Presidential leadership from Presidents Washington to Bush and beyond: assessing presidents within the cycled circumstances of institutional expectations

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Presidential leadership from Presidents Washington to Bush and beyond: assessing presidents within the cycled circumstances of institutional expectations

by

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Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa
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ABSTRACT

A revealing way of assessing Presidential leadership comes through interpreting a President’s time in office within the six-step cycled circumstances of institutional expectations. Using historical biographies and reinterpreting the patterns of Presidential political time from Stephen Skowronek’s *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush*, I develop leadership cycles of Reconstructive, Great-Son Articulator, Preemption-One, Grandson Articulator, Preemption-Two, and Disjunctive Presidents. I develop the thesis through a literature review and chapter describing Presidential history from 1789-1829. From here, I use the Presidential leadership types in my Washington, Jackson, Lincoln, McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, and Reagan cycles to understand why Presidents make the decisions they do and why we should understand the circumstances Presidents face before labeling them as great, average, or failed Presidents. I also speculate how the cycle offers predictable leadership characteristics for future Presidencies and the elections that have put Presidents into office throughout our history.
1. INTRODUCTION
Toward a Theory of Cycled Leadership Circumstances

“If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do and how to do it.”

-Abraham Lincoln
Speaking about leadership in 1858

As leaders, do Presidents control their time in office or does the institutional time Presidents serve in control the President? Why are some Presidents considered great, others average, and others failures? Trying to answer these questions is central to an understanding of Presidential leadership. The first portion of question one is a variation of the question in Richard Neustadt’s *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan* and the notion of whether the President is a leader or clerk. Neustadt focused his attention on the extent to which Presidential power is subject to the political circumstances in which Presidents find themselves. Their leadership is demonstrated less by unilateral command than by their mastery of the politics of bargaining or persuasion in the context of the dominant issues and actors of the day.²

The Neustadt approach is revealing and has its place for understanding Presidential leadership as a strategy Presidents use when trying to influence their national constituency. However, “the institutional time the President serves in controls the President” also has a unique place for understanding leadership. Here, Presidents should be assessed based on the

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circumstances they face while in office. For Presidents have different circumstances by which they take the oath within a spectrum of good, average, or bad policy commitments with strong sets of governing ideals constantly trying to counter each other. This makes it more challenging for some Presidents to use persuasion and set visionary agendas than it is for other Presidents.

To explain, some Presidents find themselves in periods receptive to revision, where there is ample room for new policy proposals. Some Presidents find themselves in periods where the most prudent course is to simply follow the policies of their predecessors. Some Presidents find themselves in times where the policies of their predecessors are in need of marginal adjustment. And some Presidents find themselves in periods where mere adjustments to past policies can no longer gain enough political consensus to sustain effective governance.

This much is clear from the history of individual Presidencies. The question I seek to address is whether these leadership circumstances of our various Presidencies can be formulated into a defined cycle. I will argue, here, that indeed they can. I will argue that not only do such leadership cycles exist, they exhibit six distinct recurring phases or steps, each with its own distinct complex of circumstances defining the relationship of the President to the institutional expectations for governing.

Let’s begin by defining the six phases of circumstances I propose. The first phase is a revolutionary period of sweeping new policy changes based on a dominant set of ideals originating in the political circumstances of the time. This is followed by a second phase in which the same policy commitments are implemented and furthered using similar ideals.
Though the revolutionary policies continue to be implemented in phase three of the cycle, they are now challenged by a set of opposing policies that begin resisting the established revolutionary ways. By phase four, the revolutionary policy commitments continue to be implemented using the same set of ideals by which the revolution began, but in somewhat different forms due to the changing times. A second resistance phase then follows in phase five, again having opposing ideals to the revolutionary policy commitments. Finally, phase six completes the cycle with the original set of revolutionary ideals falling apart and another set rising to begin the cycle all over again in phase one of the cycle.

To illustrate the cycle of circumstances, let us look at how the sequence played out from Presidents Franklin Roosevelt through Jimmy Carter. President Roosevelt entered the cycle during its revolutionary phase and used it to create cycle-defining policy commitments through the New Deal and foreign policies associated with World War Two. President Truman then implemented these policy commitments during phase two or the first implementation phase of the cycle. This was followed by President Eisenhower in phase three who used opposing ideals to resist the revolutionary policies that had started with Roosevelt. Presidents Kennedy and Johnson (after Kennedy’s assassination) led within phase four of the cycle where they again implemented the revolutionary policy commitments of Roosevelt in different ways through the Great Society and the Vietnam War. Presidents Nixon and Ford (after Nixon’s resignation) led during phase five when the revolutionary policy commitments were again resisted. President Carter completed the cycle in a period where the governing policy commitments of FDR fell apart and a new set of revolutionary policy commitments arose. Those new commitments can be identified with President Reagan.
and the beginning of our current cycle. However with its completion, the FDR cycle, as we will see, became the fifth in what are now almost six complete cycles of similar governing circumstances that trace to the Presidency’s beginnings in 1789.

The argument for identifiable cycles within a spectrum of revolutionary change and reaction to that revolutionary change is not entirely new. On a broader scientific level, the Presidential cycles described above might be compared to cycles of change and reaction evident in Thomas Kuhn’s *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* or Max Weber’s writings on charisma and bureaucracy. Kuhn described how scientific revolutions are periodic in nature, with normal science providing the mechanisms by which science moves from paradigm to paradigm.3 Weber described an alternating cycle of charismatic actors (agents of change) followed by bureaucratic actors who react to change before the next charismatic actor appears.4 Thus, just as Kuhn did for science or Weber for sociology, one could make the case that similar mechanisms are at work within the American Presidency. Here, revolutionary periods centered on charismatic Presidents define the beginning of a paradigm that contains normal or bureaucratic periods of Presidential leadership and eventually evolves into the next revolutionary or charismatic President.

But given the scope of this project to better understand Presidential leadership, it seems most warranted to place this theory of cycled circumstances within the institutional expectations of the Presidency itself, as well as previous studies of Presidential leadership. When the founders created the Presidency, for instance, they inserted provisions for

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Presidents to be able to promote change and act more independently at times, particularly during crisis situations. This is best seen in *Federalist 70* when Hamilton argued that the Presidency should provide “energy” for the country.\(^5\) Further, the limited guidelines of Article Two, control of foreign policy as commander and chief of the army and navy, and the duty to provide a national purpose through the State of the Union were aspects designed to help insure that Presidents could make change and act with an increased degree of independence if needed.

Yet the founders also wanted to limit the President’s ability to promote independent change to avoid a monarchy and as a result designed the office to promote subordinance, order, and stability.\(^6\) This is best highlighted through Hamilton’s arguments that the Presidency involves “administration” as well.\(^7\) The advice and consent of the Senate for foreign treaties, cabinet appointments, and Supreme Court Justices and Congress’s other duties to make the laws of the land and declare war are a few mechanisms that ensure the President is an implementer, not a dictator.

These institutional expectations are particularly apparent when placed within the cycle of circumstances described earlier. Presidents who serve during revolutionary periods have the greatest opportunities to make changes and act independently. On the other hand, Presidents whose purpose is to implement, resist, or watch an old set of revolutionary changes disintegrate have more limited opportunities to make change and instead must act

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\(^6\) Harvey Mansfield, Jr., *Taming the Prince: The Ambivalence of Modern Executive Power* (New York: The Free Press, 1989). See Mansfield for how Presidents are both independent and subordinate leaders.

\(^7\) Hamilton, Jay, and Madison, *The Federalist Papers*. 
subordinately to maintain order and stability. The interplay between the state of policy commitments and institutional expectations subsequently has some key connections with the Presidency, which can be even more adequately examined within the context of Presidential leadership studies.

**Skowronek and Presidential Leadership**

Examining Presidential leadership through policy commitments and political identities for governing was the arm of Stephen Skowronek’s *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton* where he theorized that Presidential leadership occurs through regimes of political time; political time defined as the various relationships and patterns incumbents project between previously established commitments of ideology and interest and their own actions in the moment at hand.\(^8\) Within this theory, along with the notion of Presidential authority, Skowronek then developed four types of Presidents as seen in Table 1 on the following page.\(^9\)

From the left side of Table 1, we see that Presidents were elected and led in office when previous commitments were either “vulnerable” (when things were not working well) or resilient (when things were working well for the Federal government). The most

---


\(^9\) Ibid., 17-32. Skowronek believed looking to a President’s power or the ability to get things done is less important for understanding leadership when compared to a President’s authority or the sustaining warrants for actions taken and realized. All Presidents accomplish things through power, but only a few such as Franklin Roosevelt or Ronald Reagan have had lasting legacies for defining political discourse for a generation of Presidents or more.
Table 1
Recurrent Structures of Presidential Authority\textsuperscript{10}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Previously Established Commitments</th>
<th>Opposed</th>
<th>Affiliated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerable</td>
<td>Politics of Reconstruction</td>
<td>Politics of Disjunction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilient</td>
<td>Politics of Preemption</td>
<td>Politics of Articulation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

vulnerable points in Presidential history for Skowronek were the fall of Federalism in 1800, the “common man” crisis of 1828, the rise to Civil War in 1860, the Great Depression of 1932, and the “government is the problem” vulnerabilities of 1980. Between the times when commitments are vulnerable are periods when the commitments are resilient. As one example, the state of the commitments in 1820 were more resilient as compared to 1800 or 1828, as were those in 1972 when compared to those in 1932 or 1980.

As we also see from Table 1, the other central variable is the political identities that Presidents bring to the office. They are either opposed to or affiliated with the guiding commitments of the day. This can generally be seen by examining the political party with which the President is a member. Being a Democrat, President Truman had an identity affiliated with the lasting commitments of his regime made under President Roosevelt, while Nixon, as a Republican, had an identity opposed to the established ways. Today, President Bush has a political identity affiliated with the key Presidential commitments of his regime.

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid., 36.
made under the Reconstructive President Reagan, while President Clinton, a Democrat, has an identity opposed to the commitments of the regime.

Understanding the state of commitments and Presidential identity, however, means nothing without understanding the types of Presidential leadership that arise with the interplay between them. Looking again at Table 1, we see the first two types of Presidential leadership to come from the “Politics of Reconstruction” and the “Politics of Disjunction.” Again from Table 1, we see that the former came to office when the commitments were most vulnerable, but had ideals opposed to dealing with them and as a result were able to make sweeping changes to the country’s commitments. Disjunctive Presidents, on the other hand, led when the commitments were vulnerable, had ideals affiliated with these commitments, and had a more challenging position to make lasting changes. As examples, Lincoln’s ideals were opposed to those ideals that Buchanan was still trying to instill as the civil war loomed, while Franklin Roosevelt’s were opposed to those ideals that Hoover was trying to guide the country by as the Great Depression of the 1930’s commenced. As a result, Lincoln and Roosevelt had times to become apparent masters of the Presidency, while Buchanan and Hoover came across as inept and failed leaders of Presidential politics.

Also seen in Table 1 are the politics of resiliency that produce two more types of Presidents through Articulation and Preemption. The former are elected to carry on with the paths of the Reconstructive Presidents using like minded ideals, while the latter are elected to alter but not reconstruct the commitments of the day using their opposing ideals. As examples of Presidents of Articulation, Presidents Polk and Kennedy led in resilient times and tried to carry on with the Jackson and FDR commitments of the day using similar ideals.
of the Democratic Party of the time. Finally, since Presidents Tyler or Eisenhower did not have ideals associated with the reconstructive leaders of their era but were elected during times of resiliency, they had to fashion leadership based on compromise and from this led the country as Presidents of Preemption.

It is within these types of Presidents and the state of the ideals and commitments that Skowronek’s patterned regime theory of political time and Presidential authority was distinguished. Here, his selected Presidents of Reconstruction (Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt, and Reagan) set forth the governing commitments for their generation of Presidents that were either articulated or preempted until their governing regime was no longer adequate to govern the country by during a Disjunctive Presidency. In turn, another regime was given the authority to throw out the politics of the past and start over with a new set of commitments. The various types of Presidents that formed regimes are shown in Table 2 on the following page, with a list of the Presidents who have come through, come up, or come down in their respective Presidencies of Reconstruction, Articulation, Preemption, or Disjunction.

*Six Types of Cycled Presidents*

Skowronek’s work provided a significant beginning to understanding Presidential leadership by comparing the *patterns* created through the interplay of commitments and political identities across Presidential history, but he claimed it was not designed to
Table 2
Skowronek’s Presidents in Political Time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of President</th>
<th>Reconstruction</th>
<th>Articulation</th>
<th>Preemption</th>
<th>Disjunction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson</td>
<td>Madison</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>John Adams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monroe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>John Q. Adams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson</td>
<td>Van Buren</td>
<td>Tyler</td>
<td>Pierce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Polk</td>
<td>Taylor</td>
<td>Buchanan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>Johnson</td>
<td>Hoover</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Garfield</td>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arthur</td>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Harrison</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>McKinley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T. Roosevelt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taft</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roosevelt</td>
<td>Truman</td>
<td>Eisenhower</td>
<td>Carter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kennedy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Johnson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reagan</td>
<td>Bush I</td>
<td>Clinton</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bush II</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

understand the Presidency as a *cycled* institution of leadership whose types recur on a specifically defined basis.  

11 I have taken Skowronek’s approach a step further by adjusting

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11 Ibid., xi-xii and 51. Skowronek states that his main goal was not to put in place a cycle theory. In his Chapter 3 on structure and action, Skowronek does mention how his theory creates a general cycle of breakthrough, breakup, and breakdown in Presidential leadership but does not offer a predictable cycle for types of leaders, nor how the election process worked to put them there.
two starting points for assessing the “patterns” and by reformulating the phases of Presidential leadership into six distinct sets of circumstances. In doing so, I have moved from Skowronek’s patterns to a defined and repeating cycle of leadership phases that I believe matches well with Presidential history across the entire span of the Presidency.

To explain how I reached this repeating cycle of six phases, I found that President Washington and not Jefferson defined the commitments and political identities of an early cycle of Presidents and that Presidents McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt (after McKinley’s assassination), as Reconstructive Presidents, began a new cycle of their own in 1897 which lasted until 1933. When switching the beginnings of these Presidential cycles around, it created six phased cycles of Presidents of Reconstruction, Great-Son Articulation, Preemption-One, Grandson Articulation, Preemption-Two, and Disjunction and then back to the start with a President of Reconstruction. On the following page, Table 3 shows six and the likely seventh cycle of six phases of Presidential leadership types since 1789. Over the next few pages, let us get to know what is meant by each of these types of Presidents.\(^\text{12}\)

**Reconstructive Presidents**

To start, Revolutionary Reconstructive Presidents lead when the previous cycle’s commitments are vulnerable or had come unraveled and have ideals opposed to what had occurred in the recent past. As a result, they are able to create lasting policy visions that hold authority for governing for a generation of Presidents. Ironically, they do not initially

\(^{12}\) Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush*, 36-45. Many, but certainly not all of these characteristics are taken from the mechanisms Skowronek used to describe his four types of Presidents. For a comparison of how my characteristics compare and contrast with Skowronek’s, see Chapter 2 and pages 46-49.
Table 3
The Six-Step Cycles of Presidential Leadership Circumstances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reconstruction</th>
<th>Great-Son Articulation</th>
<th>Preemption 1</th>
<th>Grandson Articulation</th>
<th>Preemption 2</th>
<th>Disjunction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Washington (F)</td>
<td>Adams (F)</td>
<td>Jefferson (R)</td>
<td>Madison (R)</td>
<td>Monroe (R)</td>
<td>J.Q. Adams (R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Jackson (D)</td>
<td>Van Buren (D)</td>
<td>Harrison/Tyler (W)</td>
<td>Polk (D)</td>
<td>Taylor/ M.F (W)</td>
<td>Pierce/ J.B.(D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Lincoln/ A.J. (R)</td>
<td>Grant-Arthur (R)</td>
<td>Cleveland (D)</td>
<td>B. Harrison (R)</td>
<td>Cleveland (D)</td>
<td>Cleveland (D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. McKinley/ TR (R)</td>
<td>Taft (R)</td>
<td>Wilson (D)</td>
<td>Harding/C.C. (R)</td>
<td>Coolidge (R)</td>
<td>Hoover (R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. F. Roosevelt (D)</td>
<td>Truman (D)</td>
<td>Eisenhower (R)</td>
<td>JFK/ LBJ (D)</td>
<td>Nixon/ Ford (R)</td>
<td>Carter (D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Reagan (R)</td>
<td>Bush I (R)</td>
<td>Clinton (D)</td>
<td>Bush II (R)</td>
<td>2008? (D)</td>
<td>2016? (R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. 2020ish (D)</td>
<td>2028ish (D)</td>
<td>2032ish (R)</td>
<td>2040ish (D)</td>
<td>2048ish (R)</td>
<td>2056ish (D)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

solve the problems they were elected to fix, are historically viewed as masterful politicians and great party leaders, and win landslide victories in the Electoral College.

**Great-Son Articulators**

From here, implementing Great-Son Articulators follow by entering office in order affirming elections with high expectations on their shoulders to live up to the Reconstructive Presidents. They lead when the commitments are resilient or functioning well, and have ideals affiliated or in agreement with those of the Reconstructive President. These Presidents, however, face more challenging leadership circumstances than their reconstructive predecessor, having to deal with uprisings from their affiliated party for not exactly following the reconstructive ways and also from opposition parties searching for

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13 President Andrew Johnson is the one President who logically does not fit within the six-step cycles. He was a Democrat at heart, used by Lincoln to bring the Union back together through putting him in the Vice President slot for the 1864 election. As Skowronek highlights, he is best seen as a preemptive leader. I admit this puts a partial break in the six-step cycle as we moved from reconstructive to preemptive leadership before returning to the cycle through Grant’s Great-Son Articulation. However, given that Johnson was never elected or nominated to be elected President, and that Congress from 1865-1869 literally reconstructed the country for him, I do not feel like the cycle is negated.
ways to oppose the Great-Son Articulator and win back the Presidency. Finally, Great-Son Articulators typically lose their reelection bids, not so much because they did anything personally wrong, but because the country felt the cycle’s commitments needed modifying.

**Preemption-One Presidents**

This leads us to the third step of the cycle where resistant Preemption-One Presidents enter office following an order-correcting or modifying election when the country’s commitments were resilient, but the Preemptive-One President’s ideals were opposed to the cycle’s commitments. As a result, these Presidents spend their time in office making compromising policies, where they combine the better of two sets of ideals, even when the ideological wing of their party complained they were being too timid, or when the opposing party’s affiliates tried thwarting their every move. Preemptive-One Presidents typically win two victories in the Electoral College, fail to complete an important policy event during their final year and office, and pass the Presidential baton to a President of Grandson Articulation.

**Grandson Articulators**

Cycle Implementing Presidents of Grandson Articulation come next in phase four, following the Preemptive-One Presidents. They lead in resilient times when the governing commitments of the past still work well for the country and have similar ideals with the cycle’s guiding commitments. As a result, these Presidents carry on by affirming the policies of the cycle they were serving in. But like Great-Son Articulators, the circumstances Grandson Articulators face also force them to take on new initiatives that run counter to the
initial reconstructive ways of their cycle. Further, these Presidents take on what become foreign policy blunders, helping to cause the policy commitments of their cycle to ironically begin unraveling. Finally, most Grandson Articulators win very close order-affirming election victories when entering office and, though not in every case, win reelection or are at least part of an eight year phase of Grandson Articulation.

*Preemption-Two Presidents*

Resistant Preemption-Two Presidencies come next in the cycle. These Presidents follow Grandson Articulators and as a result have to clean up a foreign policy debacle during a time when the policy commitments of their cycle were still resilient or functioning well, but their ideals were opposed to the guiding principles of the day. Like Preemption-One Presidents, Presidents in the Preemption-Two phase also guide the country using compromising leadership styles where they combine the better of two sets of ideals when making policies. In governing in this fashion, however, they cause increased hostilities from the ideological purists of each party who argue the President was either being too timid or thwarting the policy commitments of the cycle. Finally, Preemptive-Two Presidents are consistently first elected in three way races, have mixed reelection efforts, and lead during the last stage of a stable cycle before it unravels under Presidents of Disjunction.

*Disjunctive Presidents*

Finally, the disintegrating Presidents of Disjunction follow Preemptive-Two Presidents in the sixth step of the cycle. They lead when the commitments are vulnerable and their ideals affiliated with the established commitments of the cycle. Because these
Presidents are affiliated with the ideals that had worked for decades, their inability to change the country’s governing direction in crisis situations make them come across as failed leaders. Their political allies fall into disarray and, as a result, an opposition movement is given the opportunity to highlight how drastic change is needed using their ideals and commitments. Finally, Disjunctive Presidents or their party representatives are defeated soundly when running for reelection against what will become a future President of Reconstruction who begins the cycle of circumstances all over again.

Why Reconfigure Skowronek’s Presidents?

To further compare Tables 2 and 3, it is worth asking why I relabeled many of Skowronek’s Presidents and how the six-phased cycle occurred as a result of doing so. To start within Skowronek’s Jefferson regime, it was curious to me that President Washington was generally missing in action and, given what other Presidential regimes have brought, that no Presidents of Preemption led during this early phase of the republic. But having examined the history, commitments, and ideals of the era, I concluded that Skowronek’s interpretation of a Jefferson regime seemed misplaced. Instead, Washington should be the revolutionary or Reconstructive President of the era.

For President Washington provided the commitments and ideals that defined a cycle of Presidents until 1828. He instituted a new system for governing on economic, foreign

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15 Some may argue that Washington was the 1st President and should thus be labeled a President of construction, not Reconstruction. I use Reconstruction knowing he was the 1st President, but also knowing that he reconstructed the country’s ideals and policy commitments from their status under the Articles of Confederation.
policy, and political grounds after the Articles of Confederation had unraveled, just as FDR would do in a similar phase of the cycle when trying to bring the country out of the Great Depression in 1933. It was then the “great-son” John Adams who articulated and implemented Washington’s policy path in the second phase of the cycle, just as Truman would do for FDR in 1945. Though Jefferson’s Republican Party was the success story from 1801-1828, the commitments made and the ideals of the Washington Presidency set in place the main governing commitments for the first cycle, making President Jefferson better examined as a compromising and resisting “Preemptive-One” President in the Washington cycle, just as Eisenhower was for a Franklin Roosevelt cycle or Clinton for a Reagan cycle centuries later.

Further historical examination also revealed that Madison represented a distinct “Grandson Articulation” to the Washington cycle, just as Presidents Kennedy and Johnson would do when carrying on with what President Roosevelt had wanted during their time in office. Furthermore, President Monroe represented a second and distinct phase of Preemptive-Two leadership to the Washington cycle in line with what Nixon and Ford did when resisting the Franklin Roosevelt cycle for a second time or what our next President may do beginning in 2009 when again resisting the Reagan cycle of circumstances. Finally, John Quincy Adams in the Washington cycle joined President Carter in the FDR cycle as a President of Disjunction that, in each case, completed their respected cycle.

This six-phased Washington cycle, as seen in Table 3 on page 12, became all the more interesting by the apparent second six-phased Jackson cycle that followed from 1829 to 1861 (also in Table 3). Here, Jackson led as the revolutionary President of Reconstruction,
Van Buren as the implementing Great-Son Articulator, Harrison and Tyler (following Harrison’s death) as resistant Preemption-One leaders to the Jackson cycle, Polk as an implementing Grandson Articulator, Taylor and Fillmore (following Taylor’s death) as resistant Preemption-Two Presidents, and Pierce and Buchanan as cycle unraveling Presidents of Disjunction. Having assessed what came across as two six-step cycles of Presidents, I began asking whether it was possible that the general rising, altering, and falling regimes Skowronek began to describe through political time were more adequately explained as a more specific six-phased cycle of leadership circumstances defined within institutional expectations.

To make the case that it was, I then took issue with Skowronek’s long Republican regime from 1861-1933 as seen by his Presidents listed in Table 2. Here, Skowronek argued for a Lincoln Reconstruction, a period of preemption and articulation from various Presidents until 1897, a major McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt articulation of Lincoln’s commitments from 1897-1909, another period of articulation and preemption from Presidents until 1928, and the end of the Republican regime with a Herbert Hoover Disjunction.

The troubling thing about this regime is its length at 72 years and the drastic changes in ideals and commitments that occurred between 1861 and 1933. The issues spurred by the civil war and unfettered economic nationalism of the 1860’s were much different than the increased foreign policy and trust busting corporatist policies being debated when Hoover watched the regime fall apart in the 1920’s. Upon further historical review and examination of the characteristics that define the types of Presidential leadership, it was necessary to

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16 In regards to the length comment, this regime is much longer than the other regimes Skowronek described. Jefferson’s was 28 years, Jackson’s 32, and the liberal regime (Franklin Roosevelt) 48 years.
divide Skowronek’s Republican regime into two distinct six-phased cycles of circumstances. As seen from Table 3, they are a Lincoln cycle of leadership circumstances that began in 1861 and ended with the second Presidency of Grover Cleveland in 1897 and a McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle of circumstances that started in 1897 and ended with Hoover in 1933.

Within the Lincoln cycle seen in Table 3, President Lincoln is still a revolutionary President of Reconstruction just as Washington or FDR were in different time periods that the cycle occurred in. Lincoln was followed (after President Andrew Johnson completed Lincoln’s term following his assassination) by implementing Great-Son Articulators in Presidents Grant through Arthur (like Adams and Truman did in their respective Washington and FDR cycles). President Cleveland’s first administration then led using a resistant Preemption-One compromising style of leadership like Jefferson or Eisenhower did in their respective cycles and President Benjamin Harrison followed as an implementing Grandson Articulator in the mold of Madison or Lyndon Johnson in similar places in their respective cycles. Finally, we reach the first of two Presidencies where Presidents took on multiple categories. President Cleveland’s second term served both the resisting Preemption-Two category like Monroe or Nixon did in their cycles, but also, due to a large depression that occurred during his second term, as an order shattering leader of Disjunction. Here, it was perceived that the Democratic Party’s purposes fell apart as did other commitments under John Quincy Adams or Carter in similar periods in other cycles.

The disjunctive nature of Cleveland’s second term then allowed Presidents McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt to define another cycle (Table 3) through their Presidencies of
Reconstruction to guide the country until the commitments and ideals they implemented fell apart in 1933. The commitments they implemented during their cycle were perhaps not of the same expansive degree as Washington or Lincoln’s. Still, McKinley and Roosevelt’s revolutionary Presidencies reconstructed the country by throwing out the old order for governing. They took the country further onto the world stage in economic and diplomatic policies and increasingly used the federal government to create a more equitable economic playing field through trust-busting and corporatist policies where a more balanced approach to the interests of business, labor, and government was put forward. The more limited revolutionary degree of the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle could thus be compared to the more limited Jackson cycle following the massive changes brought on by the Washington cycle of leadership circumstances or the current and more limited Reagan cycle that has followed the massive undertakings of the Franklin Roosevelt cycle.

Whatever the degree of the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle of circumstances, examining them as revolutionary Reconstructive Presidents allows us to better compare and understand the leadership rolls Presidents Taft through Hoover faced across another six-step cycle. Taft clearly served as an implementing Great-Son Articulator to carry on with the procedures of his “masterful” predecessor in Theodore Roosevelt, just as Van Buren did for Jackson or George H.W. Bush did for Reagan. Wilson is best viewed as the resistant Preemption-One compromising leader of the cycle in the mold of President Tyler or Clinton. Like Polk or current President Bush did or is doing to carry on with what Presidents Jackson and Reagan would have wanted, Harding’s Presidency is also a strong example of an implementing President of Grandson Articulation, as he tried to carry on with the
reconstructive commitments of Presidents McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt. Coolidge represents our second of two Presidencies who led using two types of leadership in that he completed Harding’s Grandson Articulation but also built upon Wilson’s foreign policy goals and, as a result, exhibited characteristics of a resistant Preemption-Two President in the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle. Presidents Taylor and Fillmore and our next, likely 2008 Democratic President elect, took or will take on a similar style of leadership. Finally, like Buchanan did on the last legs of a Jackson cycle, Hoover led as a President of Disjunction when the policy commitments of the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle began to fall apart. As did other Presidential cycles before and after, this cycle also occurred in six phases.

Time and Institutional Expectations

Two other pieces of information are worth examining before proceeding forward. First, arguing for cycled leadership is still not to say that the cycles occur in exact time frames. Even after realigning Skowronek’s regimes, my five completed cycles thus far are 40 years (Washington), 32 years (Jackson), 36 years (Lincoln), 36 years (McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt), and 48 years (Franklin Roosevelt), with similar types of Presidents serving different numbers of terms than others. As one example, Grant and Taft were both Great-Son Articulators, but the former served for two terms and the latter one.

However, placing the Presidents into cycled leadership categories does allow for more accurate predictions of how long certain types of leaders will serve. We see that five of six Great-Son Articulators have been elected to one term, all Presidents of Reconstruction but
Theodore Roosevelt (who chose not to run again) reelected, and how six of the ten Preemptive Presidents have gone on to win reelection, with only one (Cleveland) losing when running for a second term. Nevertheless, the cycles do not bare out exactly by time, but merely by the repetitive six-step cycle of leadership types Presidents find themselves in.

Finally, we can continue to see how the six phased cycle of leadership circumstances works within the institutional expectations described earlier. Here, we see that the constitution’s pluralist design ensures that some Presidents are elected with greater amounts of independence and lead during revolutionary times when the country is ready to implement drastic new commitments and new changes (Reconstruction), while other Presidents are elected and lead to resist the pace of that change (Preemption), attempt to speed up the pace and implement the revolutionary changes again (Articulation), or prevent drastic change from occurring (Disjunction). These processes of Presidents changing and reacting to changes with various degrees of independence are seen in Figures 1 through 8 in the Appendix, which will be further examined and explained in Chapter 2.

**Overview of Chapters**

Understanding Presidential leadership through identifying six phases or steps of cycled circumstances within the context of institutional expectations of a President’s time in office suggests that institutional time, more than the personal characteristics of any President, controls a Presidency’s potential for greatness. The cycles allow us to better categorize and compare the six leadership roles Presidents take on and fits within the pluralist constitutional framework of the republic. Having briefly touched on these mechanisms for understanding
Presidential leadership, I can now move forward with how to best capture these themes in the remainder of the thesis.

Chapter 2 has two parts, the first of which is a literature review on Presidential leadership in political science and history. I examine the classical, modern, and institutional works done on Presidential leadership to convey how I reached my six-step cycle of circumstances. In doing so, the chapter will also expand on the theoretical nature of my cycled circumstances, particularly by assessing the Presidency as an order based institution by which cycled election results help define which of the six cycled leadership roles the President plays.

The remaining chapters need to be explained in a bit more detail. I thought an adequate way to integrate the previously discussed theory of Presidential leadership would be to focus on explaining my Washington cycle to first highlight the first six-step cycled Presidency (Washington-John Quincy Adams) and then use the roles each of our first six Presidents played within the institutional cycle to explain the other five cycles of leadership circumstances that have followed (Jackson, Lincoln, McKinley/Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, and Reagan). Thus, Chapter 3 is written from a purely historical perspective to refresh the reader’s memory of the events, players, and ideals that occurred from 1789-1829. In doing so, the chapter also helps support the argument that, unlike Skowronek’s interpretation where Jefferson defined the initial era of Presidents, the policy commitments and ideals that Washington’s Reconstructive Presidency made guided the country until Jackson’s election in 1828.
Understanding the history makes Chapter 4 more understandable as I take the theoretical principles and characteristics of cycled Presidential leadership circumstances to show that President Washington embodied a revolutionary President of Reconstruction and John Adams an implementing Great-Son Articulator. In doing so, I compare each of our first two Presidents with other Presidents that led in steps one and two of their leadership cycles. I do the same for making the case for Jefferson and Madison as the respective first resistant Preemption-One and implementing Grandson Articulation Presidents when highlighting steps three and four of the cycles in Chapter 5. Similarly, I stress how Monroe was the first to lead in the slot of a resisting Preemption-Two President and John Quincy Adams the first to lead in the disintegrating Disjunctive spot of the Presidency when assessing steps five and six of the cycle in Chapter 6. Finally, I offer a conclusion and prospects for future Presidential leadership studies in Chapter 7.
2. PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP THEORY: Classical, Modern, and Institutional Perspectives

“…there is no man, who would not find it an arduous effort, either to behold with moderation or to treat with seriousness the devises…which have been…contrived to pervert the public opinion in relation to the subject.”\(^{17}\)

-Alexander Hamilton

“We deal here with the President himself and with his influence on government action…His influence becomes the mark of leadership.”\(^{18}\)

-Richard Neustadt

“…simple periodization schemes impose severe limits on the analysis of leadership… presidents…pass to successors leadership challenges (differing from) the ones they just faced.”\(^{19}\)

-Stephen Skowronek

Assessing and explaining Presidential leadership is a challenging task with multiple characteristics, issues, and qualities needing to be considered and sorted out in order to better develop a theory for why Presidents make the decisions they do at certain moments in their administrations and become great, average, or failed leaders as a result. During the process, multiple questions are relevant to ask to further our understanding. Do we need to examine a Presidents’ speech giving ability, how they relate with the media, or how visionary they were for the country to understand if they should be labeled a great leader? Should we judge their leadership abilities based on the circumstances Presidents had while in office or how the


\(^{19}\) Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush*, 4-8.
institutional setup defined their potential to be effective? Finally, can we compare Presidents across United States history to assess leadership or are their too many changing variables that attempting to do so merely provides more questions than answers?

These are the questions scholars of Presidential and executive leadership theory have attempted to answer both in today’s discipline but also for centuries beforehand. My inclinations again are that understanding Presidents as leaders can be judged across history with the institutional setup revealing cycled circumstances that Presidents have been placed in that helps them become the great, average, or failed leaders we perceive them to be. Before furthering this theory in Chapters 3-7, however, I will first explain how previous research on Presidential leadership provides the basis for our understanding of Presidential leadership within cycled circumstances and institutional expectations.

I do so in four parts, with the first focusing on how classical theorists such as Niccolò Machiavelli, John Locke, and Alexander Hamilton provided the first perspectives into how executive leaders should act. From here, we turn to modern day Presidential leadership studies. We first review Presidential leadership through the lens of a “modern Presidency” since Franklin Roosevelt. Here, scholars such as Richard Neustadt, James Pfiffner, and Samuel Kernall offer insights into the resources, strategies, and personal characteristics Presidents have used to take their actions to their national constituency. Yet we will find that they offer little insight into other key components of Presidential leadership, such as explaining why Presidents make the decisions they do in determining who gets what, when, and how or why some Presidents appear great while others come across as failures. Hence, section three builds on what classical executive theorists have said about leadership by
returning to examine modern day studies such as institutional and critical election studies. The section culminates with Skowronek’s groundbreaking assessment of understanding Presidential leadership through political time and what has been done since its breakthrough to understand leadership from this perspective. Finally in section four, I address how I furthered and altered Skowronek’s theory with my six-step cycle of circumstances and order creating, affirming, correcting, and shattering election patterns using historical biographies.

Executive Leadership: The Classical Perspective

Developing a theory of cycled circumstances through the institutional expectations of implementing change and order and acting independently and subordinately has been hundreds of years in the making. One of the first great executive theorists, Niccolò Machiavelli, speculated that to reform a state, leaders must first astutely judge the state of past conditions before moving forward with new policies. As he wrote in The Discourses:

“He who desires to reform the government of a state, and wishes to have it accepted and capable of maintaining itself to the satisfaction of everybody, must at least retain the semblance of the old forms; so that it may seem to the people that there has been no change in the institutions, even though they are entirely different from the old ones.”

