

**THE U.S. 2008 ELECTIONS and the U.S. PRESIDENCY:  
WEB SITES, INAUGURATION. THE TRANSITION and WHAT  
AWAITS THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION.**

**NEW! UPDATED FEBRUARY 1, 2009, with material on the  
PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION AND INAUGURATIONS.**

**INCLUDES THESE APPENDICES:**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON POLITICAL  
CONVENTIONS**

**THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE**

**THE ROLE OF THE FIRST LADY**

**THE POWERS OF THE PRESIDENCY**

**THE ROLE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT OVERTIME**

**THE ENCHANCED ROLE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT**

**HOW PRESIDENTS ARE IMPEACHED**

**OVERALL RESOURCES:**

**NEW! TOP 10 WEB TOOLS FOR THE 2008 U.S. ELECTION SEASON:**  
<http://lifehacker.com/5061215/top-10-web-tools-for-election-season> **NEW!**

**NEW! INDIVIDUAL STATES AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION CRUCIAL FOR  
THE 2008 ELECTIONS** <http://fpc.state.gov/106308.htm>

**NEW! THE 2008 ELECTOPEDIA** "A guide to (almost) everything there is to know about presidential candidates John McCain and Barack Obama, from the important issues (Best Speech) to the really important issues (Hairstyle)." News and opinion on topics such as "most embarrassing gaffe," "most amusing YouTube video," and pets. From New York Magazine. URL: <http://nymag.com/news/politics/2008/electopedia/>

### **NEW! BALLOT MEASURE DATABASE DATABASE OF STATE BALLOT**

**MEASURES**, covering the current election and selected elections back to the early 1900s. Search by state, topic area, date, and election type (general, primary, or special). Entries include ballot number, title, status, and summary, when available. From the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL).

<http://www.ncsl.org/programs/legismgt/elect/dbintro.htm>

**NEW! BALLOTPEDIA** is a free, collaborative, online encyclopedia focusing on ballots, ballot measures, ballot access for initiatives and candidates, petition drives, the supporters and opponents of initiatives and, in general, all things ballot.

Ballotpedia is a wiki, which means that anyone -- including you right now -- can edit." Includes news and a page for each state, with current and historical material.

[http://ballotpedia.org/wiki/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://ballotpedia.org/wiki/index.php/Main_Page)

### **NEW! FINDLAW OFFERS SPECIAL EDITION: ELECTIONS 2008**

[www.findlaw.com/election2008.html](http://www.findlaw.com/election2008.html)

### **NEW! TWITTER: ELECTION 2008**

This website filters "hundreds of Twitter updates per minute to create a new source for gathering public opinion about the [2008] presidential election and a new way for you to share your thoughts." View all Twitter updates or updates by candidate. From the social networking website Twitter. <http://election.twitter.com/>

### **THE U.S. NATURALIZATION TEST**

Material about the testing for becoming a naturalized U.S. citizen. As of October 1, 2008, a new naturalization test covering English vocabulary and U.S. history and government ("civics") will be used. Includes information about which test will be administered (depending on timing of filing forms), exemptions, and links to sample test questions. From the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

<http://lii.org/cs/lii/view/item/27023>

### **HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT QUESTIONS FOR THE NEW NATURALIZATION TEST**

<http://www.uscis.gov/files/nativedocuments/100q.pdf>  
Those of us who are already citizens by birth or naturalization might want to try answering the questions to see if we knew enough about our country to become a citizen now.

### **UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP RESOURCES**

"Multilingual guides, exam practice questions and community resources" for the new U.S. citizenship exam (starting October 2008). Includes material in English, Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, and Russian on topics such as organizations that can help with citizenship, English as a Second Language (ESL) providers, and the naturalization process. From the San Francisco Public Library (SFPL). <http://sfpl.org/citizenship/>

### **EJOURNAL: BIOGRAPHIES OF THE CANDIDATES: OBAMA AND McCAIN AND BIDEN AND PALIN: IIP EJOURNAL ON THE CANDIDATES: (October 2008)**

<http://www.america.gov/publications/ejournalusa/1008.html>

### **2008 ELECTION RESOURCES FROM INTERNET PUBLIC LIBRARY:**

<http://www.ipl.org/div/election/>

**PBS PRESENTS THE CANDIDATES: NEW! CANDIDATES 2008** Watch the full program, view slide shows for each candidate, and read interviews with journalists,

advisors and aides, and friends of the candidates. Also includes a producer Q&A, classroom guide, readings and links, discussion, and more.

URL: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/choice2008/>

**EJOURNAL: THE LONG CAMPAIGN: US ELECTIONS 2008:**

<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itdhr/1007/ijde/ijde1007.htm>

Contains a bibliography and valuable Internet references!

**2008 ELECTIONS - WEB SITE OF THE FOREIGN PRESS CENTER, U.S. DEPT OF STATE, WITH LINKS TO BRIEFINGS, ANALYSES, PROFILES, POLLS, CONTACT INFORMATION** etc <http://fpc.state.gov/fpc/c21250.htm>

**THE U.S. ELECTION PROCESS - SOME RESOURCES COMPILED BY THE FOREIGN PRESS CENTER, U.S. Dept of State** <http://fpc.state.gov/c9809.htm>

**U.S. ELECTIONS: GUIDE TO THE 2008 ELECTION. A WEB PAGE OF THE OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS, U.S. DEPT OF STATE, 2008** <http://uspolitics.america.gov/uspolitics/elections/index.htm>

**USA ELECTIONS IN BRIEF:** <http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/elections-in-brief/>

**2008 USINFO ELECTION PAGE:**

<http://usinfo.state.gov/politics/elections/>

**PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATING PROCESS: CURRENT ISSUES.** CRS report, updated April 11, 2008 <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/106173.pdf>

**PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION ACCEPTANCE SPEECHES, PAST AND PRESENT - LINKS TO TEXTS**

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/nomination.php>

**PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES, 1960-2008: LINKS TO TRANSCRIPTS**

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/debates.php>

**BATTLEGROUND STATES IN 2008 MATERIAL COMPILED BY FOREIGN PRESS CENTER, U.S. DEPT OF STATE** <http://fpc.state.gov/106308.htm>

**ONGOING POLITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE 2008 ELECTIONS: (Blog)**

<http://www.realclearpolitics.com/> (Updated daily)

Another ongoing series of Political analysis comes from the **UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA'S CENTER FOR POLITICS**, these analyses of the 2008 Elections are written by one of America's most distinguished political analysts, Larry Sabato:

<http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/>

**RESEARCH SHELF'S COLLECTION OF 2008 ELECTION MATERIALS:**

<http://www.docuticker.com/index.php?s=election>

**U.S. ELECTIONS FOR KIDS:**

<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/index.html>

## **ELECTION 08 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION**

News and analysis about the 2008 presidential election.

Features material about candidates (with links to stories, photos, video and audio clips, and related websites), and the "Democratic Candidate Mashup," in which users build their own debate by selecting video clips from different candidates on topics such as Iraq, health care, and education. Also includes fundraising data, and a summary of where each candidate stands on selected issues. From Yahoo News.

URL: [http://news.yahoo.com/fc/US/2008\\_Presidential\\_Election](http://news.yahoo.com/fc/US/2008_Presidential_Election)

**NEW YORK TIMES 2008 ELECTIONS CENTRAL:**<http://politics.nytimes.com/election-guide/2008/index.html>

**UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN DOCUMENTS CENTER: ELECTIONS 2008 Extensive**, An annotated listing of websites related to the 2008 U.S. national election. Covers presidential and congressional candidates, debates, campaign finance, media coverage, advertising, policy issues (such as energy and terrorism), elections and voting, and much more. Also includes relevant Library of Congress subject headings and keyword searching suggestions for databases and online search engines. Maintained by political science librarian Grace York at the University of Michigan Library. <http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/elec2008.html>

**2008 ELECTIONS: THE BIG PICTURE: Briefing by Chuck Todd, political director**, NBC News, at Foreign Press Center, U.S. Dept of State, December 10, 2007 <http://fpc.state.gov/fpc/96834.htm>

TRY OUT THE NEW FREE [www.cqpolitics.com](http://www.cqpolitics.com) with all new content.

**CQ PRIMARY GUIDE TO THE 2008 ELECTIONS:**

<http://innovation.cq.com/primaries>

**KEEPING CURRENT ON ELECTIONS: NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY:**

<http://www.nypl.org/research/sibl/images/elections.doc>

**NEW! PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS: NEW!**

: <http://www.llrx.com/columns/govdomain39.htm>

## **INAUGURATION AND TRANSITION:**

**OVERVIEW OF INAUGURATIONS AND PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS from the Foreign Press Center website:** <http://fpc.state.gov>

**FREE VIDEOS ON INAUGURATION: The Presidential Inauguration**

Before the inauguration of Barack H. Obama on January 20, 2009, review the workings of the institution of the U.S. presidency with "The Modern Presidency: Tools of Power" <[http://www.learner.org/courses/democracyinamerica/dia\\_7/](http://www.learner.org/courses/democracyinamerica/dia_7/)>, Program 7 of Democracy in America. Downloadable readings include the insightful writings of Alexis de Tocqueville, Alexander Hamilton (from the Federalist Papers), Andrew Jackson (On Indian Removal), and Abraham

Lincoln (The Emancipation Proclamation).

The first three programs of an Emmy Award-winning discussion series  
The Constitution: That Delicate Balance

<<http://www.learner.org/redirect/january/constitut40.html>> discuss executive privilege; covert action; and the nomination, election, and succession of the president.

Read this interview with veteran reporter Helen Thomas  
<<http://www.learner.org/catalog/extras/interviews/hthomas/ht04.html>> to learn about media coverage of the White House.

For a discussion on race and the implications of the election of the first African American president, see America's History in the Making Unit 20, "Egalitarian America"

<<http://www.learner.org/courses/amerhistory/units/20/>>.

Explore the full range of Web-based resources to review developments in racial divisions and integration, as well as the role of mass media in shaping the political landscape. The text chapter includes the article, "The Many Facets of Brown: Integration in a Multiracial Society," plus examples of ethnic mobilization and a discussion of President Kennedy's response to the Civil Rights movement.

**PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS: NEWSLETTER FROM US EMBASSY BUDAPEST:**

<http://newsletters.usembassy.hu/usvalues/usvaluesjanuary08shared.doc>

**TRACKING THE TRANSITION:** <http://www.llrx.com/columns/govdomain39.htm>

**PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION: PERSPECTIVES:**

[http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RL34692\\_20081003.pdf](http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RL34692_20081003.pdf)

**VOA ONLINE DISCUSSION: PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION, EXECUTIVE POWER.** [Voice of America]. December 17,

2008.<http://www.voanews.com/english/2008-12-17-Executive-Power.cfm>

**PRESIDENT-ELECT BARACK OBAMA AND THE 111<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS: WHAT TO EXPECT.** December 6, 2008.

[http://www.pattonboggs.com/files/News/ecc08749-57fb-4661-b720-0e5008939d82/Presentation/NewsAttachment/a010bcc1-c7d4-44b3-8e63-07087426f819/WASHINGTON-%234977208-v10-2008\\_Election\\_Analysis.pdf](http://www.pattonboggs.com/files/News/ecc08749-57fb-4661-b720-0e5008939d82/Presentation/NewsAttachment/a010bcc1-c7d4-44b3-8e63-07087426f819/WASHINGTON-%234977208-v10-2008_Election_Analysis.pdf)

**THE OBAMA TRANSITION WEBSITE** <http://change.gov/>

**THE NATIONAL SECURITY TEAM** – Video and text.

[http://change.gov/newsroom/entry/the\\_national\\_security\\_team/](http://change.gov/newsroom/entry/the_national_security_team/)

**PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS: POLICY OPTIONS**

<https://www.policyarchive.org/handle/10207/9671>

**PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS.** CRS report, updated April 3, 2008

<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/106172.pdf>

**USA.GOV EXPLAINS PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS:**

[http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Election\\_2008.shtml#vgn-2008-presidential-election-information-vgn](http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Election_2008.shtml#vgn-2008-presidential-election-information-vgn)

**PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS: ISSUES INVOLVING OUTGOING AND INCOMING ADMINISTRATIONS** CRS Report 2008:

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL34722.pdf>

**2008-2009 PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS: NATIONAL SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS AND OPTIONS. [CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE, RL34456, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS].** April 21, 2008.

<https://www.policyarchive.org/bitstream/handle/10207/9671/RL34456.pdf?sequence=1> [PDF format, 52 pages].

**THE COUNCIL FOR EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNMENT'S 2008-2009 PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION INITIATIVE.** [Council for Excellence in

Government]. October 2008.

[http://ceg.files.cms-plus.com/usermedia/images/uploads/PDFs/Updated%20Transition%202008-2009%20Document%20\\_electronic%20letterhead\\_%20\\_6a\\_.pdf](http://ceg.files.cms-plus.com/usermedia/images/uploads/PDFs/Updated%20Transition%202008-2009%20Document%20_electronic%20letterhead_%20_6a_.pdf) [PDF format, 5 pages].

**PRESIDENTIAL POWER IN NATIONAL SECURITY: A GUIDE TO THE PRESIDENT ELECT.** [White House Transition Project, Law Library of Congress]. Web posted November 3, 2008.

<http://www.loc.gov/law/help/usconlaw/pdf/presidential-power-national-security.pdf> [PDF format, 16 pages].

**PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS. [CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE, RL30736, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS]. FEBRUARY 11, 2008.**

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL30736.pdf> [PDF format, 38 pages].

**PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS: ISSUES INVOLVING OUTGOING AND INCOMING ADMINISTRATIONS. [CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE, RL34722, Library of Congress].** Web posted November 1, 2008.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL34722.pdf> [PDF format, 35 pages].

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRANSITION TEAMS.** [Project on Government Oversight]. Web posted October 20, 2008.

<http://pogoarchives.org/m/go/transition-paper-20081016.pdf> [PDF format, 7 pages].

**TRACKING THE TRANSITION: ONLINE PRESIDENTIAL TRACKERS:**

<http://www.llrx.com/columns/govdomain39.htm>

**MANAGING PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS:** Consider an earlier presidential transition aided by a man whose career had included managing congressional relations for two presidents...

[http://www.brookings.edu/articles/2008/1121\\_transition\\_congress\\_hess.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/articles/2008/1121_transition_congress_hess.aspx)

**2008-09 PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS RESOURCES WEBSITE -**

<http://directory.presidentialtransition.gov/>

**TRANSITION LAWS** - <http://directory.presidentialtransition.gov/PTT-PresTransInaug-TransitionLaws.cfm>

**KEY APPOINTMENTS IN THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION:**

[http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/us/series/the\\_new\\_team/index.html](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/us/series/the_new_team/index.html)

**Change.gov** ( <http://www.change.gov/> )  
Official Obama-Biden transition Web site

**I Do Solemnly Swear . . . Presidential Inaugurations**

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/pihtml/>

"Approximately 400 items or 2,000 digital files from each of the 54 inaugurations from George Washington's in 1789 to George W. Bush's inauguration of 2001. This presentation includes diaries and letters of presidents and of those who witnessed inaugurations, handwritten drafts of inaugural addresses, broadsides, inaugural tickets and programs, prints, photographs, and sheet music." This site is from the Library of Congress American Memory Collection.

**January eJournal USA, *U.S. Presidential Transitions*** , which highlights an important characteristic of democracy in the United States, the recurring peaceful transfer of power from one president to the next.  
<http://www.america.gov/publications/ejournalusa/0109.html>

**USA TRANSITION:** [http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Election\\_2008.shtml#vgn-barack-obama-president-elect-vgn](http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Election_2008.shtml#vgn-barack-obama-president-elect-vgn)

**TRANSITION WEB SITE ON AMERICA.GOV:**

<http://uspolitics.america.gov/uspolitics/elections/index.html>

<http://uspolitics.america.gov/uspolitics/government/inauguration.html> -

Collected materials on the inauguration, including background articles and photo galleries

**Barack Obama:** <http://www.america.gov/publications/books.html#obama> -  
Barack Obama: 44th President of the United States

**Inaugural History** - <http://inaugural.senate.gov/history/>

## Inauguration Firsts

(Event has evolved since days of George Washington)

George Washington, April 30, 1789  
First inauguration in New York City, then the capital of the nation

Thomas Jefferson, March 4, 1801  
First inauguration in Washington; first president to walk to and from inaugural; first newspaper "extra" edition for an inaugural address

James Polk, March 4, 1845  
First telegraph coverage; first featured in newspaper illustration

James Buchanan, March 4, 1857  
First known photographs

Abraham Lincoln, March 4, 1865  
First participation by African Americans in an inaugural parade

William McKinley, March 4, 1897  
First recorded by motion picture camera

William Taft, March 4, 1909  
First use of an automobile in inaugural parade (President Taft was not an occupant.)

Woodrow Wilson, March 5, 1917  
First participation by women in an inaugural parade

Warren Harding, March 4, 1921  
First president to ride to and from inaugural in automobile; first use of loudspeakers

Calvin Coolidge, March 4, 1925  
First broadcast by national radio

Franklin D. Roosevelt, January 20, 1937  
First inauguration on date specified by 20th amendment

Franklin D. Roosevelt, January 20, 1945  
First and only time a president was inaugurated for a fourth term (The 22nd Amendment to the Constitution, ratified in 1951, restricts a president to two terms.)

Harry Truman, January 20, 1949  
First broadcast on television

Lyndon Johnson, November 22, 1963  
First oath administered in an airplane (Air Force One, in Dallas, following Kennedy's assassination); first oath administered by a woman (U.S. District Judge Sarah Hughes)

Gerald Ford, August 4, 1974  
First unelected vice president to assume the presidency

Jimmy Carter, January 20, 1977  
First time handicapped-accessible viewing provided for the parade

Ronald Reagan, January 20, 1981  
First closed-captioning of television broadcast for hearing impaired

William Jefferson Clinton, January 20, 1997  
First live broadcast on Internet

George W. Bush, January 20, 2001  
First time a former president (George H.W. Bush) attended his son's inauguration

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>)

## **OATH OF OFFICE:**

(President-elect and vice president-elect both take oaths)

The language of the presidential oath is specified in Article II, Section I, of the U.S. Constitution:

"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of the President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

The president-elect traditionally takes the oath with his hand on a Bible. However, this is not a requirement - Theodore Roosevelt took the oath in 1901 without swearing on a Bible.

The vice president-elect takes the same oath as other federal employees:

"I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic, that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same, that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion, and I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God."

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>)

## **Inaugural Addresses and Memorable Words**

(Tradition of president's first speech dates back to George Washington)

Washington - Starting with George Washington at the first inauguration in 1789, the inaugural address has been an important American tradition. Most presidents use the inaugural address to present their visions for the United States and to set forth their goals to the American people.

Inaugural addresses have varied in length, from George Washington's 135 words on March 4, 1793, to William Harrison's 8,445 words on March 4, 1841. The speeches set the tone for the upcoming presidency, and a select few are among the most enduring, and most frequently quoted, presidential speeches:

"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

- Abraham Lincoln, 1865, in the final days of the U.S. Civil War

"Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

- Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1933, in the midst of the economic Great Depression

"And so my fellow Americans: Ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country." - John F. Kennedy, 1961

"To a few of us here today, this is a solemn and most momentous occasion; and yet, in the history of our nation, it is a commonplace occurrence. The orderly transfer of authority as called for in the Constitution routinely takes place as it has for almost two centuries and few of us stop to think how unique we really are. In the eyes of many in the world, this every-four-year ceremony we accept as normal is nothing less than a miracle." - Ronald Reagan, 1981

"I see history as a book with many pages, and each day we fill a page with acts of hopefulness and meaning. The new breeze blows, a page turns, the story unfolds. And so today a chapter begins, a small and stately story of unity, diversity, and generosity - shared, and written, together." - George H.W. Bush, 1989

"The greatest progress we have made, and the greatest progress we have yet to make, is in the human heart. In the end, all the world's wealth and a thousand armies are no match for the strength and decency of the human spirit." - William Jefferson Clinton, 1997

"Through much of the last century, America's faith in freedom and democracy was a rock in a raging sea. Now it is a seed upon the wind, taking root in many nations. Our democratic faith is more than the creed of our country, it is the inborn hope of our humanity, an ideal we carry but do not own, a trust we bear and pass along. - George W. Bush, 2001

## **ELECTION MAPS AND GRAPHICS:**

**GOOGLE MASHUPS: GOOGLE MAPS for the 2008 ELECTIONS: Keep up-to-date on the 2008 election with Google Maps:**

[http://maps.google.com/help/maps/elections/#us\\_senators](http://maps.google.com/help/maps/elections/#us_senators)

"**CONGRESSIONAL QUARTERLY'S ELECTION MAP**, on CQPolitics.com gives readers the option to see the publication's projected Democrat vs. Republican breakdown for U.S. House and Senate seats, as well as for governors and the state-by-state results for the 2004 Presidential election.

