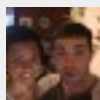
by [Evan Andrade](#) – Monday, January 18, 2016, 11:28 PM

No I do not think that there was a huge democratic revolt. The nation was enduring a huge economic boom and certain things had to occur in big government so the nation could sustain these growth spurts. Obviously this

was against democratic beliefs because they wanted government to do as little as possible to regulate the economy, but the truth of the matter is that big government needed to step in so that the economy went into complete chaos, this is where I think that the democratic revolt thing was blown a little out of proportion, because at the end of the day the government needs to do something so there is some sort of structure so that things don't fall apart and that's what the government needed to do in order for that not to happen. I believe that most people realized at the end of the day the government has to do something about it and the small number of democrats that were making a fuss about the government stepping in grew and grew and grew, but it didn't really grow it just seemed like it because it was a small number of the extreme population that was making a big deal over it and it was portrayed as a "democratic revolt". I think that the average american knew the government had to do something but the extreme democrats were too stubborn to see it.

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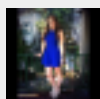
The Spoils System

by [Devlin Wynn](#) - Monday, January 18, 2016, 11:47 PM

Do you believe that the “Spoils System” was a fair system like Martin Van Buren believed giving sometimes the advantage to one group and than giving the advantages over to the other group at times. Was this a fair system or would this lead to one group or party consistently coming out ahead?

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An election in slander...

by [McKalie Bellew](#) - Thursday, January 21, 2016, 9:40 AM

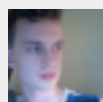
"The presidential campaign of 1828 was an exercise in slander rather than a debate on public issues" (Liberty, Equality, Power; page 379). Just based on this specific quote that begins the specific discussion of the 1828 election in our textbook we know that this was not an ideal election. After reading through each of the historians sides, yes or no, on whether this election represented a democratic revolt of the people, I would have to say yes.

In Richard P. McCormick's argument that this election did not represent a democratic revolt of the people, he talks about how elections went before and after the election of 1828 in comparison. Although he says that there are reliable statistics for elections before the 1828 election, I don't feel that they are nearly as reliable as they should be. Also, even when he is discussing the numbers increasing, this election was not a clean one. I feel like the people knew this, who is to say they were going to vote at all had they not been pushed to by the runners practically forcing them?

In Robert V. Remini;s opposing argument he talks more of the things that happened throughout this election that made it one of slander rather than just pointing out the statistical basis of everything. "The states did not provide an official ballot; instead, the parties printed their own ballots, distributing them to friends and employing high-pressure party hacks at the polls to get the voter to accept the ticket. I 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" (Remini page 205). I feel as though this elections focus needs to be more on the steps that each candidate took to try to win their presidency and their peoples votes rather than the statistical evidence of the election, which is exactly what Remini pointed out and focused on in his argument.

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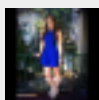
Re: An election in slander...

by [Peter Mixon](#) - Friday, January 22, 2016, 12:09 AM

I have to admit that you raise a good point in echoing Remini’s statements about the conditions at the polls. It seems likely that the Democrats at the polls were more likely to be rough-and-tumble brawlers who would coerce voters, rather than the Whigs, who, if they were representative of the social strata of their party, would likely have been slightly more genteel about things. That makes it an interesting question how many people voted for Jackson because of coercion (although that question rests on whether the ones doing the threatening had any real way to tell how individuals voted). It seems that party spirit and this kind of poll-mobbing was much greater than in the 1824 election, or at least that’s what the lower voter participation in 1824 would seem to imply. So if this was the first election where this dynamic was in play, it might have had a significant effect on the voting results.

With that said, it would almost seem that, if that were the case, it would indicate that Jackson’s overwhelming victory might *not* be a symptom of a great democratic revolt, but rather of external influence on the voters’ natural voting opinion. So I’m interested to hear why you consider it an indication that a democratic revolt did, in fact, take place.

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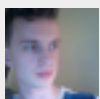
Re: An election in slander...
by [McKalie Bellew](#) – Saturday, January 23, 2016, 12:42 PM

I want to give you a really deep and great answer to this question, which is a great question by the way, but my understanding on the subject is a little iffy. I can't explain exactly why I feel that a democratic revolt did take place in this election because I don't fully understand exactly what happened. My forte is not history at all and this question in particular is baffling to me as I have never really taken a lot of thought and consideration into forming an opinion on a time period in history. All my life history has been strictly factual, and although this topic is exactly that, the opinionated part of it is definitely throwing me for a loop.

That being said, I made my decision that it did take place not necessarily on what happened after the election and how the people reacted to Jackson's election, but on the facts that Remini stated on the events that took place throughout the election. I feel as though it just makes sense for a democratic revolt to take place from this election as it was such a dirty election. After Jackson lost the election of 1824 I think he took that loss, despite having the most popular and electoral votes, and did everything he could to ensure that wouldn't happen again. This led to the election of slander in 1828. He laid the groundwork for a dirty election and in his term there were many social and political changes that took place. I can't help but feel as though this isn't necessarily what the people wanted, their right of democracy were taken away from them and they were forced by fear to vote for a certain candidate despite how they truly felt about the candidate in the first place.