Here, we see the beginnings of executive leaders needing to judge their place in history and past circumstances before taking independent action on the issues at hand. Yet Machiavelli was writing at a time when executives had absolute control over the people and

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territories they wished to rule, a very different situation than what United States Presidents faced beginning in 1789 when they led within a theory of separation of powers to ensure a foundation for freedom. To bridge the gap between Machiavelli and the Presidency’s beginnings, Charles-Louis Montesquieu furthered the notion of separation of powers which decreased the odds that no one person or branch of government could forcibly rule for an extended period of time without being checked by other branches of government. 21 This, along with Locke’s *The Second Treatise of Government* principle that in order for a constitutional system to work, a devotion to “established, settled, known law” must be at its center, came together when the founders established the ideals for the Presidency at the constitutional convention. 22

They did so by combining the best of all three classical theorists. Just as Machiavelli argued that leaders should shrewdly control those they are leading for their safety, Article Two of the United States Constitution was designed to further a strong Presidential office through limiting its rules, making the President commander and chief of the army and navy, and insuring that the executive branch would produce the only nationally elected leaders. But the founders also did not want the President to rule as an absolute monarch and took the advice of Locke and Montesquieu to limit the powers of the President through the congressional and judiciary branches, advice and consent provisions, and impeachment provisions. As Harvey Mansfield Jr. would allude to when writing of the Presidency in his


1989 *Taming the Prince: The Ambivalence of Modern Executive Power*, the constitutional design created an institution where Presidents could be independent institution and establish their authority over the other branches under certain circumstances, but also be a subordinate institution to the other branches in other circumstances.\(^{23}\)

Theorizing that Presidents should be both independent and subordinate was also apparent in *The Federalist Papers*. With the help of James Madison and John Jay, Alexander Hamilton wrote of the important Presidential provisions in the constitution to convince the states that the Presidency was a republican and not monarchical office, had limited powers implied through the constitution, and had important pardon, treaty, term, and appointment powers.\(^{24}\) Hamilton also theoretically wrote of potential judgments Presidents may have to make depending on their leadership situations. One was described in *Federalist 72* and noted that Presidents would likely have to make change if their predecessor was viewed as an unsuccessful President. Hamilton wrote that, “To reverse and undo what has been done by a predecessor is very often considered by a successor as the very best proof he can give of his own capacity…the less he resembles him the more he will recommend himself to the favor of his constituents.”\(^{25}\)

A final “classical” means that highlights the notion that the institutional Presidency is designed to take on different roles depending on the circumstances the President are presented with comes through the writings of those who have served in the office themselves.

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\(^{23}\) Harvey Mansfield, Jr., *Taming the Prince: The Ambivalence of Modern Executive Power*.


\(^{25}\) Ibid., 440-445. As we will see, this leadership situation is particularly apparent in the cycle of circumstances when moving from Presidential leadership by Disjunction to Presidential leadership by Reconstruction.
Most Presidents have written thoughts on what role Presidents should play, but space only permits for a few to be mentioned here. President Lincoln, for instance, described a prerogative or very independent Presidency where he felt some situations demanded that Presidents expand the constitution to save the constitution. Though Theodore Roosevelt did not go as far, his stewardship ideal for the Presidency still gave the office broad duties, independence, and responsibilities to think about when governing the country. On the other hand, President Taft hinted at the subordinate principles of the office when writing how a literalist approach must guide the Presidency based strictly on what is written in the constitution. Finally, though not a President when he wrote it, Woodrow Wilson’s *Congressional Government: A Study in American Politics* discussed his preference for a more active and independent Presidency during a time of inactive and subordinate Presidents in Hayes, Garfield, Arthur, and Cleveland.

All of the above provided the theoretical basis for Presidents needing to judge when to be independent or subordinate and when to push change on the issues or insure that more of the same policies occurred during their time in office. Yet none of these classical theorists predicted, nor could they have at the time, that the Presidential institution itself would play itself out through a six-step cycle of circumstances with change and stability within the ideals and commitments of the day guiding the process. However, Skowronek’s *The Politics*

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26 Jay Shafritz and Lee Weinberg, eds, *Classics in American Government: Third Edition* (Toronto: Thompson Wadsworth, 2006), 312-318. All three of the selected leadership models from these Presidents can be found here. Inaugural addresses, state of the union speeches, and personal writings are other key areas for finding our Presidents’ thoughts on the ideal role of Presidents.

27 Woodrow Wilson, *Congressional Government: A Study in American Politics* (New York: Meridian Books, 1959). Writing in the 1880’s, Wilson’s work came at a time when Congress arguably had the greatest say in what went on in the national government, with recent Presidents Hayes, Garfield, Arthur, and Cleveland taking limited control of national policy. For our cycled circumstances theory here, these Presidencies showed how the branches were balancing their powers out after the active Presidencies of Lincoln and Grant.
Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush took the first steps to highlight how the founders created an institution with repeated patterns of leadership built into it. Thus, after first examining the non-institutional means that modern scholars assess Presidential leadership by in section two to put this thesis in perspective, we will then see how Skowronek built his patterns in section three.

**Leadership Studies and the Modern Presidency**

Richard Neustadt’s masterpiece, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents, The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan*, changed and furthered the study of Presidential leadership significantly and in the process was arguably the first modern study of Presidential leadership. First, Neustadt argued that with the amount of increased issues and resources brought on with Franklin Roosevelt’s Presidency, modern Presidents must do more than just use the powers given to them in the constitution, as had most clerk-like Presidents before 1932. Instead, modern Presidents must effectively use their personal power to persuade to convince their constituencies that the agenda they set forward is not only what they want, but also what the country wants. Further, they must also use their reputation among the Washington elite and their prestige with the public at large to judge what actions are best for the country. When doing so, Neustadt raised the bar for modern Presidents by limiting the institutional and historical focus of the office and instead challenged Presidents and the country to go beyond the administrative Presidency of the past and to instead be constantly setting new visions for the country; much like FDR did as President. As we will

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see later, however, this has been difficult for some Presidents to do given that the constitution and institutional expectations have remained intact.

Yet with its debut, Neustadt paved the way for a modern day and individual focused study of Presidential leadership. James Pfiffner’s *Modern Presidency*, for instance, furthered Neustadt’s notion by describing the seemingly insurmountable number of tasks Presidents have had to take on since 1932. The bureaucracy, foreign and domestic policy issues, media strategies, Congressional and party relations, and an increased White House staff have and continue to expand in duties and relevance from President to President.\(^{29}\)

Examining how each President relates to these extra-Constitutional responsibilities has been a popular way of assessing leadership, as it tells us how well Presidents manage their resources and strategies for taking their message on the commitments of the day to the people while they are in office. However, by neglecting the Constitutional and pre-1932 historical Presidents for the Neustadt and Pfiffner focus, we are left with little perspective and theory as to why Presidents push the issues that they do, why they end up making the decisions they make on the commitments of the day, and why some Presidents are perceived as great, while others are just average or outright failures.

Further, examining modern day Presidential resources and strategies within a certain era of post FDR Presidents misses out on how other Presidents used resources and strategies to take their vision for the country to the people during their time in office. Though limited, some leadership studies have focused on past eras to reveal what Skowronek refers to as Presidential leadership studies in secular time. Here, secular time is “the progressive

development of the institutions resources and governing responsibilities of the executive office and thus to the repertoire of powers the Presidents of a particular period have at their disposal to realize their preferences in action. As examples, Ralph Ketcham’s *Presidents above Party: The First American Presidency, 1789-1829* or James Sterling Young’s *The Washington Community: 1800-1829* help tell of a patrician structured period from 1789-1832 where personal reputation among notables characterized Presidential resources, which were made use of through a Presidential strategy of standing on national tribune over faction and interest. Just as Neustadt argued for persuasion to be used as a strategy and Pfiffner described the enhanced resources modern Presidents have at their disposal, Ketcham and Young did the same by describing the strategies and resources our first Presidents used to see out their preferences in action.

Joel Silbey’s *The Partisan Imperative: The Dynamics of American Politics before the Civil War* and Richard McCormick’s *The Party Period and Public Policy: American Politics from the Age of Jackson to the Progressive Era* did the same when helping us understand a second period of Presidential leadership in secular time from 1832-1900. Here, a structured era of partisan operations saw Presidents take their actions to the people using party organization and executive patronage as resources and local party machines and party factions as a strategy to manipulate the distribution to this patronage. Yet again, these

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studies tell us little about the impact Presidents have on determining who gets what, when, and how. The same can be said for Neustadt, Pfifner, or other modern Presidential theorists when describing a pluralist structured era of secular time that lasted from 1900-1972. Described in the selected works earlier, this era was characterized by Presidents who used the resources of an expanding executive establishment in new nationalized domestic and foreign interests and a strategy of bargaining “with leaders of all institutions and organized interests as stewards of national policy making.”

A final means of assessing Presidential leadership through secular time has come most recently through the plebiscitary governing structures that began in earnest in 1972 and have taken us through the present day. Here, an “independent political apparatus and mass communication technologies” have been used as Presidential resources to guide Presidential strategies of appealing “for political support over the heads of Washington elites directly to the people at large.” Press conferences, prime time addresses, public appearances, and a national primary structure are a few examples of how Presidents are using this new leadership era in secular time. Further, Samuel Kernell’s *Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership*, Theodore Lowi’s *The Personal President: Power Invested, Promises Unfulfilled*, and Jeffrey Tulis’s *The Rhetorical Presidency* all offer perspectives on how this latest phase of media driven politics has impacted how Presidents realize their preferences in action through the changing extra constitutional structures of secular time.

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34 Ibid., 52-55.
Toward Presidential Leadership and Institutional Expectations

All of the studies listed in section two are helpful if we are assessing Presidential leadership from the evolving extra-constitutional structures of the executive office. Yet in doing so, we miss out on how this relates to the classical executive theories that created an institution of change and stability for working with the commitments of the day and an office designed for Presidents to act independently or subordinately when implementing these commitments. Therefore, we now must begin to piece together how other recent leadership studies have helped us understand the Presidency from the standpoint of institutional expectations.

Take James Burns’ 1978, *Leadership*, which stresses two types of leaders: transactional and transforming. The former is based on an exchange between leaders and followers where participant motivations remain unchanged between leader and follower. The latter is more ideal and sees leadership as a fusion of purpose and vision between leaders and followers. The latter type of leader somewhat relates to Neustadt’s notion of the power to persuade to instill a vision through fusion of purpose. Still, the fact that Burns brought the notion back to the table that leaders can have different roles became particularly useful when understanding Presidential leadership within institutional expectations.

As did Thomas Cronin’s 1979 article *Presidential Power Revised and Reappraised* that highlighted a model of Neustadt’s principles of Presidential leadership before addressing some concerns with Neustadt’s theory. Whereas Neustadt argued that with the right

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persuasive skills, Presidents can foster inspirational, active, and visionary leadership, Cronin wanted to also point out that anyone reading Presidential history shows that, “Presidents are almost invariably stabilizers or protectors of the status quo rather than agents of redistribution or progressive change. Neustadt gives little attention to the way the prevailing American elite, values, or ideology, severely limit a President’s freedom.”

Cronin’s critique of Neustadt that not all Presidents are designed to lead as FDR did was of particular use. However, by only highlighting his thoughts on Presidents from FDR through Carter, we gain little perspective about Presidents before 1932, nor how these different leadership responsibilities compare from President to President.

George Edwards III and Stephen Wayne’s editions of Presidential Leadership: Politics and Policy Making also helped to further the notion of different Presidential leadership roles. Here, some Presidents are directors of change who “create opportunities to move in new directions and lead others where they otherwise would not go,” while others are less heroic as facilitators of change who “exploit opportunities to help others go where they want to go anyway or, at a minimum, do not object to going.” Yet this is as far as the duo goes when assessing different institutional roles that different Presidents take on. Instead, like Pfiffner’s Modern Presidency, they prefer to focus on the impact individual Presidents have on the expanding resources of the executive office, a notion we want to shy away from here to better assess institutional expectations within Presidential leadership.

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Thus, we turn to Bert Rockman’s *The Leadership Question: The Presidency and the American System*, which stresses that the individual impact Presidents have on the office is difficult to demonstrate. Environmental, institutional, and personal forces are continuously interacting with each other through personal and institutional relationships, the political climate of the time, policy needs, and public moods. As a result, the book helps us understand that many external forces are involved in determining whether or not Presidents succeed, but it does not offer any means of predicting patterns by which these success stories occur.

Nor did James March and Johan Olsens’ 1989 book *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics*. What their study does is remind us that institutions are autonomous political forces that can reshape societies by redefining individual and group identities with time. They can create order, bring about routine, and procedure. Though not specifically focusing on the Presidency, their work furthers the premise that the constitutional setup of the Presidency has the potential to define Presidents more than any individual characteristics that Presidents may bring to the office. Further, when combined with Edwards and Wayne’s and other’s arguments for different types of Presidential leaders, we begin to see the argument that leadership could be judged based on institutional expectations of what Presidents should do depending of the time they are in office.

Yet understanding the role institutional expectations play from modern day studies still only takes us so far in assessing why some Presidents are viewed as great, some average,

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and some failures. To understand this, we must move to see how cycled circumstances interact with institutional expectations. In doing this, we must first examine the premises for critical elections.

_Toward Presidential Leadership and Cycled Circumstances_

In his attempt to understand the Democratic process, V.O. Key was the first to point out in “A Theory of Critical Elections” that some elections had more of a lasting impact for the country than others due to the nature of realignment in American politics.\(^{41}\) Key pointed out how the party realignments of the 1896 and 1928 elections had a significantly larger and lasting impact on the country. Further, he claimed that these elections occurred when voters were deeply concerned and in which the decisive results of the elections revealed a “sharp alteration of the preexisting cleavage within the electorate.”\(^{42}\) Furthermore, he set off a wave of literature on such elections with the Presidential elections of 1828 (Jackson vs. John Quincy Adams), 1860 (Lincoln vs. Douglas, Breckenridge, and Bell), 1896 (McKinley vs. Bryan), 1932 (Roosevelt vs. Hoover), and 1980 (Reagan vs. Carter) being generally argued as the most influential elections that reshaped the electorate for a generation.

Two other key contributors to critical election theory need to be referenced here as we take our first step to a cycle of Presidential leadership circumstances. The first is Walter Dean Burnham’s _Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics_ which helped to further define critical elections as ones that show intense disruptions of traditional patterns of voting behavior, have a particularly high intensity, have a remarkably uniform periodicity

\(^{42}\) Ibid., 4.
in their appearance, and have durable consequences for the boundaries of policy.\textsuperscript{43}

Burnham also brought insights by using electoral numbers across states and the nation to understand the process of party movement before and after the 1896 and 1932 elections. Similarly, James Sundquist’s \textit{Dynamics of the Party System: Alignment and Realignment of Political Parties in the United States} expanded upon Key and Burnaham’s party realignment theories to show party movements and significant elections from the 1850’s into the Reagan election of 1980.\textsuperscript{44} Though these assessments of critical elections by themselves offered little for understanding why Presidents make the leadership decisions they did in office, they did offer insight into the key turning points of United States history. In return, they become useful when setting markers for the beginnings and endings of cycles of leadership circumstances.

In making more use of what such critical elections meant for American leadership and policy in politics, Jerome Clubb, William Flanagan, and Nancy Zingale’s 1980 \textit{Partisan Realignments: Voters, Parties, and Government in American History} argued that instead of spending time examining the election numbers leading up to critical elections, we should instead examine the leadership and governing policies that happen immediately following these elections, as well as the general flow of policies in between each critical election.\textsuperscript{45} The trio goes on to astutely point out that a general pattern of the rise, mid-sequence

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adjustment, and decay that occurs among policies between each critical election and major policy realignment periods in American history. However, they offer little insight into the President’s leadership role in these rising, adjusting, and falling patterns, nor how these patterns affect the impact Presidents have in becoming great, average, or failed leaders.

Several surveys have been taken, however, to rank the Presidents from Washington to our present day leaders that help to offer insight into who should be considered a great, average, or failed President. Presidential historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr., the Wall-Street Journal, and others are examples of those who have each taken on the task of rating our Presidents.46 Here, the survey groups or individuals let a respected group of history, legal, and political scholars vote based on a general set of criteria on who they believed were the best and worst Presidents. Being a visionary leader, leading the country through crisis situations, and avoiding scandals are a few of the mechanisms used to establish the rankings. Yet these rankings suggest that Presidential leadership can be assessed on a President-by-President basis which mean little if the Presidency is more institutional than personal in its potential to produce great leaders.

Yet Gary Maranell’s “The Evaluation of Presidents: An Extension of the Schlesinger Polls” and Dean Simonton’s “Presidential Greatness: The Historical Consensus and its Psychological Significance” took note of the limits of ranking the Presidents from beginning to end in their 1970 and 1986 articles. Though Maranell still sees Presidential greatness or ineptness as being able to come through assessing Presidents on a case by case basis, his

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separate variables and rankings of Presidents based on their prestige, strength of action, activeness, idealism or practicality, administrative accomplishments, and amount of information those surveyed knew about each President rearranged the rankings of Presidents significantly depending on the variable being examined.\(^{47}\) Further, it suggested that depending on what circumstance you look to when assessing Presidents, you are going to get different results in terms of who was a great Presidential leader.

Simonton’s article went a step further when he ran statistical tests to show that by looking at the variables of how long a President was in office, whether or not they led during war, avoided scandals, were assassinated, or entered office as war heroes, we could explain much of the variance for why and how Presidents will be ranked historically.\(^{48}\) Yet it too only vaguely suggests institutional mechanisms for determining leadership abilities and has little to say about any patterns that may exist when examining leadership types based on state of the ideals and commitments of the day.

It was through Skowronek’s 1993 *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush* that we began to combine the tasks of assessing great or failed Presidents and the critical election theories described earlier with institutional and historical perspectives of Presidential leadership. This again culminated through examining Presidents in political time or “the various relationships incumbents project between previously established commitments of ideology and interest and their own actions in the moment at

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hand.” In doing so, Presidential leadership from Skowronek’s perspective then became the effort Presidents take on “to resolve disruptive consequences of executive action in the reproduction of legitimate political order of Presidential authority” (expectations of a given time of what Presidents should do to sustain warrants and realize accomplishments).

We already discussed in the introduction how this definition played out into creating a patterned spectrum of vulnerable and resilient commitments and affiliated or opposed ideals by which Presidents led within and fell into the leadership categories of Presidents of Reconstruction, Articulation, Preemption, and Disjunction. What needs to be furthered now, however, is what Skowronek meant when labeling these types of Presidents, how they helped make sense of what happens in between critical elections, and how they related to Clubb, Flanagan, and Zingale’s argument for rising, adjusting, and decaying policy realignments.

First were Skowronek’s Presidents of Reconstruction (Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt, and Reagan) who complement rising realignment schemes. They were first and foremost Presidents who followed Presidents of Disjunction in vulnerable times and had ideals opposed to the shattered commitments of the past. This in turn allowed them to “remake the government wholesale.” Further, their new policy commitments reset the terms for governing for a generation of Presidents, yet ironically did not initially solve the country’s problems they sought to fix. Finally, Presidents of Reconstruction were great party leaders elected in landslide Electoral College victories who won reelection handily, are likely

50 Ibid., 17-20 and 30. Besides the specific page numbers, the first three chapters of The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton express this theory of the Presidency.
to be viewed as masterful Presidents, and passed the Presidential baton onto a “heir
lieutenant” with affiliated ideals.  

Next were Skowronek’s most notable Presidents of Articulation (Monroe, Polk, Theodore Roosevelt, and Lyndon Johnson) who could be viewed as Presidents who led during Clubb, Flanagan, and Zingale’s mid-sequence adjustment periods. Such leaders shared affiliated ideals with their respective President of Reconstruction, served during periods when the established policy commitments were resilient and built upon, and also took on new commitments to validate their administration and ensure the continuation of the regime’s ideals they were elected to uphold. Most pertinently when taking on new commitments, Presidents of Articulation in the middle of a regime have a habit of taking on or aggravating “wars of dubious provocation.” Further, when taking on new commitments, President’s of articulation draw fire from affiliated members (or those with like minded ideas) of their regime for altering their President of Reconstruction’s path and from opponents of the regime’s ideals (those who do not support it) who are seeking to use their ideals to establish a new governing regime of lasting authority.

The third type of Presidential leadership Skowronek describes in his typology is that of Presidents of Preemption who also appear in between critical election periods (Presidents

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51 Ibid., 36-39, 62-85, 130-154, 198-227, 288-324, and portions of 409-446. Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, Roosevelt, and Reagan are described as Presidents of Reconstruction in these pages.
52 Skowronek, The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush, 242. Monroe’s Seminole War, Polk’s Mexican War, McKinley’s Spanish-American War, and Johnson’s Vietnam War were his examples.
Tyler, Cleveland, Wilson, Nixon, and Clinton are examples). Here, Presidents serve in political time when the established commitments are resilient, yet their ideals are opposed to these commitments. They thus spend their time constructing hybrid and compromising approaches to the reconstructive commitments, yet fail to instill immediate lasting authority for their or their party’s ideals. These compromising alternatives also anger the ideological wing of the President’s party or factions as they paint such Presidents as leaders lacking in principle. On the other side of the political spectrum, the regime affiliates serving alongside the President of Preemption (frustrated that their reconstructive ideals and commitments have been interrupted) attempt to thwart Preemptive Presidents’ initiatives at nearly every opportunity. Such frustration also provides the basis for digging deep to find immoral conduct against many Preemptive Presidents, sometimes resulting in drawing articles of impeachment against them.  

The final type of leader Skowronek describes is that of Disjunction (John Adams, John Quincy Adams, Pierce, Buchanan, Hoover, and Carter) who would lead during Clubb, Flanagan, and Zingale’s periods of realignment decay. Elected at the end of a regime, they are only nominally affiliated with the regime’s ideals whose commitments are now fully vulnerable and appear no longer adequate for leading the nation. Their affiliation with the faltering regime, however, puts Presidents of Disjunction in the position where they are unable to gain credibility when trying to move the country in a new direction, making them easy targets for all that is wrong with the country. Further, though they realize they are

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54 Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton*, 447-464. Leadership by preemption is the one type Skowronek has not devoted a great deal of time to. Nevertheless, the pages listed here were an addition to his 1993 book and highlight the characteristics of preemptive Presidential leaders, with specific focus being given to then President Clinton.
serving in impossible leadership positions sometime during their administration, they also
make the case to the country that this is not their fault, that things will improve, and that the
proposed reconstructive alternative that is building and follows their Presidency will be more
of a threat to the country. Finally, Presidents of Disjunction are defeated soundly in their
reelection efforts, becoming the apparent failed Presidents in United States history.\textsuperscript{55}

Taken together then, the general patterns that resulted from Skowronek’s four types
of Presidents form \textit{regimes} of authority for sustaining warrants. Though I expand upon this
notion of a regime throughout the coming chapters, I wish to instead call it a cycle to avoid
any negative connotations that may be associated with the word. To me, a cycle of
Presidential leadership is a set of commitments and ideals of a given period in Presidential
history that first go through a stage when Presidents can act most independently and create
big changes under Presidents of Reconstruction, are then reaffirmed and slowed when
Presidents are less independent and create fewer changes under Presidents of Articulation
and Preemption, and come unraveled during Presidencies of Disjunction when Presidents are
more than anything subordinate to the state of issues of the time and have an impossible
situation to create change in. The results of which can be seen in Figures 1 through 8 in the
Appendix which will be explained in the next section.

As a result, the cycled and institutional setup of the Presidency creates masterful
Presidents who have the opportunity to become so due to serving in rising reconstructive
leadership periods, average Presidents who serve during adjusting periods of leadership by
articulation and preemption, and failed leaders during decaying periods of Presidential

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 39-41, 110-128, 177-196, 260-286, and 361-406. Presidents Quincy Adams, Pierce, Hoover, and Carter
are described as Presidents of Disjunction here.
leadership by disjunction. Presidents Jackson and Franklin Roosevelt, for instance, led inideal times to be viewed as great leaders and form lasting cycles of circumstances based on
the ideals and commitments they implemented in rising periods, Polk and Lyndon Johnson as
average leaders due to serving in adjustment periods and Pierce and Carter during times
when they would likely come across as inept or even failed leaders due to serving in
decaying periods.

*Toward a Six-Step Cycle of Circumstances over Patterns*

Skowronek’s contribution of bringing institutions, leadership, and portions of critical
election theory together furthered the patterns for understanding Presidential leadership like
never before. As one reviewer put it, Skowronek’s theory has, “…proved strongly predictive
of the nature of each president’s challenges; his vulnerability to congressional impeachment
and judicial antagonism; his degree of policy affinity with his own or the opposition
party;…and even the degree of temptation to make discretionary war.”56 His updated 1997
dition, *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton*, only
continued to further our understanding of Presidents as leaders by including an examination
of Preemptive Presidents and his 2005 article “Leadership by Definition: First Term
Reflections on George W. Bush's Political Stance” argued that our current President is
serving in a similar state of political time like that of Presidents Monroe, Polk, Theodore

56 Elizabeth Sanders, “In Defense of Realignment and Regimes: Why We Need Periodization.” *Polity 37*
Roosevelt, and Lyndon Johnson. Further, Skowronek’s theory for understanding Presidential leadership has provoked many articles and been referenced in many other books, where authors use statistical studies to affirm a current Reagan regime or branch away from the Presidency to examine how other institutions such as Congress or the courts operate under similar institutional patterns as well.

Yet no one has yet to produce what Skowronek called for in his second edition, “(an) alternative of equal scope (that) explains more of the variance” within Presidential leadership. Here is where I believe my contribution lies. Though I accept the general theory he puts forward for understanding Presidential leadership through regimes of political time, I believe it can be changed on two levels to help explain more of the leadership circumstances Presidents face and why, in the end, they make the decisions they do to make it appear as though they are great, average, or failed leaders.

The first difference is what results when changing Skowronek’s Jefferson regime to a Washington cycle of circumstance and making Skowronek’s long Lincoln through Hoover regime into two separate Lincoln through Cleveland and McKinley/ Theodore Roosevelt through Hoover cycles. Taken alongside Skowronek’s other Jackson, Franklin Roosevelt, and the Reagan regime thus far, turns what was a patterned leadership theory of four types of Presidents into a cycled leadership theory of six-steps (Reconstruction, Great-Son

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Articulation, Preemption-One, Grandson Articulation, Preemption-Two, and Disjunction). In doing so, we can now more adequately understand each President’s unequal leadership positions and the institutional time they serve in through the order of the cycle, particularly by having developed two specific types of Presidential leadership by Preemption and by Articulation. We can turn Skowronek’s recurrent patterns into the cycle theory he claims his work was not designed to do and more accurately predict where, when, and why Presidents are making the decisions they are at certain time periods.60

Moving from Presidential leadership patterns to a six-step cycle was not accomplished through rigorous statistical analysis or even scientific assessment, qualities the political scientist at heart may find unappealing. To make my case, I felt the Presidential theory of political time and cycled circumstances needed to be developed further by using the descriptive branch of American Political Development. I thought statistical studies could then be run in future works to test the various arguments and trends being made throughout the thesis.

But how did I gain the evidence needed to move toward the six-step theory? Reading historical biographies of each President (particularly focusing on those Presidents where my interpretation was different from Skowronek’s) was my main mechanism for establishing my argument and obtaining the needed information.61 In the process, I also kept Skowronek’s

60 Ibid., xi-xii and 51. Again, Skowronek states that his main goal was not to put in place a cycle theory for understanding Presidential leadership, but to access Presidents as instruments of political change, where “leadership efforts in different periods have similar political effects.” In his Chapter 3 on structure and action, Skowronek does mention how his theory creates a general cycle of breakthrough, breakup, and breakdown in Presidential leadership but does not offer a predictable cycle for leadership styles, nor how the election process worked to put them there.

61 Clifford Griffin, Donald McCoy, and Homer Socolofsky, The Presidency of (fill in the President’s name), (Lawrence: Univeristy Press of Kansas, various years) Forward; This series of Presidential biographies proved particularly useful. Griffin, McCoy, and Socolofsky’s purpose is to present interesting and scholarly
theory of resilient and vulnerable commitments and opposed or affiliated ideals in mind. It was then through reexamining the flow of the historical Presidency alongside political time that the differing judgments about each Presidents leadership type could be made.

For instance, it was through reading the biographies that I could judge that President Washington’s and not President Jefferson’s ideals and commitments among our earlier Presidents had lasting authority for the country in a similar way that Jackson, Lincoln, or Reagan’s did in future cycles. Further, looking at the new commitments Presidents McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt took on at a vulnerable time period beginning in 1897, makes it reasonable to make the case that a new leadership cycle began during their reconstructive Presidencies and had lasting authority for governing the country’s policies until Hoover’s disjunctive Presidency in 1933.62

Examining Presidential history alongside political time to determine a six-step cycle also aided in altering a second change to Skowronek’s theory through disagreeing with his statement that regimes of Presidential leadership “…encompass sequences of unspecified and unequal duration, and they make no assumptions about the periodicity of electoral politics….The politics of leadership forms an essential counterpoint to shifts within the electorate in the explanation of political change.”63 Skowronek made this point when it made sense to, given that his Jefferson, Jackson, Republican, and Liberal regimes were 28, 32, 72, and 48 years in length respectively and judging what elections meant was difficult due to

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62 The chapters that follow will provide more specific details of these arguments.
these differing lengths. Though the six-step cycles I present for the Washington, Jackson, Lincoln, McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt, FDR, and now Reagan regimes still do not play out in an exactly equal number of years between the start and end of a cycle, their lengths of 40 years (Washington: 1789-1829), 32 (Jackson: 1829-1860), 36 (Lincoln: 1861-1897), 36 (McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt: 1897-1933), 48 (Roosevelt: 1933-1981), and an estimated 40 years for the current Reagan regime (1981-2020) do allow for something more to be said for, all other things being equal, a (R,GS)(P1)(GRS)(P2)(D) cycle of leadership styles that are complemented with cycled electoral circumstances.64

To further this notion that election circumstances and the people doing the electing are, like Presidential leadership, acting in a predictable and repeatable manner, let us briefly turn to Skowronek’s notion of the Presidency being an order creating, affirming, and shattering institution, as well as, I argue, an order correcting institution. It is an order creating institution through its ability to “construct some new political arrangements that can stand tests of legitimacy” for governing, an order affirming institution in that the “exercise of Presidential power must be justified on constitutional terms…and (in) defense of values…of the body politic,” and also as an order shattering institution in that it “prompts each incumbent to take charge of the independent powers of his office…in his own right.”65 Further, it is an order correcting institution in that Presidents must sometimes subtly reconfigure commitments without completely altering the principles being used primarily to

64 R = Reconstruction, GS= Great-Son Articulation, P1 = Preemption-One, GRS = Grandson Articulation, P2 = Preemption-Two, and D = Disjunction
guide the country by at the time.\textsuperscript{66} It is then the interplay between the four types of order just mentioned that help create the patterns of cycled leadership circumstances as well as the election outcomes that put the Presidents there in the first place.

Abraham Lincoln’s or Franklin Roosevelt’s Reconstructive leadership roles, for instance, were produced more by order creating elections than order affirming, correcting or shattering elections, while James Buchanan’s or Herbert Hoover’s Disjunctive leadership positions were produced more by order shattering elections than order creating correcting, or affirming elections. Further, Benjamin Harrison’s or Lyndon Johnson’s Presidencies of Articulation were produced more by order affirming elections than order creating, correcting, or shattering elections, while Grover Cleveland’s and Dwight Eisenhower’s Preemptive Presidencies resulted more from order correcting elections than order creating, affirming, or shattering.

All of which results in a six-step cycle of elections that works alongside the six-step cycle of leadership circumstances, allowing us to make more accurate claims about the periodicity of electoral politics that Skowronek claims his regimes do not do. As seen in Figures 1 through 8 which combines both the cycled Presidential leadership and election theories presented here, order creating elections give us Presidents of Reconstruction and are then followed by order affirming elections that give us Presidents of Great-Son Articulation. Next, order correcting elections occur, electing Preemption-One Presidents and are then

\textsuperscript{66} President Eisenhower, for instance, could only partially use the Republican Party ideals of the day to correct portions of Roosevelt’s New Deal, such as, Eisenhower felt, its over stretch in the agriculture industry. Similarly, President Clinton could only use portions of the Democratic Party’s ideals in the 1990’s to correct the commitments made under President Reagan, and thus raised taxes to compensate for larger tax cuts for the wealthy or reduced the debt to compensate for Reagan’s large budget deficit.
followed again by order affirming elections where Grandson Articulators then take the oath. Finally, the last two steps of the election cycle are again order correcting elections giving us Preemptive-Two Presidents and order shattering elections which give us Presidents of Disjunction. The people then, like Presidential leadership are fairly predictable in moving through a cycle of ordered elections to express what they want their Presidents to do in regards to the commitments of the day. It is through these elections and the circumstances certain Presidents are given when elected that will be examined further through the cycles described in the introduction and furthered in Chapters 4-6.

*Three Types of Presidential Leadership Studies*

Despite having been hundreds of years in the making, multiple questions still exist when trying to assess and explain Presidential leadership. Nevertheless, important studies from numerous authors have and continue to shed light on why Presidents make the decisions they do while inside the oval office. Machiavelli, Locke, and the founders developed the nature and basic set up for how the Presidency should function, while Neustadt, Pfiffner, and many others have explored how the resources and strategies Presidents have at their disposal have affected leadership in secular time across Presidential history. It is through the synchronization of institutional, historical, and critical election studies, however, that Skowronek was able to produce an effective patterned leadership theory of political time and Presidential authority for beginning to assess what impact Presidents have in determining who gets what, when, and how, and as a result why some Presidents come across as great, some average, and some failures.
Yet more can be explained from this theory by rearranging certain Presidents within Skowronek’s regimes to create a six-step cycles of circumstances within institutional expectations that also work alongside cycled types of elections. Here, the people send Presidents to Washington to take on various leadership roles based on the state of ideals and commitments of the times. Thus, after setting up Chapters 4-6 by writing of Presidential history from Presidents Washington to John Quincy Adams in Chapter 3, we can then further examine the six-step cycle to offer “an alternative of equal scope (that) explains more of the variance” within Presidential leadership styles for past, present, and future Presidents to better their decisions by, as well as for us to assess their leadership abilities.
3. PRESIDENTIAL HISTORY FROM 1789 TO 1829:
Reconsidering Which President Defined the Era

“Certain it is that the year 1829 marked the end of
an era politically and administratively. The gentlemen
who since 1789 had taken the responsibility of
government were driven from the scene, to be
replaced by a new type of public servant and by
other ideals of official action.”

-Leonard White
Early Republic Historian

To better understand Presidential leadership during the six-step cycle of Presidential
circumstances within institutional expectations, we turn in this chapter to examine United
States’ Presidential history from 1789 until 1829. Keeping two political themes in mind,
however, will help put the historical ideas, policies, and players of this nation-forming era
into the context of the rest of this thesis. First, one should see how Skowronek’s Presidential
leadership interpretation of this first era of Presidential history was misinterpreted. As we
saw in the figures from Chapter 1, Skowronek saw the ideals and commitments of the
Federalists falling apart under John Adams’ Presidency of Disjunction and as a result saw a
new set of ideals and commitments rising and defining an era of Presidents through
Jefferson’s Presidency of Reconstruction. From here, Skowronek saw the Presidencies of
Madison and Monroe trying to carry on and adjust the commitments made in Jefferson’s
regime as leaders of Articulation. Finally, Skowronek described how John Quincy Adams’

Company, 1951) viii.
68 Skowronek, The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush, 61-85. Skowronek
develops his thoughts on Adams’ and Jefferson’s leadership placement here.
69 Ibid., 86-109. Skowronek develops his thoughts on Madison, but particularly Monroe’s leadership positions
here.
Presidency came at a difficult time when the commitments and ideals of Jefferson’s regime were coming unraveled in a leadership position of Disjunction. Yet a better story is available to tell.

This is where the second political theme we should keep in mind when reading the history of this chapter comes into play. Instead of using Skowronek’s interpretation of a Jefferson regime, we should instead see how the history fits into the six-step cycle of leadership as described in the previous two chapters. For it was President Washington who had the first opportunity to act most independently and use his ideals to create lasting commitments in his Presidency of Reconstruction and President Adams that followed him to carry on with the policies and ideals Washington had started through the leadership position of a Great-Son Articulator. President Jefferson then followed Adams with opposing ideals for what the national government should be doing, but was there merely to correct and act subordinately on certain aspects of the commitments made under Washington and Adams as a Preemption-One President.

