Reform and Politics in the Age of Jackson, 1824-1845

- Election of 1824
  - John Quincy Adams vs. Andrew Jackson
  - Neither candidate wins majority of electoral votes
    - What happens?
    - House of Reps chooses President
      - Henry Clay, Speaker
      - Met with Adams behind closed doors
        » Jackson accuses Clay of “Corrupt Bargain”

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- John Q. Adams wins presidency
  - Henry Clay made Sec’y of State
  - Jackson vows in 1828 he’ll win election
    - Campaign was bitter
    - Accusations against both:
      - Jackson: “A dueler, adulterer”
      - Adams: “Snob, while emissary to Russia, procured young ladies for Czar Alexander I”, wears silk underwear”

Reform and Politics in the Age of Jackson, 1824-1845

- Two political issues simmering:
  - Antimasonry
  - Abolition
    - These two issues and their underlying meanings would help form and reform politics.
      - Two views: Immediate vs. Gradualists
    - Antimasonry
      - Anti-Masonic Party (Felt Masons were privileged)
Reform and Politics in the Age of Jackson, 1824-1845

• Antimasonry –
  – Seen as opposition to privilege
  – Gave two lasting changes to political parties
    • Party Platform
    • Party Convention
      – For nominating their candidate
  – Abolition –
    • Movement to end slavery heats up after 1830
      – William Lloyd Garrison, editor, speaks out of evils
      – Women’s organizations spring up to aid abolition.

Reform and Politics in the Age of Jackson, 1824-1845

• Abolition –
  – Women Abolitionists
    • Helped this issue along
    • Also tried to get women’s issues brought to the forefront.
  – Elizabeth Cady Stanton
  – Susan B. Anthony
    • Beginnings of “women’s rights movement”

Reform and Politics in the Age of Jackson, 1824-1845

• Election of 1828
  – Jackson was not going to be out-done now
  – Modern campaign starts here
    • Barbecues, parades, free drinks, baby kissing, back patting, hand-shaking, etc;
    • Speeches and promises of jobs if elected
      – Jackson will be King of the “Spoils” system
Reform and Politics in the Age of Jackson, 1824-1845

- Wins 1828 outright –
  - Jackson’s philosophy:
    - Neither branch of govt. can control any other branch.
    - Anti-Federal, pro-State except on nullification
      - Hates National Bank of US
      - Will Veto bill in 1833, after re-election
      - Vetoes Maysville Road Bill (Kentucky)
      - Slap in the face of Henry Clay, from Kentucky

Reform and Politics in the Age of Jackson, 1824-1845

- Jackson –
  - Portrays self as “common man”
    - Anything but common
    - Large estate holder, slave holder
    - General – made his name fighting Indians and British
      - “Hero of New Orleans”
      - Nickname “Old Hickory”

Reform and Politics in the Age of Jackson, 1824-1845

- Peggy Eaton affair –
  - Widow and daughter of a friend
  - Her reputation was “not too chaste”
  - Cabinet member’s wives would not take to her
    - Forced Jackson to shuffle his cabinet
      - Members like Martin Van Buren, who accommodated Jackson
      - Little “Matty” would be 8th President, and first American President to be born in “America”
Reform and Politics in the Age of Jackson, 1824-1845

- Manifest Destiny –
  - John L. O'Sullivan coined phrase in 1845
  - US to expand all way to West Coast
  - Texas
    - Mexico offered free land to American settlers:
      - Converted to Catholicism
      - Become Mexican Citizens
        - Too many were coming and not honoring pledges

Reform and Politics in the Age of Jackson, 1824-1845

- War for Texas Independence
  - Angered Mexican govt. puts “halt” to immigration
    - Tries enforcing “Mexicanization”
    - Slavery, too, an issue – prohibited in Mexico, but many Southerners brought them with them when they went to Texas
    - 1835/1836 Tensions break out into shooting
      - Alamo/Goliad battles – Mexican victories
        - Rallying cries for US

Reform and Politics in the Age of Jackson, 1824-1845

- By end of 1836, Texas gains independence
  - Will not be annexed for political reasons until 1845
    - Thus, known as “Lone Star” state
    - Too politically “hot” to deal with right now
      - Jackson – passed on issue
      - Van Buren – passed on issue
      - Tyler – brought Texas in to avoid problems with Britain
Reform and Politics in the Age of Jackson, 1824-1845

• Oregon –
  – US and Britain had jointly occupied Oregon Territory since 1818
  • Both had claims there
  • Both had settlements there
  • 1843 Cincinnati convention proclaimed, 54 degrees 40’ boundary, or fight!
    – Settled on boundary at 49th parallel, 1846

• Van Buren
  – Inherits a bad economy
  – Jackson’s killing of National Bank did not stop smaller state banks from collapsing
  – Election of 1840 approaches
    • William Henry Harrison –
    • Made name fighting British and Indians
      – Out “campaigns” Van Buren and wins election