I hope that made sense, I would love another response and deeper explanation of what I'm not completely understanding on this subject matter! Thanks!

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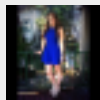


Re: An election in slander...
by [Peter Mixon](#) – Saturday, January 23, 2016, 6:45 PM

I guess it seems to me that if you feel like the American people had “their right of democracy taken away from them and they were forced by fear to vote for a certain candidate despite how they truly felt about the candidate,” then that’s the opposite of a democratic revolution, isn’t it? That isn’t the common people rising up to elect a president sympathetic to states’ rights and the needs of the people, it’s the common people being bullied into electing who Jackson’s party wanted them to. 1828 may have been a victory for the Democrats, but, if our supposition about the political tactics used during the election is correct, the common people didn’t have much of a voice and democracy didn’t have a chance to flourish.

This is, of course, making the assumption that there was a good amount of political coercion going on, which I have no data about.

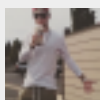
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Re: A Democratic Revolt?
by [McKalie Bellew](#) – Saturday, January 23, 2016, 12:32 PM

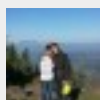
After reading through everyone's responses and feelings on this topic, I am curious to know, what does the majority of the world believe? Is there a right or wrong answer to this question? When history classes refer to the election of 1828, do they have a true or false question as to whether or not this election represented a democratic revolt of the people? Or is this strictly an opinionated subject matter in history?

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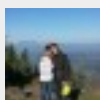
Re: Opinion
by [Zachery Brown](#) – Saturday, January 23, 2016, 11:36 PM

I dont think that there is a right or wrong answer to the question. It is more about the peoples opinion and who believes that the election of 1828 represented a democratic revolt. The reason that most people believe that it was, is because this had hardly any time energy, or resources dedicated to investigating the issue. It wasnt even really questioned. Most just assumed that this was correct, when in all reality, it cannot be proved in its entirety to be completely true. Just like Richard P. McCormick stated, "Probably because the image of "mighty demoaatic uprising" has been so universally agreed upon, there has been virtually no effort made to describe precisely the dimensions of the "uprising." Inquiry into this aspect of Jacksonian democracy has been discouraged by a common misconception regarding voter behavior before 1824." pg. 209. So there is not much research that has been put into the subject as McCormick said. Therefore there cannot be no 'right' or 'wrong' answer to this. But I still personally believe that no the election of 1828 did not lead to a democratic revolt. To me there was a lot of issues as in like, who was allowed to vote, (male, female, race etc) who had voting poles in a convenient area as if they had to ride a carriage so many miles or what not just to vote(riding in a carriage for even 1 mile would be terrible), or even if where and who the propaganda for voting got out to. Maybe some people never cared much about voting because they were out in the boonies and didnt realize how important it was to vote. I can think of and have heard a number of reasoning's as to what could have made the numbers in the voting statistics change so drastically. And for those reasons I still chose to believe that the election of 1828 did not cause a democratic revolt.



Voters for Jackson or just against the process
by [Dan Johnson](#) – Saturday, January 23, 2016, 1:42 PM

If the overwhelming number of individuals truly believed in Jackson as a candidate, then it would be less like a revolt and more like a natural democratic turnover from "ineffective" leadership to a new approach, which for the most part wouldn't constitute a democratic revolt. More than likely Southern voters found themselves voting for him out of ideological agreement where as many of the Northern voters probably voted for Jackson because they were fighting the process of democracy of the previous election. The Northern incentive constitutes a democratic revolt more because it was actively fighting the processes of essentially non-democratic rule and the snobbery of their Northern elite. In the North, it would be more of a democratic revolt because the core principle of there votership would be much more focused on the ending of the incumbent leadership and not for the prospect of new leadership while the South more likely focused on the prospects of the new leadership more than they focused on just getting the old leadership out because of its non-democratic deal. Thus, in the South it was apart of their collective vision. In the North, it would be mostly acting solely against the established power. It seems to be this way because the democrats approach was not meant to serve the Northern way of life. It was more bent upon serving essentially itself, a more Southern centric vision, although Andrew Jackson himself was more moderate on that accord. The actions of the Democratic party weren't as much to strengthen the democracy but in many ways weaken it as shown by actions taken by Jackson himself and other Democrats moving forward. The Southern voter turnout could be viewed as revolt, but they probably could not be viewed as a Democratic revolt. More than likely, many southerners would have been completely fine with fascism as they largely believed in the effectiveness of submissive and dominant relationships. Northerners were slowly turning away from the institution of those types of relationships especially in their middle class. In the coming time, the differences of the Northern and Southern perspectives would be made ever more clear.



The Super Bowl effect
by [Dan Johnson](#) – Saturday, January 23, 2016, 2:03 PM

A large part of the voter turnout could also probably be attested to the nature of the campaigning. The campaigns were heated spectacles which challenged people's moral identifications. Much like the Super Bowl, the spectacle of slander and grandiose forms of competitivness could have interested large parts of the population itself increasing the voter turnout because the outcome of the vote represented a type of superiority to the other side, which can quickly mobilize large groups of people to fight for their sense of

honor.

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