During President Madison’s leadership position as a Grandson Articulator, he ironically returned to the principles and ideals that Washington and Adams used to lead the country. Furthermore, Monroe followed Jefferson’s lead by having ideals opposed to those that defined the Washington era of Presidents, but did so through the Preemption-Two part of the cycle when correcting or modifying certain aspects of Washington’s cycle. Finally, John Quincy Adams completed the first cycle of circumstantial Presidential leadership by

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70 Ibid., 110-127. Skowronek develops his thoughts on John Quincy Adams’ leadership position here.
watching Washington minded ideals and commitments shatter and Jacksonian minded commitments and ideals rise during his Presidency of Disjunction.

Now knowing the political themes to keep in mind while reading the following pages we can now ask how the history of the Washington Presidency defined the ideals and commitments for governing from 1789-1829? The historiography of the era leads one to develop two descriptive umbrella categories. First, neutrality defined the foreign policies from 1789-1829, where Presidents and their secretaries of state used the ideal of not entangling the alliances to help secure and expand the borders of the young republic. Second, the resiliency of Alexander Hamilton’s inspired economic programs that Washington implemented during his Presidency defined the domestic policies of the era. Here, Washington’s actions on debt, credit, a national bank, taxes, and tariffs guided the country from 1789-1829.

It is with these historical themes in mind that we can turn to describing the desecrate events that defined these Presidents. We begin briefly by describing the downfall of the Articles of Confederation and then move to describe the key events and players of the first six Presidents. In the end, the entire chapter will serve as a setup to understanding the cycled Presidency described in chapters four through six, particularly among the leadership circumstances our first Presidents faced.

*The End and the Beginning*

The Articles of Confederation defined the relations of the national government and the states in the immediate years after independence. They saw the country through a period
of economic growth and set precedent for admission of new states through the Northwest Ordinance. Perhaps best looked at as an early “League of Nations” type of governing structure, the Articles of Confederation also provided the first party debates between the Anti-Federalists and Federalists. The main disagreement between the two parties centered on whether the republic should continue governing based on the principle that the federal government was subordinate to the states or start over by creating a stronger national government with equal or overarching powers to the states.\textsuperscript{71}

During the process, the Federalists avoided discussing the positives of the Articles for they believed there were few “positives,” and instead stressed its weaknesses. Examples of which included that trade among states was difficult, the lack of one national leader made foreign policy making unclear and unstable, and the loose configuration of states and individuals was unable to produce the same nationalist spirit that a stronger national government could.\textsuperscript{72} Federalists were particularly concerned about the ability of the national government to defend the nation against Great Britain and other European powers, for Britain had not yet fulfilled its obligations from the Treaty of Paris, and the U.S. government had little power to force such a fulfillment.

The focus on the Articles’ weaknesses eventually created a political movement that called for a Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia where Washington oversaw and Madison wrote the Constitution based on Federalist principles of a strong central government that then went to the states for approval. To aid in its passage, Alexander


\textsuperscript{72} Ibid., 347-421. These pages describe the positive achievements of the articles in nation building and setting up economic and governing processes for the country.
Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison convincingly wrote *The Federalist Papers*, which pointed out the weaknesses of the articles and the attributes that a three-branch republican government would bring under the constitution. Their efforts prevailed by 1789 when enough states ratified the constitution to implement a stronger central government. This also meant that elections needed to be held, including one for the country’s first nationally elected leader.

As a result, George Washington became the first President of the United States in 1789 after a unanimous victory in the Electoral College. He had already spent a lifetime in public service through serving in the French and Indian War and Continental Congress and leading the fight as General in the Revolutionary War and President of the Federalist minded Constitutional Convention. It was because of this service that Washington was elected to transform a loose assortment of states into a more nationally-minded people with a constitutionally led central government. Questions of precedent, constitutionality, and policy surrounded Washington throughout his two terms, but by the time of his departure in 1797, he had instilled a set of ideals and commitments that guided the republic through its first four decades of trials and tribulations.

Washington’s first year as President was eventful. He helped to ensure that the new central government began on the right foot by supporting a federal court system and executive cabinet, watching a needed Bill of Rights pass through Congress and the states, and

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traveling the country to show the prestige of the Presidency.\textsuperscript{75} Having done so, Washington then set out to build a more nationally minded economy, while dealing with a large war debt in the states and a low credit rating. In order to build a national economy, he turned to Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton.\textsuperscript{76} Hamilton issued a report to promote a British-inspired credit system by first arguing that the national government should buy out the war debts of the states. Doing so would help the states pay off the war, establish credit within the country by financing the new national debt through public bank notes, and thus help spur a national economy, just as had occurred in Britain following the Glorious Revolution of 1688.\textsuperscript{77} Though first met with staunch opposition from the debt hating agrarians, Jefferson and Madison eventually conceded and helped pass the proposal, only after a site near Virginia became the site of the new national capital.

Next, Hamilton insured implementation of the credit program by convincing Washington of the need for a national bank. In doing so, Hamilton believed the bank and the well-to-do in the country would support the national government and the government would support the bank.\textsuperscript{78} Also inspired by the Bank of England, Hamilton felt the bank would produce a national economic spirit, allow markets to flourish, and improve economic stability. After having heard the case from Jefferson that the bank went beyond the powers

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., 127-160.
\textsuperscript{76} Forrest McDonald, \textit{The Presidency of George Washington}, Lawrence: (The University of Kansas Press 1974), 177-186) and Clark, Harrison, \textit{All Cloudless Glory: The Life of George Washington}. Historical debate exists as to whether or not Washington himself should receive credit for his accomplishments in office or if he was merely a figurehead who did little in his own right and was great because of the other actors in government at the time. McDonald takes Washington to be more of a figurehead, while Clark presents Washington as the epitome of leadership.
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid., 55-69.
of the Constitution and furthered an aristocratic society, Washington sided with Hamilton and signed the bank legislation, determining that the measure was in bounds with the necessary and proper clause of the Constitution.\(^7^9\)

With Washington’s action on the bank, the short period of increased national unity unraveled into the first partisan political debates. Jefferson resigned as Secretary of State to further an opposing Republican Party and Madison led the charge as Speaker of the House to oppose many of Washington’s remaining proposals for the rest of his administration. Hamilton, however, continued to have the President’s support for his economic policies. He proposed a tax on whiskey and other goods to insure steady revenue for the treasury. The New Yorker also countered Madison’s proposal for a discriminatory tariff system against Britain and insured a competent tariff system was designed to develop the economic interests of the country, particularly those in the Northeast. Each of these proposals moved through Congress and received the signature of Washington.\(^8^0\)

Policies for credit, debt, tariffs, a national bank, and taxes were the initial domestic commitments Washington took on as President. They were also complemented by Washington’s proposals that the national government play an active role in creating a peacetime army and navy and programs focused on education, internal improvements, the agricultural sciences, and the new national capital in the future District of Columbia.\(^8^1\) In

\(^7^9\) Forrest McDonald, \textit{The Presidency of George Washington}, 67-88. The debate for the bank and other Hamilton based economic programs is seen here.

\(^8^0\) Ibid.

\(^8^1\) Clarke, \textit{All Cloudless Glory: The Life of George Washington}. Washington makes these proposals throughout his Presidency.
one way or another, these commitments were challenged, but remained resilient following his administration until the election of Andrew Jackson in 1828.

Washington’s Presidency also set precedents in foreign policy. Stemming from the Revolutionary War, Washington began his term in 1789 in a strong alliance with France and a strained relationship with Great Britain. By 1796, relations had changed greatly, with the United States having much improved relations with Britain and nearly at war with France. What happened? To answer, we turn to the commitments Washington made through his policies of neutrality and Jay’s Treaty.

In 1789, the United States was a small republic in a world of more powerful empires. Determining relations with Britain and France became the priority for Washington’s Presidency and the country’s foreign policy. Though he was touched by France’s call to liberty when the French Revolution began, Washington saw what was occurring in the Reign of Terror and presumably agreed with Edmund Burke’s *Reflections on the Revolution in France* when concluding that the ideals by which the United States and France fought for liberty differed. This made his call for neutrality and not aiding France during its revolution (as he may have felt obligated to do under the 1778 Treaty of Alliance) easier, particularly given the proposition that aiding France may mean aiding instability and tyranny and not the freedom the United States had in mind.

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Washington’s declaration of neutrality was also necessary to insure the survival of Hamilton’s economic plan. A continued alliance with France while France was at war with Britain would cripple Anglo-American trade and, in turn, hurt the bank, credit, and tariff programs, and potentially lead to an ill timed war with the former mother country. Thus, despite outcries from the French supporting Jeffersonians, Washington chose an ad hoc position of neutrality to better relations with Britain, hurting the 1778 alliance with France in the process. Needless to say, the French reacted in shock at the lack of support they received to fight off what they thought was a common enemy in Britain.

Relations between the American Revolutionary War allies became more strained when Chief Justice John Jay returned from Britain with what became the Jay Treaty, which led to a difficult debate in the Senate. Looked at by both the French and the Jeffersonians as a move toward a United States alliance with Britain, Jay’s Treaty was misunderstood by the Jeffersonians at the time. It temporarily settled tensions between Britain and the United States by negotiating land and fort disputes in the Northwestern United States, improved economic relations for the two countries in the West Indies, revoked British Orders in Council, and set up a fairer system for United States debt repayment. The treaty thus improved economic relations for all countries (including France), but did not set up an alliance between Britain and the United States, nor did it change the main diplomatic pillars within French-U.S. relations.

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Regardless of the benefits of the treaty, Jeffersonians were angry, and several hostile French foreign ministers sought to muddy the waters of American politics. Minister Edmond-Charles Genêt started the escapades in 1793 when his propaganda campaign in the southern states tried to unite the Jeffersonians against the “anti-French” actions of the United States’ government. His actions aided the passage of the 11th amendment, soured even Jefferson’s taste, and caused his replacement, Minister Jean Fauchet, to briefly heal relations through the improvement of debt, food, and trade relations between France and the United States.87

By 1796, Minister Pierre Adet had arrived in the United States to insure respect for France under the terms of the Jay Treaty. Instead, he ended up turning against Washington’s government, particularly the administration’s proposal not to allow countries at war to trade prized goods in U.S. ports as a means to implement his policy of neutrality. Following Washington’s decision to implement the Jay Treaty to further the aim of neutrality, Minister Adet kindly informed the administration of the French Decree that effectively ended the Treaty of 1778 by stating that neutral vessels be treated with the same oppressive means as English vessels.88 In turn, the decree put a strain on the United States’ relations with France, made Washington keep France in mind as he wrote the neutrality portion of his farewell address, and eventually led to the Quasi-War with France by 1797.89 The ironic twist of relations between the allies of the American Revolution had completed its 180-degree turn.

87 Ibid., 204-234.
88 Ibid., 423-455. The chapter shows Adet’s actions against the administration, climaxing with informing Washington of the French Decree effectively ending the alliance.
89 Ibid., 456-500. DeConde’s interaction of politics and diplomacy throughout the book is best seen here as he connects Washington’s neutrality focus in his farewell address with Adet’s actions and describes the growing animosity toward France as the Quasi War looms.
Besides the focus of British and French relations, Washington also set lasting precedents on other foreign policy matters. He set up Foreign Service assignments for Americans to interact with European countries. He acted to better our relations with Indian tribes by using military action only when needed, while encouraging conferences and treaties with several tribal nations. Further, Washington encouraged both militias and, more importantly, a peace time army and navy to resist potential threats from Britain and Indian tribes in the North, and French, Spanish, and Indian tribes in the South and West.  

Finally, Thomas Pinckney’s negotiations with Spain on the Treaty of San Lorenzo or Pinckney’s Treaty set another precedent for the Washington era of Presidents toward the end of his Presidency. Like Washington’s other foreign actions, the treaty was negotiated under terms of neutrality after Washington rejected the proposal earlier in his administration to allow Britain access to United States’ territory to take out Spain at New Orleans. Having remained neutral, Pinckney secured a more established Spanish-United States border line that expanded the country’s territory to include the future states of Mississippi and Alabama, and also insured the United States rights to trade on the Mississippi River. Washington thus became the first President to implement a treaty that secured the country’s borders through expansion, a mechanism Jefferson would follow later with a much larger purchase.

In conclusion, along with Hamilton’s inspired economic programs, the actions President Washington took in foreign affairs and the ideals by which he did so set in place


91 McDonald, The Presidency of George Washington, 122. Earlier in his term, Washington sided with Jefferson over Hamilton. Jefferson thought aiding Britain would trigger a war with France and potentially Spain, while Hamilton thought helping Britain would insure United States rights to navigate the Mississippi River.
(as we will see) the policy commitments that were challenged and modified but always remained central when governing the country until Jackson took over in 1829. All that Washington could hope for now, after establishing the two-term precedent for Presidents, would be that his Vice President could carry on in his footsteps. When the election results of 1796 came in, Washington would have his wish.

*John Adams Carries on with Washington’s Legacy*

John Adams narrowly squeezed into the Presidency after the election in 1796, having already spent a lifetime dedicated to strengthening the public interests of his country. From his time in the Continental Congress and call to action through signing the Declaration of Independence, Adams accepted his life’s purpose as a call to freedom through creating a stronger national government. This purpose was only built upon during his ambassadorship to Great Britain and role in promoting a foundation of freedom through the United States Constitution. Most recently, Adams continued a calling to his country by serving as Washington’s Vice President and was now set to culminate his public career as the second President of the United States. In doing so, he saw himself as a moderate Federalist and generally agreed with the philosophical premises that guided Washington as President. Though his image and charisma did not compare to Washington’s, Adams’ intellect and devotion to country guided him through the defining event of his Presidency—the Quasi War with France.

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Not often does one issue define a Presidency, but from 1797-1801 virtually all foreign and domestic concerns for Adams revolved around avoiding and yet preparing for war against France. Springing from the Washington administration’s commitment to neutrality, Adams inherited a quasi or limited war, later legally defined through the Supreme Court’s 1800 ruling of Bas v. Tingy. Though Adams’ initial meeting with French Minister Adet showed progress towards diplomacy, the rejection of United States Minister Charles Pinckney in France made Adams feel he should prepare for war. In doing so, however, Adams chose not to initially use military force unless absolutely necessary, saying that he, “dread not a war, with France or England, if either forces it upon us, but [I] will make no aggression upon either, with my free will, without just necessary cause and provocation.”94

This helps to explain Adams’ initial response to the French hostilities and their attacks of United States’ ships on the high seas. Instead of immediately declaring war, Adams carried on with Washington-minded policies and raised taxes to build up the country’s defenses, taking particular pride in watching the strength of the country’s navy grow.95 Despite hostilities from both Federalists and Republicans, Adams also sent John Marshall, Elbridge Gerry, and Pinckney for a second attempt at negotiations in Paris. Here, France responded with the notorious XYZ Affair where they demanded that the Americans pay a large bribe in order to speak with French Minister Charles de Talleyrand, refigure loan

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93 McCullough, John Adams, 460; Brown, Ralph, The Presidency of John Adams, 36. As one example, Adams cast 31 pro-Washington deciding votes in the Senate during his Vice Presidency. He did not agree with every policy, however, including distrusting some of Hamilton’s banking ideals.
95 Ibid., 63-76. The chapter highlights Adams’ commitments to a strong central military establishment as opposed to the militia based programs the Jeffersonians wished to keep.
terms so that the United States would help fund France’s European war, and apologize for anti-French comments made by figures in the United States’ government.\footnote{Brown, \textit{The Presidency of John Adams}, 36-46.}

Though the trio considered paying the bribe, the other terms to proceed with negotiation were unacceptable and subsequently sent Marshall and Pinckney back to the United States to update Adams on the growing hostilities. Gerry stayed in hopes of furthering negotiations, feeling that the potential for negotiation still existed. As it turned out, he was right. Despite pushing the United States to the brink of war with their demands, Talleyrand and the French Directory wanted peace in the end. They knew the odds of securing victory in Europe while fighting another war in North America at the same time were limited, but also wished to continue their grudges over neutrality and the Jay Treaty by making strict demands on the United States.\footnote{Alexander DeConde, \textit{The Quasi War-The Politics and Diplomacy of the Undeclared War With France, 1797-1801}, (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons 1959), 59. Despite Talleyrand’s demands, DeConde gave due credit to the French Minster throughout the book for insuring peace with the United States.} All of which was designed so that President Adams would continue questioning France’s motives throughout his administration.

Back home, Adams was fighting ideological battles over the war from both ends of the political spectrum. The Jeffersonians thought Adams’ actions were close to provoking an unneeded war against the country’s natural ally in freedom. On the other hand, the Federalists, led by a concerned Hamilton, made the case for immediate war against France, deeming the fight inevitable and knowing victory meant the acquisition of New Orleans and the Floridas. In the mist of the bickering, Adams decided to put out the Republican fire first by sending the XYZ papers to Congress once Marshall returned from France. Doing so generally silenced criticisms from the Jeffersonians for the time being as they overcame the
shock of how the ambassadors were treated in France and went along with passing twenty war preparation bills.\(^98\)

Still, Adams was not ready to declare war and continued his two step approach of preparation and diplomacy. He called Washington out of retirement and quarreled with the first President over the rank of other generals.\(^99\) He avoided Venezuela’s Francisco de Miranda’s request to unite with Great Britain and the Spanish colonies in North America against Spain, knowing the action would break relations with Spain and Washington’s call for neutrality, as well as push France closer to war.\(^100\) Further, he proposed sending a controversial third round of negotiators to France through Gerry, Supreme Court Chief Justice Oliver Ellsworth, and William Davie. The event stirred further rebellion from Federalists in the administration, who now felt Adams had sold out to the French when he instead should have declared war.

Within the midst of losing support from the Federalists, Adams signed the Alien and Sedition Acts which implemented a lengthier time for foreigners to become citizens and punished those who spoke out against Adams’ war preparation. Proposed and passed by Congress and rightfully condemned historically, the acts should be placed within the context of the times. Acquired as a modest resemblance of English law, many saw the act as

\(^98\) Ibid., 90-92. The bill included a provision for a navy department, navy, increased army, arms, militia, increased taxes, embargo, and the infamous Alien and Sedition Acts.

\(^99\) Brown, *The Presidency of John Adams*, 66-71. Adams was adamant about not allowing Hamilton to serve as Washington’s number two man; a proposal that Washington was strongly against. Though only speculative, one historical argument argued that Adams’ actions were done to buy time for the peace process to work itself out.

remarkable “for its lenity and humanity: No honest man need to dread such laws as these.”101 Under the acts, only fourteen were sentenced for punishment and they were later upheld by the Supreme Court under the principle that “the Federal Constitution endowed the national government with cognizance over all cases (including speaking seditiously against the government) arising under common law.”102 Further, most procedures under the four acts expired by the time Adams left office, making them a short distraction from the country’s mission to insure civil liberties.

Despite putting the acts into perspective, Jefferson and Madison knew there was something inherently wrong with passing the acts and took full advantage of this concern when working to promote the ideals of their emerging Republican Party. For years, attacks on Adams’ “monarch-like tendencies” were second nature, and the acts only furthered the Republicans cause to unite against this “king-like monarch who did nothing but tax the people.” In countering the acts, Jefferson and Madison inspired the Virginia and Kentucky resolutions, urging states to stand up to the federal government for limiting their civil liberties.103 Though the resolutions and attacks against Adams helped the Republicans organize their party, both backfired when the resolutions were viewed as promoting disunion and when Adams’ actions to prevent war with France succeeded.

Back in France, the three latest diplomats discovered Minster Talleyrand’s increased desire for peace. Napoleon Bonaparte had, in essence, taken supreme control of the country

102 Ibid., 232.
103 Kock, Adrienne, Jefferson & Madison, The Great Collaboration, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 174-211. Both Jefferson and Madison make clear later on that their actions were not designed to spur an extreme states’ rights movement for secession, but only to stand up for the liberties that the country was build upon.
and hoped to work out a treaty given the conditions in Europe and the prospect that Jefferson may become the next President. After six months of stalemate over the terms of breaking the 1778 alliance, the forgiveness of indemnities to France by the United States, and other small quibbles, the respected foreign dignitaries agreed on a framework for a peace agreement. They set aside the more difficult issues such as indemnities for a later date and instead created the Treaty of Mortefontaine. Because of the treaty, open war between the countries was no longer an option for the time being, all previous calls under the 1778 alliance were abandoned, and better trade options were established. For all practical purposes, however, most of the terms under the Alliance of 1778 were kept, with the exception that the new treaty accepted the United States’ position of neutrality.104

The news brought great relief to the American ambassadors, but failed to reach home soon enough to save Adams’ reelection bid. Along with the Jeffersonian attacks, Hamilton also came out to spoil his reelection, not satisfied that Adams had carried the banner of Federalism high enough. In doing so, he published a 54-page letter in New York chastising Adams’ public conduct and character.105 Between the letter and his sway with New York’s votes in the Electoral College, Hamilton aided in costing Adams reelection in a close 73, 73, and 65 loss to Burr and Jefferson in 1800.

Despite the disappointment in his electoral defeat, Adams was rejuvenated by the peace treaty, which came in from France and passed the Senate after an initial defeat. In return, Adams felt his objective as President complete and took pride that he kept the country

104 DeConde, The Quasi War, 223-258. As usual, the details of DeConde’s Ellsworth Mission chapter discussing the formation and conditions of the treaty are splendid.
at peace without sacrificing the country’s or his own principles regarding how government should operate. As his term ended, he left without attending Jefferson’s inaugural, hoping that the Federalist legacy for the nation would live on through the help of his midnight court appointments (most notably new Chief Justice John Marshall) and would not succumb to the Jeffersonian ideals for governing. Though Jefferson’s party was now set to dominate national elections until 1828, Adams’ wish that the Jeffersonian ideal would not guide the country’s commitments would come true.

_The Jefferson, Not Jeffersonian Presidency_

Jefferson’s larger than life ideals and Congressional election results in 1800 suggested that the country was calling for dramatic change as the third President entered office. On the former, Jefferson’s ideals had served him well throughout his life as colonial legislator, member of the Second Continental Congress, state legislator, Governor of Virginia, and Minister to France. Further, Jefferson’s ideals united the country against Great Britain in the 1770’s and 1780’s and, with their agrarian-based nature, continued to play out in governing the nation under the Articles of Confederation. With emphasis placed on states and individuals over a strong central government, militias over armies, legislators over courts and executive leaders, and French over British relations, Jefferson spoke to the hearts of agrarian America and seemed ready to return the country to these ideals following twelve years of Federalist leadership under Washington and Adams.

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106 Brown, _The Presidency of John Adams_, 195-216
107 Forrest McDonald, _The Presidency of Thomas Jefferson_, (Lawrence: The University Press of Kansas, 1976), 1-28. The pages listed describe how Jefferson’s ideals came to be, yet hundreds of other writings are available to better understand Jefferson’s philosophy.
The campaign and Congressional election results of 1800 also suggested the country was ready for big changes. Besides expressing the above values and painting Adams as a aristocratic Monarch, Jefferson spoke against money and banking systems, for eliminating the national debt, and for decreasing the roles the federal government played. The platform seemed to have worked, despite a close Presidential victory for Jefferson in the Electoral College and being elected on the 34th ballot in the House of Representatives. His Republican Party was handed a 65-38 majority in the House (103-39 after the 1802 elections) and a 17-15 majority in the Senate (25-9 following 1802). Yet Jefferson’s campaign platform and the election results throughout his Presidency seem to be the only pieces of evidence suggesting that Jefferson’s Presidency was going to be a second revolution for the country through Jeffersonian ideals.

To explain this discrepancy, one must first look to the perceptions of party in the early republic. Before 1800, it was almost immoral to be a straight party voter. One voted based on the person’s credentials and ideas for public service and not solely on a party platform. By 1800, this had changed through the organizational abilities of Jefferson, Madison, and the Republicans in Congress.108 With the Federalists, including Adams, not strenuously campaigning before the election, the Republicans convinced the people that voting straight party was all right, that the Federalists represented aristocrats and the Republicans the common agrarian man, and were swept into office as an all-encompassing, one-party system.109 The Republican Party victories were not meant to completely throw

out what had been done under Washington and Adams, but instead to correct or modify certain parts of those policies created during the first twelve years of Federalist Presidential leadership.

This is not to deny that Jefferson’s first years in office did not produce substantial policy shifts toward the Republican ideal when compared to the Federalist ideal of Washington and Adams. Cutting most taxes, pardoning those punished under the Alien and Sedition Acts, pushing for debt reduction, and decreasing the size of the military were all actions Jefferson took to counter what he believed were the overreaches by the Federalist administrations. At the same time however, Jefferson violated his philosophical principles by expanding the federal government through increasing tariffs, making the country more reliant on Great Britain by decreasing the debt, and increasing military expenses by fighting an expensive war with the Barbary Pirates in the Mediterranean.\textsuperscript{110} As the country’s first opposition President, Jefferson found out quickly that for every Jeffersonian move he made forward, he ironically had to take one Federalist step back with Washington and Adams having set the ideals by which Presidents acted on the commitments of the time period.\textsuperscript{111}

As Jefferson moved further into his administration, he found using Federalist ideals to be even more tempting and useful, particularly after Adams’ diplomacy during the Quasi War helped Jefferson purchase one of the easiest land accusations in United States history. The move for the Louisiana Purchase began when Napoleon realized that the onset of

\textsuperscript{110} Forrest McDonald, \textit{The Presidency of Thomas Jefferson}, 29-74.
\textsuperscript{111} Leonard White, \textit{The Jeffersonians: A Study in Administrative History, 1801-1809}, (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1951). Specifically focused on administrative capacities, White’s claim is that the governing structures of Washington and Adams were not drastically altered under Presidents Jefferson through John Quincy Adams.
Jefferson in the White House would not amount to any major changes in United States policy toward France. The French leader became even more frustrated when the slave uprisings on his Caribbean colony of St. Domingo increased, knowing that the island was a gateway to the Louisiana territory he had Spain retrocede to France. In desperate need of money to finance his European conquests, Napoleon then discussed the Louisiana Purchase offer with French Minister Francois Barbe-Marbois, who, through Minister Talleyrand, pitched it to United States Minister Robert Livingston.112

The offer stunned Livingston, for he only had orders from Jefferson to seek the purchase of the port of New Orleans to guarantee American farmers west of the Appalachian Mountains access for their goods to the high seas. Joined now by Ambassador James Monroe, the duo struggled for days in deciding whether it was proper for them to accept the offer without consulting Jefferson.113 Once they had decided that they would accept the purchase on the grounds that it was best for the country, they then moved to deciphering by what terms they should purchase the land. In the end, John Quincy Adams labeled the purchase one of the most outstanding achievements for the country to date behind the Declaration of Independence and Constitution.114 At the cost of roughly $27 million over twenty years, the purchase agreement sailed across the Atlantic for, hoped Linvingston and Monroe, Jefferson’s approval.

113 Ibid., The concern was that Napoleon would go back on his offer if they waited for a cross Atlantic tour to deliver the information. Email, at the time, was not available!
114 Ibid., 201-206.
The offer also astonished Jefferson. A year earlier he had been ready to go to war with France if not allowed access to trade through New Orleans and the Mississippi River. Now he was presented with an agreement that, if accepted, would double the size of the country. Yet Jefferson’s philosophical views briefly stood in the way. Legally, Jefferson questioned the possibility of breaking the France-Spain agreement that said if France ever wished to sell off the territory, they must work through Spain to do so. Economically, the purchase meant sending the country into deeper debt, a provision the philosophical Jefferson felt was unhealthy for the nation. Constitutionally, the purchase drastically extended the powers of the federal government if done without first adding a constitutional amendment.\textsuperscript{115} In the end however, Madison convinced Jefferson of the treaty’s possibilities for the nation and the purchase was agreed to, knowing that it gave into the Federalist philosophy.\textsuperscript{116}

Compromising the Jeffersonian ideal also occurred in judicial affairs during Jefferson’s Presidency. Concerned by the potential that the federal judiciary would turn into a harsh 1760’s British modeled court system, the Jeffersonians in Congress first won two philosophical victories to limit the powers of the federal courts. The Judiciary Act of 1801 was ruled unconstitutional and countered Adams’ midnight judge appointments, and they impeached and found guilty a Federal District Judge Pickering for drunkenness and unlawful rulings in cases.\textsuperscript{117} The trial of Supreme Court Justice Chase, however, served as the true test when trying to uphold the Jeffersonian ideal in judicial affairs.

\textsuperscript{115} McDonald, \textit{The Presidency of Thomas Jefferson}, 66-73.
\textsuperscript{116} Cerami, \textit{Jefferson’s Great Gamble}, 218.
\textsuperscript{117} Ellis, \textit{The Jeffersonian Crisis}, 36-82. A good description of judicial affairs under Jefferson is found in these pages, with the President taking on a moderating role between the Federalists and Republicans.
At stake in the trial was whether or not to use the impeachment article in the constitution in a loose or strict manner and whether the Supreme Court would serve more as a legal or political branch of government (the charges against Chase were centered on his rulings in cases that countered the Jeffersonian philosophy, meaning that, if impeached, it would be based on a political and not a legal basis). After Vice President Burr graciously allowed the ideological Republican Quids, moderate Republicans, and Federalists to state their respective cases, Chase was acquitted on all counts of impeachment, with only one of the articles closely reaching the needed votes. Washington’s legal ideal for the Supreme Courts had won out and Jefferson himself accepted the result in the end, knowing the powers within the three branches would balance themselves out.

To close the Jefferson Presidency, he wanted to act on an issue that had plagued the country for decades and chose to do so during his final two years in office. From the American perspective, the British were always one to take advantage of U.S. trade and shipping on the high seas through taking ships, enforcing orders in council, impressing sailors, and using discriminating tariffs. With these actions and their unapologetic tone following the British attack on the U.S.S. Chesapeake, Jefferson followed Madison’s suggestion for a series of Embargo Acts against Britain in hopes of changing British policies without triggering war. Though the administration generally met their aims of bringing United States’ ships back from British ports, they also put the country in a more strained financial position, given the limited revenue coming in from Jefferson’s earlier tweaking of

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118 Ibid.
119 Ibid., 96-107.
economic policies. Further, the Embargo Acts set off a round of rebellion in the Northeast with cries that Jefferson’s policies were destroying commercial prosperity.\footnote{White, The Jeffersonian- A Study in Administrative History, 1801-1829, 423-452. His chapter offers a good description of Jefferson’s adventure in “Peaceable Coercion” under the Embargo Acts.}

To this, the lover of civil liberties and limited executive powers responded with the Enforcement Acts, which made it legal for collectors to blatantly violate the fourth amendment to search any vessels at any time and sent the army and navy out to enforce them.\footnote{Ibid., 453-473; McDonald, The Presidency of Thomas Jefferson, 148-152; Both listings describe the rebellion that resulted as the Embargo Acts became stricter and the Enforcement Acts went into existence.} Ironically, the acts were overruled by some of Jefferson’s court appointees and faded away, along with the Embargo Acts, during the last days of Jefferson’s administration. Nevertheless, Jefferson’s actions arguably went beyond the Alien and Sedition Acts in terms of limiting civil liberties and put a stamp on Jefferson’s Presidency not fulfilling its initial Jeffersonian promise.

**Madison Returns to the Washington Ways**

Despite the non-Jeffersonian Jefferson Presidency, the attachment to the agrarian and not aristocratic Republican Party continued to rise and was subsequently not challenged seriously by a Federalist candidate in the 1808 presidential election. As a result, Jefferson’s apparent heir, James Madison, became the country’s fourth President after defeating South Carolina’s Charles Pinckney 162-14 in the Electoral College. He entered office following two decades of crisscrossing the ideological spectrum to do what he felt was best for the country through several public roles and offices. During the 1780’s he was an ardent nationalist, working with Jay and Hamilton to write the Federalist papers after being labeled
the Father of the Constitution at the Constitutional Convention. After aiding Washington in his first years as President, as Speaker of the House, Madison soon realized the reality that winning elections in Virginia required a Republican Party label and crossed the political isle to play an opposition role to Washington for the remainder of his term.122

He then joined Jefferson in organizing the Republican Party and became his right hand man as Secretary of State during Jefferson’s Presidency. His mixed ideals while serving Jefferson were more Federalist when encouraging the Louisiana Purchase and in helping ensure the acquittal of Supreme Court Justice Chase, but moved Republican when forming the Embargo Acts against Britain.123 It is with these mixed ideological views that Madison entered the Presidency, where his inability to know when to push the right policy buttons helped lead to the War of 1812 and put the young republic at risk on several fronts.

Entering office in 1809, Madison took heart in preserving and furthering the union and insuring that the Federalist Party remained a limited political party. With his cabinet in place, however, Madison began his Presidency by pleasing the Northeastern Federalists, where the daily Madison bashing in Boston turned to comments that Madison may not be so bad after all.124 The new praises resulted from the Non-Intercourse Acts and subsequent talks with Great Britain’s Minister David Erskine which reopened most trade relations with Britain and increased economic activity following years of embargo restrictions.125 Back in Great Britain, however, British Foreign Minister George Canning soon revoked the Madison-

123 Cerami, *Jefferson’s Great Gamble*; Ellis, *The Jeffersonian Crisis*, 96-108. The former shows Madison’s nationalist tendencies throughout the book while the latter tells of Madison’s role in the Chase Trial.
125 Rutland, *The Presidency of James Madison*, 19-50. The chapter discusses the beginnings of Madison’s Presidency and his initial relations with Britain.
Erksine agreements, ending the brief stint of good trade relations and sending Madison into an angry state of mind with the former mother country. His degree of frustration was only worsened when Britain, through Canning, made increasingly harsher demands on American trade and shipping practices, and, according to Madison, continued treating the United States as though it were a third rate world power.\textsuperscript{126}

Before Madison took the country into a risky war, however, he also affirmed several other Washington commitments despite harsh reaction from the Jeffersonian Republican Quid faction led by John Randolf in Congress. He proposed increased taxes and urged Congress to reestablish the army and navy in preparation for a potential war. He strongly promoted the reauthorization of the national bank, despite being rejected early on with the Republican Congress, and signed Macon’s Number Two bill to increase revenues and further trade relations with Britain. Madison also took a balanced approach to Indian policy, negotiating treaties whenever the situation demanded and was always in good spirits knowing future Whig leader Henry Clay was guiding the House of Representative as Speaker.\textsuperscript{127}

After ironically returning to many of the policies made under Washington early in his administration, Madison began to move toward war with Great Britain, which was far from inevitable as 1812 dawned. Macon’s Number Two had eased trading tensions with Britain, while increasing tensions with France. Next, Britain was not looking for war during a time when trade with the United States was necessary for security in an unstable Europe. Finally, the United States was in no condition to fight a war against one of the world’s top

\textsuperscript{126} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{127} Ibid., 19-98.
superpowers, with the state of the treasury, military, and militia in a weakened national state after losing revenues and organization during Jefferson’s Presidency.128

Yet for all the reasons that would not lead to war, the sequence of events also seemed destined to provoke a war in 1812. Congress had recently sworn in 74 new members, many of who were war hawks itching at the prospects of making Canada part of the United States after defeating Britain. Further, Napoleon sent his infamous Cadore Letter to the President, informing him that France would limit its decrees on the United States if Britain eliminated its Orders in Council against the United States or if Madison stood more firmly against British trade practices.129

Another important factor in sending the country to war, however, was the fact that Madison had reached a tipping point toward conflict, having wanted since 1793 to curtail Great Britain’s position on the high seas.130 As a result, Madison had given a large new list of requirements to Britain to avoid war, including an apology for the Chesapeake Bay incident, repeal of the Orders of Council, and halting the impressment of United States sailors. When Britain did not enact the new policies in a timely fashion, Madison then informed his cabinet that if the U.S.S. Hornet did not return with a change in policy from France in April of 1812, he must ask Congress for a declaration of war with Britain. By June, with France attacking United States ships at a more consistent rate than Britain, much of the country questioning why we were taking on this military endeavor, and the British

128 71-132
129 J.C.A. Stagg, Mr. Madison’s War-Politics, Diplomacy, and Warfare in the Early American Republic, 1783-1830, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 55-58. This sly move by Napoleon was designed to pit the United States against Britain or vice versa and better France’s chances for victory in Europe.
130 Forrest McDonald, The Presidency of Thomas Jefferson, 106.
Parliament close to preparing a suitable trade agreement that may have extinguished the reasons for going to war, Madison followed through with his war crusade against Britain and asked Congress for a declaration.\textsuperscript{131} After leading Jeffersonian Republican John Randolph put up an unsuccessful opposition movement in Congress, the country was at war with Britain.

