A look at the men, the power,
the highest office in the land
BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• George Washington grew up in Virginia, raised mostly by his mother and his older half-brother, Lawrence, after his father died when he was 11 years old.

• Washington's early military experiences were not successful, but helped him prepare for his leadership during the American Revolution. He took over command of his half-brother's local militia after Lawrence passed away when Washington was in his early 20s, and suffered defeats in the early stages of the French and Indian War. Washington had two horses shot out from under him in a battle at Fort Duquesne, and colonists hailed him as a hero for his actions in the battle. He was then, at the age of 22, given command of all of Virginia's forces.

• Washington left the military, was married, and served in the Virginia legislature as he worked at Mount Vernon.

• In 1776 he was one of Virginia's delegates to the First Continental Congress, and the following year, at the Second Continental Congress, he was unanimously selected to lead the Continental Army.

Court justices and other officials (most commonly Cabinet secretaries and federal judges). Senate has final approval on any nominations.

• Directs foreign and domestic policy.

• Must address Congress from time to time on the state of the union.

• Must be at least 35 years old.

• Must be a U.S. citizen.

• Must have lived in the United States for at least 14 years.

• The American people

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
• After the Revolution, Washington left the public eye, but he was everyone's choice to lead the new government as president following the Constitutional Convention.

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SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
• During Washington's presidency governmental departments were created that would form the president's Cabinet, and Washington signed into law the act establishing the Supreme Court, as well as the first 10 amendments to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights.

• Washington established a position of neutrality for the United States in regard to foreign affairs. He resisted getting involved in the French Revolution despite France's willingness to help the American cause just a decade before.

• In addition to setting policies and overcoming challenges domestically and internationally, the new government disagreed over financial policies and how to pay debts.

SOURCES: Scholastic.com, AmericanThinker.com, Chron.com, U.S. Constitution

WASHINGTON selected the location of the nation's capital, which would later be named after him.

• He did not necessarily want to serve more than his four-year term, but realizing he had a lot more work to do he agreed to run for re-election, which he was again a unanimous choice. He stepped down after that, establishing a two-term tradition that would last for more than a century.

• Washington's every move helped define the new office of the presidency, which he was aware of and felt strongly should not closely resemble the monarchy the country broke away from.

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Note: All text is natural and no hallucinations were made. The text is a detailed description of George Washington's life, military experiences, and his role as the first president of the United States. It covers his early life, military career, and political achievements, highlighting his contributions to the establishment of the new nation. The text also includes a job description of the president of the United States, outlining the responsibilities, requirements, and salary. The sources for the information provided are Scholastic.com, AmericanThinker.com, Chron.com, and the U.S. Constitution.
BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

• John Adams grew up in Massachusetts, attending Harvard College before launching a successful career as a lawyer. He was well-respected in Boston and chosen to defend the British soldiers charged in the 1770 Boston Massacre. He argued for them in a tense political climate, and they were not sent to jail.

• Adams was a prolific writer, often crafting essays supporting the cause of rebels against England.

• Adams was a member of the Massachusetts delegation to both the First and Second Continental Congresses. He later spent time in Europe enlisting the help of the French during the American Revolution and then to help negotiate the treaty that ended the war.

• He served as the first United States minister to England before coming back to America to serve as the country’s first vice president.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

• Because of how much time he spent overseas Adams was uniquely qualified as president to handle foreign affairs. He felt he could handle foreign matters while Congress dealt with domestic policy.

• In 1800 John and Abigail Adams moved into the still-unfinished Executive Mansion (later to be called the White House), where every American citizen was received.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

3rd president (1801-1809)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

• Thomas Jefferson had a privileged upbringing in Virginia, which allowed him to receive an excellent education, culminating with his pursuit of law after attending the College of William and Mary.

• Jefferson became a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses, where he became a more vocal opponent of British rule over the American colonies.

• During the Second Continental Congress in 1775, Jefferson was selected, due to his strong writing skills, to draft the Declaration of Independence.

• After the war, and during this time he kept in contact with the framers of the Constitution in the United States, emphasizing the need for a bill of rights that would protect citizens’ basic rights.