□ "The NY Times shines, however, with its compelling page [tracking Presidential campaign finances](#)."

□ "...to see where each candidate will be each day of the campaign, click to the Washington Post's outstanding [Campaign Tracker](#). The Post's page blends a custom Google Map with a traditional list of candidate appearances..."

**REAL CLEAR POLITICS ELECTORAL MAP: OBAMA vs. McCain:**

[http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/maps/obama\\_vs\\_mccain/](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/maps/obama_vs_mccain/)

**ELECTORAL MAP PREDICTIONS JUNE 18, 2008**

<http://politicalmaps.org/electoral-map-predictions-june-18th-2008/>

## **POLLS: QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK ABOUT POLLING AND POLL RESULTS:**

## **20 QUESTIONS A JOURNALIST SHOULD ASK ABOUT POLL RESULTS**

<http://www.ncpp.org/?q=node/4>

And that news readers/viewers should ask as well, because reports on polling data are often flawed and downright misleading. Among the questions: How many people were interviewed for the survey? When was the poll done? What questions were asked? In what order? Also the one journalists never seem to report: What other polls have been done on this topic? Do they say the same thing? Without this information, people are left puzzled by polls with diametrically opposite results.

## **POLITICAL FACT CHECKING WEB SITES:**

**FACT CHECKING WEB SITES** <http://www.llrx.com/columns/govdomain38.htm>

## **YOUTH ORIENTED WEB SITES:**

### **A DISTINCTIVE U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION SITE FOR YOUTH -- the**

*Weekly Reader* Election Center: <http://www.weeklyreader.com/election/>

Today's edition features a "hot topic" on why swing states matter.. You'll also find the candidates' positions on major issues, an explanation about how the American political system works, quizzes, and more -- all presented with great flair.

## **YOUTH VOTE:**

### **THE YOUTH VOTE in the 2008 ELECTIONS:**

<http://www.youthradio.org/election2008/>

Youth Radio: Election 2008 - "Youth Radio is following Election 2008 around the country, through the \*\*perspectives of young people who are getting a close-up view of the process. Check out their thoughts, and watch for more to come." \*\*

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**The Young Vote: Engaging America's Youth in the 2008 Elections and Beyond** - nearly two out of five 18 to 24 year olds identify themselves as "independent." While the lack of party affiliation may prevent many young voters from voting in the primaries, the large number of independents makes the youth vote unpredictable when played out in the general election.

[http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2007/~media/Files/Projects/Opportunity08/Factsheet\\_Youth\\_Vote.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2007/~/media/Files/Projects/Opportunity08/Factsheet_Youth_Vote.pdf)

## **POLITICAL NOMINATING CONVENTIONS:**

### **FOREIGN POLICY AND POLITICAL NOMINATING CONVENTIONS.**

**BACKGROUNDER** by Joanna Klonsky. Council on Foreign Relations, August 21, 2008 <http://www.cfr.org/publication/16992/>

### **HISTORY OF THE REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC CONVENTIONS:**

<http://poynter.org/column.asp?id=49&aid=68171>

includes bios of the Presidents as well

## **PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES:**

### **THE PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES**

News and analysis about the September and October 2008 presidential and vice presidential debates. **Includes full video of the debates** (where you can jump ahead to a particular topic using a timeline and find key words or phrases on the timeline), video and transcripts of Democrat and Republican debates, **and video highlights of past presidential debates.** From MSNBC.:

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/18296908/>

### **BRIEF HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE:**

<http://www.american.com/archive/2008/september-09-08/a-brief-history-of-the-modern-presidential-debate>

OVERVIEW OF THE PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES: <http://fpc.state.gov/fpc/107977.htm>

PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES FROM 1960 to 2008: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/debates.php>

**COMMISSION ON PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES ANNOUNCES SITES, DATES, FORMATS AND CANDIDATE SELECTION CRITERIA FOR 2008 GENERAL ELECTION:** November 19, 2007. [http://www.debates.org/pages/news\\_111907.html](http://www.debates.org/pages/news_111907.html)

**There is more information in the news release** at <http://www.c-span.org/pdf/2008PresidentDebates.pdf>

and **there is historical information about U.S. Presidential Election Debates** at <http://www.debates.org/pages/history.html>

## **ELECTORAL COLLEGE:**

**NEW! TOP 10 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE:**  
<http://www.britannica.com/blogs/2008/10/the-electoral-college-top-10-strengths-weaknesses/> **NEW!**

**NEW! ELECTORAL COLLEGE ESSENTIAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION**  
<http://fpc.state.gov/fpc/c21306.htm> **NEW!**

**ELECTORAL COLLEGE: AN EJOURNAL** (IIP SEPTEMBER 2008) Includes how to win an Electoral college majority. <http://www.america.gov/publications/ejournalusa/0908.html>

### **ELECTORAL COLLEGE PRIMER:**

[http://www.history.com/minisite.do?content\\_type=Minisite\\_Generic&content\\_type\\_id=290&display\\_order=1&mini\\_id=1045](http://www.history.com/minisite.do?content_type=Minisite_Generic&content_type_id=290&display_order=1&mini_id=1045)

**CASE FOR KEEPING THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE:** [American Enterprise Institute, AEI On the Issues]. Walter Berns. April 7, 2008.

[http://www.aei.org/publications/pubID.27766.filter.all/pub\\_detail.asp](http://www.aei.org/publications/pubID.27766.filter.all/pub_detail.asp)

## **ARGUMENTS FOR PRESERVING OR ABANDONING THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE:**

[http://www.history.com/minisite.do?content\\_type=Minisite\\_Generic&content\\_type\\_id=301&display\\_order=8&mini\\_id=1045](http://www.history.com/minisite.do?content_type=Minisite_Generic&content_type_id=301&display_order=8&mini_id=1045)

## **HOW THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE WORKS**

[http://www.nationalatlas.gov/articles/government/a\\_electoralC.html](http://www.nationalatlas.gov/articles/government/a_electoralC.html)

## **WILL STATES TOPPLE THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE?**

<http://www.stateline.org/live/details/story?contentId=316080>

By Pamela M. Prah. Stateline, June 9, 2008

## **CHOOSING THE VICE PRESIDENT:**

### **"PROCESS OF SELECTING VICE PRESIDENT EVOLVED OVER CENTURIES."**

(<http://www.america.gov/st/elections08-english/2008/July/20080711180349hmnietsua0.1257898.html>)

### **"VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: A POLITICAL AND PERSONAL DECISION."**

<http://www.america.gov/st/elections08-english/2008/July/20080711175003HMnietsuA0.6977503.html>

### **WHAT DO VICE PRESIDENTS DO?**

The **Office of the Senate** explains just what it is that Vice Presidents do.:

[http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/briefing/Vice\\_President.htm](http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/briefing/Vice_President.htm)

## **STATISTICS:**

### **2008 ELECTIONS FROM THE US CENSUS BUREAU:**

<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2008/2008elections.html>

### **US CENSUS BUREAU STATISTICS ON THE US 2008 ELECTIONS:**

[http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts\\_for\\_features\\_special\\_editions/010725.html](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/010725.html)

### **U.S. ELECTIONS FROM THE US STATISTICAL ABSTRACT:**

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/cats/elections.html>

### **THE 2008 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. SOME FAST FACTS FROM THE CENSUS BUREAU,**

October 1, 2007 [http://www.census.gov/Press-](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/010725.html)

[Release/www/releases/archives/facts\\_for\\_features\\_special\\_editions/010725.html](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/010725.html)

## **CANDIDATE POSITIONS ON ISSUES:**

**U.S. Election 2008 - selected speeches by candidates, and other material; compiled by the Council on Foreign Relations**

[http://www.cfr.org/issue/480/us\\_election\\_2008.html](http://www.cfr.org/issue/480/us_election_2008.html)

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER TOPICS: PUBLICATIONS ON ELECTION '08** Compilation of backgrounders, analysis, and other publications related to the 2008 U.S. presidential election. Some of the topics include debates, political endorsements, presidential primaries, religion, specific candidates, news coverage, and candidate websites. From the Pew Research Center.

<http://pewresearch.org/topics/election'08/>

**ELECTION 2008: FOREIGN POLICY GUIDE TO ELECTION 2008.** A blog of the Foreign Policy Association <http://election.foreignpolicyblogs.com/>

**THE COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS: FOREIGN POLICY AND THE 2008 ELECTIONS IN THE U.S.**

[http://www.cfr.org/publication/15456/international\\_issues\\_in\\_the\\_2008\\_campaign.html?breadcrumb=%2F](http://www.cfr.org/publication/15456/international_issues_in_the_2008_campaign.html?breadcrumb=%2F)

**ISSUE TRACKER: THE CANDIDATES ON TRADE. PREPARED BY THE COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS**

[http://www.cfr.org/publication/14762/issue\\_tracker.html](http://www.cfr.org/publication/14762/issue_tracker.html)

**HEALTH08.ORG INFORMATION ABOUT HEALTH CARE ISSUES ADDRESSED BY THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES IN THE 2008 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.**

Features news, video clips, analysis, poll results, and side-by-side comparisons of the candidates' positions on health care issues (such as expansion of public programs, insurance premium subsidies, cost containment, and financing). Also includes links to campaign resources for each candidate.