As Henry Clay and other war hawks would say, the war to teach Britain a lesson had begun, but the arrogance by which the country believed it would easily secure its war aims of taking Canada and securing better and more just trade practices with Britain was far from smooth. With an untrained army, lack of proper war equipment, uninspired Northeastern militias, and unprepared Generals such as James Wilkinson, Henry Dearborn, William Hull, Stephen Van Rensselaer, and even William Henry Harrison, early campaigns to take Canada and hold present day Michigan at Detroit ended in defeat. The only war saving victories during the first year and a half of the conflict were Commodore Oliver Perry’s hold at Lake Erie – a naval victory - and a victory at York (present day Toronto) which was marred by the subsequent burning of York and Canadian desire for revenge.\textsuperscript{132}

With more negatives than positives, Madison quickly realized how unprepared the country was for war. After his concern for winning reelection passed with a large Electoral College victory over DeWitt Clinton 128-99, he tried to regain control of his complex war operation. Using Jefferson’s advice, he set forth a Hamiltonian program of taxes, loans, and paper money to fund the war, and also created a brief, yet harmful and unpopular embargo against Britain. He reorganized his generals and cabinet, each having their own idea about

\textsuperscript{131} Ruland, \textit{The Presidency of James Madison}, 102.
\textsuperscript{132} Ibid., 99-132.
how to proceed, yet did not succeed in using the needed Presidential leadership skills to unite them under one coherent strategy.\textsuperscript{133} On another level, he tried unsuccessfully to bring Russia on board for peace talks with Britain in hopes of producing a diplomatic means of securing the country’s interests on the high seas. Finally, Madison was left to deal with increased attacks from Federalists in the Northeast, Congress, and others who felt he was no longer competent to guide the country through the war.\textsuperscript{134} Calls of “Mr. Madison’s War,” “the country’s prosecution of a wicked war,” or “the wrong war, against the wrong nation, at the wrong time” were consistently heard as well.\textsuperscript{135}

Despite Madison’s attempts to untangle his pre-war miscalculations, the dignity and prestige of the country was brought to its lowest point when the British marched on Washington in July and August of 1814. Going into denial as the event neared, Madison’s hopes that the militia and other unprepared military operations would arrive just in time to save the capital turned instead to a scene of fleeing militiamen and little defense of the city. Instead, the British sailed near the heart of the capital, burned the prominent public buildings, chose to leave the city, and taught the United States a valuable lesson.\textsuperscript{136} As British Admiral Cockburn claimed, “You can thank old Madison for this. It is he who got you into this scrape.”\textsuperscript{137}

\textsuperscript{133} Stagg, \textit{Mr. Madison’s War: Politics, Diplomacy, and Warfare in the Early American Republic, 1783-1830}, 304-386.
\textsuperscript{134} Ibid., 270-286; Ruland, \textit{The Presidency of James Madison}, 99-154. Rutland’s two chapters show the mounting chaos that Madison created when declaring war when he did. Stagg does the same put places Congressional bickering at the forefront for why Madison was unable to progress with its war aims.
\textsuperscript{135} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{137} Ibid., 163.
Fortunately, the burning of Washington was the lowest point of the war, with Britain not wishing to take over their former colonies, a reinvigorated military able to retake territory in the country’s northwest, and General Andrew Jackson’s ability to win victory at New Orleans. The latter victory came after the peace signing at Ghent, but before news of the treaty reached New World ports. Americans generally believed that Jackson’s victory over veterans of Britain’s peninsula campaign led to the treaty. This incorrect sequencing was gladly welcomed by Madison who came out of his isolated state and continued to lead the country.\textsuperscript{138} Though the Treaty of Ghent did little to secure the war aim of bettering treatment of United States vessels and trade on the high seas with Britain, Madison and Congress agreed to end the war with Britain in 1815.\textsuperscript{139} In doing so, the Madison administration wiped their brows for surviving a near catastrophe for the republic.

The ending of the war spurred Madison to return even further to his national roots of the 1780’s and, as Randolph put it to, “out do Hamilton” when promoting a Federalist agenda during the final years of his administration.\textsuperscript{140} Congress passed many of Madison’s proposals, including creating a second national bank and peacetime military, paying down but allowing a national debt, passing protective tariff, tax, education, currency, and veteran legislation, and promoting internal improvement projects.\textsuperscript{141} Though done under the Republican Party, it’s safe to say that Washington and Hamilton would have each supported Madison’s actions during his final years in office.\textsuperscript{142} Further, former President Adams stated

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{138} Ibid., 155-182.
\item \textsuperscript{139} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{140} Ibid., 183-215; Stagg, \textit{Mr. Madison’s War}, 501-518.
\item \textsuperscript{141} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{142} Kock, \textit{Jefferson and Madison: The Great Collaboration}, 251-260. The pages touch on Jefferson and Madison abandoning their Republican principles during their Presidencies, but also urge one to keep in mind that they kept a higher calling for liberty and freedom always kept at the forefront of their decisions.
\end{itemize}
that Madison did more to build a strong nation than Washington, himself, and Jefferson combined did as President.¹⁴³

Yet the country was wounded internally, as seen most evidently through the Federalist sparked Hartford Convention. The convention did not reach a condition where the northeastern states were close to seceding from the union. However, their calls for action on limiting Presidential power and proposed amendments to the constitution for dealing with embargoes, slaves, and territorial expansion further showed the divisiveness that took over the country following the war.¹⁴⁴ It was under such divisive circumstances that Monroe became President in 1817 to begin healing the country in an “Era of Good Feelings.”

**Monroe Heals the Country**

James Monroe entered the Presidency with ideals formed in his home state of Virginia where he had spent most of his public career. Though he greatly respected Washington as he fought alongside him during the Revolutionary War, he chose to vote against the Constitution as an elector from Virginia for its lack of a bill of rights. After working briefly as the U.S. Ambassador to France under Washington, Monroe worked tirelessly with Jefferson and Madison to spearhead the ideals of the Republican Party in the 1790’s. His lessons learned here then guided him as Representative to the Virginia House of Delegates, Congressman, Senator, and Governor.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ Stagg, *Mr. Madison’s War* *Mr. Madison’s War: Politics, Diplomacy, and Warfare in the Early American Republic,* 1783-1830, 482-485.
As diplomat for President Jefferson, Monroe’s ideals became a bit more oriented toward what Washington would have wanted for the national government, as he immediately took the Louisiana Purchase offer from Napoleon and worked with William Pinkney to negotiate the Monroe-Pinkney Treaty with Great Britain to further trade and sea relations. Nevertheless, as the end of Jefferson’s Presidency neared, the Jeffersonian Republicans attempted to draft Monroe over Madison as the party’s nominee for President in hopes that he would move forward the Jeffersonian policies and ideals that Jefferson himself did not complete.

Other circumstances, however, allowed Madison to be elected President in 1808, but led to Monroe’s appointment as Secretary of State in 1811. The position suited Monroe well, as he guided Madison through the War of 1812, particularly during the British march on the capital. The near disaster of the war made Monroe realize the importance of an organized, united, and active central government. Thus, even though he always remembered his roots as a Jeffersonian Republican, Monroe knew that as President elect, he could only take those ideals so far. With his initial task to unite the country following a difficult war, he would then work within the ideals and commitments of President Washington to guide the country from 1817-1825.

To begin his Presidency, for instance, Monroe rekindled a Washington tradition by setting out on a tour of the country, starting in the war torn northeast. As he toured the region disrupted most by the war, each state welcomed him with praise and Monroe looked forward to culminating his public career as President. In furthering the Presidential office,

\[146 \text{ Ibid.}\]
however, he saw increased pressure from Congress throughout his two terms, with Madison’s actions during the war awakening the legislative branch to more sternly enforce its check on the executive branch. As a result, Monroe constantly insured that his cabinet delivered all papers and documents to the legislative branch and used caution when implementing and moving forward with the major issues of his administration.\textsuperscript{147}

The first major issue was how to deal with The Panic of 1819. As the country’s economy worked to recover from a difficult war and adjust from the end of the Napoleonic Wars in Europe, the economic era of good feelings soon ended. Cotton prices in the south plunged and the manufacturing center in the northeast staggered. With blame and anger steadily rising against banks and the well-to-do, Monroe could have easily returned to his Jeffersonian roots to abolish the national bank and promote a less centralized economy.

Yet he did not see the bank and national economy as needing vast changes.\textsuperscript{148} To Monroe, the bank had provided stability and furthered economic growth for the country until its charter ran out briefly during the War of 1812. As a result, time and incremental policy change were needed to let the bank help revitalize the economy.\textsuperscript{149} As a result, he insured that Congress did not eliminate Hamilton’s bank and that a protective tariff was implemented instead to revitalize the manufacturing industry in the country’s northeastern region. These policies, along with decreasing the national debt and taxes, were the means by which Monroe acted to thwart the panic and pull the country out of a major economic downturn.

\textsuperscript{147} Cunningham Jr., \textit{The Presidency of James Monroe}. Monroe’s leadership style when dealing with Congress is seen throughout the book.

\textsuperscript{148} Ibid., 81-86.

\textsuperscript{149} Dangerfield, \textit{The Era of Good Feelings}, 175-196. Here is a discussion of the specific causes of the Panic of 1819, as well as how the Supreme Court furthered Monroe’s Hamilton minded response to it. Most notably was their decision in \textit{McCulloch vs. Maryland}, upholding the constitutionality of a national bank, and, more importantly for legitimizing the federal government, limiting the rights of states to restrict interstate commerce.
Another prominent economic domestic concern during Monroe’s Presidency was the continued battle over internal improvements. Ever since Washington’s proposal for an active federal government in public works projects, cries rang out from the Jeffersonians that the “promote the general welfare” clause in the Constitution need not turn into a Pandora’s box to feed the federal government’s increasing needs. Though Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe each liked the idea of using the national government for building roads, schools, and canals, they took a middle ground position expressing the federal government’s lack of authority to support such improvements without the addition of a constitutional amendment.  

Monroe only moderately lived up to this philosophy during his Presidency. Though he vetoed his share of internal improvement bills, he also allowed many to pass, including money for Atlantic seaboard canals and $300,000 for the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal Company. Further, he signed the General Survey Bill in 1824 that allowed the newly formed United States Army Corps of Engineers to produce surveys, plans, and estimates for improving navigation across the country. In doing so, Monroe balanced pleasing the Jeffersonian minded members of his party by vetoing some internal improvement bills, but still insuring that funds were available to move many popular projects forward.

Perhaps more than any other of our first six presidents, Monroe was also most cautious, yet bold when resolving and making foreign policy decisions. The border with

150 Ibid. 320-326; Cunningham Jr. *The Presidency of James Madison*, 165-167; White, *The Jeffersonians: A Study in Administrative History, 1801-1829*, 474-495. Each provides details about the internal improvement issue during the Monroe Presidency, with White offering a chapter on the internal improvements issue for each of these Presidencies.

151 Ibid.
Spanish Florida, for instance, became an increasingly debated issue early on in the Monroe administration. Miscommunications between General Jackson and Monroe spurred the First Seminole War, resulting in the taking of a portion of the then Spanish colony. The event threw the President into a heightened state of alert, as he initially thought to return the land to Spain and avoid a potential and untimely war. Yet the good fortune of the young republic overruled Monroe’s initial inclination.

Like France nearly twenty years earlier, Spain had grown weary of securing a large colonial empire in the New World. The result threw Secretary of State John Quincy Adams into the picture for what became another great land treaty for the country. After multiple negotiations with Spanish Foreign Minister Don Luis de Onis, Adams proudly came away with the Transcontinental or Adams-Onis Treaty. The results not only gave all of Florida to the Untied States, but also extended its borders for the first time to the Pacific Ocean. Though the Secretary gave into Spain’s demands along the Arkansas River and did not obtain the border along Texas that he wanted, President Monroe and the Senate were both pleased, as they ratified the treaty two days after the completed negotiation.

Perhaps the most prominent foreign policy legacy of Monroe, however, was the Monroe Doctrine and its formation on the grounds of national interest, foreign politics, and the Presidential election of 1824. For years, new independent nations in South America had called for recognition from the United States. Thus, after a brief period of withholding

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153 Dangerfield, *The Era of Good Feelings*, 137-156. His “Secretary” chapter tells of the buildup to the treaty and also highlights the negotiation skills of John Quincy Adams.
his support for recognition, Monroe deemed it necessary to take full advantage of the issue when recognizing the countries. To further the national interest, Monroe, with the help of his Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, proclaimed that the colonization of the Western Hemisphere was complete and that, though foreign countries could keep their current land in the New World, no future colonial endeavors could occur without facing consequences from the United States.  

Monroe made this strategic move during a time when the threat of foreign obstacles seemed least evasive. Britain was not about to quarrel with Monroe’s plan, given that it did little to change, if not furthered its interests in the hemisphere. Even if France wanted to put up a fight, they had little interest in doing so as they continued to recover from a costly European War. With foreign influence at stake, The Holy Alliance of Russia, Prussia, and Austria argued against the doctrine, but did little to challenge its premise. Spain too argued against it, but took little action.

In the midst of proposing the doctrine, Monroe needed to answer two other questions. Should he answer Britain’s request to form an alliance with the former mother country when implementing it? Second, should the United States come to the aid of Greece, currently in a revolutionary state, if their quest for independence was ever challenged by another European country? On the former, Jefferson, Madison, and all members of his cabinet (excluding John Quincy Adams) felt he should accept the alliance. Other than Jefferson and John Quincy

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155 Ibid. Monroe was also implemented the doctrine knowing that he had British support to enforce it as it was in their interests to keep out other European influences in the newly independent parts of Spain’s former empire in the Americas.
156 Cunningham Jr., The Presidency of James Monroe, 149-163. A general description of the national and foreign interests involved in the doctrine is listed in this chapter.
Adams who believed in staying out of European conflicts, Monroe’s cabinet gave the “o.k.” to aid Greece if the situation arrived. Despite the general approval from key players in and out of his administration for both policies, Monroe rejected both proposals, with the upcoming election of 1824 having provided the most accurate explanation for his decision.\footnote{Ibid. and May, *The Making of the Monroe Doctrine*, 132-253. These pages go into deep detail of how the position each candidate took in making their stance on the doctrine impacted their chances in the 1824 election.}

Monroe had remembered all too well what happened to Jefferson and his Embargo Act at the end of his administration and did not wish to duplicate any big mistakes in attempting to promote a likely controversial policy of aligning with Britain or coming to the aid of Greece. Further, John Quincy Adams’ persuasive skills outdid Clay, Crawford, and Calhoun’s as they each tried to best position themselves for the Presidential election in 1824.\footnote{Ibid.} Furthermore, whether it was for national, foreign, or Presidential election interests, the Monroe Doctrine solidified the Washington commitment to neutrality and furthered the goal that began in 1789 to secure the nation through a stronger central government. Monroe had completed his tasks to correct or modify the policies that came out of the Madison Presidency, further some Jeffersonian based policies, and put a stamp on an era of Washington-minded Presidential ideals and commitments.

*John Quincy Adams Closes the Washington Presidential Era*

As Monroe left office, the end of one era and the beginning of the next was near with the controversial Presidency of John Quincy Adams providing the backdrop. The election chaos and outcries from the 1824 election outcome haunted the President throughout his
administration, as he worked to uphold the virtues of Washington in a time of rising partisanship and Jacksonian Democracy. To try and uphold the Washington ways, he worked with his Secretary of State Henry Clay on the domestic front to instill a nationalist and economic American System. Inspired through the ideals of Hamilton, Washington, and, of course, his father, a high protective tariff “of abomination”, investments in internal improvements and scientific expeditions, securing public lands, reconfiguring Indian policy, and establishing uniform currency and bankruptcy acts were a few of the measures that were suggested, but were mostly turned down in Congress during the difficult times of the second Adams’ Presidency.¹⁵⁹ In foreign affairs, Adams tried, but was also mostly unsuccessful in obtaining better trade agreements with Great Britain through the West Indies and Cuba and in seeing his proposals to send representatives to Greece, Guatemala, and the Panama Congress were defeated.¹⁶⁰

Many explanations arose regarding these and other unsuccessful policy endeavors by Adams, but two seem most relevant. The first and most evident was that the hostile Jacksonian Congress felt it their duty to thwart the stealer of the 1824 election at every turn.¹⁶¹ Second, the governing ideals that had worked during this Washington Presidential era were fading and ready for a new direction centered on a leader who could rally the Democratic cries of the people and implement fully a Jeffersonian vision that the Quid faction in Congress had wanted for decades.¹⁶² Hence, Andrew Jackson was elected in a

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 67-164.
¹⁶¹ Ibid., Throughout Hargrave’s book, one can see the Jacksonian Democrats mounting and thwarting the President’s moves.
landslide in 1828 and set forth broad new ideals and commitments that would guide Presidents and the country through the antebellum period of American history. Jackson’s actions on Supreme Court appointments, a spoils system, elimination of the national bank, implementing free trade agreements, decreasing the high protective tariff, virtually eliminating the debt, substantially changing Indian policy resulting in the Trail of Tears, and creating a mindset to government of, by, and for the people affirmed that the Presidency of John Quincy Adams ended one era and began another in American Presidential history.  

The 1st Presidential Era

Washington’s call for neutrality to secure and expand the nation’s borders and his broad interpretation of the Constitution to instill Hamilton inspired economic programs were the main policy commitments that framed Presidential actions from 1789-1829. After Washington laid the groundwork for these endeavors, Adams furthered them through peacefully ending the Quasi War. Even though the Republican Party and Jefferson’s victories in the election of 1800 looked to establish broad new policy directions for the country, his two terms turned out to be far from grounded in Jeffersonian philosophy, with his moderate Presidential commitments and factions in the Republican Party actually furthering many of the Federalist commitments made under Presidents Washington and Adams.

Randolph said in 1806, “The administration...favors federal principles, and, with the exception of a few great rival characters, federal men...The old Republican Party is already ruined, past redemption. New men and new maxims are the order of the day.” These new men and maxims would fight on and result in the Jacksonian Democratic Party 20 years later.

163 Donald Cole, The Presidency of Andrew Jackson, 3-22. Cole points out that the republic was anxious in this chapter. Throughout the book, we see themes that a new era was beginning for Presidents to lead the country by.
Furthermore, before and after Madison put the country at risk through the misled War of 1812, he used Washington’s ideals to guide him during his time in office. Monroe did the same, particularly when putting a stamp on Washington’s foreign policy notion to secure and expand the nation’s borders by implementing the Monroe Doctrine and the Transcontinental Treaty. However, John Quincy Adams’ Presidency could no longer further many of Washington’s policy commitments with the rise of the Jacksonian ideal becoming more prominent as the next phase of Presidential history loomed.

So what did the policies, players, and events that the first six Presidents dealt with during the first 40 years of the republic mean for the future of Presidential leadership? Despite the era’s conclusion in 1829, the institutional leadership roles of cycled circumstances that each of our first six Presidents played into during their time in office lived on and continue to live on in our Presidents today. It is examining these cycles of vulnerable or resilient commitments and opposed or affiliated ideals within the institutional expectations of implementing change or stability and acting independently or subordinately that we now turn to in Chapters 4-6.
4. CYCLED STEPS ONE AND TWO: Presidents of Reconstruction and Great-Son Articulation

“It is necessary to revise and amend the Articles of Confederation… something must be done, or the fabric must fall, for it certainly is tottering.”

-George Washington
1786 Letter to John Jay

…for eight years, the country had been administered by a citizen who, “by a long course of great actions”… brought “unexampled prosperity” and “the highest praise of foreign nations.”

-John Adams
Speaking of Washington in his 1797 Inaugural Address

Having just described the history of our first six Presidents, we are ready to venture back to the political aspect of the thesis. Our task over the next three chapters is to further explain how these first six Presidents were the first to lead in the six-step cycle of circumstances within institutional expectations. For it would be these Presidents who were the first to serve in what in future years became Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, William McKinley/ Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, and Ronald Reagan institutional cycles of circumstantial Presidential leadership. To do so, it may be useful to again turn to Tables 2 and 3 from the introduction to highlight how the central argument for a six-step cycled Presidency works better within the framework of a Washington cycle instead of a Skowronek based Jefferson regime. Here we can better assess our first six Presidents leadership roles through a Washington Reconstruction, Adams Great-Son Articulation, Jefferson Preemption-

165 Clark, All Cloudless Glory Volume Two: The Life of George Washington, Making a Nation, 361.
One, Madison Grandson Articulation, Monroe Preemption-Two, and John Quincy Adams Disjunction.

Further, when using the above statement and central thesis for understanding Presidential leadership through the six-step cycled circumstances and institutional expectations examined in the introduction, we can first turn to President Washington’s leadership position as a Reconstructive President. Here, we can assess how he led at an opportune and independent time to become a “masterful” President through reconstructing and thoroughly changing the country’s governing commitments compared to their status under the Articles of Confederation. The same can be said for Presidents Jackson, Lincoln, McKinley (and Theodore Roosevelt after McKinley’s assassination), Franklin Roosevelt, and Reagan who led in similar reconstructive periods when the country’s prior policies for governing were most vulnerable to criticism and these Reconstructive Presidents having ideals opposed to the existing order.166

To begin assessing the similar leadership circumstances these Reconstructive Presidents faced, it is first worth asking why Skowronek left President Washington out of his leadership theory of political time referred to in this thesis as cycled circumstances. Given that he is usually one of the highest ranked Presidents the country has ever elected, was

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Washington unlike any other President? Did the commitments and ideals that Washington brought to the office fail to fall into the patterns of political time (cycled circumstances) that all other Presidents have faced since? Having completed a historic review of the time period, the answer is no.

Through the commitments he created and the ideals by which he created them, Washington epitomized all characteristics of a President of Reconstruction. The previous governing commitments under the Articles of Confederation were coming unraveled and Washington had Federalist ideals for governing that opposed the existing government. As a result, he was able to create a new reconstructive order that held authority for governing the country and its Presidents until Jackson’s election in 1828. Also as a Reconstructive President, Washington’s new policy commitments ironically did not initially help the problems they were designed to fix, but nevertheless were accepted as legitimate due to the country’s call for change and guidance in a vulnerable time in United States history. Finally as a Reconstructive President, Washington came across as very persuasive and a great party leader who won landslide Electoral College victories. These characteristics, when

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167 Leonard Leo and James Taranto, *Presidential Leadership: Rating the Best and the Worst in the White House*. This leadership book is one example where Washington is ranked first among our Presidents.

168 As stated in the introduction, some may argue that Washington was the 1st President and should thus be labeled a President of construction, not Reconstruction. I use Reconstruction knowing he was the 1st President, but also knowing that he reconstructed the country’s ideals and commitments from their vulnerable status under the Articles of Confederation.

169 Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton*, 36-39. I obtained many of my traits for Presidents of Reconstruction from these pages, as I do for my other types of Presidents from other steps of the cycle. Some may argue that I am merely repeating the arguments Skowronek made in his book. Though I thank Skowronek again for providing many parts of the theory, I would disagree with the previous statement on the grounds that I have substantially altered the Presidents leadership roles (as seen in the introduction) when compared to Skowronek’s interpretation to better understand their place in the cycle of institutional circumstances. As stated in Chapter 2, I am offering “an alternative of equal scope (that) explains more of the variance” within Presidential leadership.
examined alongside the other order creating, most independent, and perceptively masterful Reconstructive Presidencies of Jackson, Lincoln, McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, and Reagan, make Washington, more than Jefferson, the best President of Reconstruction for the early republic.

**Vulnerable Commitments and Opposed Ideals**

As shown in the history section, Washington’s Reconstructive Presidency was initiated through the vulnerability of the previously established commitments that governed the country under the Articles of Confederation. Though the articles had functioned well for a time, the weaknesses of not having a stronger central government, a 1786 economic downturn, and the ability for Federalists to build a strong case against the Anti-Federalists gave Washington the opportunity to become our first President in 1789 after the adoption of a new constitution. Given the institutional circumstances he served in as President, it allowed him to create big changes for the country’s governing commitments using his Federalist ideals. The same state of vulnerable policy commitments occurred when President Jackson became President after the Washington cycle of circumstances fell apart during John Quincy Adams’s Presidency of Disjunction and after President Lincoln became President when the Jackson cycle of circumstances came unhinged during James Buchanan’s Presidency of Disjunction.

Similarly, President McKinley entered office when the commitments were vulnerable after the Democratic Party of the late 19th century came unraveled through the economic depression of the time and President Grover Cleveland’s Presidency of Disjunction. Further,
President Franklin Roosevelt became President after the commitments made in McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt’s cycle fell apart during the Great Depression and President Hoover’s Disjunctive Presidency. Finally, President Reagan took the oath when the previous commitments created through the Franklin Roosevelt cycle of circumstances were vulnerable during President Jimmy Carter’s Disjunctive Presidency where he was faulted for being weak on defense and not limiting the burdensome federal government.

Looking to the future based on what the institutional Presidency has brought us in the past, look for the Democratic President elected around 2020 to come into office in similar circumstances, having followed the Disjunctive Republican President elected around 2016 who was unable to hold the faltering Reagan cycle together. All of the above represented instances where the old polices for governing had faltered at the end of a Presidential cycle. The first of which again was the fallout of the Anti-Federalist based Articles of Confederation, which paved the way for Washington’s Federalists ideals to reconstruct the country’s commitments when he entered the Presidency in 1789.

Here, the nation selected a leader with opposing ideals to the past so that he could create a new order to form a stronger and more active central government-something worth trying given that the policies of the past had collapsed. Washington could not have fit the part better, with his strong central governing ideals he had gained as a general, member of the Continental Congress and Society of Cincinnati, and as President of the Constitutional Convention. As a result of having ideals opposed to the old order, President Washington could play his part masterfully, attempting to create new solutions to faltering problems. Whether or not his ideals for creating new commitments worked, Washington had the ideal
time to walk away from his Presidency a hero for trying something different in the face of crisis, given that the country wanted change from the Anti-Federalist ideals that had become weakened for governing the country recently.

Other Presidents of Reconstruction became President under similar circumstances when having opposed ideals to the now faltering Presidential cycles of the past (again, an ideal situation for the country to see you as a masterful President). Jackson, for instance, had opposed ideals to the vulnerable commitments of 1829, as he embodied the common man ideal and countered the floundering “aristocratic” Washington cycle that John Quincy Adams’ Disjunctive Presidency could not overcome. President Lincoln did as well, during a time when he could unite and save the union by instilling the Republican Party’s ideals after the commitments of the Jackson cycle fell apart during Buchanan’s Disjunctive Presidency. Further, Presidents McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt used progressive Republican Party ideals to reconstruct the vulnerable Lincoln cycle when taking the United States onto the imperialist world stage and instilling trust-busting and corporatist domestic policies following the Democratic Party’s fallout in Cleveland’s second term. Finally, Franklin Roosevelt’s liberal government ideals and Reagan’s anti-social government and military strength standards fit well when old commitments had proved unsuccessful and new proposals deemed essential following the unraveling Disjunctive Presidencies of Carter and Hoover. Yet it was Washington who was the first President to enter office with opposed ideals to the faltering policies of the past when the country wanted great changes to be implemented using the Constitution’s implicit provision for an independent President. Washington and future
Reconstructive Presidents had ideal times to take full advantage of this position when offering cycle defining policy commitments for the country to take on.

Reconstructive Commitments

Because of the cycled circumstance of institutional independence and just as future Presidents of Reconstruction would create new commitments of drastic change, Washington took the oath sensing that the country was ready for a drastically new direction. As a result, he went to work with Congress to create a cycle defining domestic order. As seen in Chapter 3, he countered the weaknesses of the Anti-Federalists and the Articles of Confederation by implementing a stronger federal court system, executive cabinet, and Alexander Hamilton economic policies on debt, credit, a national bank, and tariffs. These policies would make their way through the affirming and correcting institutional leadership roles of Presidents Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and John Quincy Adams, but in the end be prominent in guiding the country until 1829.

Presidential domestic commitments with the same degree of lasting authority and change would not occur again until the commitments of the Washington cycle faltered and President Jackson’s anti-national bank, debt elimination, spoils system, states-rights judges, increased male voting rights, Trail of Tears, and Force Bill policies from 1829-1837 reconstructed the domestic commitments until 1861. Here, the commitments of the Jackson cycle came unglued, allowing Lincoln’s Presidency of Reconstruction to override the Constitution when expanding executive powers in hopes to preserve the Union during the

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Civil War. Along with it, the Lincoln Reconstruction implemented a more nationally minded banking system, increased tariff, Homestead western land policies, national railroad systems, equality provisions, and post civil war reconstruction policies to guide Presidents’ domestic agenda until 1897. ¹⁷²

Other Presidents of Reconstruction would also throw out the politics of the past to create new domestic commitments of lasting Presidential authority. Though high tariffs continued to be the center of domestic debate in the early 1900’s, the McKinley/ Theodore Roosevelt Reconstructive Presidencies countered many of the commitments in Lincoln cycle when the duo made new order creating policies for gold standards, trust-busting, increased conservation, militia centralization, federal railroad controls, a more uniform currency, and better banking standards.¹⁷³ These domestic initiatives would then guide the leadership circumstances Presidents faced until they were shattered during Hoover’s Presidency. Here, another drastically changing domestic Reconstruction was seen through President Roosevelt’s plethora of New Deal programs that set the standard for Presidents through the Carter administration.¹⁷⁴ Most recently, President Reagan’s domestic reconstructive commitments put a hold on expanding the FDR big government ideal and instead implemented a domestic cycle of circumstances based on decreased taxes and regulations and increased military spending that still holds authority in our present day political discourse.¹⁷⁵

Though only speculating, it appears that the Democratic Party is paving the path for the next cycle that will be instituted by a President of Reconstruction perhaps focused on the

¹⁷² Paludan, The Presidency of Abraham Lincoln.
¹⁷⁴ Black, Franklin Delano Roosevelt: Champion of Freedom, 225-1090.
¹⁷⁵ Reeves, President Reagan: The Triumph of Imagination.
problems of global warming and economic globalization. Yet whatever the actions future Presidents of Reconstruction will take on domestic commitments, Washington had the first opportunity to initiate order creating domestic changes because he had an ideal institutional time to serve in as President to use his opposed ideals to the faltering commitments of the past to implement polices of lasting authority for the country and for Presidents until 1829.

As the first President elected when the commitments of the past were vulnerable and his ideals for governing at the national level were opposed to them, Washington also had the ideal opportunity to create new reconstructive commitments for the country’s foreign policies. As we saw in the history chapter, Washington’s actions on Indian relations, neutrality, and Jay and Pinckney’s Treaties to secure and expand our nation’s borders countered most of what had guided the country’s foreign policy under the Articles of Confederation and set up the foreign policy reconstruction for our first cycle of Presidents. Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and John Quincy Adams each furthered or worked around what Washington had the opportunity to initiate. President Adams’ used neutrality to prevent war with France, Jefferson sided with Federalist principles when buying the Louisiana Purchase, and Monroe sensed that the time was right to use Washington’s ideals to implement the Monroe Doctrine and secure the young country’s boarders.

Though foreign policy initiatives would not be at the center of the next two order creating Reconstructive Presidents, these Presidents nevertheless had the unique opportunity to set the foreign policy standards for their respective cycles as well. Jackson halted John Quincy Adams’ Greece and Pan-American conference initiatives and set the tone for foreign

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policy until 1861 when he expanded, bettered, or attempted to form many free trade policies across the globe and began the process of acquiring Texas, while being tempted to take Mexico in the process. Then when these commitments had faltered by the end of Buchanan’s Presidency, Lincoln’s increased tariffs and call not to follow his Secretary of State William Seward’s proposal for imperial expansion kept United States foreign policy largely isolationist until the end of the century. Here, the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt Reconstructive Presidencies were able to throw out Lincoln’s foreign policy commitments and create lasting foreign commitments through economic imperialism in Cuba, the Philippines, and Hawaii, economic expansion through reciprocity agreements and the Open-Door trading policy in East Asia, and increased diplomatic maneuvers through mediating the Russo-Japanese War, establishing the Roosevelt Corollary, and limiting immigration through the Gentleman’s Agreement.

These reconstructive foreign policies would see the country through until the next Roosevelt, whose Reconstructive Presidency first took the shattered state Hoover’s Disjunctive Presidency had left him with to isolate the country until 1941 and then used World War II and its aftermath to create new international economic and political governing institutions that guided Presidents throughout the Cold War. Finally, Reagan reconstructed the nation’s foreign policies when tearing down the Soviet Union through military arms strength, which paved the way for the United States to be the world’s sole

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177 Cole, The Presidency of Andrew Jackson.
178 Paludan, The Presidency of Abraham Lincoln
180 Black, Franklin Delano Roosevelt: Champion of Freedom, 225-1090.
super power and deal with its effects in a post Cold War world.\textsuperscript{181} Therefore, just as
Washington did when using the circumstances of having opposed ideals in vulnerable times
to reconstruct foreign policies for the Washington cycle of Presidential leadership, the other
Presidents of Reconstruction took advantage of similar periods to make long-lasting foreign
commitments for their cycle of Presidents.

\textit{Initial Setbacks but Lasting Authority}

As Skowronek points out when describing these “masterful” Reconstructive Presidents, the irony behind the policy commitments they implement is that their policies do not initially solve the problems they were elected to change and improve, nor are they always Constitutional.\textsuperscript{182} Washington was the first to see his order creating policies as a
Reconstructive President falter before they worked out for governing the country. His
economic answers inspired by Hamilton did not prevent the Panic of 1793 and Washington’s
foreign policies of neutrality and the Jay Treaty with Great Britain nearly provoked war with
France.

Further, Jackson’s implementation of the common man Democratic Party ideals to
eliminate the national bank and debt actually hurt the common man, caused the Panic of
1837, and a censor from Congress. Lincoln’s stance on slavery that it should not be
expanded into new territories and states, helped provoke a deadly civil war and many of the
policies Lincoln implemented as a result were later ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme

\textsuperscript{181} Reeves, \textit{President Reagan: The Triumph of Imagination}.

\textsuperscript{182} Skowronek, \textit{The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton}, 33-34. Skowronek first makes this point here, but one may wish to also read his chapters on his Reconstructive Presidents to gain further insights into this characteristic.
McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt’s commitments to imperialism and trust-busting also created more arguments than solutions. Further, Roosevelt’s New Deal policies did not pull the country out of the Great Depression of the 1930’s and many of them were initially ruled unconstitutional. Further, his foreign policies did not prevent, nor keep us from entering a deadly World War II. Finally, Reagan’s economic programs initially faltered before they proved to work out.

The ironies found in the initial policy blunders Reconstructive Presidents implement are not to say that they were bad leaders. It merely highlights that their actions were not completely suited for solving the country’s problems of the time, nor did they always work within the constitutional limits of the republic. As a result, we may not wish to view these Presidents as the masterful leaders history presents them to be, but merely as being in the right institutional place at the right time with the country calling for change and an independent Presidency being allowed to implement those changes.

As Skowronek also points out, what saves and makes these Presidents appear to be masters of the political circumstances they served in is that their commitments had lasting authority among the Presidents that followed them. Because they were elected in times when the country was calling for great change (Figures 1 through 8), their domestic and foreign reconstructive commitments had the greatest ability to instill a new direction until the next Reconstructive President had similar circumstances to make another set of big changes. Washington’s economic and foreign policy commitments withstood initial setbacks and went

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on to form a generally resilient order by the end of his administration that did not fall apart until Jackson’s election in 1829.