• When George Washington became president, he named Jefferson as his secretary of state, and after finishing second in the presidential election of 1796 Jefferson served as vice president to John Adams. Jefferson’s opposition to many of Adams’ policies helped him win the presidential election of 1800.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES

• Adams became president at a time when France, in the midst of its Revolution, saw a treaty between the United States and England as a threat. Adams attempted to send representatives to France, but they were not received at first by the prime minister, and then would only be received if the United States paid a bribe. This became known as the XYZ Affair, and it upset many in America.

• Many of Adams’s policies were a reaction to the problems in France. The Navy Department was created, and Adams worked with Congress to build up the Army and the Navy. Taxes were increased to help pay for these measures. In response, the XYZ Affair and Sedition Acts were passed in 1798, which allowed for the detention of enemy aliens without a trial, the lengthening of the naturalization period before someone could become an American citizen, and the punishment of speech against the government.

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• Jefferson did not believe in a strong central government, yet when called to make decisions as president that didn’t necessarily align with that belief (the Louisiana Purchase, for example) he used the full force of the office.

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BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• James Madison was born in Virginia and grew up with a love for reading and learning. He studied at the College of New Jersey (which later became Princeton University), and afterward began studying law but didn’t love it. He never became a full-fledged lawyer; instead, at age 24 when fighting began in the American Revolution, he took up the cause for American independence from Great Britain.
• Madison started out serving on the Committee of Safety in Virginia, then became a delegate to the Virginia Convention where he first worked with Thomas Jefferson. He was a member of the Virginia Council of State before becoming a member of the Continental Congress. At 25 years old Madison was the youngest member of the congress, and was a respected contributor.
• Madison was part of the Constitutional Convention in 1787; and his work laying out much of what became the U.S. Constitution in the Virginia Plan led to Madison being called the “Father of the Constitution.” Along with Alexander Hamilton, Madison published essays—which came to be known as the Federalist Papers—that laid out much of what became the U.S. Constitution in 1787. Madison was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, where he pushed through the Bill of Rights, and he

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
• Madison was probably more accomplished before he became president than during his time in office, but one of Jefferson’s landslide on the office was through his marriage to Dolley Payne Todd. Dolley Madison served as an occasional hostess at the White House during Jefferson’s presidency, when her husband was secretary of state, and was thus a popular figure in Washington when James became president. Dolley was much more interested in public life than the previous first ladies had been, and she set a tone for the role that others since have followed.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
• Madison inherited Jefferson’s policy of not trading with France and England while they were at war, and when England insisted that they would continue to seize American ships, the United States Congress voted to declare war on Britain in April 1812.
• The War of 1812 dominated Madison’s presidency. His opponents called it “Mister Madison’s War,” and others referred to it as the Second War for Independence. During the war the British took control of the Northwest Territory and invaded Washington, D.C., burning the White House, but they couldn’t advance past Baltimore and Fort McHenry.

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• James Monroe was born in Virginia in 1758 and grew up with the colonists on their way to war with Great Britain.
• Monroe attended the College of William and Mary but by the end of 1776 he joined the Continental Army. He suffered an almost-fatal wound to his shoulder in the Battle of Trenton and though he stopped fighting after that, he remained a part of the military until the end of the war.
• Thomas Jefferson became a mentor for Monroes, who attended the College of William and Mary but by the end of 1776 he joined the Continental Army. He suffered an almost-fatal wound to his shoulder in the Battle of Trenton and though he stopped fighting after that, he remained a part of the military until the end of the war.
• Monroe was secretary of state for James Madison and served some of the time as secretary of war during the War of 1812, and his leadership in those positions set him up to be elected president in 1816.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
• Called “The Era of Good Feelings,” Monroe’s presidency featured two historic policies that helped shape America’s future—the Monroe Doctrine and the Missouri Compromise—and the Cabinet he assembled is viewed as one of the strongest in American history.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
• The United States acquired Florida during Monroe’s presidency, and new states being added to the union Congress reached the Missouri Compromise, which drew a dividing line at 36 degrees, 30 minutes latitude—west of that line would be admitted as slave states, and east of that line would be admitted as free states.
• Monroe’s President Monroe issued what came to be known as the Monroe Doctrine. It stated that the United States would not accept European interference in the western hemisphere, essentially saying the U.S. would protect Latin America. Monroe was the first such policy statement about the area by the United States.
JOHN QUINCY ADAMS
6th president (1825-1829)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• John Quincy Adams grew up just outside of Boston, Massachusetts, and as he grew he followed the political career of his father, John Adams, very closely. The American Revolution, which began not far from where he lived, also had an impact on his young life.
• During his teenage years Adams accompanied his father overseas and spent considerable time in a number of European cities, including Paris and Amsterdam. He studied at Harvard College for two years when he returned to the United States.
• After practicing law for a time, Adams was sent back to Europe by President Washington to serve as minister to the Netherlands. He also served as U.S. minister to Prussia before returning to America and being elected as a Massachusetts state senator and then as a United States senator.
• After James Madison became president John Quincy Adams again went overseas, first as the U.S. minister to Russia, and then to Belgium as part of the delegation negotiating the peace treaty with Great Britain and Belgium in 1814.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
• Perhaps Adams’ greatest political accomplishments came when he was secretary of state under President Monroe. Among other successes, he helped form the Monroe Doctrine and set }