From the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation.

<http://www.health08.org/>

**U.S. PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE VIEWS ON INTERNATIONAL LAW: (from the American Society of International Law) 2008**

<http://www.asil.org/il08/il2008.html>

**SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE 2008 ELECTIONS: CANDIDATES COMPARED ON ISSUES:** <http://election2008.aaas.org/>

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**RELIGION AND POLITICS '08** Public opinion, analysis, and other documents concerning religion in the 2008 U.S. presidential elections.

Some of the issues discussed include candidate preferences of various religious groups, evolution, abortion, and social-issue voters. **Provides profiles of candidates, and candidate view comparisons for issues such as church and state, faith-based initiatives, and stem cell research.** From the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life.

<http://pewforum.org/religion08/>

**Candidate Calculator: Which 2008 Presidential Candidate Agrees With You?**

Answer the questions below to find the 2008 presidential candidate that best aligns with your beliefs. More than 2 million people have already filled it out. Give it a try!

**MIDDLE EAST:**

**UNITED STATES: PRESIDENTIAL HOPEFULS AND MIDDLE EAST DEMOCRACY**

*Steven A. Cook*

<http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=19776&prog=zgp&proj=zdrl,zme#cook>

Even this early in the game, there are observable differences in how candidates for the U.S. presidency speak about democracy in the region.

**"ARAB AMERICANS AND THE MIDDLE EAST POLICY IN THE 2008 U.S. ELECTIONS" DR. JAMES ZOGBY, PRESIDENT OF THE ARAB AMERICAN INSTITUTE**, at the Washington Foreign Press Center Briefing on "Arab Americans and the Middle East Policy in the 2008 U.S. Elections," Thursday, November 29, 2007 - [Transcript](#). Related State Department links on [Role of Minority Groups in the 2008 Elections](#)

See Also the **Arab American Institute's ELECTION CENTRAL 2008** WEBSITE for a discussion of Presidential Candidate views on Middle East Issues:

<http://www.aaiusa.org/get-involved/2866/election-central>

## **IMMIGRATION ISSUES:**

**ISSUE TRACKER: THE CANDIDATES ON IMMIGRATION. PREPARED BY THE COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS**

[http://www.cfr.org/publication/14766/issue\\_tracker.html](http://www.cfr.org/publication/14766/issue_tracker.html)

**RACE, IMMIGRATION AND AMERICA'S CHANGING ELECTORATE**

[http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2008/0227\\_demographics\\_frey/0227\\_demographics\\_paper\\_frey.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2008/0227_demographics_frey/0227_demographics_paper_frey.pdf)

Many scholars and pundits continue to wonder and discuss what the effects of America's changing demographics will have on future election cycles. Recently, the Brookings Institution's own William H. Frey discussed this very topic in a paper released at the end of February 2008. "The rise of immigration from Latin America and Asia, the higher fertility of some minorities and the slow growth of America's aging white population will have profound impacts on the nation's demographic profile, with important implications for the electorate." The paper goes on to examine the magnitude of new minority population growth and the lag that immigrant minorities experience in translating their growth into actual voting power. It's an important report and one that will be of interest to political scientists, sociologists, and members of the general public

**REFORMING U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICY: OPEN NEW PATHWAYS TO INTEGRATION** by Audrey Singer. Brookings Institution, (December?) 2007.

[http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2007/0228demographics\\_singer\\_Opp08.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2007/0228demographics_singer_Opp08.aspx)

The 15-page position paper is at

[http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2007/~media/Files/Projects/Opportunity08/PB\\_Immigration\\_Singer.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2007/~media/Files/Projects/Opportunity08/PB_Immigration_Singer.pdf)

**A WATERSHED MOMENT ON IMMIGRATION** - October 2007 may turn out to be the month that immigration became a key issue in presidential politics.

## **CAUCUS AND DELEGATES:**

**SUPER DELEGATE TRANSPARENCY PROJECT:**

[http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Portal:Superdelegate\\_Transparency\\_Pr](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Portal:Superdelegate_Transparency_Pr)

[object](#) "is the central gathering place for compiling information on the 2008 Democratic Convention superdelegates, their endorsements and the delegate voting process, including for comparison to the district-by-district allocation of pledged delegates. It is based on fully sourced research generated largely by citizen journalists, bloggers and activists who have the common purpose of bringing public transparency to the role of super delegates in the Democratic nomination process."

### **HOW DO CAUCUSES WORK?**

This essay explains how caucuses work, and outlines the differences between presidential primaries and caucuses, which are both "a means for each political party to let voters nationwide select their party's presidential nominee." The Iowa caucus (the first of the presidential election year) is used as an example. Includes links to further information about the U.S. presidential election system. URL: <http://people.howstuffworks.com/question721.htm>

### **IMPORTANCE OF POLITICAL PRIMARIES IN THE U.S.:**

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/04/13/AR2008041302159.html?sub=AR>

"If the eyes of the world are glued on the U.S. presidential primaries, the most important lesson others take away might have to do with the importance of having such races in the first place. New research by Adams and others shows that primaries are the most efficient way to discover political phenomena such as [Ronald Reagan](#) and [Bill Clinton](#) -- politicians who might never have been chosen if it had been left up to party insiders.

### **THE CAUCUS SYSTEM IN THE US PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATING PROCESS: HOW IT WORKS, A BACKGROUNDER FROM THE COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS: (MARCH 2008 STUDY)**

[http://www.cfr.org/publication/15640/caucus\\_system\\_in\\_the\\_us\\_presidential\\_nominating\\_process.html](http://www.cfr.org/publication/15640/caucus_system_in_the_us_presidential_nominating_process.html)

### **HOW RAUCOUS IS THE CAUCUS? USINFO ARTICLE, DECEMBER 2007:**

<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=December&x=20071221110904mlenuhret5.692691e-02>

### **BACKGROUNDERS AND OTHER ISSUES:**

[Trouble Ahead for the Next U.S. President](#) - When taking the oath of office on January 20 2009, the next president of the United States will be assuming responsibility for the most difficult, dangerous and complex set of foreign-policy challenges ever to face a newcomer to the White House.

[http://www.brookings.edu/articles/2008/0104\\_foreignpolicy\\_talbott.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/articles/2008/0104_foreignpolicy_talbott.aspx)

### **PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATING PROCESS: CURRENT ISSUES. [CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE (CRS), LIBRARY OF CONGRESS].** [http://opencrs.com/rpts/RL34222\\_20071024.pdf](http://opencrs.com/rpts/RL34222_20071024.pdf)

After every election, the presidential "nominating process generates complaints and proposed modifications." On a national level, both parties created task forces to evaluate the process. On a state level, the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) recommends regional primaries. The 110th Congress has introduced four bills to reform the nominating process. This report provides background information on these bills.

### **CAMPAIGN FINANCE: DEVELOPMENTS IN THE 110TH CONGRESS. CRS report,** <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/93477.pdf>

**THE VIEW FROM THE OTHER SIDE: HOW REPUBLICANS RATE THE DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES, AND DEMOCRATS THE REPUBLICANS.** Pew Research Center, <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/638/cross-party-voting>

**ELECTIONS REFORM: OVERVIEW AND ISSUES.** CRS report, updated September 4, 2007 <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/94356.pdf>

## **JOURNALISTIC/MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE CAMPAIGN and the ROLE OF THE INTERNET:**

**POYNTER'S ELECTION COVERAGE JUST FOR JOURNALISTS: INCLUDES NEWS STORIES IDEAS.** <http://poynter.org/subject.asp?id=50>

**PATCHWORK NATION: INTRIGUING MULTI-MEDIA ANALYSIS AND VISUALIZATION OF VOTERS, VOTING TRENDS AND ISSUES:** <http://www.csmonitor.com/patchworknation/>

**THE CHALLENGE OF COVERING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS.** A discussion at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), April 24, 2008 [http://www.csis.org/media/csis/events/080506\\_covering\\_elections\\_transcript.pdf](http://www.csis.org/media/csis/events/080506_covering_elections_transcript.pdf)

**SCOOP '08** Website for a national student newspaper "dedicated to providing in-depth and innovative coverage of the 2008 presidential election." Features articles and editorials (in blog format) from student correspondents from universities and high schools across the country, descriptions of beats and how to get involved as a correspondent, and details about the contributors and advisors (journalism professors and journalists from national media outlets). <http://scoop08.com/>

**THE STATE OF ONLINE: THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN 2008: CANDIDATES AND NEWS SOURCES.** By Laura Gordon-Murnane. Infotoday.com, November-December 2007 This is a comparative guide to candidates' websites, mainstream media online coverage of the election campaign, political blogs and aggregator tools. [http://www.infotoday.com/searcher/nov07/Gordon-Murnane\\_51stState.pdf](http://www.infotoday.com/searcher/nov07/Gordon-Murnane_51stState.pdf)

**THE 51ST STATE: THE STATE OF ONLINE: THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN 2008: CANDIDATES AND NEWS SOURCES.** By Laura Gordon-Murnane. Infotoday.com, November-December 2007 (21 pages) This is a comparative guide to candidates' websites, mainstream media online coverage of the election campaign, political blogs and aggregator tools. [http://www.infotoday.com/searcher/nov07/Gordon-Murnane\\_51stState.pdf](http://www.infotoday.com/searcher/nov07/Gordon-Murnane_51stState.pdf)

**THE INVISIBLE PRIMARY—INVISIBLE NO LONGER: A FIRST LOOK AT COVERAGE OF THE 2008 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN.** [Project of Excellence in Journalism, Excellence in Journalism and the Joan Shorenstein Center, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University]. October 29, 2007. [http://www.journalism.org/files/The%20Early%20Campaign%20FINAL\\_0.pdf](http://www.journalism.org/files/The%20Early%20Campaign%20FINAL_0.pdf)

**In the 2008 presidential campaign, the media has "already winnowed the race to mostly five candidates and offered Americans relatively little information about their records or what they would do if elected."**

Democrat Barack Obama has received the most positive treatment, followed closely by Republican Fred Thompson. Senator John McCain has received the most negative

coverage. The tone for the two front runners, Senator Hillary Clinton and former Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, has been more negative than positive.