Similarly, Jackson’s Reconstructive policy creations held the country together until Lincoln’s election in 1860. Here, Lincoln’s union building and economic nationalism commitments guided the country until McKinley’s takeover in 1897 where McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt’s economic corporatism and diplomatic expansion actions worked to govern the country until Franklin Roosevelt’s election in 1932. Further, Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal and World War II foreign policies generally held strong until Reagan’s election in 1980, while Reagan’s limited federal government and post Cold War agenda is still holding together, but will likely shatter with the beginnings of a Democratic Party led cycle of circumstances by 2020. All of which is to show that Reconstructive Presidents (despite initial setbacks) provide a resilient order of policies for the other Presidents in their cycle, which also has a tendency to make them come across as very persuasive leaders.184

Great Persuaders, Party Leaders, and Electoral College Magicians

Though Neustadt’s Presidential theory was designed for use among modern Presidents since FDR, his argument for a President’s power to persuade seem particularly relevant for Reconstructive Presidents.185 It seems warranted given these Presidents’

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184 As two examples, the commitments of Washington guided the country through the Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and John Quincy Adams’ administrations, while the commitments of FDR guided the country through the Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, and Carter administrations.

185 Neustadt, Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents, 29-49. Persuasion again to Neustadt is a President’s ability to convince the country that what is best for them is best for the country. Washington could thus be viewed as a great persuader for convincing the country that a stronger federal government with
seemingly masterful ability to persuade historians, their political parties, and their constituencies of their greatness as leaders. However, from the perspective of this paper, we must ask the question, “Were they great persuaders or did they merely have the right time within the cycle of circumstances to make it appear so?”

When looking at persuasion with cycled circumstances, for instance, it follows that Reconstructive Presidents have a better chance to persuade and enact big changes if leading in vulnerable situations and having opposed ideals to those that have not been tried before. For instance, it seems easier for Presidents Washington or Franklin Roosevelt to persuade the country that action and rapid change were needed during times when a national government had just been created or the country was in a Great Depression. By contrast, it seems more difficult for Presidents Jefferson or Eisenhower to persuade the country to make big changes using their ideals in times when the respected Washington and Roosevelt commitments of their cycle were working well for the country.

Our “masterful” Presidents’ ability to persuade the country of their visionary agendas is also easier given that these Presidents (other than Reagan) have large Congressional majorities with affiliated or like-mined ideals to implement these visionary agendas from. As a result, each President could rely on Congress throughout most of their Presidencies to pass nearly any piece of legislation they wanted. Washington had the Federalists in Congress, Jackson the Jacksonian Democrats, Lincoln the New Republicans, McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt the more progressive Republicans, and Franklin Roosevelt the New Deal Hamilton minded economic policies were needed, while FDR a master of persuasion for convincing the country that his New Deal policies were needed.

\footnote{Reagan had to work with a Democratic Party controlled House of Representatives.}
Democrats to pass big pieces of legislation. Further, with southern members of Congress still calling themselves Democrats but by now having ideals more aligned with Reagan Republicans, Reagan’s Reconstructive Presidency was also furthered by being able to pass much of the legislation he wanted in Congress.

Each Reconstructive President also served during times when their party or factions were in agreement about what needed to be done in the country, which made it even easier for them to come across as great persuaders as well as great party leaders. Unity of factions in the Reconstructive President’s party is not surprising, given the many years their party’s ideological wing had spent trying to get to this stage of being able to implement the major policies Reconstructive Presidents put in place. Federalists, for instance, had been fighting for what Washington implemented as President since the 1780’s and before, making it easier for Washington to influence those with similar ideals throughout his Presidency. Further, the commitments Jackson implemented in his Reconstructive Presidency had been being debated by Jackson’s future Democratic Party (most notably John Randolph and his Quid Faction) since the early 1800’s.¹⁸⁷

Next, the new Republican Party that aligned to allow Lincoln to lead as a Reconstructive President had been trying to get their issues to work together in a national platform since at least the 1840’s. Further, McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt’s Reconstructive Presidencies were made easier through the ideological progressive portion of the Republican Party having finally convinced the rest of the Republican Party to implement its stances on issues. Franklin Roosevelt’s Democratic Party had been building an ideological coalition

¹⁸⁷ As we will see in Chapter 5, Randolph was upset that Jefferson’s Presidency did not turn out to be as Jeffersonian as he and the rest of his Quid faction had hoped for.
since at least the early 1900’s, which helped him come across as a great party leader during his Presidency. Furthermore, Reagan came across as an exemplary party leader in that the Republican Party had been attempting to implement a more conservative agenda since Goldwater’s “you know he’s right” campaign of 1964. Finally, it appears that Howard Dean in 2004 began a movement to make the Democratic Party build a cycle around its ideological issues that, if the cycle continues, will culminate in a “great party leading” Reconstructive President by 2020.

All of which is not to say that the individual actions Reconstructive Presidents took to strengthen their parties were not influential. However, from the perspective of cycled circumstances, we must note that Reconstructive Presidents are viewed as great party leaders because they had an ideal time to implement an ideologically based agenda for their party that had been in the works for decades, but could not be implemented due to the resilient policies of the past. In other words, it was unlikely that the Reconstructive President’s party was not often going to get in the way of what these Presidents did and adding another example of the ideal times these Presidents led in to come across as having mastered the Presidency through being great party leaders.

Finally, Presidents of Reconstruction are noted as great political operatives for their initial landslide victories in the Electoral College and their generally larger victories during their reelection bids. Washington had the greatest accomplishment in this, as he won two unanimous victories in the Electoral College, but other Reconstructive Presidents have nothing to scoff at with the degree of their election victories. Jackson, Lincoln, McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, and Reagan were each elected and
reelected (except Theodore Roosevelt) by large, if not landslide margins. 

Again, their ability to win big election victories certainly has something to do with their ambitious, inspirational, and persuasive abilities as individual leaders. However, the degrees of their landslide election victories are more likely due to the fact that they were elected when the country was searching for new governing changes to replace the vulnerable ideals and commitments that had fallen apart under the Presidents of Disjunction. As a result, it was easier for Washington and other Reconstructive Presidents to create a large base of support for change and win big election victories because they were placed in a great institutional position in the cycle of circumstances.

Reconstructive Circumstances

Like the future Reconstructive Presidencies of Jackson, Lincoln, McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, and Reagan, Washington led during a time when the established commitments of the previous cycle were vulnerable and his ideals for creating new policy commitments were opposed to the shattered commitments of the previous cycle. As a result, he was in an ideal spot to act independently according to institutional expectations and create vast new policy measures that faltered initially but recovered to guide the country’s commitments until the beginnings of Jackson’s cycle in 1829. Also like future Presidents of Reconstruction, Washington had the circumstances available to him to be seen as a masterful, persuasive, and a great party leader who also was fortunate to win landslide victories in the Electoral College. By Skowronek and my own definitions, Washington

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188 Theodore Roosevelt, having already served most of McKinley’s second term after he was assassinated and another term following his own election victory in 1904, chose not to run again in 1908.
fulfilled all the needed characteristics of a Reconstructive President and did so more than any other President until Andrew Jackson’s Presidency began in 1829.

To strengthen the argument for a Washington six-step cycle of circumstances, however, and to continue down the Presidential leadership roles based on institutional expectations, other Presidents within Washington’s cycle should also fall into similar leadership situations that future Presidential cycles produced. Thus, let us turn to John Adams in the second section of Chapter 4. Here, we will see that Adams was the first to play the institutional role that Presidents Martin Van Buren, Ulysses Grant through Chester Arthur, William Taft, Harry Truman, and George H.W. Bush have taken on in the Great-Son Articulation step of the cycle.

The Great-Son Takes Office

March 4th, 1797 was a historic day for the United States’ Presidency. It was the first time the office would exchange hands following its “magnificent” beginnings under Washington, who for eight years had taken advantage of a time of great change and institutional independence to implement order creating commitments using Reconstructive leadership. Now it would be up to Washington’s “great-son” John Adams to carry on and articulate the commitments he had laid out for the country. Just as Van Buren would do for Jackson, Grant for Lincoln, Taft for Theodore Roosevelt, Truman for Franklin Roosevelt, and most recently George H.W. Bush for Reagan, Adams was elected to carry on with the ways of his “glorious” predecessor.189

189 Brown, The Presidency of John Adams; David McCullough, John Adams; Major Wilson, The Presidency of Martin Van Buren (Lawrence: The University of Kansas Press, 1984); William McFeely, Grant: A Biography
These are the high expectations that the Presidents in the second phase of cycled institutional circumstances find themselves in. After eras of great change and apparent invincibility from Reconstructive Presidents, Great-Son Articulators are elected in order affirming elections whereby the people want them to carry on with the established ways of their predecessor. This is difficult to do, however, with Adams and other Presidents in this great-son position not having as much authority to make changes based on their affiliated ideals (as seen in Figures 1 through 8), and at the same time needing to act on new issues that alter the Reconstructive President’s ideals in order to govern the country more effectively. In altering the reconstructive President’s commitments slightly, Great-Son articulators also face a leadership challenge of causing an uprising from those with affiliated or like mined ideals for not following the Reconstructive President’s ways to a tee. Further, they are also critiqued more by opposition parties or factions for the policy decisions they are making as they work to gain the legitimacy needed to elect a President again.  

All in all, these characteristics put Presidents of Great-Son Articulation in a more difficult and less independent leadership position when compared to their reconstructive predecessors. In return, this generally results in a three-way electoral defeat for them when

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190 Skowronek, The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush, 41-43.

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190 Skowronek, The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush, 41-43.
seeking a reelection bid. Such is the story of the President of Great-Son Articulation that we will now further describe by keeping President Adams as our focal point and after briefly countering Skowronek’s argument that Adams should be categorized as a President of Disjunction.

*John Adams Reconsidered*

To Skowronek, Adams represented a Presidency of Disjunction, which, when compared to other Presidencies, meant that he served in a similar leadership position as would Presidents John Quincy Adams, Buchanan, Hoover, and Carter. The first of these characteristics was that he would have been affiliated with the ideals of a now faltering regime whose commitments were fully vulnerable and seen as a threat to the nation. Next, due to this affiliation with Washington’s commitments, Adams could not gain credibility when trying to move the country in a new reconstructive direction and thus became an easy target for the crises occurring in the country. Third, though Adams keenly realized he was serving in an impossible leadership position, he made the case to the country that the conditions were not his fault, that things would improve, and that a counter Reconstructive movement (presented from Skowronek’s perspective as Jefferson’s ideals in the Republican Party) would cause the country greater harm. Finally, Adams’ reelection efforts should result in a humiliating defeat.

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191 Ibid., 62-69. Also see pages 39-41 for characteristics of Presidents who led as Disjunctive Presidents.

192 Remember that Skowronek defined his Presidencies in political time through regimes. I use cycles to describe my theory, but since I am referencing Skowronek here, I use his term of art.
Yet despite Skowronek’s claims, Adams did not exhibit most of these Disjunctive Presidential characteristics during his Presidency. First, he was fully affiliated or in agreement with Washington’s commitments for what the national government should be doing, having just completed two terms as the administration’s Vice President and a lifetime before this grounded in Washington minded ideals. Further, the commitments Washington created during the country’s 1st constitutional Reconstruction provoked controversy during Adams’s time in office, but were not in a Buchanan or Hoover-like order shattering state at any point during his administration. The economy remained fairly strong from 1797-1801, Washington’s foreign policies were challenged, but resilient, and the terms by which government functioned remained widely sufficient.\textsuperscript{193}

Next, Adams’ affiliation with Washington’s ways only marginally interfered with his inability to gain credibility from various players during the latter part of his administration. For example, his task to carry out the Jay Treaty with Britain and avoid war with France was difficult but handled effectively, though at the cost of losing support both from Federalists and Republicans.\textsuperscript{194} Though Adams leadership task was difficult, it did not compare to the impossible tasks of more obvious Disjunctive Presidencies. Buchanan, for instance, had to attempt to save the union through a states rights’ party, Hoover had to try pulling the nation out of a deep economic depression through a Republican Party guided corporatist principles, or even John Quincy Adams who had to try carrying on with Washington’s economic programs and be looked at as a common man during the rise of the Jacksonian Democratic Party.

\textsuperscript{193} Brown, \textit{The Presidency of John Adams}.
\textsuperscript{194} Ibid.
Adams did see himself in a difficult leadership position and at times became very frustrated with relentless attacks from Jefferson. However, as another counterpoint to Skowronek’s interpretation, the difficulties and attacks did not convince Adams that he needed to move the country in a new Reconstructive direction, as he kept Hamilton’s economic programs, Washington’s foreign policy formulas, and a broad constitutional government in place. Unlike Carter who tried shrinking government bureaucracy and increasing defense strength before Reagan or Hoover who attempted wider federal economic involvement before Roosevelt’s Reconstructive Presidency began, Adams overwhelmingly stuck with Washington-based ideals, sensing that they were still in a resilient state and worked well for governing the country.

Finally, Adams narrowly defeated Thomas Jefferson in 1796, and was barely defeated by the same opponent in 1800. The closeness of the 1796 election is fitting if Adams is to be viewed as a leader of Disjunction, but the closeness of the 1800 election against Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr seems extremely out of place, given the large electoral defeats other Disjunctive Presidents or their respected parties suffered during their reelection bids in 1828, 1860, 1896, 1932, and 1980.\footnote{As a note to explain the meaning of “their respected parties,” President Buchanan was not the Democratic Party’s nominee in 1860, nor was Cleveland in 1896. Despite these Disjunctive Presidents not being on the ballot, their parties were defeated and Reconstructive Presidents elected.} As Adam’s Secretary of the Treasury Oliver Wolcott pointed out, “(the election) saw little difference between and genuine respect for both candidates.”\footnote{McCullough, The Presidency of John Adams, 545.} In return, and as we will see later in this chapter, the election of 1800 did not throw out the politics of the past as Skowronek interpreted it.
These pieces of evidence suggest that Adams was not a President of Disjunction as Skowronek suggests. Instead, we should look at Adams’ Presidency as occurring in the leadership position of Great-Son Articulation. Like Presidents Van Buren, Grant through Arthur, Taft, Truman, and George H.W. Bush, his tasks were to carry on with the commitments made by the Reconstructive President of his cycle using like minded ideals for governing, while also needing to innovate new strategies to deal with the issues of the day. These were the circumstances Adams faced as President and assessing them within institutional expectations is where we now turn.

Resilient Commitments and Affiliated Ideals

Just as sons like to do so for their fathers, some Presidents want to make their predecessors proud. This was the case when Adams entered office to carry on with Washington’s commitments as they were still adequate for governing the country by. As a result (and as we saw in Chapter 3), Adams furthered Washington’s domestic ideals by keeping his cabinet, building up the navy, keeping the Hamilton economic programs in tact, and promoting an active national government. In foreign policy, Washington’s commitments to neutrality and the Jay Treaty were also carried on by Adams.197

Future Presidents leading in the cycled circumstances of Great-Son Articulators would also face similar leadership situations when affirming the commitments of their Reconstructive predecessor. Van Buren, for instance, received the baton from Jackson and continued his anti-bank, Trail of Tears, spoils system, and free trade policies.198

198 Wilson, *The Presidency of Martin Van Buren.*
continued on with the polices of the Lincoln cycle through overseeing and enforcing the 13th through 15th Amendments to the Constitution, trying to unite the union through post civil war reconstructive programs, and using Lincoln’s economic programs and ideals in the face of economic downturns.199 Next, Taft carried on with McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt’s reconstructive commitments through continuing to implement trust-busting, conservation, Panama Canal, and Open Door policies.200 Further, Truman picked up where Roosevelt left off by leaving the New Deal largely in place, continuing it through Fair Deal programs, and carrying out a FDR minded post World War II and early Cold War foreign policy.201 Finally, George H.W. Bush continued Reagan’s Reconstructive ways by watching the Soviet Union fall and trying to keep domestic spending and government regulations off of the taxpayers back.202 Just as Adams did initially for Washington, all of these “great sons” were elected to affirm the resilient commitments of their proceeding Reconstructive President.

In doing so, it is apparent that Great-Son Articulators have ideals affiliated with their Reconstructive President, but nevertheless this is a second leadership characteristic we need to examine in order to label them in this category.203 After the initial Washington cycle, we can tell if Presidents of Great-Son Articulation have similar ideals to their Reconstructive President based on the President’s political party. Jackson and Van Buren’s similar ideals, for instance, are obtained from seeing that they were both members of the Democratic Party.

199 Scaturro, President Grant Reconsidered and McFeely, Grant: A Biography, 247-449. Reconstructive in this case literally refers to the programs implemented after the Civil War.
200 Colena, The Presidency of William Howard Taft.
201 McCoy, The Presidency of Harry S. Truman.
203 Refer to Figure 1 in the introduction and remember that Presidents of Articulation lead during times of resilient commitments and affiliated identities based on the guiding commitments of the time.
of the time, Lincoln and Grant’s from the Republican Party, McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and Taft’s from an evolving Republican Party, Roosevelt and Truman’s from the Democratic Party, and most recently Reagan and George H.W. Bush’s through the Republican Party of today. In the early days of the Presidency, however, one must look closer when seeing if Washington and Adams had similar ideals for governing the country by, given that a dual party system had not yet become a strong tool for political organization. As a result, just because politicians were in the same party did not necessarily mean they shared similar ideals.\textsuperscript{204}

Despite this, it is fairly obvious that Adams shared affiliated ideals with Washington, given how he acted both before and during his own Presidency to promote the Federalist ideals. Before his Presidency, for instance, his speeches and actions in the Continental Congress, role in producing the Declaration of Independence, Ambassadorship to Great Britain, role in setting up the Constitution, and as Vice President to Washington aligned him closer to the ideals of the Federalist Party than to Jefferson’s Republican Party.\textsuperscript{205} This would also be apparent during his Presidency, as we discussed earlier, when Adams set out to continue on with Washington’s commitments for what the national government should be doing. However, as Adams and other Great-Son Articulators would find while leading when the country’s commitments were resilient or working well, the reconstructive commitments made through their predecessor’s ideals still need tweaking to better govern the country.

\textsuperscript{204} This notion will be more important when assessing Jefferson and Madison’s Presidencies within the cycle of circumstances. As one example to highlight the point for now, John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson, future political adversaries, were both members of Jefferson’s Republican Party during the first decades of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century.

\textsuperscript{205} Brown, \textit{The Presidency of John Adams}, 6-21.
Altering the Reconstruction

The great changes made under Reconstructive Presidents provide the country with a visionary order-creating cycles in which policies have become the standard for governing by the time the Great-Son takes over. With new events arising, however, not even the order created from our ideological Reconstructive Presidents has all of the answers to continue effectively governing the country. Washington’s commitment to neutrality, for instance, continued to work overall, but still put us on the brink of war with France. Jackson’s economic policies pleased the common man, but created the Panic of 1837. Lincoln’s assassination meant civil rights legislation would not get implemented under President Johnson. Theodore Roosevelt’s tariff and conservation policies were left uncompleted or over completed. Franklin Roosevelt’s economic and foreign policies got us through World War II, but not the Cold War. Finally, Reagan’s economic policies worked for a time, but then created strained economic conditions. Further, his foreign policies did not prepare us for a post Cold War world.

It is because of these inadequacies in Reconstructive Presidential policies that Great-Son Articulators are faced with a difficult question. They can either let conditions in the country deteriorate to continue on with the exact ideals of the Reconstruction or risk backlash from party stalwarts to alter the reconstructive commitments and ideals slightly to affirm the new cycle of circumstances in a more adequate way. In making their choice, Presidents of Great-Son Articulation judge that the country’s mindset for change is still relatively high (Figure 1-8) and they choose the latter option in hopes that slightly altering the reconstructive
commitments will better the country. In historical hindsight, their decisions are generally approved, but, as we will see, their choices weaken their standing as leaders.

In focusing on how Great-Son Articulators altered the cycle’s reconstructive ways, we saw from the history of Chapter 3 that President Adams spent his entire administration coming across as having adjusted Washington’s foreign policy commitments with France to avoid war and better the principle of Washington’s neutrality. In the Jackson cycle, Van Buren altered the Jacksonian economic creed through actions on debt, tariffs, and trying to implement an Independent Treasury System to not have to reinstate the national bank and to try and pull the country out of the Panic of 1837 at the same time. Grant altered some of the Lincoln cycle’s economic principles to help the country through economic hardships, while Hayes pulled Union forces out of the south to better unite the country despite African American rights not being enforced. Further, Taft altered his immediate predecessors’ banking, tariff, conservation, and national defense policies to make for a more efficient and equitable national government. Furthermore, Truman moderately changed FDR’s New Deal by drawing a line in what areas the federal government would act in. Finally, George H.W. Bush altered the Reagan ways when raising taxes and adding funding to social programs to help prevent economic instability. All of these actions worked out well for the country eventually, but they created difficult leadership circumstances for Great-Son Articulators. For unlike Presidents of Reconstruction, who lead in crisis periods with limited

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207 Wilson, *The Presidency of Martin Van Buren.*
209 Colena, *The Presidency of William Howard Taft.*
resistance from other players in the government, Presidents of Great-Son Articulation lead in times of more stability and as result are less invincible and more prone to criticism

*Angered Ideologues and a Strengthened Opposition*

The actions Great-son Articulators take to alter the commitments of Reconstructive Presidents are generally praised historically, but at the time of their enactment are seen from those with similar ideals as Presidents who do not live up to the “masterful eras” of Reconstructive Presidents. Great-son articulators are subsequently criticized for not following the reconstructive path, which creates a leadership obstacle for implementing their order affirming policies that they were elected to implement. From the history in Chapter 3, we saw how Alexander Hamilton provided the Federalist Party’s upheaval to Adams’ actions during his Presidency, particularly attacking Adams’ moves when negotiating with France.

Other Great-Son Articulators would see similar periods of rebellion and criticism from the ideological wings of their party for not continuing on with the reconstructive ways that not long ago worked so wonderfully. Affiliated Democrats in Congress took issue with Van Buren’s treasury and banking proposals as not guiding the country as Jackson would have. Republican Stalwarts in Congress took issue with President Grant for how his civil war reconstructive efforts did not align with what Lincoln would have wanted. Next, Taft arguably had the worst battering from the ideological wing of his party, with Senator Nelson Aldrich wanting to control Taft’s economic policies in Congress and conservationist Gifford Pinchot informing President Roosevelt that Taft was not living up to the standard Roosevelt had set as President. Finally, Truman faced growing opposition from New Dealers such as
Henry Wallace for not living up to what FDR would have done and George H.W. Bush from the neo-conservatives for raising taxes and not living up to Reagan’s toughness when making the decision not to completely take over Iraq.

The frustrated attacks on Great-Son Articulators from those with similar ideals are also combined with increased attacks from rising opposition movements. Unlike Reconstructive Presidents who can afford to ineptly error on one or several policy decisions due to the vulnerable or crisis times in which they are serving in and still not have these errors affect their Presidencies in significant ways, Great-Son Articulators are serving in resilient times when errors are more costly. Here, opposition parties or factions want desperately to win an election after several defeats and as a result will take advantage of any mistakes Great-Son Articulators make to convince the country that a better way is available than that provided by the Great-Son Articulator.

Hence we saw how Jefferson’s Republican Party took full advantage of Adams’ tax on land and the Alien and Sedition Acts to help form an acceptable alternative to the ideals of Washington’s cycle. Similarly, Van Buren faced growing Whig Party criticism for floundering economic conditions that helped build a modifying alternative to the Jackson cycle of circumstances. Next, the post civil war Democrats took advantage of the scandals in Grant’s administration to build an alternative to the commitments of Lincoln’s cycle, while the Democrats hammered Taft for the recession in the latter half of his term to help build a

\[212\] Examples of errors Reconstructive Presidents have made that did not significantly alter their label as great Presidents were Jackson’s bank actions, Lincoln’s early civil war defeats, Roosevelt’s actions with African American soldiers in Brownsville, Texas, Roosevelt’s court packing, or Reagan’s issues through the Iran Contra dispute. At other times, these Presidents would have paid the price politically for these errors, but given the vulnerable state of the country’s commitments, these errors in judgment did not dramatically hinder their leadership position at the time. As we will see, this was not the case for Presidents of Great-Son Articulation.
modifying opposition to counter the suitable policies that had governed the McKinley/Roosevelt cycle to that point. Finally, the post New Deal Republicans took advantage of Truman’s misfortunes in North Korea when mounting an opposition to the Franklin Roosevelt ways, while the Democrats during George H.W. Bush’s Presidency increasingly faulted him for economic woes to counter the Reagan standard that until then had proved sufficient.

All of these policy struggles that Great-Son Articulators faced would have likely been forgiven if they had occurred during reconstructive time periods in the cycle of circumstances. However, given that we are now in the second phase of Great-Son Articulation where the country is less willing to forgive and forget in order to form a more perfect union, their leadership shortcomings have electoral consequences.

Great-Son Election Results

A final characteristic Great-Son Articulators share is found in the similarities of their electoral victories that, as described in Chapter 2, are important to analyze to see how the majorities that elect these Presidents are also acting in cycled ways and as a result expect Presidents to guide the commitments and ideals of the day in a certain fashion or suffer the consequences in future elections. In their initial order-affirming election victory, for instance, all but Grant in 1868 (who came after President Johnson due to Lincoln’s assassination) rode in on the coattails of the “magnificent” Reconstructive Presidents. Adams was first to do this in 1796 when he used the coattails of Washington’s Reconstruction to defeat the author of the Declaration of Independence in Thomas Jefferson.
Van Buren in 1836, Taft in 1912, Truman in 1948 (after serving out FDR’s 4th term following his death), and George H.W. Bush in 1988 would also win electoral victories in similar cycled circumstances following the respective Reconstructive Presidencies of Jackson, Lincoln, McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, and Reagan. In each case, Presidents of Great-Son Articulation took advantage of the resilient commitments and their affiliated ideals with them to win their election, with four of the six also having just served the country as Vice President.

Their reelection efforts, other than Grant’s, do not go according to plan, however. All except Grant lost their reelections or failed to pass the torch to a President with similar ideals. This is not surprising in a theory of cycled circumstances nor is the fact that half of the Great-Son Articulators reelection efforts occurred in three-way races.\(^{213}\) By the time these President’s or their party representatives were running for reelection, their ideals controlled the policy commitments for at least three administrations and were in need of correcting by those with opposing ideals.

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\(^{213}\) The elections surrounding Grant’s Presidency are of particular interest and would likely have followed the cycle of other Great-Son Articulators if two events would not have occurred. First, Lincoln’s assassination put a Union Democrat in President Johnson in the White House who limited the reconstructive path for nearly four years. Thus, Grant’s first term could be looked at as completing the Lincoln Reconstruction, while his second term was where he played the role of Great-Son Articulator, making it not out of line with the typical one-term expectations of Great-Son Articulators. What is more interesting is that Grant passed the baton to Hayes, a President with similar ideals following his Presidency of Great-Son Articulation. Having a Great-Son pass the baton to a member with similar ideals is a circumstance that did not occur in any of the other circumstances we have discussed. But should it have? Arguably Hayes’ 1876 election was stolen from the Democrats and their nominee, Governor Tilden of New York, through post civil war reconstruction vote procedures in Florida, Louisiana, and South Carolina. If the election would have turned out like the American people wanted, Tilden would have followed Grant, just as Jefferson followed Adams, Harrison followed Van Buren, Wilson followed Taft, Eisenhower followed Truman, and Clinton followed Bush. In return, the cycle of circumstances would have been more accurately presented, but is still not thrown off given that Preemption-One President Cleveland would follow the Presidencies of Hayes, Garfield, and Arthur (following Garfield’s assassination) in 1885.
The 1800 election was the first example of these circumstances, with an institutionally weakened President of Great-Son Articulation in Adams facing difficult leadership times when being attacked by members of his own Federalist Party and facing a growing Republican Party opposition movement ready to win a Presidential election. In the end, Jefferson walked away with a close Electoral College victory, defeating Adams by nine votes on election day and soon to be Vice President Aaron Burr in the House of Representatives on the 34th ballot to break the tie in the Electoral College.

Other Great-Son Articulators failed to get reelected or pass the Presidential baton onto members with similar ideals and instead passed it onto Preemption-One Presidents. As examples, Van Buren lost to Harrison 52-46 percent in 1840, Blaine (following President Arthur) to Cleveland 48.85 to 48.25 percent in 1884, Taft to Wilson when Theodore Roosevelt was running 42 to 23 and 27 percent respectfully in 1912, Stevenson to World War II hero Eisenhower 55 to 44 percent in 1952, and Bush to Clinton 43-37 percent in 1992.²¹⁴

Even more similar are the cycled circumstances by which the 1800, 1912, and 1992 Great-Son Articulator to Preemptive-One Presidential elections played out. All three were conducted in three way races, with Aaron Burr, Theodore Roosevelt, and Ross Perot respectively seeking to garner votes from portions of the electorate not entirely satisfied with what the Great-Son Articulator had done as President. In doing so, they ironically hurt the Great-Son President or his party’s electoral chances and helped to elect a Preemption-One President in soon to be Presidents Jefferson, Wilson, or Clinton.

²¹⁴ Dave Leip, “Dave Leip’s Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections,” http://uselectionatlas.org. As a personal side note, I owe this web-site a big thank you for the incredible amount of information it has about Presidential elections from 1789 to 2004. It helped tremendously when tracing many of the cycled circumstances and anyone interested in Presidential elections can spend hours on it.
Great-Son Circumstances

Having been affiliated with Washington’s ideals, using those ideals to further Washington’s commitments, altering the reconstructive commitments slightly to aid the country and distinguish himself as President, dealing with increased partisan attacks from both Federalists and Republicans, and not losing a landslide election in 1800, John Adams exhibited all of the cycled leadership circumstances Presidents of Great-Son Articulation face. When compared to Washington’s Reconstructive Presidency that came at a time when he institutionally could act independently to make big changes, Adams did not (as seen in Figure 2) have as much institutional independence to create change as President Washington did before him. As a result, President Adams did not have the same leadership opportunities as a Reconstructive President to become a great President that receives the praises of historians and the American people for ages.

As a result of this, we must put Adams’ leadership position in its proper context. Like Presidents Van Buren, Grant through Arthur, Taft, Truman and George H.W. Bush would do with their place in the Presidential cycle of leadership circumstances, Adams should be assessed based on his ability to continue on with and alter slightly the big changes made by Reconstructive President Washington. Further, Presidents of Great-Son Articulation must be viewed as having left office with the country still generally satisfied with the commitments and ideals of the cycle, a leadership task always worthy of notice.

But when leaving office, these Presidents of Great-Son Articulation passed the Presidential baton to a President with different ideals than the ones they were trying to instill
as President, meaning that the country was at least somewhat ready for a new direction. Jefferson would follow Adams, like Harrison to Van Buren, Cleveland to Arthur, Wilson to Taft, Eisenhower to Truman, and Clinton to George H.W. Bush. So what would the challenges be and how should we assess these Presidents who came to the Presidency after multiple administrations of creating and affirming new commitments under Presidents of Reconstruction and Great-Son Articulation? The answers lie in our examination of Preemption-One Presidents in the 3\textsuperscript{rd} step of cycled circumstances within institutional expectations that we now turn.
5. CYCLED STEPS THREE AND FOUR
Presidents of Preemption-One and Grandson Articulation

“We are all Federalists. We are all Republicans.”
- Thomas Jefferson
1801 Inaugural Address

“Madison’s proposals proved that the President out-Hamiltons Alexander Hamilton.” He has abandoned the Republican principles of 1798.
- John Randolph
Leader of Republican Quid faction in Congress speaking of President Madison’s

As political scientists, we love looking at big shifts in the political party numbers of Presidential elections to help determine when great changes and critical points took place in our country’s political history. Most of the time, examining the big shifts in party numbers works. The Jacksonian Democratic Party landslide in 1828, the Lincoln Republican Party swing in 1860, the new Republican Party majorities of McKinley in 1896, the Roosevelt New Deal Democratic Party takeover of 1932, or even Reagan’s election in 1980 are accurately assessed as major turning points for the country’s governing policy commitments. The other often cited critical election not mentioned here is 1800 where Jefferson’s Republican Party began a series of election victories where they essentially eliminated the Federalist Party by the end of the decade. This election, however, did not drastically change the

217 Walter Burnham, Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics, James Sundquist, Dynamics of the Party System: Alignment and Realignment of Political Parties in the United States. Burnham and Sundquist, again, are two of many who have speculated about realignment theory in electoral politics.
direction of the country’s policy commitments or the ideals by which the policies were implemented the way that the elections of 1828, 1860, 1896, 1932, or 1980 did to alter the country’s governing ways. As seen in Chapter 3, many of the Federalist aims made under Washington and Adams were not eliminated once Jefferson became President in 1801. In some cases, the goals of the first two Presidents were even furthered by Jefferson using Federalist ideals.

All of which leads to the argument that Jefferson’s leadership circumstances should not be examined as a President of Reconstruction (as Skowronek did), but instead as that of a President Preemption, where he sought to combine Federalist and Republican ideals and made decisions that produced a compromising agenda. More specifically, Jefferson was the first Preemption-One President in the six-step cycle of circumstances of institutional expectations. Presidents William Henry Harrison (and John Tyler following Harrison’s death in 1841), Grover Cleveland’s first administration, Woodrow Wilson, Dwight Eisenhower, and Bill Clinton would also take on similar leadership roles in the decades and centuries to follow.  

What characteristics embody a Preemption-One leadership style? Using Jefferson as an example, he entered office following a Great-Son Articulator in President Adams when the Washington cycle of policy commitments still worked well for governing, but Jefferson’s ideals were opposed to the Washington cycle’s ways. As a result, Jefferson spent his

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Presidency making compromising policies combining the best of both Federalist and Republican ideals even when the ideological wing of his party complained he was being too timid or those with Washington’s ideals thwarted Jefferson’s every move.\textsuperscript{219}

Like most other Preemptive-One leaders, Jefferson also won two election victories in the Electoral College and guided the country through eight years of general peace and prosperity. Further, because he was a Preemptive-One President, he was unable to sufficiently act upon an important policy issue during his final year in office and ironically passed the Presidential baton to a Grandson Articulator in Madison. These were the institutional circumstances that future Presidents Harrison and Tyler, Cleveland’s first administration, and Wilson, Eisenhower, and Clinton also found themselves in. Much like Jefferson, they too worked to correct certain parts of a sound and suitable governing order that had been created and affirmed prior to them by Presidents of Reconstruction and Great-Son Articulation.

\textit{Opposed Ideals and Resilient Commitments}

The country was likely expecting a second revolution from the national government using Jeffersonian ideals to guide it when the author of the Declaration of Independence was sworn in on March 4, 1801 as the first President to lead with opposing ideals from his predecessors. Yet by the end of his term, historians would be unable to write in the centuries to follow that Jefferson’s Presidency fulfilled its Jeffersonian expectations. Historian David McCullough, for instance, wrote in \textit{John Adams} that despite the feeling that the country was

\textsuperscript{219} Skowronek, \textit{The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton}, 43-45 and 447-464.
in for a second revolution following Adams’ defeat, “the advent of Jefferson in the President’s House turned out to be far from a radical upheaval.” Similarly, Forrest McDonald wrote that despite the Jeffersonian progress made during the early years of the administration, in order for the 1800 “revolution” to succeed, it had to contradict itself later on because “their (Jeffersonian) system was incompatible with the immediate current of events.”

So how should we explain the historical interpretation and actions Jefferson took as President in terms of the cycled leadership circumstances other Presidents in similar positions faced? First, let us look at one plausible scenario that seems likely, but does not occur in these Presidencies. Here, one may expect that Preemptive-One Presidents, who come to office with opposing ideals than that of their immediate Reconstructive and Great-Son Articulation predecessors, would be able to implement the ideals of the ideological wing of their party or factions, given that a President with their ideals has not taken the oath for a number of administrations. In other words, Jefferson should have been able to use the his party’s opposition to the Hamilton economic programs and Washington inspired foreign policy commitments to make big changes in line with what his Jeffersonian philosophy called for.