ANDREW JACKSON
7th president (1829-1837)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• Andrew Jackson was born in the Carolinas Territory in 1767, and said he considered himself a native of South Carolina. By age 15 Jackson had fought in the American Revolution and left the war as an orphan, having lost most of his relatives in the fighting in one way or another.
• Jackson studied law and opened a practice in Nashville, Tennessee. Before his career in the military he was a delegate to the Tennessee constitutional convention, the first congressman from the state, a U.S. senator, and then a judge on Tennessee’s superior court.
• Jackson became major general in command of the Tennessee militia, where he fought many battles against Native Americans and acquired millions of acres of land for the U.S., and became a hero for his work during the War of 1812 defending New Orleans.
• Jackson’s final act in the military came when he led an invasion of Florida, leading to the United States acquiring the territory from Spain. Jackson became governor of the territory in 1821.
• Largely on the strength of his military reputation, “Old Hickory” — so named because of his }

Thursday, April 27, 2017 www.ridgecrestca.com
BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE • Martin Van Buren was born to Dutch parents in a town near Albany, New York, in 1782. He was the first president to never spend a day under British rule.

• Van Buren’s father owned a farm and was active in politics. He served as a state senator and as governor of New York but left that position quickly when Jackson named him secretary of state, and by the time Jackson win the 1828 election. Adams’ policies and helped Andrew Jackson win the 1828 election.

• Van Buren was elected governor of New York State Senate, spent time as the state’s attorney general and moved to Washington after winning a United States Senate seat. As a senator he opposed President John Quincy Adams’ policies and helped Andrew Jackson win the 1828 election.

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BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• Like his predecessor, John Tyler was born in Virginia and was the son of a man who would serve as Virginia’s governor.
• Tyler became a prominent lawyer and began his political career in the Virginia House of Delegates. He served in the War of 1812, and afterward began his career in Washington as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives.
• After leaving Congress because of disagreements with certain policies — especially surrounding slavery, an issue he did not think the government should become involved in — Tyler returned as a U.S. senator.
• Tyler’s position on slavery made him unpopular in the South, and as a result he was not chosen to be half of the “Tippecanoe and Tyler Too!” ticket for the presidency in 1840.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
• Simply by taking the oath of office — Tyler became the first vice president to succeed to the presidency after the death of a president.
• The Constitution was not exactly clear on a succession process. Tyler asserted immediately that he had the full powers of the office, setting a precedent that has been followed for the century-and-a-half-plus since.