### **NOW ADVENTURES IN DEMOCRACY: ELECTION 2008**

<http://www.pbs.org/now/election-2008/index.html>

This website serves as a clearinghouse of high-quality news coverage and analysis dealing with the 2008 presidential election campaign. First-time visitors can browse through the recent news headlines on the homepage and then take a look at their recent reports. Recently, these documents have covered everything from private developers' interest in public lands and explorations into the ways candidates use the web to solicit donations. The "Democracy Toolkit" is quite a find, and visitors can use the online resources here to learn about campaign finance reform, voting machines, congressional election reform, and ballot initiatives

### **PEW RESEARCH CENTER: INTERNET'S BROADER ROLE IN CAMPAIGN 2008 SOCIAL NETWORKING AND ONLINE VIDEOS TAKE OFF:**

<http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?ReportID=384>

### **PQ MEDIA REPORT: CAMPAIGN MEDIA SPENDING TO GROW 64.1% IN 2008 TO ALL-TIME HIGH OF \$4.50 BILLION**

[Press release](#): "Political campaign spending on advertising media and marketing services is expected to rocket to an all-time high of \$4.50 billion in the 2008 election cycle, as an acrimonious political environment, record fundraising and the high number of presidential candidates are driving an unprecedented media spending splurge, according to a preliminary forecast analysis released today by [PQ Media](#), the world's leading provider of custom media econometrics."

<http://www.pqmedia.com/about-press-20071206-pmb2008.html>

### **POYNTERONLINE: ELECTION COVERAGE**

Coverage of elections in general and the 2008 presidential election in particular, with an emphasis on resources for journalists covering the election. Features background, reading suggestions, ideas for story angles, and other material of interest to journalists and also to general audiences. From the Poynter Institute. <http://poynter.org/subject.asp?id=50>

### **THE INTERNET AND THE 2008 ELECTION. [PEW INTERNET & AMERICAN LIFE PROJECT].** June 15, 2008. [http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP\\_2008\\_election.pdf](http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_2008_election.pdf)

[PDF format, 27 pages] A record-breaking 46% of Americans have used the internet, email or cell phone text messaging to get news about the campaign, share their views and mobilize others. A significant number of voters are also using the internet to gain access to campaign events and primary documents. Online activism using social media has also grown substantially since the first time we probed this issue during the 2006 midterm elections. Yet despite the growth in the number of people who are politically engaged online, internet users express some ambivalence about the role of the internet in the campaign. On one hand, 28% of wired Americans say that the internet makes them feel more personally connected to the campaign, and 22% say that they would not be as involved in the campaign if not for the internet. At the same time, however, even larger numbers feel that the internet magnifies the most extreme viewpoints and is a source of misinformation for many voters.

## **PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND THE U.S. ELECTIONS:**

**SHARING THE U.S. ELECTIONS WITH THE WORLD: PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AT WORK.** Fact sheet, U.S. Dept of State, June 19, 2008 <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/scp/2008/106094.htm>

## **FREE VIDEO LECTURES FOR UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT OF THESE ELECTIONS:**

### **A FREE VIDEO SERIES FROM THE ANNENBERG FOUNDATION: U.S. ELECTIONS: THE MAINTENANCE OF DEMOCRACY:**

[http://www.learner.org/channel/courses/democracyinamerica/dia\\_7/](http://www.learner.org/channel/courses/democracyinamerica/dia_7/)

Presents free videos, with built-in exercises and numerous critical thinking skills. (Part of the overall site from ANNENBERG: **DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA**)

**Note: the videos are free for viewing, but one must register first; registration process is completely free.**

### **HOW ELECTORAL POLITICS WORK: A VIDEO SERIES FROM THE ANNENBERG FOUNDATION: Includes Lesson Plans, Teacher Perspectives, Student Perspectives, Workshop Sessions and Essential Readings.**

<http://www.learner.org/channel/workshops/civics/workshop2/>

## **BLOGS:**

Campaign Trail Talk (<http://blogs.america.gov/campaign/>) -- **Provides running commentary and information on the 2008 elections in the United States.** This blog keeps readers up to date on news, rumors and political chatter surrounding thousands of political races. **Readers may ask questions about the electoral process, post their comments about the candidates, and generally guide the discussion.**

## **FOR EDUCATORS:**

### **LESSON PLANS FOR THE ELECTIONS 2008:**

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/vote2008/lessonplans.html>

### **HOW VOTERS IN AMERICA PERCEIVE THE VOTING EXPERIENCE:**

<http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2008/electionday/> (A PBS Documentary with embedded educational videos.)

Compiled by IRO Stephen Perry, [perrystephen@fastmail.fm](mailto:perrystephen@fastmail.fm)

**LATEST DATE OF REVISION: FEBRUARY 1, 2009**

Related Bibliographies may be found here:

<http://tinyurl.com/6dfaxn>

**Please write [perrystephen@fastmail.fm](mailto:perrystephen@fastmail.fm) if you would like a free copy of a Researcher's Toolkit. Provide your email and I will email it to you.**

## **APPENDIX I:**

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON POLITICAL CONVENTIONS**

(Party gatherings have evolved over more than a century)

Why are national political conventions held?

The processes of the political national conventions have evolved over more than a century, but the purpose has remained the same -- to nominate presidential candidates and lay out goals and party priorities.

The first political convention was held in 1831 when the Anti-Mason party met in a Baltimore saloon to choose candidates and write a platform on which they would run. The next year, the Democrats met in the same saloon to select their nominees. Since then, the major parties and most minor parties have held national nominating conventions, attended by state delegates, to choose their presidential and vice presidential candidates and to agree on policy positions.

In conventions held during the 19th century and most of the 20th, the national conventions, even though attended by many of the party faithful, were controlled by state party leaders. These political "bosses" had used their influence to hand pick their state's convention delegates who would help select the presidential nominee. Opponents of that system demanded reforms to permit ordinary voters to select convention delegates. This led to the establishment of primary elections. In 1916, more than half the states held presidential primaries. The primary system declined during World War I but its popularity rose again after World War II.

**(See "Delegate System Aims to Give Nominating Power to the People ( <http://www.america.gov/st/elections08-english/2008/March/20080324140500hmnietsua0.4460871.html> ).")**

Early political conventions were colorful, contentious and filled with lengthy speeches and debates, but much business was also conducted by party leaders and key supporters in private meetings that became known as "smoky back rooms" -- eventually an American political cliché.

Because primaries and caucuses now determine for whom delegates will vote, the presidential nominee usually is known months before the

convention, the nomination vote at convention is a formality, but remains an important one. It serves as an official introduction of a party's nominee, demonstrates party unity and marks the beginning of the general election campaign.

Originally, presidential candidates stayed away from conventions, but Franklin D. Roosevelt broke that tradition in 1932. At today's conventions, a speech from the nominee is considered the highlight of the meeting.

**For more information, see "Presidential Nominations ( <http://www.america.gov/st/elections08-english/2008/April/20080410154210eaifas0.2422144.html> )."**

When and where are the 2008 conventions?

**Democrats will convene August 25 to 28 in Denver**  
<http://www.america.gov/st/elections08-english/2008/June/20080627090107xkknorb0.3469965.html>

**Republicans will gather in Minnesota's twin cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul ( <http://www.america.gov/st/elections08-english/2008/January/20080122134922AKllennoCcM5.324954e-02.html> ) September 1 to 4.**

More than 45,000 people -- including party members, delegates, journalists, security forces and other service providers -- are expected to descend on each of these cities and bring them millions of dollars in revenue.

What is a typical convention schedule?

The exact schedule varies each year and with each party. The introduction of television altered many convention traditions -- parties now schedule their biggest events and most prominent speakers during television's prime viewing hours (8 p.m. to 11 p.m. EDT).

Throughout the week, leaders and delegates hold informal gatherings or official committee meetings behind the scenes. For the more formal convention activities, plans often are not final until the last minute, but a rough schedule of what is likely to occur follows:

Day 1: The convention is called to order by the party chair, and important local leaders deliver welcoming speeches. Rules committees meet to finalize procedural issues such as the credentialing delegates. Important party members, such as the current president or those identified as "rising stars" in the party give speeches in the evening. One of the rising stars speaking at the Democratic National Convention in 2004 was Senate candidate Barack Obama.

Day 2: Routine committee business continues. Party leaders gather to make final the organization's platform, a statement of its political philosophies and goals for the next four years. Platforms typically are drafted by a committee in advance of the convention but that draft is open for debate and revision at the convention. In 2008, Republicans are asking party members to share their views online ( <http://www.america.gov/st/elections08-english/2008/January/20080122134922AKllennoCcM5.324954e-02.html> ). More speeches will be given in the evening.

Day 3: Occasionally, platform debate will spill over to this day, but the key event is the formal nomination of the presidential candidate. A party member makes the motion to nominate; another delegate seconds the motion; then the voting process begins as each state delegation is called to cast its votes. Because most delegates' votes are bound (or pledged) to a specific candidate based on the results of primary or caucuses, the outcome of the voting rarely is a surprise. In recent years, the nominee choice for a running mate also has spoken in the evening.

Day 4: The vice presidential candidate is formally nominated. In the evening, the culmination of the past four days' activities is the acceptance speech by the presidential nominee. For the first time since 1960, a presidential nominee has chosen not to give his acceptance speech from the convention hall. Instead, Barack Obama plans to speak from a nearby Denver football stadium that will hold a much larger crowd than the convention site.

Is there anything different about the 2008 conventions?

Both parties have taken countless measures to make these conventions the greenest political gatherings in history.

**(See "National Conventions Going Green**  
**( <http://www.america.gov/st/elections08-english/2008/April/20080414160544hmnietsua0.378689.html> ) )**

There also will be more bloggers covering the convention than ever before, and a record number of media organizations plan to webcast from the convention halls. For the first time, the proceedings of the Democratic National Convention will be simulcast in Spanish.