Similarly, following twelve years of the Jacksonian based cycle, Whig Presidents Harrison and Tyler could have tried to implement the Whig Party’s American System of a national bank and higher tariffs. Further, and after decades of Republican Party dominance, Cleveland could have followed what the Democratic Party wanted in 1884 by creating a

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220 McCullough, John Adams, 577.
221 McDonald, The Presidency of Thomas Jefferson, vii-ix & 163.
more equitable based credit, trade, and tariff system for the southern states. With McKinley, Roosevelt, and Taft having led the Republican Party for sixteen years, Wilson could have done more to proceed with the Democratic Party ideals for the time through backing limited internationalist policies and broader, fairer, and federal government backed economic programs. Eisenhower could also have countered twenty years of a Democratic Party controlled Presidency by using the Republican Party’s ideals to undo the New Deal and limit the country’s role in foreign policy. Finally, President Clinton could have entered office following three Republican administrations in Reagan and Bush and tried to implement liberal Democratic Party ideals throughout his Presidency. Yet despite all of these Preemptive-One Presidents having had opposing ideals to the commitments made by their immediate predecessors, none were able to completely implement the ideals the ideological wing of his party would have liked during their time as President.

To explain why this was so, let us again reference Figures 1 through 8. Here, we see that Jefferson and others in his leadership position were elected in order correcting or modifying elections. Here, the ability to change the country’s commitments in a new ideological direction was limited due first to the vast and suitable changes created under Presidencies of Reconstruction and Great-Son Articulation and second to the country’s apprehension of returning again to the ideals that had guided Presidents in the previous cycle. In Jefferson’s case it was difficult for him to undo the functional commitments and ideals of Washington and Adams using his Jeffersonian ideals for governing the country that were still being questioned from their fallout under the Articles of Confederation.
Elected in 1840 under the Whig Party, Harrison and Tyler would face a similar leadership circumstance following the likable changes made under Jackson’s Reconstruction and Van Buren’s Great-Son Articulation. Here, the country was not ready to adamantly return to the ideals of the Washington cycle that had guided but come unraveled by the time John Quincy Adams left office in 1828. Comparably, Cleveland was confined by the Republican commitments made under Presidents Lincoln through Arthur, with the country not yet trusting the Jacksonian and Democratic Party ideals which had gone by the wayside when President Buchanan left office. Next, Wilson was constrained by the Republican Party commitments created and affirmed during the McKinley through Taft Presidencies, with the nation still not trusting the Democratic Party that had again fallen apart during Cleveland’s second administration.

Eisenhower could also not push full steam ahead with Republican Party policies, being bound by Roosevelt and Truman’s policy creations and affirmations and the country’s unwillingness to return to the ideals of the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle that fell apart by the end of Hoover’s administration. Finally, Clinton could not move forward with a vast Democratic Party agenda due to the policy order that was created and liked under Reagan and then supported by President George H.W. Bush. Further, the country was still not convinced that we should return to the ways of the FDR cycle that had fallen apart by the end of Carter’s Presidency. All in all then, Preemption-One Presidents could not make the big ideological changes their parties would have liked them to and instead could only correct parts of the governing order using a leadership style of compromise or what President
Clinton referred to as “third-way” politics. Within the cycle then, Preemptive-One Presidents faced a more subordinated leadership position than either the President’s of Reconstruction or Great-Son Articulation.

**Order Correcting and Compromising Commitments**

Knowing that Jefferson had ideals opposed to the commitments instilled under his predecessors and that he was elected to modify the commitments under a resilient Washington cycle of circumstances, the compromising decisions Jefferson made to combine both Federalist and Republican ideals are more understandable. As we saw in Chapter 3, Jefferson first continued to use Federalist ideals in the Washington cycle when acquiring the Louisiana Purchase. Working against his personal philosophy, Jefferson took on a greater national debt and loosely interpreted the Constitution when acquiring the territory. Further, he did not abolish Hamilton’s national bank as his Jeffersonian ideal would have, nor did he work against the ruling in Supreme Court Justice Chase’s trial that furthered the Federalists ideal for a strong and independent federal judiciary. Further, he promoted a strong army over militias by fighting a costly Barbary Pirate War in the Mediterranean and promoted a strong central over state government when implementing and enforcing the controversial Embargo and Enforcement Acts.

As a result of these decisions, Jefferson became the first President to continue on with many of the ideals created and affirmed by his immediate predecessors, despite having ideals

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opposed to them. He would not be the last. To stay within the limits of what the Jackson
cycle had done thus far, Whig President Tyler shocked Whig Senator Henry Clay by vetoing
his policies for a national bank and higher tariffs twice.\textsuperscript{224} Sticking within the policy
standards of the Lincoln cycle, Cleveland tried repealing the Bland-Allison Silver Purchasing
Act the Democratic Party had passed before his administration and did little to try and reduce
the Republican Party’s high tariff.\textsuperscript{225} To further the commitments begun in the
McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle, Wilson oversaw the implementation of the Federal
Reserve banking system, the Federal Trade Commission, corporatist WWI initiatives, and a
more active role for the United States in foreign affairs.\textsuperscript{226} Defined by the Franklin
Roosevelt cycle, Eisenhower did little to alter the New Deal, furthered it through initiatives
like the interstate highway program, and maintained an active foreign policy to fight the Cold
War.\textsuperscript{227} Finally, to further the Reagan cycle during his Preemption-One Presidency, Clinton
balanced the budget, implemented a welfare reform act, and signed free trade measures such
as NAFTA.\textsuperscript{228} All of which were done to carry on with the likable commitments and ideals
of each cycle.

Yet Preemptive-One Presidential leaders do not just take actions to continue or
further the established commitments of the cycle they are put in. They are elected to correct
or modify parts of that cycle using their party’s opposed ideals that have been neglected by

\textsuperscript{223} McDonald, \textit{The Presidency of Thomas Jefferson}.
\textsuperscript{224} Peterson, \textit{The Presidencies of William Henry Harrison and John Tyler}, 1-112.
\textsuperscript{225} Welch, \textit{The Presidency of Grover Cleveland}.
\textsuperscript{226} Clements, \textit{The Presidency of Woodrow Wilson}.
\textsuperscript{227} Ambrose, \textit{Eisenhower: The President}.
\textsuperscript{228} Clinton, \textit{My Life}.
Presidents of Reconstruction and Great-Son Articulation.\textsuperscript{229} To explain, Jefferson used the ideals of his Republican Party during his administration to limit the powers of the central government in a variety of areas. He and the Republicans in Congress countered the Federalists and made decisions to cut most taxes, pardon those punished under Adams’ Alien and Sedition Acts, set the national debt on a path to elimination and decrease the size of the domestic military in hopes of strengthening the state militia system.\textsuperscript{230}

Other Preemptive-One leaders took similar actions to correct issues not addressed by their immediate predecessors, while furthering their party’s ideals in the process. Tyler worked to implement Whig policies by insuring passage of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty with Canada that settled several long-term boundary disputes and ended the slave trade on the high seas. He also signed an increased tariff in 1842 that helped to protect American industries hurt under the lower tariff policies of the Jackson and Van Buren administrations.\textsuperscript{231} Next, Cleveland made his mark with his Democratic Party in his first term by passing the Interstate Commerce Act to limit the economic powers created thus far in Lincoln’s cycle and also furthered civil service reform that had become a major issue with the scandals of Republican President Grant.\textsuperscript{232} Similarly, Wilson pleased his Democratic base through decreasing the tariff to better economic conditions in the south and pushed to make inroads for farmers by providing federal government assistance in the agriculture

\textsuperscript{229} As two examples of how the ideals of Preemptive-One Presidents Eisenhower and Clinton were neglected by Presidents of Reconstruction and Great-Son Articulation, it could be argued that the Republican Party’s ideal for not trying to let the federal government control economic affairs was largely forgotten in FDR and Truman’s Presidencies, while the Democratic Party ideal for letting the federal government increasingly be involved in federal domestic programs was largely forgotten in the Reagan and George H.W. Bush administrations.

\textsuperscript{230} McDonald, \textit{The Presidency of Thomas Jefferson}.

\textsuperscript{231} Peterson, \textit{The Presidencies of William Henry Harrison and John Tyler}, 1-112.

\textsuperscript{232} Welch, \textit{The Presidency of Grover Cleveland}. 
industry. Wilson also insured that more Democratic and thus more equitable foreign policies were implemented to counter the often imperialistic foreign policies that defined the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle.⁡²³³

Years later, Eisenhower remained loyal to the Republican Party in the midst of the Franklin Roosevelt cycle when he helped bring closure to the Korean War, limited defense spending and price controls (particularly in agriculture), and balanced the budget.⁡²³⁴ Finally, President Clinton took action using the ideals of his Democratic Party when attempting to overhaul the country’s healthcare program, raising taxes to support a more equitable economy, investing in education, crime prevention, and gun control, and furthering diplomatic and multinational foreign policies in Ireland, the Middle East, and the Balkans.⁡²³⁵

These and the commitments mentioned earlier that furthered the ideals made under Presidents of Reconstruction and Great-Son Articulation define the compromising leadership circumstances Preemptive-One Presidents are faced with during their Presidencies. Despite the many important results that come from these Preemptive-One Presidents however, their agendas would not have lasting authority once they left office because Grandson Articulators are elected who (as we will see in the second section of this chapter) wish to continue full speed ahead with the affiliated ideals that began the cycle through the Presidents of Reconstruction and Great-Son Articulation.⁡²³⁶ Nevertheless, the pragmatic leadership policies Preemptive-One Presidents put forward are respected by the country for their ability

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²³⁴ Ambrose, *Eisenhower: The President.*

²³⁵ Clinton, *My Life.*

²³⁶ As a brief preview, Grandson Articulator Madison ironically took out many of Jefferson’s policies, while Polk did the same for Tyler, Harrison for Cleveland, Harding for Wilson, Kennedy and Johnson for Eisenhower, and George W. Bush for Clinton.
to bring stability and subordinate actions to the Presidency after the Presidents who preceded them had brought more change and independence to the country’s governing commitments and the Presidential office. These compromising strategies of Preemptive-One Presidents worked well for the country over the long haul, but not during their final year in office.

The Final Year: Missed Opportunities

As stated above, Presidents in the Preemption-One position combine the better of two sets of ideals during their administrations and use this hybrid to guide the country through years of general peace and prosperity. Leading using compromise has run its course by the end of these Preemptive-One Presidencies, however, leaving the country without one straightforward vision by which to continue to govern the country. Perhaps due to this characteristic of not being able to chart one ideological course and stick to it, Presidents in this phase of the cycle are unable to complete or merely mishandle one important issue during their final year in office. In return, these missteps set the stage for the more independent President of Grandson Articulation to follow.

The first example of this was in the Washington cycle when Jefferson’s Embargo Act against Britain (described in the history chapter) faltered and was repealed on Jefferson’s last day in office, subsequently helping create the conditions by which President Madison would take over and lead the country to war by 1812. For Tyler in the Jackson cycle, the mishandling was the annexation of Texas that led to the beginnings of the Mexican War using the Jacksonian ideal during Polk’s Presidency. For Cleveland in the Lincoln cycle,
trying to reform tariff policy set off fireworks among Republicans who returned to the Lincoln ways during Benjamin Harrison’s administration. For Wilson in the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle, not getting the League of Nations through the Senate set up the foreign policy mishaps under Harding in the 1920’s. During Eisenhower’s administration in the FDR cycle, it was the U2 incident that helped lead to Kennedy’s Bay of Pigs, Cuban missile crisis, and increased Cold War tensions. Finally, for Clinton in the Reagan cycle, the issue was an inability to take out Osama Bin Laden and convince the Republican Congress to fight terrorism that helped to create our current War on Terror under George W. Bush. All of which are at least partially caused by the limited changes Preemptive-One Presidents feel they can make, being confined by more stable than changing circumstances and subordinate rather than independent places within the institutional expectations of the Presidency.

Angry Reconstructors and Restless Ideologues

A few other characteristics of the unique cycled leadership circumstances Preemption-One President’s face also need highlighting before moving on to assess Presidents of Grandson Articulation. First, within the midst of trying to implement their compromising agendas, Preemptive-One Presidents face increasingly harsh attacks from those who had helped the Reconstructive President create a lasting cycle of policy ideals and commitments before the Preemptive-One President took office. These individuals or “cycled affiliates” had just spent multiple administrations beginning a new cycle that they really enjoyed being part of and they now feel that their issues are being taken from them and their
cycle’s destiny for greatness is being thwarted. In the midst of their frustration, they pull out all the stops to stir deep opposition to any progress the Preemption-One President wishes to make on issues, including making harsh accusations about the President’s immoral character.

Jefferson was the first Preemptive-One President to face such an ordeal when the Federalists in the Washington cycle attacked Jefferson’s principles during the acquisition of the Louisiana Purchase and Yazoo land disputes in Georgia. Further, when accusations arose against Aaron Burr’s military actions in the southwest that nearly caused war with Spain, a conspiracy against Jefferson arose within it, with the President devoting a great amount of time proving to Congress that he had little to do with the former Vice President’s actions. Finally, though Jefferson escaped some of the immoral character attacks, likely because he was held in high acclaim for being the author of the Declaration of Independence, it seems unlikely that the Sally Hemings accusations that arose during Jefferson’s administration were merely coincidental.

Jefferson was not the last to face Presidential assaults from angry cycle affiliates ready to have a member of the same party as the Reconstructive President back in the White

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237 Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush*. Skowronek refers to these individuals as regime affiliates throughout his book.

238 The irony in this, as we have seen, is that Preemptive-One Presidents generally carry on with many of these cycled affiliates reconstructive commitments. Jefferson used Federalist ideals when acquiring the Louisiana Purchase, Wilson furthered many of the economic and foreign policy ideals of the early 20th century Republican Presidents, and Clinton fulfilled many of Reagan’s policy aims. Because they are of a different party or faction than the cycles guiding ideals, however, the attacks come at full force, limiting the impact Preemptive-One Presidents have on the country. These cycle affiliates also likely remember the days not that long ago when they were in the minority for setting the vision for the country and are worried that the country is moving that way again. As one recent example, the Republicans who attacked Clinton came of age when the FDR cycle had guided the country. Thus, when Clinton tried pushing for a return to the strong central government ways during his first two years, Republicans pulled out all of the stops to prevent him from doing so to carry on with the Reagan ideals that were implemented in the 1980’s.
House. Tyler took his fair share of criticism from Jacksonian Democrats for implementing the Tariff Act of 1842. Cleveland was immediately thwarted when trying to make slight alterations to tariff policy and the Tenure of Office Act by Lincoln’s Republican coalition and was attacked endlessly for his personal actions. Wilson had McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt Republicans consistently critiquing many of the moves he made before, during, and after World War I, particularly when trying to implement the League of Nations. Being a World War II hero, Eisenhower’s character attacks were limited, but he was still critiqued by affiliated FDR Democrats for his handling of foreign policy and not moving forward quickly enough with the “destined” course of the FDR cycle. Finally, President Clinton was met with attacks from the Reagan cycle’s Republican opposition in every move he made, particularly after the 1994 elections, and was part of an endless investigation into his personal flaws. All of which was designed by those affiliated with the ideals guiding the institutional cycle to stall the Preemptive-One leaders and allow time for the party and ideals of the cycle that began under the Reconstructive President to regain its footing.

Besides the attacks from the opposing party, Presidents in these positions of leadership also have to face the difficult task of facing criticism from the ideological wing of their own party. Members within the wing have waited through Presidents of Reconstruction and Great-Son Articulation to put a member of their party back into the White House. As a result, they are expecting bold and immediate action to further their ideological agendas. When the Preemptive-One President instead takes on the compromising strategies as we saw in earlier sections because of the cycle’s resilient policies, members of the ideological wing
from the President’s party grow frustrated. As a result, these opposition leaders then spur away and build a counter movement to rebuild their party and set up the next cycle further down the road.

Jefferson was the first President to do this when his Preemptive-One leadership style broke his strong Republican Party into factions over using many Federalist ideals to implement or maintain Federalist Party commitments. The most notable example of this was John Randolph’s Republican Quid faction in Congress who grew continually frustrated with the administration’s compromising initiatives. As Randolph stated in 1806, "The administration...favors federal principles, and, with the exception of a few great rival characters, federal men...The old Republican Party is already ruined, past redemption. New men and new maxims are the order of the day." With this, Randolph started a movement to reform Jefferson’s Republican Party that finally paid off when the party’s ideological commitments could be implemented under the beginnings of Jackson’s cycle and his Reconstructive Presidency in 1829.

Whig President Tyler created the same Preemption-One frustrations with Henry Clay and the Whig Party, who nearly impeached him during his Presidency for not following through with what the party wanted. This caused them to set out to create a stronger Republican Party that could finally implement their ideological commitments with the election of Lincoln and the beginnings of a new cycle in 1861. Further, Cleveland’s Preemption-One actions in his first administration forced ideological Democrats to continue

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239 Ibid.
240 Risjord, The Old Republicans: Southern Conservatism in the Age of Jefferson- the Standard History of the Randolph Faction, 47.
searching for a way to elect a President who would fully express their values. In many ways, this would not come until FDR was elected in 1932.

Democrats also criticized Wilson for not using the federal government more to create a fairer economic playing field for all, particularly for southern issues. In return, this led the ideological wing of the Democratic Party to continue fighting their party building coalition that culminated with Roosevelt’s election in 1932. Senator Robert Taft also led the charge to try and get Eisenhower to implement more ideological Republican policies that, when Eisenhower did not, provoked Barry Goldwater to start building an acceptable Republican alternative that culminated with the election of Reagan and the beginnings of the next institutional cycle in 1980. Most recently, many ideological Democrats have grown frustrated with the “timid” or Preemptive-One Democratic policies made under the Clinton administration. As a result and just as Randolph did over 200 years ago when he grew frustrated with Jefferson’s timid Preemptive-One Presidency, Howard Dean’s ideological message did the same in 2004 when sparking the fire to what will likely eventually form the next cycle of institutional circumstances led by the Democratic Party.241

*Order Correcting Election Results*

The cycled based order correcting or modifying election results that send Preemptive-One Presidents to Washington vary a bit more than other Presidents in the six-step cycle, but have patterns that exist within them as well. All, for instance, (other than Cleveland who did not run against Great-Son President Arthur but Republican James Blaine and Eisenhower

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241 See Figure 11 for a look at how the next Democratic Party led cycle will likely play out.
who didn’t run against Great-Son President Truman, but Democrat Adlai Stevenson), defeated or followed Great-Son Articulators to enter the Presidency. Jefferson, Harrison, Wilson, and Clinton each won elections following the Great-Son Articulation Presidencies of Adams, Van Buren, Taft, and George H.W. Bush in election results described in Chapter 4.

Next, four of the six Preemptive-One Presidents won reelection with the country favoring their pragmatic and modifying actions that generally created peace and prosperity for the country and stability and subordinate actions in their Presidencies as seen again in Figure 1. Jefferson, Wilson, Eisenhower, and Clinton defeated candidates that had affiliated ideals with the cycle in Charles Pinckney (1804), Charles Evans Hughes (1916), Stevenson (1956), and Bob Dole (1996). The other two Preemptive-One Presidents saw Tyler disowned as a Whig for his actions as President and not allowed the opportunity to seek reelection and Cleveland narrowly defeated in his first reelection candidacy over then President elect Benjamin Harrison.

A final characteristic of the elections that follow Preemption-One Presidencies is that they have all been followed by Grandson Articulators who return full speed ahead with the policies of the cycle that began with the Reconstructive President. Madison, Polk, Benjamin Harrison, Harding, Kennedy, and George W. Bush have all followed these modifying Preemptive-One Presidencies and were ready to return to the reconstructive commitments that worked so “marvelously” to govern the country before the Preemptive-One President took office. Nevertheless, Preemptive-One Presidents had done what the country elected them to do: stabilize the country using their opposing ideals following Presidencies where
great changes had been made before them within an institutional time period characterized by having to act more subordinately than independently to the flow of events as President.

*Preemption-One Leadership Circumstances*

Jefferson spoke in his first inaugural that “We are all Federalists. We are all Republicans.” Skowronek argued that this was a way for Jefferson to reach out to all and prepare the country for its first Presidential Reconstruction. Upon closer historical examination, it turned out to be a way to call the ideals of both the Federalists and Republicans together and for Jefferson to use Preemptive-One leadership within the Washington cycle’s commitments regarding the operations of the federal government. Similar situations greeted future Preemptive-One Presidents Harrison (and Tyler after Harrison’s death), Cleveland’s first administration, Wilson, Eisenhower, and Clinton, as they worked within the circumstances determined by the cycle’s favored ideals set in place by the Reconstructive Presidents.

Also like these future Preemption-One Presidents, Jefferson dealt with other difficult leadership circumstances. The ideological wing of his party grew frustrated over his timid actions, while attacks on his actions and character increased from those with affiliated ideals in the respected cycles, as they felt their issues being stolen from them. As many other Preemptive-One Presidents were, Jefferson was elected in a three-way race, guided the country through a period of general peace and prosperity and was easily reelected.

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Furthermore, he preserved the ideological roots of his party enough for Jackson to make full use of it during his order creating Reconstructive Presidency beginning in 1829.

All of these circumstances suggest that, like Great-Son Articulators, Preemption-One Presidents did not have the same opportunities Reconstructive Presidents had to produce a visionary legacy of policy commitments and accomplishments. As a result, we should also assess Preemptive-One Presidents based on the leadership circumstances they faced. More than anything, these Presidents were elected to modify, stabilize, and correct the big changes that preceded them, and as a result we should understand their leadership place as needing to do just that. For it would be through the Presidents of Grandson Articulation (Madison, Polk, Benjamin Harrison, Harding and parts of Coolidge’s Presidency, Kennedy/Johnson, and George W. Bush) that institutional expectations would again allow for more active and independent Presidents to take on the leadership challenges seen in the forth step of the cycle of circumstances.

*Madison: The Ironic First President of Grandson Articulation*

We have made our way through half of the six-step cycles of circumstances implicitly embodied in the institutional expectations of Presidential leadership. Turning briefly again to Figure 1, we first saw how Reconstructive Presidents began a new governing cycle, were elected when the commitments of the past had fallen apart, had ideals opposed to those

Taranto and Leo, *Presidential Leadership: Rating the Best and the Worst in the White House*, 11-12. If the ratings are any indication, it appears that scholars do see these Preemptive-One Presidents as providing a healthy dose of modification to the big changes made before them. In the Wall Street Journal source listed here, Preemptive-One Presidents, Jefferson, Cleveland, Wilson, and Eisenhower are ranked in the top 12 of “the best” or “the worst” in the White House.
commitments of the past, and as a result were able to implement cycle defining changes to the country’s commitments. From here, Presidents of Great-Son Articulation continued to affirm these changes in a resilient time period with like-minded ideals to the Reconstructive Presidents, but were typically defeated in their reelection efforts. Most recently, we saw how Presidents leading in Preemptive-One circumstances of the cycle corrected and modified the reconstructive commitments in a period of constitutional stability, made compromising policy proposals, and were critiqued by both sides of the political isle for making the decisions they did.

We are now ready to move onto the fourth step in the cycle. To do so, we place President Madison front and center and use him and other future Presidents in similar cycled and institutional circumstances to examine the intriguing leadership role of Grandson Articulation. At first glance, Madison seems an unlikely candidate to articulate a resilient Washington Presidential cycle with a fairly high degree of institutional independence (Figure 1) the same way that James Polk did in Jackson’s cycle, Benjamin Harrison in Lincoln’s, Warren Harding in McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt’s, John Kennedy/Lyndon Johnson in Franklin Roosevelt’s, and as George W. Bush is doing for Reagan’s. Madison seems out of place in that he countered Federalist ideals during the final years of the Washington

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administration and throughout the Adams’ Presidency and worked with Jefferson and Monroe to form the Anti-Federalist based Republican Party. Further, he was elected in 1808 as a member of the Republican Party.

Yet despite the fact that Madison was elected under the Republican Party banner and had worked closely beside Jefferson during his Presidency, we must look closely to see what ideals President Madison used to act on the commitments of his Presidency to see if he can be placed in our fourth step of cycled leadership. When doing so, we see that Madison exhibited the needed characteristics for Presidential leadership by Grandson Articulation. He followed a Preemptive-One leader in Jefferson in a cycle still defined by President Washington and used Washington-based ideals to make policy decisions. Like we saw with Great-Son Articulators, Madison also had to try and innovate new ways of dealing with issues in his Presidency due to the changing nature of the times.

In the process of taking on these new commitments, Madison and future Grandson Articulators ironically caused the ideals they were elected to uphold, to begin losing the cycle’s authority for governing. Further and most notably, Presidents in this slot have a habit of taking on a “war of dubious provocation” or mishandling a foreign policy that allows those opposed to the cycle’s ideals an issue to rally around. Finally, after usually being initially elected in very close elections, Grandson Articulators Madison, Polk, Benjamin Harrison, Harding, Kennedy (and Johnson after Kennedy’s assassination), and now George W. Bush come across as having led the country using risky, perhaps even inept behavior that

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245 Skowornek, The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush, 41-43, 342. Though not as specific, many of the basic characteristics for Presidential leadership by articulation are found in these pages.
ends up splitting the country. Though the events that occur in their Presidencies do not shatter the cycle completely (as will happen under Presidents of Disjunction in step six of the cycle), they do make the country rethink the ideals by which to govern by.

*Affiliated Ideals and Resilient Commitments*

Like future Grandson Articulators, Madison entered office at a time when the policy commitments of the established cycle were working particularly well for the country, having been created under Washington’s Reconstruction, affirmed by Adams’s Great-Son Articulation, and most recently modified by Jefferson’s Preemption-One Presidency. In theory then, the beginnings of the Grandson Articulator Presidencies are thus the most stable times for the republic, given how two sets of ideals have been used to create, affirm, and then modify the commitments of the time. Like Madison, Polk entered the Presidency when the Jacksonian economic and government ideals still guided the country, but had just been corrected under Tyler. Similarly, President Benjamin Harrison entered office when Lincoln’s economic and union-saving commitments were still favorable, but had been modified under Cleveland’s first administration.

Further, Harding entered the Oval Office when the ideals of the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle of corporatism and imperialist foreign policies were still evident but had been modified under Wilson. Kennedy took the oath when the FDR ideals for massive federal government undertakings and expansive diplomatic role were still resilient, but had been corrected under Eisenhower. Most recently, President George W. Bush entered office when the ideals of the Reagan cycle of big tax cuts and military might still dominated policy
discussions, but had recently been altered under Clinton. All of which goes to show that Grandson Articulators, including Madison, entered office when the commitments were resilient.

Unlike his fellow Grandson Articulators, however, it is a bit more challenging to show how Madison’s ideals were affiliated with those of Washington and his cycle, a needed characteristic for leadership by Grandson Articulation. It is more difficult in that Madison did not share the same party as his President of Reconstruction, as George W. Bush is doing with Reagan or Lyndon Johnson had done with Franklin Roosevelt. But to counter this potential anomaly, we must remember from Chapter 3 the role that political parties played in the early republic.

Here, we will find that the Federalists did not actively organize their party and support candidates like the Republicans did, instead opting to stand above party and faction. This was perhaps morally justifiable, but also allowed Jefferson’s Republicans to paint themselves as agrarian saviors and the Federalists as elitist aristocrats. As a result, the vast and diverse majority of elected officials were members of Jefferson’s all encompassing Republican Party, including the wide ranging ideals of Henry Clay, John Calhoun, John Quincy Adams, John Randolph, and Andrew Jackson. Because of this, identifying a candidate’s ideals was difficult merely by stating that “he is a Republican.” Instead, we must look at how politicians acted on the commitments of the time before labeling their ideals as more Washington or Jefferson based. In the case of Madison, just because he identified himself with Jefferson’s party does not necessarily mean that the ideals he used as President were Jeffersonian.
The need to closely examine Madison’s case becomes even more apparent when we examine Madison’s mixed ideological actions before he became President. Also seen in the history chapter, Madison used Washington ideals when writing the Federalist papers and the Constitution, getting the national government on its feet, and encouraging Jefferson to buy the Louisiana Purchase. On the other hand, Madison was more Jeffersonian as an elected official from Virginia in the 1790’s, when forming the Republican Party, and when implementing the Embargo Act. As we will see in the coming pages, however, Madison by and large returned to the ideals he had used when forming the constitutional republic to articulate the ideals of the Washington cycle during his Presidency. As a result, we can categorize him as a Grandson Articulator.

Other Grandson Articulators are easier to categorize for having ideals affiliated with their cycle of circumstances. Polk’s ideals found in the Democratic Party of the 1840’s, for instance, would be used to articulate those of the Jackson cycle, while Benjamin Harrison’s ideals built around late 19th century Republican ideals would do the same to uphold the Lincoln cycle’s commitments. Further, Harding’s Republican Party principles of the 1920’s would articulate the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle, while Kennedy/Johnson’s Democratic Party ideals of the 1960’s would articulate those of the Franklin Roosevelt cycle. Most recently Bush’s Republican Party ideals of the early 21st century have done the same to continue on with the commitments of Reagan’s cycle just as Madison did for Washington nearly two centuries ago.
"The Paths Already Traced"

Presidents of Grandson Articulation are thrilled, perhaps to the point of arrogance, when entering their Presidency. As we saw in the Preemption-One chapter, cycled affiliates are angered that their “pre-destined legacy” for greatness was interrupted by an opposing Preemption-One President. Thus, when Grandson Articulators enter office, they are anxious to continue on with the “paths already traced” by the Reconstructive and Great-Son Articulator Presidents and (despite the relative peace and prosperity created under the just completed Preemption-One Presidencies), to do away with what their predecessor had just accomplished.\textsuperscript{246}

Madison was the first to lead in such a way, seen through the policies he implemented as described in Chapter 3. Before the War of 1812 for instance, he carried on with the Washington cycle’s ideals and commitments by holding up the repeal of Jefferson’s Embargo Act against Britain and implementing the Non-Intercourse and Macon Number Two Acts to, like Washington, better trade relations with Great Britain. Further, he pleaded with Congress to reestablish Hamilton’s national bank, and carried on with what President Adams had done by increasing taxes and military spending.\textsuperscript{247} Following the War of 1812, Madison continued to further Washington’s commitments to the point that Congressional Republican Party leader John Randolph proposed that Madison, “outdid Alexander Hamilton.”\textsuperscript{248} Here, Madison furthered Washington’s commitments by seeing that the national bank was

\textsuperscript{246} The “path already traced” is used frequently by Skowronek when discussing leaders of articulation.\textsuperscript{247} Rutland, \textit{The Presidency of James Madison}.\textsuperscript{248} Ketchum, \textit{James Madison: A Biography}, 603. John Randolph was again a key congressional leader that gave voice to implementing a Jeffersonian vision on the federal level that eventually resulted in the rise of the Jacksonian Democrats by 1829.
reestablished, promoted a peacetime army and navy, passed increased tax and tariff bills, and implemented internal improvement projects.

Other examples of Grandson Articulators continuing down the path of circumstances that Reconstructive and Great-Son Presidents had started for them. Polk, for instance, picked up where Jackson would have desired. He and the affiliated Democrats in Congress threw out the high Whig Tariff of 1842, replaced it with the decreased Democratic backed Walker Tariff, legitimized the annexation of Texas, and set aside any hopes of returning to a Whig Party backed national bank by working with Van Buren’s treasury system.249 Next, Benjamin Harrison followed the Lincoln cycle’s direction in the Republican Party with a billion-dollar Congress that asserted the authority of the Federal government. Harrison oversaw the implementation of the high McKinley Tariff and the Land Disposal Act of 1891 to carry on with Lincoln’s Homestead Act, while pushing for increased African American rights.250

Then in the 1920’s, Harding “returned to (the) normalcy” of the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt Republican Party cycle when he first insured that the country would not enter Wilson’s League of Nations.251 Further, Harding raised the Republican-backed tariff, restricted immigration like Theodore Roosevelt, pleased the progressive wing of the Republican party by balancing labor and business interests, and, just as McKinley had started, maintained an active imperialist foreign policy.252 Further down the road, Kennedy/Johnson continued on with the Franklin Roosevelt cycle’s ideals through

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249 Seigenthaler, James K. Polk.
250 Socolofsky, The Presidency of Benjamin Harrison.
251 The “return to normalcy” slogan was used throughout Harding’s 1920 campaign for the Whitehouse.
implementing the Great Society, federal government backed farming programs, and “tougher” anti-Communist stances in Cuba and across the globe. Finally George W. Bush has furthered the Reagan cycle’s policy commitments through large tax breaks for the wealthy, limited federal government regulations, and military focused budgets.

Yet as much as grandsons wish to live up to the traditions set by their grandfathers, they also want to distinguish themselves by promoting a new set of commitments for their generation. As a result, Grandson Articulators take on new policies due to the changing nature of the times, but also to legitimize their own Presidency. Unlike Great-Son articulators, however, the new commitments Grandson Articulators take on do more to disrupt the ideals under which the cycle’s ideals were built around, causing the order and coalitions that have kept them together for so long to begin teetering. As our first example, Madison’s new commitments, brought on most obviously through the War of 1812, weakened the Washington cycle’s calls to bring the country together under a stronger central government and centralized economic programs of a national bank, and debt, tax, and tariff initiatives.

Other Grandson Articulators would take on new commitments for their cycles that made the affiliates with like-minded ideals question its purpose. The results of Polk’s new commitments to Manifest Destiny and the Mexican War, for instance, could not keep the slavery question off the national platform any longer and consequently began shattering the ideals and commitments the Jackson cycle was designed to uphold. Harrison’s commitment

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to work with both business and labor to pass the Sherman Antitrust and Silver Purchase Acts fractured the unfettered economic nationalism that had guided those affiliated with the Lincoln cycle up to that point. Harding’s new commitments to focus more on big business interests rather than giving labor a co-equal voice weakened the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt’s cycle’s corporatist ideals by making the progressive wing of the Republican Party question what party they belonged.  

To better the country in the 1960’s, Johnson’s new commitment to a civil rights platform aided in fracturing the FDR cycle’s commitments by splitting the solid Democratic south apart from the rest of the Democratic Party. Finally, Bush has taken on several big government initiatives and spent the country to its limits, leaving many Republicans to question the Reagan cycle’s commitment to limiting the actions of the federal government. In the end, all of the above expansive policies Grandson Articulators took on hurt their cycle’s resiliency and authority for governing, yet like Great-Son Articulators, still do not shatter its commitments.  

However, there is one particular new commitment these Presidents have a habit of taking on as leaders that future Grandson Articulators may be wise to avoid.

*The Dubious Wars of Provocation*

As our President’s cycled circumstances continue, it seems less coincidental that the major foreign policy blunders or wars that come across as being provoked for less than legitimate or unneeded reasons come when Grandson Articulators are leading the country.

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255 Corporatist again means to insure that the interests of business, labor, and government were all meant.

256 Muscle flexing is another art form used by Skowronek to describe Presidential leadership by articulation.
As examples, The War of 1812 under Madison, Mexican War under Polk, near annexation of Hawaii and war with Chile under Harrison, effects of economic isolation from Europe under Harding, the Bay of Pigs incident and Vietnam War under Kennedy/Johnson, and most recently the war in Iraq under President Bush were each provoked or mishandled during these Presidents’ time in office. The rushed judgments and the apparent ineptness by which Presidents of Grandson Articulation handle the policies and procedures of these conflicts help turn what were generally peaceful and prosperous time periods under Preemption-One Presidents into divisive periods of instability for their cycle’s commitments and the country.