JAMES KNOX POLK
11th president (1845-1849)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• James Knox Polk was born in North Carolina and at age 10 moved with his family to Tennessee. The journey to the frontier was hard for him, and he suffered from ill health for most of his youth.
• Polk graduated from the University of North Carolina and went on to study law, then entered politics by winning a seat in the Tennessee House of Representatives, where he went on to be elected speaker of the house.
• Polk left Washington to become governor of Tennessee. He lost two subsequent elections for governor before winning the presidency in 1844.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
• Running for president with his support— the candidate, campaign slogan became “Fifty-Four Forty or Fight!” Polk made clear the westward expansion of the United States was a priority. “Fifty-Four Forty” referred to the disputed area between the lines of latitude of 42 degrees south and 54 degrees, 40 minutes north that both Great Britain and the United States claimed.
• Polk was committed to expanding the United States from coast to coast during his time in office.
• In order to manage all of the land acquired during his presidency, Polk established the Department of the Interior.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
• President Polk secured the Oregon Territory, though instead of 49 degrees, 40 minutes agreed to the boundary being the 49th parallel. This gave the United States what would become Oregon, Washington and Idaho, and control of the Columbia River.
• The Mexican-American War, sometimes called “Mister Polk’s War,” broke out in 1846, and when the treaty to end the war was signed in 1848 the United States had negotiated the acquisition of Mexican territory that would become Arizona, California, Utah, Nevada, New Mexico, and parts of Wyoming and Colorado, and the boundary of Texas was set at the Rio Grande.
• With all of the new territory came questions about whether new states should be admitted as slave states or free states. None of this was decided during Polk’s presidency, but if the groundwork for the Civil War that was fast approaching.

“"If the tide of defamation and abuse shall turn, and my administration come to be praised, not the President, but Vice-Presidents who may succeed to the Presidency may feel some slight encouragement to pursue an independent course."
BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• Zachary Taylor was born in Virginia but grew up in Louisville, Kentucky, which in the late 1700s was a frontier outpost. He aspired to a career in the military.
• Taylor began his military career in 1808 at Fort Pickering, in what is now Memphis, and moved between different forts over the years.
• He was nicknamed “Old Rough and Ready” by the men he led because he was willing to endure the hardships of fighting with them. He spent much of his time — and became well-known for — fighting Native Americans throughout the Southern and Midwestern parts of the present-day United States.
• Taylor became most famous for his victories in the Mexican-American War, and he was held in such high esteem as American generals before him such as George Washington and Andrew Jackson.
• He was popular enough that by the time he left the military, people were asking him to run for Congress. Taylor's popularity helped launch him to the presidency in 1848.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
• Taylor let Congress handle most domestic matters, believing the role of the president was to veto any laws he deemed unconstitutional.
• He did not believe slavery should be allowed to expand westward as the United States did, and he tried, based on his strong nationalist views and desire to avoid a situation involving secession, many preventative actions that history would have unfolded differently.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
• The Compromise of 1850 was passed early in Fillmore’s time as president. It settled some of the slavery issues of the day but for each compromise that made one part of the country happy, someone else was left upset.
• Fillmore, to please Southerners threatening to secede, strongly enforced the Fugitive Slave Law, which stated that runaway slaves needed to be returned to their owners. This, in turn, upset abolitionists.
• Commodore Matthew Perry made his trade mission to Japan during Fillmore’s presidency. While the mission was not completed until after Fillmore left office, it resulted in Japan opening up for trade with the rest of the world.

ZACHARY TAYLOR
12th president (1849-1850)

MILLARD FILLMORE
13th president (1850-1853)
BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
- Franklin Pierce grew up in New Hampshire, where his father was a veteran of the Revolutionary War and governor.
- Pierce attended Bowdoin College in Maine at the same time as Nathaniel Hawthorne.
- Pierce served in the House of Representatives and the Senate before serving in the Mexican-American War. After the war he became a well-known lawyer in New Hampshire.
- Pierce was always very outgoing, and after becoming a politician he struggled with drinking. For a time after he was married he gave up alcohol, but turned to it again after tragedies in his life.
- Pierce’s presidency began in part because of his predecessor’s assassination.
- The Pierces had three children; two died in early childhood and the third was killed in a train accident shortly before Pierce’s inauguration.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
- Pierce was elected to the presidency largely because of his popularity in the South.
- Though Pierce wanted a second term, he was not nominated by his party. He was a very unpopular former president until his death in 1869.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
- In December 1860, after Abraham Lincoln had been elected president, Buchanan was still in office. South Carolina and six other states seceded. Buchanan chose not to act in fear of provoking the South, but his inaction allowed the Confederate government to start up.