**For more information, see the parties' official Web sites: Democratic National Convention ( <http://www.demconvention.com/> ) and Republican National Convention ( <http://www.gopconvention.com/> ).**

**America.gov also will report from both conventions. For more, see U.S. Elections ( <http://uspolitics.america.gov/uspolitics/elections/index.html> ).**

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>)

## **APPENDIX II: THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE:**

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

(Electoral system designed by framers of the U.S. Constitution) (524)

What is the Electoral College?

As prescribed in the U.S. Constitution, U.S. presidents are not elected directly by the people but instead by a group of designated citizens known as electors. This group of electors makes up the Electoral College. The process for selecting electors varies from state to state, but usually the political parties nominate electors at state party conventions or by a vote of the party's central committee. On Election Day the voters in each state, by casting votes for president and vice president, actually are voting for the set of electors who will vote for the voters' preferred candidate. The electors cast their votes in their states on December 15, and Congress officially counts the results in January.

**See "The Electoral College (<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itdhr/1004/ijde/college.htm>)"**

How does the Electoral College work?

Each state elects the number of representatives to the Electoral College that is equal to its number of senators - two from each state - plus its number of delegates in the House of Representatives. The District of Columbia, which has no voting representation in Congress, has three Electoral College votes. There are 538 electors in the Electoral College; 270 votes are needed to win the presidential election. If no presidential candidate wins a majority of electoral votes, the 12th Amendment to the Constitution provides for the presidential election to be decided by the House of Representatives. In such situations, the House selects the president by majority vote, choosing from the three candidates who received the greatest number of electoral votes. Each state casts one vote.

**See "U.S. Elections Frequently Asked Questions ( <http://www.america.gov/st/pubs-english/2007/October/20071009122854hmnietsua7.178903e-03.html> )"**

How can a candidate win the most votes but lose the presidency?

Every state except Nebraska and Maine awards all of its electoral votes to the winner of the state's popular vote. It is possible that a candidate can win the majority of the electoral votes without receiving the majority of votes cast nationwide (the popular vote). This has happened three times in U.S. history, most recently in 2000. This typically happens when the Electoral College winner wins some states by narrow margins and loses others by large margins. This is one reason some advocate abolishing the Electoral College. Others argue the Electoral College is important to ensure smaller states' voices are heard.

**See "Has the Electoral College Outlived its Usefulness? ( <http://www.america.gov/st/elections08-english/2008/April/20080523105932WRybakcuH0.8598596.html> )"**

What is a battleground state?

Many states have a history of their voters consistently favoring one party, but voters in battleground states, also called swing states, are so evenly divided in their political allegiances that statewide support switches from one party to another. Presidential candidates will focus much of their campaign efforts on winning those states. There likely will be about a dozen swing states in the 2008 election, including

states that are often political battlegrounds such as Florida and New Mexico. New swing states might emerge in 2008, such as Virginia, which has supported Republican presidential candidates for decades but has favored Democrats in recent state and local races.

**See "Electoral College System Affects U.S. Campaign Strategies ( <http://www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2007/August/20070820155635bpuh0.4478418.html> )"**

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>)

## **How the Electoral College Functions: The Constitutional Basis**

Excerpt from Article II, Section 1. ( <http://www.america.gov/st/usg-english/2008/April/20080416203407eaifas0.6335565.html> )

The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his Office during the Term of four Years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same Term, be elected, as follows:

Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector.

. The Electoral College is not a place. It is a process that began as part of the original design of the U.S. Constitution. The Electoral College was established by the Founding Fathers of the United States as a compromise between election of the president by Congress and election by direct popular vote. The people of the United States vote for electors, who then vote for the president. The National Archives is the federal government agency that oversees the process.

. Each state is allocated a number of electors equal to the number of its U.S. senators (always two) plus the number of its U.S. representatives, which is based on the census of population conducted every 10 years. Currently, the populous state of California has 55 electors, while a state with fewer residents, such as North Dakota, might have only three or four.

. The Electoral College now consists of 538 electors (one for each of 435 members of the House of Representatives and 100 senators, plus 3 for the District of Columbia, the national capital, Washington). A majority of 270 electoral votes is required to elect the president and vice president.

. The U.S. Constitution contains very few provisions relating to the qualifications of electors. Article II provides that no member of Congress "or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States" shall be appointed an elector.

. The process for selecting electors varies state by state. Generally, state political party leaders nominate electors at their state party conventions or by a vote of the state party's central committee. Electors are often selected to recognize their service and dedication to their political party. They may be state-elected officials, party leaders, or persons who have an affiliation with the presidential candidate.

. The voters in each state choose the electors pledged to a presidential candidate on the day of the general election -- the Tuesday after the first Monday in November (November 4 in 2008). The electors' names may or may not appear on the ballot below the name of the candidates running for president, depending on the procedure in each state.

. The electors in each state meet on the first Monday after the second Wednesday in December (December 15 in 2008) to select the president and vice president of the United States.

. No constitutional provision or federal law requires electors to vote in accordance with the popular vote in their state. But some state laws provide that so-called faithless electors be subject to fines or be disqualified for casting an invalid vote and be replaced by a substitute elector. The U.S. Supreme Court has not specifically ruled on the question of whether pledges and penalties for failure to vote as pledged may be enforced under the Constitution. No elector has ever been prosecuted for failing to vote as pledged.

. Today it is rare for electors to disregard the popular vote by casting their electoral vote for someone other than their party's candidate. Electors generally hold a leadership position in their party or were chosen to recognize years of loyal service to the party. Throughout U.S. history, more than 99 percent of electors have voted as pledged.

. The Electoral College vote totals determine the president and vice president, not the statistical plurality or majority a candidate may have in the nationwide popular vote totals. Four times in U.S. history -- 1824, 1876, 1888, and 2000 -- the candidate who collected the most popular votes nationwide failed to win the majority of electoral votes.

. In 2008, 48 out of the 50 states and the District of Columbia award electoral votes on a winner-take-all basis. For example, all 55 of California's electoral votes go to the winner of that state's popular vote, even if the margin of victory is only 50.1 percent to 49.9 percent. Only two states, Nebraska and Maine, do not follow the winner-take-all rule. In those states, there could be a split of electoral votes among candidates through a proportional allocation of votes.

. Congress meets in joint session in January of the year following the presidential election to count the electoral votes.

. If no presidential candidate wins a majority of electoral votes, the 12th Amendment to the Constitution provides for the presidential election to be decided by the House of Representatives. The House would select the president by majority vote, choosing from the three candidates who received the greatest number of electoral votes. The vote would be taken by state, with each state delegation having one vote. If no vice presidential candidate wins a majority of electoral votes, the Senate would select the vice president by majority vote, with each senator choosing from the two candidates who received the greatest number of electoral votes.

. The House has selected the president twice, in 1800 and 1824. The Senate has selected the vice president once, in 1836.

. Reference sources indicate that over the past 200 years, more than 700 proposals have been introduced in Congress to reform or eliminate the Electoral College. There have been more proposals for constitutional amendments on changing the Electoral College than on any other subject.

. Opinions on the viability of the Electoral College system may be affected by attitudes toward third parties -- ones other than the Democratic and Republican parties. Third parties have not fared well in the Electoral College system. In 1948 and 1968, third-party candidates with regional appeal won blocs of electoral votes in the South, which may have affected the outcome but did not come close to seriously challenging the major party winner. The last third-party candidate to

make a strong showing was former Republican President Theodore Roosevelt in 1912. He finished a distant second in electoral and popular votes (taking 88 of the 266 electoral votes then needed to win). Although Ross Perot won 19 percent of the popular vote nationwide in 1992, he did not win any electoral votes since he was not particularly strong in any state.

### **Source: The National Archives:**

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>)

## **The Role of the First Lady**

By Carl Sferrazza Anthony

Since Martha Washington in the 18th century, first ladies of the United States have held a highly visible yet undefined position in the U.S. government. The author describes how several first ladies fulfilled this unique role, according to their own interests and the times they lived in.

Carl Sferrazza Anthony is the author of *First Ladies: The Saga of the Presidents' Wives and Their Power*, a two-volume set that examines every first lady from 1789 to 1990, and other titles about the first families.

The role of the first lady, the U.S. president's spouse, has evolved from fashion trendsetter and hostess of White House dinners to a more substantive position. While there have been diverging views on the roles of women in society, the first lady is still a role model for American women. One of the highest-profile jobs in the U.S. government comes with no official duties, no paycheck, and almost limitless possibilities. The first lady can influence the president and can even exercise a degree of political power over policy and legislation.

Having a "first lady" has been part of American life since the founding of the presidency in 1789. Although the United States had just recently won its independence from Great Britain following the American Revolution, the first president's wife, Martha Washington (1789-1797), was treated by the elite of the first capital cities of New York and Philadelphia as if she were a "lady" of the British royal court. She was referred to in public as "Lady Washington," her popular nickname from the Revolutionary War era.

Her immediate successor, Abigail Adams (1797-1801), had also earned some fame of her own during the Revolution for her highly political opinions expressed in letters to her husband and other legislators. During her husband's presidency, she was criticized as "Mrs. President" for so publicly voicing her politically partisan views.

Fusing elements of the ceremonial and political, the ebullient Dolley Madison (1809-1817) firmly established this new national archetype. Dolley Madison risked her own well-being to remove iconic treasures of the fledgling United States from the burning White House during the War of 1812. Her heroism made her a legend and identified her in the public imagination as an ideal "presidentress." Dolley Madison dressed in elegant fashions to attract newspaper coverage yet remained democratically accessible to all citizens. She led an effort for orphans and sought equal access for women in public places from Supreme Court hearings to oyster houses. She created the standard by which all of her

successors were judged until the time of the global humanitarian Eleanor Roosevelt (1933-1945).

The public expectation for such a position was so established by the mid-19th century that when Harriet Lane (1857-1861) served as hostess for her uncle, the only bachelor president, James Buchanan, a new title was used for her that covered both presidential spouses and other women relatives who served as hostesses for those presidents who were widowed or single - first lady. The title was first printed in 1860 in Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper.