To expand upon these divisive foreign policies, Madison provoked and mishandled the War of 1812, which allowed the British to get revenge on their former colonies and caused rebellion from those harshly affected by it in the Northeastern part of the country.257 Next, Polk’s costly entry into the Mexican War to further the notion of Manifest Destiny was increasingly refuted by the opposing Whig Party of time who believed he did not have the authority to act in such sweeping ways.258 Departing partially from this leadership characteristic thanks to Secretary of State Blaine’s insistence, President Harrison did not take on the war he wanted to with Chile and only partially flexed his foreign policy muscles by nearly annexing Hawaii. Nevertheless, his annexation actions split the country between imperialists and non-imperialists and helped the fortunes of the Democratic Party.259

258 Seigenthaler, *James Polk.*
259 Socolofsky, *The Presidency of Benjamin Harrison.*
The other Grandson Articulators also followed suit with divisive foreign policy blunders. Having come to office following a more legitimate World War I, Harding deemed it best not to go war hunting. Nevertheless, he tragically hurt the country and world through his missed opportunities to rebuild Europe and, as a result, hurt the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle when his inaction helped spur the Great Depression in the 1930’s. Further, Johnson’s overreached policies in Vietnam split the country, the Democratic Party, and furthered the beginnings of a break up in the Franklin Roosevelt cycle of circumstances. Most recently, Bush has divided the country through the costly Iraq War and has begun weakening the Reagan cycle through hurting the Republican Party.

All of which begs the question of why Grandson-Articulators make such foreign policy blunders? To answer, let us turn to the cycled circumstances of institutional expectations to first remember that Grandson Articulators come to office in the most resilient and stable time periods within each cycle, having been through order creating, affirming, and correcting Presidencies prior to them. It is thus not surprising that we elect youthful, inexperienced, uneducated, and/or “dad’s son” like Presidents who fit the time well given the limited risks the country sees. As a result of electing risky and inexperienced leaders, however, it is also more likely that they will get the country involved in an unneeded or misguided foreign conflict that has just been described.

To give examples of these Presidents’ “risky” personal characteristics, Madison always looked to Jefferson for answers and was the only one of our first Presidents lacking

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military or foreign experience upon entering office.\textsuperscript{262} Polk was the youngest President elected at his time, while Harrison had to live up to his family and party’s ideals with little governing experience.\textsuperscript{263} Harding had only two years of college, was critiqued for lacking communication skills, and found it hard to tell his administration what to do.\textsuperscript{264} Kennedy was very young and felt great pressure, along with his Vice President, to not screw up what FDR had begun.\textsuperscript{265} Finally, Bush is often criticized for lacking educational soundness and control of his administration and also feels pressure for wanting to uphold the Reagan cycle’s ideals and seek redemption for his father’s defeat at the same time.

Knowing these characteristics, it seems likely that Grandson-Articulators feel a sense of invincibility when becoming President, as though they can touch magic buttons and have things work out for them as it had for the cycle in the recent past, particularly under Reconstructive Presidents. These characteristics are one reason why we see misguided foreign policies once during each cycle. In return, these misguided policies bring tragedy to the ideals of the cycle that the Grandson Articulator was elected to uphold. What once worked extremely well for the cycle under Reconstructive Presidents begins to teeter here. Yet with Grandson Articulators struggling to redefine the Reconstructive President’s legacies by taking on such wars, another difficult leadership circumstance comes into play through the opposing party’s opposition, who finally have an issue to unite around.

\textsuperscript{262} Rutland, \textit{The Presidency of James Madison}.
\textsuperscript{263} Seigenthaler, \textit{James Polk}; Socolofsky, \textit{The Presidency of Benjamin Harrison}.
\textsuperscript{264} Trani and Wilson, \textit{The Presidency of Warren G. Harding}.
The United Opposition

With the cycle’s affiliates being led down a tragic path through the Grandson Articulator’s dubious foreign policy or new policy commitments, the actions of those opposed to the ideals and commitments of the cycle provide another obstacle for the Grandson Articulator to overcome. Given the new difficulties caused from the war of dubious provocation, these opposition leaders now have an issue to unify around to spur the cause of their ideals. In return, they set out to make the President of Grandson Articulation appear as an inept leader and use this strategy as means of electing a Preemption-Two President following the Grandson Articulator’s administration.

To explain, Madison was the first to see a united opposition form around his War of 1812 policies, with John Randolph’s Quid faction, and the high Federalists in the Northeast forging together to critique Madison and the ideals he was trying to further. In return, this helped to set up the election of Republican Monroe in 1816. The Whig Party did the same when hesitantly granting Polk the authority for the Mexican War, but then cut funds and forged an opposition movement that led to Whig President Taylor’s election following Polk’s administration in 1848. During Harrison’s term, the Democratic Party rebelled against the President’s actions to try and annex Hawaii, which helped land Cleveland a second term in 1892. Harding’s dubious foreign policies helped the Democrat Party unite and fare well in the 1922 Congressional elections, though they still were unable to defeat Coolidge in the 1924 elections, nor Hoover in 1928. After Johnson’s Vietnam policy deeply divided the country, the Republicans came together to form a peace with honor campaign that helped elect Nixon
in 1968. Today, the Democrats are using Bush’s misfortunes in the Iraq War to unite and, if the cycle continues, help elect a Democratic President in 2008. All of these cycled opposition movements spur from Grandson Articulators who, in trying to carry on the path traced and implement muscle flexing war policies, end up ironically hurting the cycle’s ideals they were elected to affirm.

_The Mixed Election Results_

Before leaving the George W. Bush like Presidents of cycled circumstances, let us look at how the order affirming electoral victories compare among Presidents of Grandson Articulation as a key to understanding what the people expected from these Presidential leaders and why they made the decisions they did. Unlike future Presidents in this stage of the order-affirming cycle, Madison rolled into office without having to run against a strong opposition party and defeated Federalist Charles Pinckney and soon to be Vice President Clinton with 122 to 47 and six electoral votes respectively. President Harding would follow suit with a landslide election victory in 1920 following the country’s obvious calls to return to a pre-World War I environment.

The other initial elections of Grandson Articulators are more intriguing with Polk, Harrison, Kennedy, and Bush being elected with razor thin electoral victories over their opponents: Henry Clay, Grover Cleveland, Richard Nixon, and Al Gore respectively.²⁶⁶ Within a theory of cycled circumstances, the closeness in these elections when the country

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²⁶⁶ Leip, Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections, http://uselectionatlas.org. By the popular vote, Polk defeated Clay 49% to 48%, Harrison defeated Cleveland 233-168 in the Electoral College after losing the popular vote 48% to 49%, Kennedy defeated Nixon 49.72% to 49.55%, and Bush defeated Gore 271-266 in the Electoral College after losing the popular vote 47% to 48% respectively.
moved from leadership by a Preemption-One President to leadership by a President of Grandson Articulation is not surprising. To explain, the country in these elections is torn between continuing to pragmatically preempt the cycle’s commitments and ideals by electing another Preemptive President to follow the Preemptive-One Presidents (Tyler, Cleveland, Eisenhower, and Clinton) or to elect a member with similar ideals as the Reconstructive President to affirm or carry on with the policy commitments of the time. In the end, the country typically splits their votes equally, as was shown in the election results of 1844, 1888, 1960, and 2000, but always leans a bit more (either in the popular vote or Electoral College) to affirm the cycle through electing the President of Grandson Articulation.

Reelection efforts of Grandson Articulators are more difficult to compare, given the diverse situations in each. As a general rule however, the reelection efforts of Grandson Articulators (or their Vice Presidents who carry on with their circumstances after they die) are successful. Madison, for instance, defeated Federalist DeWitt Clinton handily in 1812, Polk did not run for reelection, and Harrison was defeated by Cleveland in 1892. Harding died, but Coolidge somewhat carried on with his Grandson Articulation legacy by winning big in 1924, while Kennedy’s assassination caused Johnson to takeover, win a landslide reelection, and carry on with the FDR cycle’s Grandson Articulation in 1964. Interestingly, current President Bush, if he completes his term, will be the first Grandson Articulator since Madison to be reelected and carry out his second term in his own right, having won reelection in 2004.
Elected into office on what, by party standards, appeared to continue on with Jefferson’s Presidency, Madison instead went on to face the leadership circumstances of a Grandson Articulator and, as a result furthered the commitments and ideals of the Washington cycle. Serving when institutional expectations gave him a substantial degree of authority to make changes and act independently (Figure 1), Madison set the stage for future Grandson Articulators by continuing the path already traced when making policy decisions, while tragically taking on new initiatives, including “a war of dubious provocation”. In doing so, he helped unite an opposition movement that had regained some of its footing following the Preemption-One President and followed the course most Presidents in this time do when serving in an eight year administration. Like future Grandson Articulators Polk, Harrison, Harding, Johnson, and now Bush did or are doing in their respected cycles of circumstances, Madison tried to carry on with his cycle’s ways, but was less successful in implementing its commitments. When looking at this type of President then, we may be apt to criticize them for acting ineptly on the commitments of the day, but we should also realize they are merely trying to implement the ideals and commitments that worked so well in the cycle’s beginnings. So again, the circumstances Grandson Articulators faced as President must be taken into consideration before judging their leadership abilities.

Yet as the first Grandson Articulator James Madison left office, he may have wondered what James Monroe’s Presidency would bring for the country. Would he seek to radically implement the Jeffersonian ideals he grew up standing for or was his position like Jefferson’s, where he would have to lead using a preemptive or modifying style due to his
place in the cycle of circumstances? To answer Madison’s question, let us turn to
Chapter 6 where we will first use the future Preemption-Two Presidencies of Taylor (and
Fillmore after Taylor’s death), Cleveland’s second administration, parts of the Coolidge
Presidency, Nixon (and Ford after Nixon’s resignation) and our next likely Democratic
President elect to explore the place of Monroe in step five of the cycle of institutional
circumstances.
6. CYCLED STEPS FIVE AND SIX: Presidents of Preemption Two and Disjunction

“What confronted him was a more alluring possibility: that inaction might become wisdom. …to observe and modify, but not actually attempt to shape the course of events; all Monroe’s instincts urged him to such a course.”

-George Dangerfield
Writing of the position Monroe found himself upon becoming President in 1817.

“The increasingly acerbic comments in his diary in reference to his opponents reflected his mounting abhorrence of the political brouhaha, his conviction that the administration cause was lost, and his personal suffering in defeat.”

-Mary Hargreaves
Describing diary entries by President John Quincy Adams as the 1828 election neared.

By the fifth stage of Presidential leadership within cycles of institutional circumstances, the ideals and commitments that have guided the various cycles begin to unravel. The cycles’ affiliates with like minded ideals are perplexed, wondering what to do now that their commitments have been challenged during the Presidencies of Grandson Articulation. On the other side, the cycle’s opposition leaders sense that they are close to forming a new cycle with their ideals and commitments at the forefront, but still realize that they are constrained by the commitments and ideals of the cycle they are currently in. As a result, a good deal of partisan bickering occurs alongside some pragmatic and compromising policies during Preemption-Two Presidencies.

267 Dangerfield, The Era of Good Feelings, 100.
This was the situation in which James Monroe found himself when elected in 1816 to begin the first Preemption-Two Presidency in the country’s history. Like future Presidents Zachary Taylor (and Mildred Fillmore after Taylor’s death), Grover Cleveland’s second administration, portions of the Calvin Coolidge Presidency, Richard Nixon (and Gerald Ford after Nixon’s resignation), and our next, likely Democratic President to be elected in 2008, Monroe followed a Grandson Articulator and had to clean up a foreign policy debacle during a time when the commitments of Washington’s cycle were still working well for the country, but Monroe’s ideals were opposed to them. Similar to Preemptive-One Presidents, Presidents in the Preemption-Two phase also lead the country by implementing compromising policy measures, where they combine the better of two sets of ideals. These compromising policies again cause increased hostilities from the ideological purists of the President’s party. At the same time, those affiliated with the cycle’s ideals continue to thwart Preemption-Two actions. Finally, Preemption-Two Presidents consistently are elected initially in three way races, have mixed reelection efforts, and represent the last stage of the cycle when its commitments are suitable for governing, before the cycle’s commitments move to a state of vulnerability under the President of Disjunction.

270 Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush*, 43-35. Though Skowronek never refers to Preemption-Two Presidents, he does list characteristics of this type of President here.
Opposing Ideals and Resilient Commitments

Like President Taylor who followed Polk, Cleveland’s second administration to that of Harrison’s, Coolidge to Harding, Nixon to Johnson, and the 2008 President elect to George W. Bush, Monroe entered office as a Preemption-Two President. In each case, the cycle’s commitments and ideals had not yet become unusable, with many of the commitments functioning well for the country, but again needing preemptive or modifying leadership to correct the typical muscle flexing policies of the Grandson Articulator. Most prominent in this correcting process was the need to sort out the arguably misguided foreign policies of the Grandson Articulator.

Monroe entered office when Washington’s economic and foreign policies still worked well to guide the country, but the actions of Madison needed correcting following the War of 1812. President Taylor was elected in similar circumstances when the Jackson cycle’s economic and governing commitments were still resilient, but Polk’s new commitments taken on in the Mexican War needed altering. Similarly, Cleveland’s second administration began when Lincoln’s ideals and policies were still prominent, but Harrison’s expansive billion dollar Congress and Hawaii annexation projects needed adjustments. Further, Coolidge was President when the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt ideals of domestic corporatism and foreign economic imperialism were still sufficient, but needed correcting after the muscle flexing policies of Harding’s administration. Furthermore, Nixon entered office when the FDR cycle’s New Deal and foreign policy commitments were still buoyant, but needed correcting after Johnson’s Vietnam policies had divided the country. Finally, our
next likely Democratic President will enter office when the Reagan ideals of limited federal government action except in military matters will still be resilient, but will need to be modified after George W. Bush’s Iraq War and big business favored domestic policies.

Besides following leaders of Grandson Articulation when the commitments were resilient, these Presidents also take on their label in the cycle because four of the five Preemptive-Two Presidents have been elected with ideals opposed to the cycle’s commitments. Five out of six will have had opposed ideals to the cycle if a Democrat is elected in 2008. Like Great-Son Articulators whose ideals needed correcting and were thus followed by Preemption-One Presidents, the commitments set forth by Grandson Articulators also needed altering using the opposed ideals of Preemption-Two leaders.

The first example of this was described in Chapter 3 where we saw that Monroe came to office with ideals (like Jefferson’s) that were built from his Virginia and Republican Party roots and countered the Federalist ideals and policies put forth under Presidents Washington, Adams, and Madison. Though he had limited political views, the Whig Party used future President Taylor in 1848 as they did Harrison in 1840, when trying to correct the antebellum ideals put forward under Presidents Jackson, Van Buren, and Polk. Cleveland’s Preemption-Two administration did the same as his Preemption-One part of the cycle as he sought to modify the post-civil war and unfettered economic nationalism ideals put forth in the Lincoln cycle through Lincoln’s Reconstruction and Grant, Hayes, Garfield, Arthur, and Harrison’s Articulations.

Coolidge, however, is an anomaly of a Preemption-Two leader within these cycles, being elected in the Preemption-Two slot in 1924 with Republican Party ideals affiliated with
the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle (countering what Preemption-Two leaders normally are: Presidents with opposed ideals). His affiliated ideals are seen through the actions he took in Massachusetts as Governor and legislator and obviously through being elected Vice President and President on the Republican Party ticket. As we will see shortly, however, the actions Coolidge took as President on the commitments of the day can be generally categorized within the scope of what other Preemption-Two leaders have done. However, the fact that Coolidge had affiliated ideals within the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle that he took part in, make him, Andrew Johnson, and portions of Cleveland’s second administration, the anomalies within the six-step cycle of circumstances.

After Coolidge, however, the Preemption-Two Presidents returned in full force under Nixon and the Republican Party in 1968. Here, Nixon acted as an opposition President to the FDR cycle and was elected, as Eisenhower was, to continue correcting and modifying the big government policies Presidents Roosevelt, Truman, Kennedy, and Johnson had created and affirmed. Further, given the state of the commitments in the country today, it appears that the 2008 Preemption-Two President elect will have ideals opposed (Democratic Party) to the established Reagan cycle. Therefore, he or she will attempt to correct and modify these ideals and fulfill the characteristic that similar Presidents in the Preemptive-Two leadership

271 If the cycle were to play itself out exactly, the President serving in Coolidge’s time should have been a Democrat.
272 Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make*, 45-49. It is interesting that when Skowronek described his typology of Presidents, two of his three “hard cases” were Cleveland and Coolidge, which correspond to two of my three anomalies in my six-step cycle (Eisenhower was Skowronek’s other hard case). Focusing on Coolidge here, Skowronek points out that for being affiliated with an established regime, he did very little while in office, having little control over the Republican stalwarts in Congress. This helps make the case that though Coolidge’s ideals upon entering the Presidency were affiliated with the McKinley and Roosevelt cycle, it appears that parts of his administration were defined by the modifying qualities of Preemptive-Two leadership. As another note, I give an explanation for Andrew Johnson’s Presidency in the introduction and Cleveland’s second administration in the second section of this chapter.
position have in the past. It is also likely that, like President Monroe nearly 200 years earlier, the President elected in 2008 will put forward compromising policies, seeking to combine the better of two sets of ideals.\textsuperscript{273}

\textit{Correcting and Compromising Commitments}

Given that the existing commitments for governing are still in a resilient phase and working well for the cycle’s ideals, it is not the place of Preemptive-Two Presidents to reconstruct the country’s commitments and create a new cycle of circumstances, just as was the case for Preemptive-One Presidents. It is not surprising then that Presidents in this spot of the Presidential cycle keep or even further the cycle’s commitments that have guided the country since they were implemented under the Reconstructive President. In Monroe’s case, he went against his Jeffersonian roots to keep Washington’s economic programs and even strengthened Hamilton’s federal banking practices within the midst of the Panic of 1819. He also used the Federalist ideals of the Washington cycle to further a strong executive office when touring the country and forcing European diplomats to meet with him.\textsuperscript{274}

Other examples of Monroe acting more Washingtonian than Jeffersonian existed. He went against the small national government ideals of his Republican Party when implementing internal improvement projects without a constitutional amendment and when making an exception for where slavery could exist when implementing the Missouri Compromise. Finally, he continued on with the Washington ways when securing and

\textsuperscript{273} It is no coincidence that the leading Democratic candidates, Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, are stressing their ability to work across party lines and bring Republicans, Independents, and Democrats together for the good of the country as the 2008 election approaches.  
\textsuperscript{274} Cunningham Jr., \textit{The Presidency of James Monroe}. 
expanding the young nation through the Monroe Doctrine that closed the western hemisphere to European settlement and through the Adams-Onis Treaty with Spain which extended the nation’s borders to the Pacific for the first time in its history.\textsuperscript{275}

Other Preemption-Two Presidents followed suit when keeping or even furthering the cycle’s prominent ideals. To continue the Jackson cycle’s commitments, Whig Presidents Taylor and Fillmore kept their hands off the Whig inspired national bank, increased tariff, and internal improvement projects and went along with a tougher Fugitive Slave Law in the Compromise of 1850.\textsuperscript{276} Next, while still working in a Lincoln cycle of circumstances dominated by Republican Party ideals during his second administration, Democratic President Cleveland would not promote the 16:1 currency ratio the Democratic Party wanted to give the southern states a fairer economic playing field. Cleveland also failed to implement increased federal government measures to pull the country out of the Great Depression of the 1890’s.\textsuperscript{277}

Other examples of Preemptive-Two Presidents making big policy decisions that their parties did not agree with whole heartedly continued in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century. During the Preemption-Two leadership phase of the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle, Coolidge furthered a strict immigration policy in line with Roosevelt’s Gentlemen’s Agreement, worked on 70 anti-trust law suits, kept tariffs high in line with McKinley’s ideal, and kept the federal government largely out of controlling the economy by furthering big business interests.\textsuperscript{278} To continue on with the FDR ways, the Nixon and Ford administrations

\textsuperscript{275} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{276} Smith, \textit{The Presidencies of Zachary Taylor & Millard Fillmore}.
\textsuperscript{277} Welch, Jr., \textit{The Presidencies of Grover Cleveland}.
\textsuperscript{278} Greenberg, \textit{Calvin Coolidge}.
furthered many of the Democrats’ social welfare programs, added big government programs such as the Environmental Protection Agency, and expanded upon the FDR cycle’s foreign policies in China and Russia. 279 Finally, the 2008 Republican Party is talking about finding another President Reagan and the leading Democratic contenders are talking about middle-class tax cuts and maintaining strong military measures to fight terrorism. Therefore, it is likely our next President will carry on with the tradition of Preemption-Two Presidents when keeping or furthering the Reagan commitments found in our current cycle of circumstances.

Like Preemption-One Presidents, however, Preemption-Two Presidents are not just elected to go against their ideals to further the commitments in the established cycle in which they are leading. Members of their party and the country elected them to correct parts of the cycle’s commitments after they had just been affirmed, but over reached under Presidents of Grandson Articulation. Hence Monroe followed the ideals of the ideological wing of the Republican Party when cutting taxes, trying to eliminate the national debt, making clear that slavery could exist below the 36° 30’ line, and insuring another dubious war did not start with Spain after General Jackson tried to conquer present day Florida. 280 Whig Presidents Taylor and Fillmore also followed their party’s ideals by letting California into the union as a free state, attempted to increase the tariff, and tried to stay loyal to the limited role their party wanted Whig Presidents do play. 281 Cleveland tried pleasing his Democratic Party when he

279 Reeves, President Nixon: Alone at the Whitehouse; Greene, The Presidency of Gerald R. Ford.
280 Cunningham Jr., The Presidency of James Monroe.
281 Smith, The Presidencies of Zachary Taylor & Millard Fillmore.
attempted to decrease the tariff, sent troops to Chicago to end labor disputes, and halted the annexation of Hawaii.\textsuperscript{282}

Other Preemptive-Two Presidents took similar measures to fulfill their party’s ideals while in office. However, Coolidge ironically tried to further some Democratic Party ideals during his administration. He followed the idealism of Preemptive-One President Wilson when signing the Kellogg-Briand Pact that made war illegal as a mechanism for national policy, encouraged an arms control policy, passed the Dawes’ Plan to help Germany refinance its debt, and decreased the size of the Navy.\textsuperscript{283} Nixon implemented ideals of the Republican Party when he decentralized federal social programs to state and local governments, established a more conservative Supreme Court, eventually ended the Vietnam War, and took the dollar off the gold standard under FDR’s Bretton Woods’ economic system.\textsuperscript{284} Finally, the Democratic Party nominee in 2008 will likely be elected and will try implementing their party’s ideals to further government programs for healthcare, energy, education, and the economy, while ending the war in Iraq. All of which, when placed alongside the policies Preemptive-Two Presidents implement that run counter to their ideals, shows that they make decisions based on the compromising, modifying, and stabilizing time periods they were serving in. Further, each Preemptive-Two President had a limited ability to dramatically alter the course of events and become a masterful or visionary President. Their purpose was merely to act subordinately to the policy commitments of their time.

\textsuperscript{282} Welch, Jr., \textit{The Presidencies of Grover Cleveland}.
\textsuperscript{283} Greenberg, \textit{Calvin Coolidge}.
\textsuperscript{284} Reeves, \textit{President Nixon: Alone at the Whitehouse}.
Searching Affiliates and a Restless Opposition

Like Preemption-One leaders, Presidents leading during Preemption-Two phases of the cycle also find increased attacks from both ideological ends of the political spectrum. Those affiliated with like-minded ideals in the cycle realize that their ideals that created the cycle’s commitments are not working as well as they once did, but still continue to thwart the Preemptive-Two President at any chance they can. Attacking and investigating the morals and actions of these Presidents is not out of the question as well. As a result, Monroe saw increased Congressional attacks and oversight, with Henry Clay and the moderate Republicans in Congress leading the charge by insisting that the United States immediately recognize South American countries fighting for independence and that Monroe deliver all executive documents on most of the issues he acted on as President.

Other examples of increased attacks on like-mined cycled affiliates followed, including the Taylor/Fillmore Whig administrations who received particularly harsh criticisms from the Democrats in the Jackson cycle over the Compromise of 1850. Next, Cleveland was greeted with continuous attacks about his morality from the Republicans in the Lincoln cycle, while taking a lot of heat for his inability to bring the country out of an increasingly harsh depression. Thirty years later, Coolidge was greeted with dismay from the Republicans affiliated with the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle in the Senate when he tried reforming their initiatives. Nixon also felt the frustrated Democrats in Congress who were associated with the FDR cycle breathing down his back at every move which likely influenced the Watergate discovery and Nixon’s future resignation. Finally, with Reagan’s Republican affiliates beginning to lose their way since the 2004 election, but continuing to
put up a fight while trying to regain their cycle’s footing, expect the next Democratic President elect to see the same sort of attacks from frustrated Republicans in the Reagan cycle, just as Monroe did from those associated with the Washington cycle.

When implementing their compromising policies, Preemption-Two Presidents also see an increasing restlessness from the most ideological members of their own party. These individuals or groups were upset the first time when Preemption-One Presidents did not implement the party’s ideological agenda and are even more restless and frustrated when Preemption-Two Presidents do not implement the ideological path during their Presidencies. As a result, by the end of the Preemptive-Two administrations, these ideological members have had enough of these compromising strategies and are ready for an ideological driven President of Reconstruction to come in the years ahead. Monroe, for instance, felt increasingly harsh pressure from General Jackson and the rest of the rising Jacksonian Democrats for using Washington-minded economic policies and for timidly handling the Florida issue.

In future cycles, Taylor and Fillmore spearheaded the approaching Lincoln cycle through feeling the wrath of Clay and the Whig Party (who would evolve into the Republican Party) after not moving forward on a more nationally-based American (economic) System and after implementing a tougher Fugitive Slave Law that disappointed the abolitionists in the North. The deep depression and Republican landslides of 1894 and 1896 during Cleveland’s second term prevented the Democratic Party from using their restlessness with Cleveland to form the next Democratic cycle. Nevertheless, this did not stop the William
Jennings Bryan wing of the Democratic Party from rebelling against Cleveland’s “timid” policies during his second term in office.

Similarly, with the progressive Republicans breaking from Republican ranks, Coolidge also saw increased criticism for being too timid during his Presidency. Further, the Nixon and Ford Preemptive-Two Presidencies saw attacks from their Republican Party for not doing more to dismantle big government social programs. This then resulted in the more ideologically minded Republican Reagan running against moderate Republican Ford in 1976, which, though unsuccessful, set up his Reconstruction in 1981. Finally, expect the more liberal members of the Democratic Party to grow frustrated when our next Preemption-Two President takes office in 2009 to implement a compromising strategy for correcting the commitments of the Reagan cycle for a second time, just as President Clinton did the first time from 1993-2001.

All of which points to the challenging leadership circumstances that Preemption-Two Presidents face in office. Though they and the country are beginning to think that changes need to be made, the time is not right for these Presidents as leaders to take on such a task of making the big changes with both ends of the ideological spectrum questioning in which direction the federal government should follow. Like Preemptive-One Presidents, those in the Preemptive-Two slot are still institutionally subordinate and can only modify the commitments of the day. Trying to provide a lasting vision is even more challenging with Congress wanting to balance out powers following the independent Presidents of Grandson Articulation.
Congressional Checks Increase

Besides the increased attacks Preemptive Presidents face, it is also interesting in general to note the increased role that Congress takes on during each phase of preemption in the cycle. This follows logically in a theory of cycled circumstances and institutional expectations in that increased independent Presidential actions during Reconstruction and Articulation periods are balanced out with increased Congressional authority during preemptive periods. Within Preemption-Two leadership positions specifically, Presidents have to face a hostile Congress who had significantly been left out of the discussion during the muscle flexing policies of the Grandson Articulator. This helps explain why Monroe was always telling the executive branch to keep Congress updated and provide them with the documents they needed. It also helps explain why Congress wanted an increased degree of oversight during Wilson’s proposal for the League of Nations, Nixon’s plan for ending the Vietnam War and then when discovering the Watergate proceedings, and Clinton’s every action after the 1994 election. Further, expect our next President to see an increased role from Congress as well, which has started early with the Grandson Articulation from President Bush causing the Democrats to regain control of Congress in the 2006 elections and begin increasing their oversight authority.

Election Results of Preemptive-Two Presidents

Like we have done with other Presidents, highlighting Presidential election results continues to help us understand the degrees to which Presidents felt they should change or merely modify polices and whether or not they should be independent or subordinate as
President based, in the Preemptive-Two case, on the order correcting elections that put them into office. The first Preemption-Two election of President Monroe, for instance, went against the norm for future Presidents in these positions. As mentioned in previous chapters, only the all encompassing Republican Party was out competing for votes and as a result, Monroe easily defeated Rufus King in 1816 and was not challenged in his reelection bid, where John Adams even voted for him. From here the elections get interesting, with all Preemptive-Two Presidents being initially elected in competitive three-way races. Like those elections that put Preemptive-One Presidents in the White House, these three-way races are not surprising. Given that the politics Grandson Articulators affirmed in the cycle split their parties or factions to the point of weakening their party’s electoral chances in the following election, an established third candidate decided to enter the race on a third-party ticket as a protest to what the Grandson Articulator was unable to do.

Polk’s actions, for instance, split the Democrats, provoked former President Van Buren to run in the Free Soil Party, and helped elect Taylor over Democrat Lewis Cass in 1848. Similarly, Harrison’s actions split the Republicans, spurred James Weaver to run with the Populist Party, and helped elect Cleveland again in 1892. Somewhat differently, Coolidge was actually aided by the progressive candidacy of Robert LaFollette in 1924, which helped him win a landslide victory over the Democrats, who were still searching for a coalition and performed very poorly. In 1968, Johnson’s actions on civil rights split the Democratic Party, caused George Wallace to run, and allowed Nixon to fair well in what had been the solid Democratic south when defeating Hubert Humphrey. As we move closer to the 2008 election, it is not surprising that rumors of a third party candidacy are stirring, given
the disillusions currently occurring in the Republican Party. If a third-party candidate
decides to challenge the Republican Party as a result over something George Bush has done
as Grandson Articulator, it will not be the first time a Preemption-Two President will have
won in a three-way race to become President.

On the reelection front, Preemption-Two Presidents are less comparable. As
mentioned, James Monroe won a unanimous victory in the Electoral College, while Fillmore,
like Tyler, was disowned from the Whigs for his preemptive and timid actions and not
allowed to run as a Whig candidate for reelection. Having already served one term,
Cleveland did not run for reelection in 1896, while Coolidge chose the same fate, having
already carried out Harding’s term and not wanting to serve longer than eight years. Nixon
returned to what Monroe initially did when defeating George McGovern by a landslide in
1972. It remains to be seen what will happen in 2012 to the Democrat likely elected in 2008.
With Preemptive Presidents generally praised for their pragmatic and compromising
approaches to leadership, it will not be surprising if 2012 brings with it a reelection of the
Democrat elected in 2008.

Preemption-Two Circumstances

Like Presidents Taylor (and Fillmore after Taylor’s death), portions of Cleveland’s
second administration, parts of Coolidge’s administration, Nixon (and Ford after Nixon’s
resignation) and our 2008 likely Democratic President elect, President Monroe was elected
following a President of Grandson Articulation and led in a time when Washington’s
established commitments were still working well for the country, but Monroe’s ideals were
opposed to them. As a result, Monroe and other Presidents in the Preemption-Two leadership position corrected or modified established cycles using compromising policies from two sets of ideals, drew harsh attacks from affiliates with like minded ideals in the cycle, and “you are too timid” attacks from members of the most ideological members of their own party for not implementing they party’s ideological policies.

Also like future Preemption-Two Presidents, Monroe watched Congress take on an increased role following President Madison’s actions as Grandson Articulator and, though his elections were not similar, would see future Presidents in his Preemption-Two position elected through cycled circumstances in the Electoral College. All of these characteristics suggest that Monroe and the other Preemption-Two Presidents to follow in future cycles only had opportunities to modify and adjust the policy commitments using their ideals opposed to the resilient cycle. Like Preemption-One Presidents, they were not in the position to significantly change the course of events by acting independently as President, nor did they have the greatest opportunities to become the most visionary and masterful Presidents. Like the three previous types of Presidents we have looked at, we should remember these circumstances when assessing their leadership abilities.

Yet with Monroe passing the baton to John Quincy Adams following the heated election and post-election of 1824, it would not take long to see that many of the governing commitments and ideals that had guided the country since Washington were beginning to shatter. In return, our sixth President was the first to be put in the unfortunate and impossible Disjunctive leadership position that the Anti-Federalists faced during the fall of the Articles of Confederation and Presidents Franklin Pierce and James Buchanan, portions of Grover
Cleveland’s second administration, Herbert Hoover, and Jimmy Carter would face in similar periods of the final step in the cycle of circumstances.

The Cycle Shatters: Presidencies of Disjunction

As has been highlighted both directly and indirectly in the previous pages, our Constitution ended up providing mechanisms that Presidents could use to make great changes and act independently if need be. However, the design was also to make sure that those great changes only occurred so often, forcing some Presidents to be mere stabilizers in the circumstances they would face as President. By the time the sixth-step of the cycle begins through Presidencies of Disjunction, the country is sensing that big changes will be needed soon, but not during the President of Disjunction’s time in office. They instead wish to give the ideals and commitments that the cycle’s previous Presidents have guided the country by one last chance to work before allowing a new set of ideals to make new commitments and a new cycle following these Disjunctive Presidencies. This was the situation Presidents John Quincy Adams, Franklin Pierce, James Buchanan, parts of Cleveland’s second administration, Hoover, and Carter found themselves in, when leading during these impossible leadership positions in the cycle.285

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Besides leading when the commitments of the cycle were vulnerable or falling apart and their ideals affiliated with the cycle, Disjunctive Presidents also exhibit other similar leadership characteristics and challenges. Other than Cleveland’s second term, they follow Preemptive-Two Presidents and use their competent backgrounds to try moving the country in a new direction as it becomes apparent that the cycle’s commitments they are affiliated with are beginning to shatter. Because they are affiliated with the ideals of the cycle that have worked for decades, their inability to change the country’s governing direction makes them come across as failed leaders. From this, it sends those affiliated with the faltering cycle’s ideals into disarray, and gives the cycle’s opposition movement the opportunity to highlight how great change is needed through the use of their opposing ideals and commitments. Finally, after pleading to the country that the vulnerable state that the country’s commitments are in is not their fault and the opposition’s alternative would only throw the country into further chaos, Disjunctive Presidents or their party representatives who are nominated after them are typically defeated soundly when running for reelection by future Presidents of Reconstruction.  

Follow Preemptive-Two Presidents

Like the other five types of Presidents, Disjunctive Presidents enter office in a unique leadership position. They follow Preemption-Two Presidents, meaning that the ideals and commitments of their cycle have already been created, affirmed, corrected, affirmed again, and corrected again by the time they take office. Along with this, the cycle’s opposition

\[286\] Skowronek, The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton, 39-41. Again, many, but not all of the leadership challenges disjunctive Presidents face are listed in these pages.
Ideals are almost ready to emerge in order to form a new cycle of circumstances using ideals from the opposing party or factions. As one example, we saw Disjunctive President John Quincy Adams follow Preemptive-Two President Monroe after decades of the Washington cycle of neutrality and Hamilton-based economic programs, with opposing Jacksonian ideals nearly ready to begin a new cycle through “common man” economic and governing principles. Similarly, Disjunctive Presidents Pierce and Buchanan took office following the Preemptive-Two Presidencies of Taylor and Fillmore when Jackson’s commitments had guided the country for a generation, but the ideals and commitments of the Lincoln cycle were on the verge of beginning. Next, Cleveland’s second administration is the anomaly in this leadership position as he represented both the Preemption-Two and Disjunctive leadership positions of the Lincoln cycle. As a result, he paved a path for the Republican Party to use its progressive wing and create new commitments through the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle that began in 1897.

More similar disjunctive phases followed. Hoover became President after parts of Coolidge’s Preemption-Two Presidency, decades of the McKinley/Roosevelt cycle, and as the new cycle of FDR Democratic and New Deal policies were about to commence. Most recently, President Carter entered office following Preemption-Two President Ford when

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Ibid., 45-49. As mentioned in the Preemption-Two section, Cleveland’s second administration represented another of Skowronek’s tough cases to classify. In his discussion of Cleveland, he highlighted that though the Democratic Party wanted big changes, Cleveland refused to take action. To me, this seems plausible given his second term position as Preemptive-Two President to a Lincoln cycle. What helped to make Cleveland a leader of Disjunction too, however, was the deep economic depression in the country throughout his second term. Such economic hardships near the end of any cycle have the potential to drastically shift the electorate and, given that the country had not produced a Reconstructive President since 1861, provided a rare opportunity for the same party to produce two cycles of circumstances in a row. Further, it gave Cleveland’s second administration the label of providing two types of leadership.
decades of FDR based commitments for governing were faltering and when those backing Reagan had the support ready to begin a new cycle. In the future, look for a Republican President to be elected following the Preemptive-Two Democrat elected in 2008, lead after the Reagan cycle had governed the country for decades, and as the ideals from the Democratic Party are on the verge of creating the next cycle of circumstances.

Vulnerable Commitments and Affiliated Ideals

Just as the Anti-Federalists inspired Articles of Confederation had begun to come unraveled as a mechanism for governing by the late 1780’s, the same state of vulnerable circumstances occurred with the Washington cycle by 1825 when John Quincy Adams came to office to become the first President of Disjunction. Here, the ideals used to govern the country’s commitments had not been dramatically changed since 1789 and the time, as the Constitution set up, was nearing for some big changes. The Hamilton economic programs that Washington implemented decades earlier were facing increased opposition and falling apart, particularly from those wanting more open trade with other countries, while the election outcome of 1824 had furthered the image that aristocrats and not the common man were running the federal government. In other words, John Quincy Adams was the first President to serve when the commitments were most vulnerable and faltering.

Future Disjunctive Presidents would enter office when the commitments of the cycle they had like minded ideas with had become extremely vulnerable. Pierce and Buchanan served in a time of vulnerability when the Jacksonian creed for dealing with economic issues and the slavery debate no longer were sufficient mechanisms to govern. Though Cleveland
was not affiliated with all of the commitments of Lincoln’s cycle, he and the Democratic Party had the unfortunate luck of bearing the brunt of the cycle’s downfall through the vulnerabilities created for the party in the Great Depression in the 1890’s. Next, the corporatist domestic and foreign policies that had guided the country since the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle were falling apart when Hoover became President. Furthermore, a large spending and bureaucratic federal government and accepted state of relations with the Soviet Union that had guided the country since FDR became vulnerable and shattered during Carter’s Presidency. Finally, after our next Democratic President elected in 2008, look for a Republican affiliated with Reagan’s commitments to face a similar vulnerable state when bringing the Reagan cycle to a close around 2020.

Besides leading when the commitments of the cycle are vulnerable or falling apart, Presidents of Disjunction enter office with competent backgrounds and ideals affiliated with the Reconstructive President of the established cycle. In turn, this makes the claim that “these Presidents are failed leaders” less plausible and the claim that they served in at an inopportune institutional time more likely. John Quincy Adams, for instance, entered office after a lifetime of governing experience and with ideals more like Washington than Jefferson. Buchanan too had vast experience, most significantly as United States Senator and Secretary of State, and was associated with the Jacksonian cycle’s ideal when entering his Presidency. Cleveland had already served as President and the country obviously deemed

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288 Leonard Richards, *The Life and Times of Congressman John Quincy Adams*, (New York : Oxford University Press, 1986). John Quincy Adams’ ideals are perhaps best seen through his opposition to Jackson’s commitments (an extension of Jefferson’s philosophy) following his Presidency, where his affiliation with many of Washington’s ideals is apparent as a Congressman from Massachusetts. The fact that he was the son of Federalist President John Adams also does not hurt when making the case that he had ideals more affiliated with Federalists Washington and Adams than Republican Jefferson.
him competent enough to elect him again, but as we mentioned earlier, he is a partial anomaly in that he did not have ideals completely affiliated with the Lincoln cycle.

Hoover entered the Presidency as a competent leader after making historic diplomatic efforts during World War I and as Secretary of Commerce. Further, Hoover also fits the Disjunctive type of President in that he had been affiliated and inspired by the Republican commitments created and implemented since McKinley. Finally, Carter entered office with great educational skills for governing and had ideals affiliated with the Franklin Roosevelt cycle through the Democratic Party. All in all, it was the circumstances of vulnerable commitments and opposed ideals that these Presidents of Disjunction found themselves in as they began to act on the commitments of the day following their respective order shattering election victories in 1824, 1856, 1892, 1928, and 1976.

_Shattered Commitments_

Presidents of Disjunction typically do not know that the country is teetering on wanting big changes in its governing commitments and ideals when they begin their administrations. How could they? Besides the order correcting Preemptive Presidencies, each cycle’s ideals with which the Disjunctive President is affiliated have suitably guided political discourse and election victories for decades through the Reconstructive, Great-son, and Grandson Articulation Presidencies of the cycle. As the next in line to continue on with the commitments of the cycle, Disjunctive Presidents begin their administrations just as other affiliated leaders have done in the past by affirming the policies that have given the cycle lasting authority.
Hence John Quincy Adams continued with Washington’s economic programs through implementing what would become the notorious high “Tariff of Abomination” and furthered the Washington cycle’s banking, currency, and scientific programs. Buchanan continued on with the Jackson cycle’s ideals by accepting the Dred Scott ruling, proceeding with pro-slavery actions in Kansas, and keeping banking and high tariff legislation off of his policy agenda. Cleveland furthered the commitments of the Lincoln cycle by striking down 16:1 silver currency legislation and worked to further homestead, forestry, and Indian legislation. Next, Hoover continued to follow the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle through the Republican Party by implementing the Smoot-Hawley high Tariff Act, keeping the United States largely out of diplomatic efforts in East Asia, and continuing to keep the debt and reparation policies separate when dealing with Europe. Finally, Carter furthered the FDR ideal by increasing the size of the Federal government through Superfund and the Departments of Education and Human Services, using an FDR-minded diplomatic strategy to negotiate peace between Egypt and Israel, trying not to bring down the Soviet Union, and speaking for human rights.

In the midst of carrying on with the traditional paths that have defined the cycle, however, one or more order shattering or disruptive events occurs that make Disjunctive Presidents realize that major changes are needed. Though they work against the ideals that have guided the cycle, their actions are necessary to better the country and give the Disjunctive President the best chance of succeeding as President. In terms of these events

290 Smith, The Presidency of James Buchanan.
292 Fausold, The Presidency of Herbert Hoover.
events, the Panic of 1786 made Anti-Federalists increase their efforts to reform the Articles of Confederation in the face of rising Federalist calls for a stronger constitution. Next, the “undemocratic” results of the 1824 election and rise of the Jacksonian Democrats in the 1826 Congressional elections made John Quincy Adams realize that changes in governing structures were needed that went against the Washington ways. Buchanan felt the same pressure for changes that went against the Jacksonian ideal following John Brown’s slavery revolt, rise to secession, and Republican election victories in 1858 and 1860 that made the U.S. Civil War more likely. Cleveland and Hoover each had great economic depressions occur during their administrations that made them realize that changes were needed, with big Congressional election defeats in 1894 and 1930 only furthering their concerns that actions against the now vulnerable cycle needed to be taken to save their administrations. Finally, President Carter saw turmoil occur in his economic and foreign policies in Iran and the Soviet Union that convinced him to change course, going against the FDR cycle.

As a result of the order shattering events, Presidents of Disjunction typically try to save the now shattering cycle by ironically proposing ideals and commitments that Reconstructive Presidents will build on in the near future. John Quincy Adams went against the standard Washington ideals of the day when trying to open up foreign trade markets using reciprocity agreements. Buchanan violated Jacksonian orthodoxy when dealing with slavery by trying various mechanisms to unite North and South and trying to prevent

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293 Carter, *Keeping Faith: Memories of a President.*
secession following Lincoln’s election. Cleveland went beyond the normal operating procedures of the Lincoln cycle by attempting to reform tariff legislation and sending troops to Chicago to help put out labor and business clashes. Hoover also went beyond the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle’s corporatist norms by increasing the role of the federal government through implementing the Reconstructive Finance Corporation and desperately attempting to reform banking policies following FDR’s 1932 election. Finally, Carter violated the ideals of the Roosevelt cycle by trying to decrease the size of the federal bureaucracy, cutting taxes, and increasing defense spending to show strength in the lead up to Reagan’s victory in 1980. All of these Presidential actions aided in solving the crisis events the country faced during and after their Presidencies and aided in the respected Washington, Jackson, Lincoln, McKinley/Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, and Reagan “masterful” Reconstructive Presidencies to follow. However, the progressive actions Disjunctive Presidents take are not enough to prevent the cycle from shattering, with confused and frustrated cycled affiliates no longer able to endure and a new institutionally based opposition cycle ready to take charge.

**Affiliated Leaders are Split and Opposition Leaders Excited**

With the cycle’s commitments shattering, the cycle nearing completion, and Disjunctive Presidents attempting to save the cycle’s ideals to preserve the existing order, Disjunctive Presidents also have to deal with the impossible leadership task of trying to unite

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296 Smith, *The Presidency of James Buchanan.*
298 Fausold, *The Presidency of Herbert Hoover.*
299 Carter, *Keeping Faith: Memories of a President.*
those still affiliated with the cycle. These cycled affiliates with like-minded ideals have been present since the cycle’s inception or have come on board halfway through and begin to grow upset when Presidents of Disjunction starts altering the ideals and commitments of the cycles. Hence we saw old Federalists or moderate Republicans bickering as the Washington cycle faltered and John Quincy Adams did such things as trying to enact free trade policies that the Jacksonian Democrats wanted. For Buchanan, it was Democrats in the Deep South who grew angry with the Disjunctive President for doing too much for northern interests and not enough to carry on with the Jacksonian ways, while William Jennings Bryan ironically split the Democratic Party for another generation when arguing against Cleveland’s weak actions on economic policies in the second of his administrations. Senator Borah led the fight among the McKinley/Theodore Roosevelt cycle’s affiliates against Hoover’s actions, as he increasingly used the federal government to deal with the Great Depression. Finally, Senator Kennedy divided the liberal and conservative wings of the Democratic Party when attempting to stand for the FDR cycle, as President Carter acted against it. He even challenged the President for the nomination in 1980.

Along with having to reunite affiliated members of the cycle, Disjunctive Presidents also face increasingly harsh attacks from the cycle’s opposition, who have been hoping for decades to have an opportunity to take down the cycle’s ideals and commitments when it was most vulnerable. Though the opposition movement could compromise with Disjunctive Presidents and help the country out of its crisis situation, the opposition’s ideals and commitments for governing have not guided the country for so long; therefore, the opposition movement chooses to thwart the Disjunctive President at every turn. This in turn adds to the
perception that the Disjunctive President is a failure and paves the way for a new cycle of circumstances and Reconstructive President to follow the Disjunctive President’s administration.

As examples, we saw Federalists not work with Anti-Federalists to revise the Articles of Confederation and instead embark on a journey to the Constitutional Convention and a Washington Reconstructive Presidency to follow. The Jacksonian Democrats in Congress did the same with John Quincy Adams when thwarting every move he made, particularly during the second half of his administration as they paved the way for the beginning of the Jackson cycle. Further, with a landslide victory in the 1858 Congressional elections, the new Republican Party stood in the way of Buchanan’s proposals and set the stage for Lincoln’s Reconstruction. The same circumstances occurred as the evolving Republicans won big in the 1894 Congressional elections, then prevented Cleveland from taking action on issues, and prepared the way for McKinley to reconstruct the country’s commitments in a new cycle starting in 1897.

The harsh attacks on Disjunctive Presidents from opposition leaders also continued in the 20th century. Following the 1930 elections, the Democratic Party increasingly blamed Hoover for all that was wrong with the country and set the stage for Franklin Roosevelt’s Reconstructive Presidency and another new cycle (something the Democratic Party had not been able to define since 1826!). Finally, the Republican Party of the late 1970’s sensed an opportunity to unite with conservative Democrats in the south as 1980 loomed, opposed President Carter’s actions, and set up Reagan’s Reconstruction Presidency and a new cycle that began in 1981. In each of these cases, the Disjunctive President had to face another
difficult, if not impossible circumstance from which the institutional time they served in would not let them recover. Nevertheless, the attacks added to the perception that they were failed leaders and gave the new order creating cycle that followed a rallying cry to “not return to the days of Buchanan, or Cleveland, or Hoover” for another cycle of Presidents.

*Election Results of Presidents of Disjunction*

For our final take on how Presidential election results compare within cycled institutional circumstances, we see that the Preemptive-Two Presidents were still not able to use their compromising commitments to establish a cycle of lasting authority. As a result, the affiliated President of Disjunction has an ideal time to win what turns out to be an order shattering election. When doing so, the country initially elects Disjunctive Presidents in mixed ways.

With a little help from Henry Clay in the House of Representatives, John Quincy Adams won a narrow Electoral College victory when defeating Andrew Jackson, John Calhoun, and William Crawford in 1824, while Buchanan defeated John Fremont and Mildred Fillmore 174, 114, and 8 respectfully in 1856. Cleveland entered his second administration where he played the role of Preemption-Two and Disjunctive Presidential leader in 1893 with a 277-145 victory over then President Harrison, while Hoover achieved a landslide victory over Al Smith in 1928 with a 444 to 87 Electoral College victory. Finally, Carter won a fairly close election over then President Ford in 1976, winning the Electoral College 297 to 240.
Despite the mixed electoral results when electing Presidents of Disjunction, the elections immediately following their Presidencies all have common characteristics: landslide defeats for their party, elections of Reconstructive Presidents, and the beginnings of a new cycle. With the cycle’s commitments having run their course for governing the country sufficiently, a crisis event having thrown these commitments into a shattered state, affiliated leaders angry over where the President of Disjunction is trying to lead the country, and opposition leaders excited over having the opportunity to create a new cycle through a President of Reconstruction, Disjunctive Presidents are left with one last duty. Here, they make the case that their cycle’s ideals and commitments can still work and that the future Reconstructive President’s alternative poses a greater threat.

Hence we saw how John Quincy Adams made one last push for the Washington way and criticized what Jackson wanted to do before being soundly defeated in the general election in 1828. Buchanan did the same when making the case for Jacksonian commitments over radical Republican ideals before watching his Democrats lose big to the Republicans in 1860. After dealing with a major depression, Cleveland could not make the case to the country and his party that moderate Democratic policies were essential and watched as William Bryan was sharply defeated by McKinley in the cycle creating election of 1896. Hoover did all that he could to make a balanced Republican corporatist approach work, tried to show how radical Franklin Roosevelt’s ideas were, and then was soundly defeated in 1932. Finally, Carter made one last push for the Franklin Roosevelt ways, was excited to tell the country how radical Reagan’s policies were, and was then soundly defeated in 1980. In
each case, one cycle for governing fell by the wayside and another was created to begin the cycle of Presidential circumstances within institutional expectations all over again.

*Disjunctive Circumstances*

Wrongfully viewed as the failed Presidencies in American history, Presidents of Disjunction should instead be viewed as leaders who faced circumstances where they had to act subordinately with little independence to complete the ideals and commitments of one cycle and hold back for one more administration the new order creating Presidential cycle that would follow them. The Anti-Federalists in the mid to late 1780’s, and Presidents John Quincy Adams, Pierce, Buchanan, portions of Cleveland’s second administration, Hoover, and Carter each led during such time periods. They were elected in various degrees in order shattering elections following, other than Cleveland, Preemption-Two Presidents and led on the tail ends of cycles when the commitments for how the federal government should operate were vulnerable, but their ideals continued to be affiliated with the cycle’s order of the time.

Though they initially try carrying on with the commitments already established, crisis events force Presidents of Disjunction to alter the direction of their Presidencies by making new proposals similar to those proposed by the soon to be Presidents of Reconstruction. All of which is an extremely difficult, if not impossible leadership position in that the Disjunctive President’s cycled affiliates grow angry over the direction these Presidents are taking the party and country and that the cycle’s opponents who sense a unique opportunity to create a new cycle using their ideals by thwarting Disjunctive Presidents’ every move. This last characteristic prepares the way for a landslide defeat for the Disjunctive President
and as well for the commitments and ideals of the cycle that had guided the country for decades. With the defeat of the Disjunctive President, however, the cycle of circumstances within the institutional expectations of Presidential leadership begins again with the creation of a new Presidential leadership cycle and the first of six leadership steps occurring again through the President of Reconstruction. Just as our founders wanted when creating the Presidency to provide change and order depending on the time period in which they were serving, the end of each cycle allows us the opportunity to reflect on the various Presidents who led within it and see that the Presidential institution is working as it should.
7. CONCLUSION
What to Make of Cycled Presidential Circumstances?

Presidents Washington, Jackson, Lincoln, Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt, and Reagan are often cited as the most visionary and inspiring Presidential leaders ever to guide the Presidency, while Presidents John Quincy Adams, Buchanan, Cleveland, Hoover, and Carter are criticized for their inept or even failed leadership abilities. Other Presidents are in between. But why is this so and how should we go about answering this question? Is it that the personal leadership abilities of some Presidents are that much greater than those of other Presidents? Or, are identifiable institutional mechanisms at work that define and constrain the leadership opportunities Presidents have available to them?

Certainly both perspectives have some truth within them, but the preceding pages have argued more for the latter by stating that a revealing way of assessing Presidential leadership comes through examining Presidents in recurring cycles of circumstances defining the relationship of the President to the institutional expectations for governing. When judging Presidents, we must understand whether the country wanted big changes to its governing commitments or merely wanting to modify its policies. We should assess whether the ideals the President brought to the office were in agreement or opposed to what the majority of the country wanted for the time period. Further, we should also assess the extent to which a President had the ability to act independently or had to be subordinate to the political forces of the time.

I started in Chapter 2 by examining classical executive leadership perspectives through Machiavelli, Locke, Montesquieu, and Hamilton to present a sense of how their
ideas about executive leadership theory helped establish the Presidency. After touching briefly on more modern examples for understanding Presidential leadership, I then turned to Skowronek’s 1993 *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush*. Skowronek showed patterned regimes of Presidents as leaders serving in a spectrum of vulnerable or resilient commitments, opposed or affiliated ideals, and as Presidents of Reconstruction, Articulation, Preemption, or Disjunction.

On the basis of Presidential biographies and other pieces of political evidence, I argued that Skowronek’s Presidential patterns in his Jefferson and Lincoln regimes should be reformatted to begin with a Washington cycle (the history of which was presented in Chapter 3) and an additional McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt cycle. I also added two distinct phases of Presidential leadership by articulation and preemption. Doing so provided a recurring six-step or phased cycle of Presidential leadership through Presidents of Reconstruction, Great-Son Articulation, Preemption-One, Grandson Articulation, Preemption-Two and Disjunction that I argued matched well with Presidential history across the entire span of the Presidency, as seem in Table 3 from the introduction.

In each of their six phases, these cycles offered insights into distinct Presidential leadership circumstances, why Presidents used a similar logic depending on their place in the cycle to make leadership decisions, how we can better predict what Presidential elections mean, and what leadership characteristics are to come for Presidents in the near and distant future. As a means to summarize these purposes, it seems worth repeating a few of the circumstances for each of the six types of Presidential leaders here.
Chapter 4 examined the revolutionary Reconstructive step of Presidential leadership, indicating how Washington, Jackson, Lincoln, McKinley (and Theodore Roosevelt after McKinley’s assassination), Franklin Roosevelt, and Reagan embodied the circumstances facing this type of leader. They led when the previous cycle’s political commitments were vulnerable or had come unraveled and they represented ideals opposed to what had occurred in the recent past. As a result, they created lasting policy visions that held authority for governing for a definable sequence of Presidents. They did not initially solve the problems they were elected to fix, but they are historically viewed as persuasive politicians and great party leaders and have won landslide victories in the Electoral College.

We then examined the second step in the cycle through implementing Presidents of Great-Son Articulation, focusing on Presidents John Adams, Van Buren, Grant through Arthur, Taft, Truman, and George H.W. Bush. We saw how they entered office in order-affirming elections with high expectations on their shoulders following Reconstructive Presidencies. They led when the political commitments were resilient or functioning well, and their representative ideals were clearly affiliated with those of the Reconstructive President. These Presidents faced more challenging leadership circumstances than their reconstructive predecessor in that they dealt with uprisings from their affiliated party for not implementing the revolutionary policies the way that the Reconstructive President would have done. Further, they faced increased criticism from opposition parties who wanted to win back the Presidency after multiple election defeats. Finally, we saw how these Great-Son Articulators typically lose their reelection bids, not so much because they did anything personally wrong, but because the country felt the cycle’s commitments needed modifying.
This led us in Chapter 5 to the resisting Preemption-One Presidents typified by Jefferson, William Henry Harrison (and John Tyler after Harrison’s death), Cleveland’s first administration, Wilson, Eisenhower and Clinton. We saw the challenging institutional circumstances these Presidents faced upon entering office following an order-correcting or modifying election when the country’s commitments were working well, but the Preemptive-One President’s ideals were opposed to what was working at the time. As a result, these Presidents spent their time in office making compromising policies, where they combined the better of two sets of ideals, even when the ideological wing of their party complained they were being too timid or when the opposing party’s affiliates tried thwarting their every move. We saw how most Preemptive-One Presidents won two victories in the Electoral College and passed the Presidential baton to a President of Grandson Articulation.

Implementing Presidents of Grandson Articulation, step four in the six-step cycle, were then examined through the Presidencies of Madison, Polk, Benjamin Harrison, Harding and parts of Coolidge’s administration, Kennedy (and Johnson after Kennedy’s assassination), and George W. Bush. We showed how they followed Preemptive-One Presidents in resilient times when the governing commitments of the past still worked well for the country and they had similar ideals with the current cycle’s guiding commitments. As a result, these Presidents affirmed the policies of the cycle they were serving in. But like Great-Son Articulators, the circumstances Grandson Articulators faced also forced them to take on new initiatives that ran counter to the initial reconstructive ways of their cycle. When combined with a “war of dubious provocation” or foreign policy blunder, this caused the policy commitments of their cycle to begin losing its authority for governing. We also saw
that due to their place in the cycle, most Grandson Articulators won very close order-affirming election victories when entering office and, though not in every case, won reelection or were part of an eight year phase of Grandson Articulation.

This then led us to Chapter 6 and the resistant Preemption-Two Presidencies of Monroe, Taylor (and Fillmore after Taylor’s death), portions of Cleveland’s second administration, portions of Coolidge’s Presidency, Nixon, and Ford after Nixon’s resignation. Our next, likely Democratic President, will also face a similar leadership situation. We continued to examine the circumstances these Presidents faced under the institutional expectations of the time they served in by first showing how each Preemptive-Two President followed a Grandson Articulator. Each had to clean up a foreign policy debacle during a time when the policy commitments of their cycle were still resilient or functioning well, but their ideals were opposed to the guiding principles of the day. Like Preemptive-One leaders, Presidents in the Preemption-Two phase also guided the country using compromising leadership styles that combined the better of two sets of party ideals when making policies. Further, we highlighted that their approaches caused increased hostilities from the ideological purists of each party who respectively argued that the President was being either too timid or thwarting the policy commitments of the cycle. We saw that Preemptive-Two Presidents are consistently first elected in three-way races and have mixed reelection efforts. Further these Presidents lead during the last stage of stability in a governing cycle, before the policy commitments that defined it unravel under the President of Disjunction.

Finally, Presidents of Disjunction occupied the sixth step of the cycle, exemplified by Presidents John Quincy Adams, Buchanan, portions of Cleveland’s second administration,
Hoover, and Carter. They led when the political and policy commitments had become vulnerable to the changing times and after the commitments had sufficiently worked for governing the country over the cycle’s previous five steps. The trouble with this vulnerability is that these Presidents have affiliated ideals with the policy commitments that had worked for decades and their inability to change the country’s governing direction made them come across as failed leaders. Making it even more difficult to lead, their political allies fall into disarray, giving an opposition movement the opportunity to highlight how change is needed using their ideals and commitments. We pointed out that after trying to prove that the vulnerable state of commitments was not their fault and that the opposition’s alternative would only throw the country into further chaos, Disjunctive Presidents or their party representatives were defeated by a landslide when running for reelection against a soon to be President of Reconstruction who began the cycle of circumstances again.

Implications

The distinct circumstances Presidents face in each of the six phases are designed to support the broader argument that Presidents have different leadership responsibilities depending on their place in the institutionally based cycle. As seen again from Figures 1 through 8 in the Appendix, some Presidents get elected in ideal times when they can become visionary leaders and act independently, while others are elected at times when they have to be more subordinate to the political events of the day. Though the founders likely did not realize this at the time they wrote Article Two, their institutional design of the Presidency implicitly created unwritten bits of wisdom for Presidential elections and leadership roles that
have overwhelmingly guided Presidents for over two centuries. One might say there are seven pieces of wisdom that Presidents, scholars, and citizens may look to when attempting to understand the types of Presidents and their place in the history and future of our republic. They are described in the paragraphs that follow.

The first President of Reconstruction in the cycle is elected to use his ideals to create a new revolutionary order for governing the country’s commitments until the next cycle. As a result, these Presidents would be wise to get as much legislation through as possible, not be afraid to push for large changes, and think critically about the direction they want the country to move in. The country is ready for a new direction and, more than any other type of President, is looking to the executive branch to give it to them. Finally, despite the vast accomplishments and large electoral victories these Presidents receive, they should not gloat too much, with the state of ideals and commitments making them come across as great leaders, not necessarily any individual attributes they brought to the office.

The second President of Great-Son Articulation is elected to affirm and implement that revolutionary order using the same ideals as the Reconstructive President. These Presidents in this phase are wise to continue on with many of the policies that Reconstructive Presidents set forth for the country. If changes from these policies are needed, these Presidents should attempt to explain to the ideological purists of their party that slight alterations will better the country and party. Further, they should also try to implement some policies from the opposing party. If for some reason these Presidents are still not reelected, they should not feel defeated individually, as it is constitutionally healthy to give another set of ideals a chance to govern within the guiding policy commitments of the day.
The third President of Preemptive-One leadership is elected with opposing ideals to the previous two Presidents and corrects and resists the governing order but does not completely alter it. In taking on this compromising order, these Presidents are wise to take it to heart immediately and not try to drastically alter the commitments of the day. These Presidents should do their best to come across as morally sound individuals and not be afraid to take firm action on a foreign policy issue toward the end of their administration. Finally, these Presidents should be proud that (though their Presidency may not have implemented a lot of lasting policies initially) they served their country well by compromising on the policies they did help to implement and held up the ideological policies of their party that may be implemented in future administrations.

The fourth President in the cycle, seen here as the Grandson Articulator, is elected with the same ideals of the first and second President in the cycle and again affirms and implements the revolutionary order during his time in office, but also takes on a governing strategy to deal with the new issues that have come about since the first President in the cycle. It is wise for these Presidents in this position to try not to feel overwhelmed, despite entering office in a close election and needing to try and implement both what has already been done in the recent past and also where the country is headed in the future. Presidents in this position should do their best to set a visionary agenda to combine both the past and future and explain this whole heartedly to those who attack them. Finally, one of the riskiest things these Presidents can do is take on a war that does not have a clear purpose or has a high risk of dividing the country. They should avoid them unless absolutely necessary.
The fifth President elected in the cycle, the Preemptive-Two Presidents, is again elected with different ideals from the first President in the cycle and correct and resist parts of the order not yet compatible for governing the country. As a result, these Presidents are wise to remember that a majority of the country is not yet in agreement for what the next set of big policy changes should be. They are wise to resist some of the policies of the past (particularly if the previous President has led the country into a poorly handled military conflict), continue offering a compromising agenda, and make a strong case that they are morally strong individuals. Like the third President elected, these Presidents should be proud that (though their Presidency may not have implemented immediate lasting policies) they served their country well by compromising on the policies they did implement and held onto the ideological policies of their party that may be implemented in the near future.

The sixth President elected in the cycle, the President of Disjunction, is elected one last time to use the same ideals as the first President, but begin moving toward implementing new commitments needed for the country if at all possible. First and foremost, these Presidents are wise not to feel ashamed if things fall apart during their administration. They are in a difficult, if not impossible spot and face several obstacles beyond their control that are likely never to align the way they want them to. Having said that, any policy they can implement that will move the country away from the policies of the past and any discussion they can have with members of both ideological wings to prevent them from attacking their administrations may help in staving off disaster. It is likely, however, that even these actions may not work and the time they are leading in will show the President to the exit door after the next election.
Finally, after completing each of the six phases, Presidents would be wise to start again by returning to piece of wisdom number one, except this time let the first President start the cycle with opposing ideals from the President who started the last cycle. This will help to insure that the pluralist setup of the Constitution will have the best chance to succeed. Since one set of political ideals dominated the last cycle, using another will help to proportionally balance out the multiple sets of interests found in our country. Here, truth is most likely found as we work to form a more perfect union through political freedom.

In sum, each of these pieces of wisdom have provided mechanisms for assessing what election outcomes mean for Presidents and then given Presidents and the country’s expectations of them a guide for the actions they should take. Specifically, the guide suggests when Presidents may be wise to push change or maintain the status quo within the country’s policy commitments and ideals and when the best times are to act independently or be subordinate as Presidential leaders. Future Presidents, their support staffs, and scholars studying the Presidency may wish to examine where we are in the six-step cycle so that they can judge what circumstances are most helpful for their leadership position or what circumstances are most detrimental to their time in office.

A couple practical examples are worth describing using our previous and current Presidents as examples. For instance, if I am Bill Clinton’s advisor in 1993 and know he is in the Preemptive-One leadership position in a Reagan initiated cycle, I would offer the President a word of caution regarding the amount of change to move forward with by using the Democratic Party’s ideals of the time. If the President were to have bought into this, he may not have pushed so hard for large changes in tax and healthcare policies early in his
administration and not suffered landslide Congressional defeats in 1994 that caused him substantial setbacks for the remainder of his time in office.

Further, if I am Karl Rove in 2003 and I know President Bush is in the Grandson Articulator leadership position of the cycle, I would offer him an extreme word of caution about taking on a war with Iraq. Presidents Madison, Polk, Harrison, Harding, and Lyndon Johnson had similar leadership circumstances in which they struggled through various foreign conflicts that hurt their Presidencies, political parties, and split the country significantly. Knowing this, Bush may have chosen not to get involved in Iraq, not had to deal with the most controversial issue of his administration, and, as a result, put the Republican Party in a stronger position heading into the 2008 elections.

Besides these pieces of wisdom and there practical applications, understanding how Presidential leadership is revealed through the repeating circumstances of institutional expectations also allows one to offer a more accurate means of predicting what leadership styles Presidents will use in the near and distant future and approximately when we will elect each of the six categories of Presidents. Using the upcoming 2008 election as an example, we see from the Presidential categories from Table 3 that President Bush has led as a Grandson Articulator to a Reagan cycle and taken on a controversial foreign policy in Iraq. Subsequently, just as the country did in 1968 by electing Nixon after Johnson had articulated Roosevelt and over committed the United States in Vietnam or in 1848 by electing Taylor after Polk had articulated the Jackson ideal and provoked the controversial Mexican War, it is likely we will elect a President with opposing ideals (a Democrat) in 2008 to fill the Preemption-Two spot in the Reagan cycle of circumstances. Further, we can expect a
Republican President of Disjunction in the Buchanan or Hoover mold to follow the Preemption-Two leader in the Reagan cycle and the next “great” revolutionary Reconstructive President (most likely elected through the Democratic Party) to follow around 2021. How the next cycle will likely play can assessed as well and is portrayed in Figure 8 in the Appendix.

*Now What?*

Having spent a few pages summarizing the implications of the six-step cycle through bits of implicit institutional wisdom, it is worth asking what future Presidential leadership studies should turn their attention to. Having potentially developed a more revealing and predictable cycle for assessing Presidential leadership, relevant quantitative political science studies could be done to test the statements made that define the cycles. Readers have likely realized that though I have provided general mechanisms for explaining the cycle above through the Constitutional setup and its recurring order creating, affirming, correcting, and shattering tendencies, running more specific tests to see whether the cycles are driven by the economy, ideology, world events, or a combination of variables would be beneficial. More specifically, finding ways to measure vulnerable and resilient commitments, affiliated and opposed ideals, the different types of Presidents in the cycle, and how they relate into the order based elections of Figures 1 through 8 would help to develop a more specific over general theory of cycled institutional circumstances.

Finally, there are the broader theoretical papers and questions that can be written and asked about when understanding the Presidency through the cycled circumstances of
institutional expectations. One may ask, “Is it appropriate for our republic to assess Presidential leadership from the six-step cycles of institutional circumstances, given the often unpredictable nature of our political system?” Two immediate responses are available. The first being, “No, it is not appropriate for us to be assessing leadership by these standards.” Any notion suggesting that there is predictability in the Presidency is unfortunate and suggests that we are spending too much time bickering among parties when we instead should be compromising about issues and avoiding the vulnerabilities that come about in our country at the various positions in the suggested cycle. Further, the issues, cultures, Presidential office, and individual Presidential styles are too varied over 200 years to be compared in a predictable cycle and we should instead focus our attention on the individual characteristics, attributes, and faults each President brings to the office.

On the other hand, as I have argued for in this thesis, one could argue that, “Yes, it is appropriate to study Presidential leadership from a perspective of cycled institutional circumstances.” Here, we see that the pluralist design of the Constitution is allowing Presidential ideals and commitments to work through the cycle and help form a more perfect union. If one set of Presidential ideals and commitments falters, another is waiting to provide an alternative. Further, the collective actions of individuals, communities, and states come together to elect a President every four years who, once elected, then leads the country through its recurring revolutionary, implementing, resisting, implementing, resisting, and

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300 One example of this would be if the Republican Presidents of the 1920’s would have compromised more with the Democratic Party of the day, we could have avoided some of the vulnerabilities created by the Great Depression of the 1930’s.
destructing cycles of circumstances. In other words, this is an appropriate phenomenon to assess Presidents by within the country’s purpose of forming a more perfect union

Continuation of Cycled Presidential Leadership

Offering Presidential advice, quantifying the cycles of circumstances through political science studies to specifically explain why the cycles repeat as they do, and asking broader theoretical assessments for understanding the Presidential leadership each offers possibilities for future studies. What is of particular interest for me, however, is whether the six-step cycle will continue. Having completed the first four steps of the Reagan cycle through our last four Presidents, will we continue to follow the cycles of the past and correct its commitments through a Preemption-Two Democratic President beginning in 2009, watch the Reagan cycle falter with a Republican Disjunctive President around 2017, and then begin to create a new cycle of circumstances with a Democratic President leading the way around 2021? Or, are the mechanisms found in the six phases presented here flawed in some way, allowing certain events and Presidencies to occur that dramatically alter our understanding of leadership within the cycled circumstances of institutional expectations.

The results remain to be seen. However, given that a diverse set of Presidents have been labeled visionary, average, or inept leaders based on the circumstances of ideals and commitments in these cycles, dramatically different leadership types seem unlikely among our future Presidents. As a result, it is warranted to assert that the six-steps of cycled circumstances within institutional expectations will likely continue playing an important part when assessing our understanding of Presidential leadership well into the future.
APPENDIX:

Figures

APPENDIX:

FIGURE 1

The Generic Cycle

Increased Ability to Change Commitments and Ideals for Governing and Act Independently
FIGURE 2
The Washington Cycle
FIGURE 3
The Jackson Cycle

Institutional Time: 1829-1881

Increased Ability to Change Constituents and Ideals for Governing and Act Independently

Step 1
Step 2
Step 3
Step 4
Step 5
Step 6
FIGURE 4
The Lincoln Cycle
FIGURE 5
The McKinley/T.R. Cycle
FIGURE 6
The Franklin Roosevelt Cycle
FIGURE 7
The Reagan Cycle
FIGURE 8
The Next Cycle
BIBLIOGRAPHY