#### A Chronicle of Firsts

The achievements and activities of first ladies who served between Dolley Madison and Eleanor Roosevelt did not attract great public attention but were often notable. Julia Tyler (1844-1845) was the first to be photographed and have her image publicly distributed in an engraving. Mary Lincoln (1861-1865) was the first enmeshed in controversy and was the subject of newspaper editorials. Lucy Hayes (1877-1881) was the first exploited for commercial merchandising. Frances Cleveland (1886-1889 and 1893-1897) was the first to issue a press release, which denied a whispered scandal about her private life. Helen "Nellie" Taft (1909-1913) was the first to ride in her husband's inaugural parade, declare her support for women's suffrage, and earn public credit for successfully lobbying for federal legislation. Edith Wilson (1915-1921), in the context of protecting her husband as he recovered from a stroke, became the first to assume management of the presidency, prompting many to cons

ider her something of the first "first lady president." Florence Harding (1921-1923) was the first to vote, deliver speeches, and publicly declare her sense of obligation to intervene in government affairs affecting specific constituencies, such as veterans, working women, and humane societies.

Eleanor Roosevelt's husband, President Franklin Roosevelt, had polio, a disease that prevented his walking and thus his freedom of movement to inspect various conditions around the country. Mrs. Roosevelt assumed this essential role, which she said was like being his "eyes and ears." In addition to her duties as first lady, Eleanor Roosevelt wrote a monthly magazine column and a daily newspaper column, lectured, hosted a weekly radio show, and authored several books. She was an international figure who had influence on the world stage.

Her immediate successors, Bess Truman (1945-1953) and Mamie Eisenhower (1953-1961), were more traditional hostesses and charity patrons. Jacqueline Kennedy (1961-1963) added the roles of historian and decorator as she presided over the historic restoration and preservation of the White House and other public sites, and she was a champion of American arts and culture. Global fascination with Mrs. Kennedy intensified because she spoke several languages and visited South American, Asian, and European nations. In conjunction with the rise of television and the growing movement for women's equality in all spheres of life, there was a public expectation at the time that first ladies address current issues, tailored to their strengths, ambitions, expertise, and interests.

#### A More Substantive Role

Lady Bird Johnson (1963-1969) became a pioneer of the growing environmental protection and urban renewal movements, fostering federal legislation that sought to restore public highways to their natural appearances and to remove visually marring sites.

Betty Ford (1974-1977) stirred controversy by her frank discussion of political issues that affected women, registering her support for the Supreme Court decision upholding a

woman's right to choose abortion and lobbying state legislatures to pass the Equal Rights Amendment. When Mrs. Ford disclosed her own breast cancer, she helped eradicate the taboo against discussing the health problem that affected millions of women.

Rosalynn Carter (1977-1981) testified before Congress to aid people with chronic mental health problems, led a global relief effort for Cambodian refugees, and held substantive meetings with Central and South American political and military leaders as a representative of the president.

Nancy Reagan (1981-1989) led a campaign to dissuade school-aged children from using illegal drugs, helped monitor her husband's appointments to ensure that his advisors remained loyal to his policies, and encouraged President Reagan's friendship with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, which eventually led to an arms reduction treaty.

Barbara Bush (1989-1993) led an effort to reduce adult illiteracy, believing it to be an underlying cause for many social problems.

In 2001, Hillary Clinton (1993-2001) became the only former first lady elected to public office, the U.S. Senate. As first lady, she headed a health care reform effort to provide insurance to all Americans. In the more traditional role of first lady, she created an outdoor sculpture garden and displayed contemporary American art in the historic rooms of the White House. In 2008, Hillary Clinton ran for president of the United States and nearly won her party's nomination.

Laura Bush (2001-present) began her tenure as first lady by encouraging childhood reading but expanded her influence into a broad range of issues, including heart disease in women, aiding at-risk young men with positive-oriented goals, increasing federal support for libraries, and teacher training. She also made independent trips to Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, promoting equal access to health care and education for women. Notably, she spoke out in support of persecuted Buddhist monks in the nation of Myanmar.

The first ladies' travels, their causes, and activities are newsworthy events in the United States. Because of their relation to the president, they are political celebrities and have been able from earliest times to use their position to influence styles and advocate for social and political causes.

The opinions expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. government.

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>)

## **The Powers of the Presidency**

Michael Jay Friedman

The U.S. Constitution outlines the president's authority but is flexible enough to allow each incumbent to define the scope of presidential powers according to his own philosophy of governance and the needs of the times.

Michael Jay Friedman is an editor in the Bureau of International Information Programs at the U.S. Department of State. He holds a doctorate in U.S. diplomatic and political history.

The men who have held the presidency of the United States - and at this writing they

have all been men - have expressed divergent views of their experience. Grover Cleveland (1885-1889 and 1893-1897) suggested, "After the long exercise of power, the ordinary affairs of life seem petty and commonplace." Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909) so enjoyed the "bully pulpit" that he came out of retirement to run again for the presidency. But for James K. Polk (1845-1849), the presidency was "no bed of roses." And Ulysses S. Grant (1869-1877) flatly declared, "I never wanted to get out of a place as much as I did to get out of the presidency."

What are the powers of the president and how have they evolved over time? Generations of American schoolchildren have learned that Congress makes the laws and the president enforces them. This helps, but only a little. The U.S. Constitution is the source of the president's authority, but it is a concise document, more of an outline than a blueprint (the proposed European Union constitution is more than 35 times longer). It leaves room for each president - subject always to "checks and balances" of the legislative and judicial branches - to interpret the breadth of his powers in accordance with his personal philosophy of governance and the demands of the times.

Article II of the Constitution begins, "The executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America." It states the term of office - four years - and lists several categories of presidential powers:

- . The president is "Commander in Chief" of the armed forces;
- . The president may grant reprieves and pardons for legal offenses;
- . The president may make treaties, with the "advice and consent" of two-thirds of "Senators present"; appoint ambassadors and Supreme Court justices, with majority Senate confirmation; and appoint all other "public Ministers ... and Officers of the United States";
- . The president shall "from time to time ... recommend to [Congress] such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient";
- . The president may veto legislation passed by Congress, subject to override by a two-thirds vote of each house (Article I, Section 7).

While other constitutional provisions limit generally the powers of the entire federal government including the president, Article II is flexible. President Calvin Coolidge (1923-1929) limited his exercise of presidential power to an occasional nudge in the right direction. As Coolidge once described his governing philosophy, "We have enough laws already, I don't need to sign any more."

But even those presidents determined to interpret their powers strictly found that affairs of state spurred them toward greater assertiveness. The first president, George Washington (1789-1797), at first interpreted literally the provision that he obtain Senate "advice" while negotiating treaties. On August 22, 1789, Washington accordingly presented himself to the Senate - sword in hand - to request its specific instructions for negotiating a contemplated treaty with the Creek Indians. As senators filed ever more contradictory motions, John Quincy Adams, himself a future president (1825-1829), confided the result to his diary:

When Washington left the Senate chamber he said he would be damned if he ever went there again. And ever since that time treaties have been negotiated by the executive before submitting them to the consideration of the Senate.

While the powers of the presidency have waxed and waned within their broad

constitutional limits, domestic and foreign challenges have sparked a trend toward greater executive authority. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, for example, President Franklin D. Roosevelt (1933-1945) secured congressional approval of many New Deal programs. These were administered by new executive branch agencies that remade much of the nation's economy even as they augmented presidential power. America's 20th-century emergence as a great power similarly enhanced the president's commander-in-chief power.

These developments have not gone uncontested. In 1935 the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional the National Recovery Act, a crucial piece of New Deal legislation, over Roosevelt's vehement objection. And the limits of a president's authority to deploy American troops absent a congressional declaration of war remains politically contentious.

The complexities of modern legislation have further augmented the presidency. Consider the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974. Congress wished to establish minimum standards of healthfulness for public drinking water but delegated the responsibility for setting those standards to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), an administrative agency in the executive branch. Congress routinely authorizes EPA and its hundreds of sister agencies to promulgate and enforce regulations that elaborate on the statutory requirements. Congress may overturn any regulation, but there are more than Congress could ever review. In this way, the modern "administrative state" has shifted additional responsibilities to the executive branch - and to the president.

Constitutionally limited yet sufficiently flexible and robust to address modern challenges, the presidency remains one key to the American people's ongoing experiment in self-government.

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>)

## **ROLE OF THE V-P**

U.S. Vice Presidency: An Understudy's Appointment with History

(New exhibition examines vice presidents who became commander in chief)

By Lauren Monsen, Staff Writer

Washington - The office of the vice presidency of the United States has been mocked and disparaged almost from its inception, quite frequently by its occupants. But the vice president's role is far more consequential than is generally understood, according to a new exhibition at the Smithsonian Institution's National Portrait Gallery.

Titled *Presidents in Waiting*, the exhibition - co-curated by historians Sidney Hart and James Barber - focuses on the 14 vice presidents who succeeded to the presidency. These men became commander in chief "either upon the death of a sitting president, election in their own right, or, in one case, the resignation of a president," Hart told [America.gov](http://www.america.gov).

The exhibition traces their careers through a series of paintings, photographs, lithographs and political cartoons, and a sampling of rare books and letters.

One letter, in particular, reveals that the vice presidency was held up to ridicule long before John Nance Garner - who was Franklin Roosevelt's vice president from 1933 to 1941 - famously said the job was "not worth a bucket of warm spit," or words to that effect. (Garner's actual quote was somewhat earthier.) Writing to his wife, Abigail, in

1793, John Adams - the nation's first vice president, serving under George Washington - described the vice presidency as "the most insignificant Office that ever the Invention of Man contrived or his imagination conceived."

Notwithstanding their frequent expressions of disdain for the office, few politicians have turned down the vice presidency if offered, Hart said. The position has been held "by nearly one-third of the 44 U.S. presidents," he observed, "and it's always been considered a likely path to the presidency."

#### ESTABLISHING A PRECEDENT

Originally, the U.S. Constitution specified that the runner-up in the presidential election was to be named vice president, but problems ensued when political parties began to emerge in the 1790s. A "change in procedure eventually became necessary because the candidate who came in second would belong to a different party than the president-elect, as happened when Thomas Jefferson became John Adams' vice president in 1797," Hart said. Finally, in 1804, the 12th Amendment was added to the Constitution, redefining how electors choose the president and vice president - and ensuring that the positions are cooperative, rather than oppositional.

While the vice president's right of succession - in the event of a president's death or incapacitation - is now taken for granted, the principle was not firmly settled until Vice President John Tyler succeeded President William Henry Harrison in 1841.

When Harrison died in office, Tyler "immediately assumed the powers of the presidency in three ways," the exhibition states. "He took the presidential oath of office (a practice that has continued to this day); he gave an inaugural address; and he instructed his Cabinet that he alone would be making decisions and not the majority of his Cabinet members, as had been the case when Harrison was president." Initially, there was some confusion about whether Tyler should be declared president or acting president, but Tyler's actions initiated a custom that would govern future successions. That custom was legally codified in the 25th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1967.

#### TREADING ON HISTORY'S STAGE

One of the objects featured in the exhibition is an oil painting (Last Hours of Lincoln, by John Bachelder, circa 1865-70) that highlights the importance of the vice presidency at a time of national crisis. The painting reveals Lincoln - felled by an assassin's bullet in 1865 - on his deathbed, surrounded by his wife, his eldest son and several prominent contemporaries. To the left is his vice president, Andrew Johnson, seated in a rocking chair. The scene is somber, but Johnson's presence sends a reassuring signal of continuity, even though he would prove to be an ineffectual president who narrowly escaped being removed from office at his impeachment trial in the U.S. Senate.

Theodore Roosevelt's arrival on the national landscape marked the next important vice presidency, Hart said. He served under William McKinley from March 4 to September 14, 1901, "and was an exceedingly activist political figure with a larger-than-life personality," Hart said. Presidents in Waiting captures Roosevelt's impact with a cartoon that depicts his greatly magnified shadow falling across the White House lawn, presenting a looming threat to corrupt officials who feared him. Catapulted into the presidency by McKinley's assassination, Roosevelt "wanted to pursue a reform agenda," Hart said. "His elevation to the presidency marked the beginning of American progressivism."

Famous images of other significant vice presidents - a guarded Calvin Coolidge, looking like a model of New England rectitude; an ebullient Harry Truman; Richard Nixon, opaque and mysterious; a forceful Lyndon Johnson, alternately cajoling and browbeating a fellow

politician - leap off the walls of the exhibition. The accompanying text provides insights about each man: For example, Coolidge's dry wit - now largely forgotten - once delighted his countrymen, while Johnson's potent mix of Southern charm and bare-knuckles intimidation fueled his rise to the top.

Videotaped interviews with four living former vice presidents round out the exhibition; a touchscreen enables visitors to access the recollections of Walter Mondale (who served under Jimmy Carter), George H.W. Bush (vice president to Ronald Reagan), Dan Quayle (who served under George H.W. Bush) and Dick Cheney (vice president to George W. Bush).

The vice presidency has evolved over the years, but its occupants all recognize one essential fact, Hart said: "As vice president, you don't have any independent source of power; it's what the president chooses to give you."

Presidents in Waiting opened on January 22, 2009, and runs through January 3, 2010. For more information, visit the National Portrait Gallery's Web site ( <http://www.npg.si.edu/> ).

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://www.america.gov>)

## **The Enhanced Role of the Vice President**

By John M. Murphy and Mary E. Stuckey

The vice presidency of the United States has grown in importance as the demands of the presidency have increased. Likewise, vice presidents have become better known to the American public and are more likely to be nominated - though not necessarily elected - to the presidency themselves.

John M. Murphy is associate professor of speech communication at the University of Georgia. He specializes in contemporary political rhetoric.

Mary E. Stuckey is associate professor of communication and political science at Georgia State University. She has just finished a book manuscript titled *Americans in Light and Shadow: Presidential Articulations of National Identity*; other books are *Strategic Failures in the Modern Presidency* and *The President as Interpreter-in-Chief*.

"There is an old story about a mother who has two sons. One goes to sea and the other becomes Vice President of the United States. Neither is ever heard from again." -Hubert H. Humphrey, Vice President of the United States, 1965-1969

The institutional, cultural, and structural pressures for a more effective vice president will continue to grow. Throughout much of the nation's history, the vice presidency was, in the sanitized words of a disgruntled occupant, worth little more than a bucket of warm spit. Prior to World War II, vice presidents occupied little of the administration's or the public's attention. These men regarded the office as a graceful prelude to retirement, with at least one notable exception in John C. Breckinridge, who, after serving as Buchanan's vice president, lost an 1860 run for the presidency and then fought the United States as a Confederate major general and secretary of war during the U.S. Civil War (1861-1865). This not entirely happy precedent has attracted no imitators.

After the emergence of the administrative state and the United States as a world power, however, the vice president could no longer be ignored. The acceleration of U.S. power and governmental complexity in subsequent decades has meant that the presidency is no longer a one-person job. A series of incremental steps, ranging from the assignment of specific tasks to the allocation of office space within the White House, has raised the profile and power of the vice president. Increasingly, the vice president has emerged as a key rhetorician for the administration, in circumstances ranging from Richard Nixon's "Kitchen Debate" to Al Gore's North American Free Trade Agreement debate. As a result, it has become difficult for the president to get by with a useless vice president.

In short, the presidency is now too big. President Bill Clinton enlisted the vice president and the first lady as partners, and President George W. Bush's reliance on Richard Cheney, particularly early in his term, was so marked that The Economist's Lexington columnist observed that the vice presidency is being upgraded into a prime ministership.

Such an evolution of the office puts the vice president squarely in the public spotlight, making him or her a logical presidential contender.

In fact, the nature of contemporary politics in general and presidential campaigns in particular makes it more likely that future presidents will campaign for their vice presidents. In the 11 presidential contests between 1960 and 2000, the ones since the advent of television as a serious force and the concomitant and debated decline of political parties, vice presidents or former vice presidents have been their parties' nominees nine times. Only twice (Lyndon Johnson in 1964 and Gerald Ford in 1976) has the candidacy been a result of the death or resignation of the president and the ascension of the vice president to the status of incumbent. In the 11 elections prior to that period (1916 through 1956), only twice were vice presidents or former vice presidents their parties' nominees, and both resulted from the death of the previous president.

Given that recent presidents have, perforce, used their vice presidents more, these formerly unknown placeholders now possess priceless opportunities to establish themselves in the consciousness of the national television audience. In addition, with a minimum of presidential cooperation, they can warehouse political consultants on the payrolls of national committees, travel extensively and in comfort at government expense during the years prior to the election, and utilize the resources of the executive branch to develop policy positions. Most important in the present atmosphere, they are ideally situated to raise huge amounts of money and scare off or overwhelm potential opponents. As late as 1988, then Vice President George H.W. Bush faced a formidable roster of opponents to his nomination for president. By 2000, most Democrats refused to run against Vice President Gore despite the Clinton scandals and the discontent of liberal activists with the administration, and Gore brushed aside his only competition with the ease and disdain that Michael Jordan felt for the New York Knicks. As political columnist Jules Witcover said, "The vice presidency, once considered the equivalent of a gold watch awarded for faithful party service and a one-way ticket to political oblivion, [has come] to be viewed differently."

Presidents, in short, now need their vice presidents to establish, cement, and continue their visions of the country. Presidents cannot do the job without the help of vice presidents; presidents cannot run for a third term and must turn to vice presidents; and, given the political advantages that vice presidents possess, presidents can seldom, if ever, designate someone else as a chosen heir. Yet the arguments used by most presidents to help their vice presidents end up hurting their vice presidents. Presidents still talk as if vice presidents are creatures of the president. Increasingly, they are not. We have reached the point at which vice presidents are close partners of presidents and inevitable nominees of their respective parties. They are also the almost inevitable losers in the general election. Presidential rhetoric on behalf of vice presidents exemplifies the

law of unintended consequences; presidents never care to say goodbye, and yet the ways in which they bid farewell hasten the departures of their political programs and loyal heirs.

Excerpted from "Never Cared to Say Goodbye: Presidential Legacies and Vice Presidential Campaigns," © Presidential Studies Quarterly, March 2002. Reprinted by permission.

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## **HOW A PRESIDENT IS IMPEACHED:**

### IMPEACHMENT AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL

The U.S. Constitution grants Congress the sole authority to impeach and try the president, vice president and "all civil officers of the United States." These officials can be "removed from office on impeachment for, and conviction of, treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors."

It is possible for an official to be impeached but not removed from office. The House of Representatives has the authority to impeach but only the Senate has the power to sustain an impeachment, effectively convicting an impeached official and removing him or her from office. It also is possible for the Senate to censure an impeached official - a form of public condemnation that falls short of impeachment and lets the official remain in office.

Sixteen officials have been impeached by the House, but only seven were sustained by the Senate. The list of those impeached includes two presidents - Andrew Johnson in 1868 and Bill Clinton in 1998 - and neither impeachment was sustained. Another American president, Richard Nixon, resigned in 1974 after the House Judiciary Committee approved articles of impeachment but before the House of Representatives acted to impeach.

A member of the House can introduce a bill of impeachment, but nonmembers also can ask the legislative body to consider a case. In recent times, an inquiry of impeachment has been referred to the House Judiciary Committee. The committee considers evidence and votes on whether it believes there is enough evidence for impeachment. The House then votes on whether to proceed with an impeachment hearing.

In an impeachment hearing, the Judiciary Committee conducts an investigation of the person's actions. The committee determines on what grounds the official could be impeached and drafts articles of impeachment for the House to vote on. It takes a simple majority of representatives' votes to impeach an official.

If the House votes for impeachment, the case then goes to the Senate. The Senate proceedings are much like a typical trial. The House selects members who will represent its case before the Senate. The official is defended by his or her own attorneys. In the case of an impeached president, the chief justice of the Supreme Court presides over the trial.

The entire roster of senators acts as a jury. Evidence can be presented and witnesses can be heard. Opening and closing arguments are given. The impeached official can choose to attend the trial but is not required to do so.

Following the trial, senators vote on the articles of impeachment. If two-thirds of the senators vote to sustain the articles of impeachment, the person is removed from office. Senators also can vote on whether to bar an impeached official from holding public office in the future. This measure needs only a simple majority vote to pass.

Congress does not have the power to charge an impeached or convicted official with a crime, but law enforcement authorities can bring criminal or civil charges.