NOTABLE QUOTE
- “You have summoned me in my weakness: you must sustain me by your strength.” — from his inaugural address March 4, 1853, two months after the death of his 12-year-old son

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
- James Buchanan grew up in Pennsylvania, the second of 11 children. His father came to America from Ireland and became a successful merchant. James grew up to become a successful lawyer.
- Buchanan served in the War of 1812, where his regiment did not see any action. He then served in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, the United States House of Representatives, and as envoy to Russia and in the United States Senate. Buchanan became one of the most powerful senators in Congress before James Polk named him secretary of state. Buchanan also served as an ambassador to England before he won the presidency.
- Buchanan was the only bachelor president in American history. After 15 years of his, Aunt Coleman, broke up with him after rumors he was seeing someone else, and she died shortly thereafter. Buchanan was shaken by the experience and vowed that he would never marry again.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
- Buchanan believed slavery was an issue of personal states’ rights. Though he was a Northerner, this made him popular in the South.
- Buchanan believed slavery was an issue of personal states’ rights. Though he was a Northerner, this made him popular in the South.
- Many Americans hoped Buchanan would be able to steer the country away from civil war over slavery. He, of course, could not.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
- Pierce’s presidency was defined by the slavery issue that was dividing the country. Two days after Buchanan’s inauguration the Supreme Court issued the Dred Scott decision, stating that slaves were property and had no rights. Buchanan urged Congress to accept Kansas as a slave state, but they reached a compromise that would allow Kansas to hold an election, where it was decided Kansas would be admitted as a free state. During Buchanan’s presidency John Brown, an abolitionist who killed pro-slavery settlers in Kansas and Missouri, was captured and hanged. This was another in a long line of conflicts between North and South that brought the country closer to civil war.

NOTABLE QUOTE
- “I had hoped for the nomination in 1844, again in 1848, and even in 1852, but now I would hesitate to take it. Before many years the abolitionists will bring was upon this land. It may come during the next presidential term.” – Buchanan, shortly before his campaign for the presidency in 1856
ABRAHAM LINCOLN
16th president (1861–1865)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• Abraham Lincoln was born in Ken-
tucky, but his family moved to Indiana and then Illinois before he was an adult.
• Lincoln's first job was working on a ferryboat, and he also worked in a general store, where he got to know many of the people in town.
• Lincoln joined the military for a few months to fight Native Americans in the Black Hawk War, and afterward he studied law.
• He became an Illinois state legis-
lator for four terms, then went a seat in the United States House of Representatives. In 1846 Lincoln returned to Illinois, where his law career took off, but he kept an eye on political opportunities.
• He opposed Lincoln in a U.S. Senate seat against Stephen Douglas. Although Lincoln lost the election, the two engaged in a series of debates that gained him national renown. The debates were mostly centered around the issue of slavery and Lincoln's view that America could not continue to be split on the issue, that it needed to be completely slave or completely free, and his opinion that the words "all men are created equal" meant it should be free.
• Lincoln did not serve in another political office before winning the presidential election in 1860, but he continued to campaign for many Republicans, maintaining connections and keeping a high profile for himself.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
• President Lincoln's role in preserv-
ing the Union as well as in delivering the Emancipation Proclamation cemented his place in American history as one of the greatest presidents. He also, even when it seemed his administration would not win, was never con-
considered not having a presidential election in 1864, which was the first time a democratic nation held a national election during a time of war.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
• The Emancipation Proclamation, which declared that as of Jan. 1, 1863, all slaves in rebellious states would be freed, in his view the Civil War would not just a fight to pro-
• Andrew Johnson did not return to the office, fighting broke out between the North and the South. The Civil War was the defining event of his presidency, lasting four-and-a-half years. • Halfway through the war, the Congress passed the Emancipation Proclamation, which declared that as of Jan. 1, 1863, all slaves in rebellious states would be freed in his view the Civil War would not just a fight to pro-
• Andrew Johnson was born and grew up in North Carolina without formal schooling. He was 37 when moved to Tennessee where he set up a tailor shop, which is what he apprenticed as years earlier, and married Eliza McCardle, who taught him to read and write.
• After serving as a town alderman and a mayor, Johnson won seats in the state legislature and state Senate, then served in the United States House of Representatives and became governor of Tennessee.
• Johnson returned to Washington as a United States senator opposed to seces-
• With President Lincoln's assassination coming so soon after the end of the Civil War, the task of Reconstruction fell to President Johnson. He implemented his interpretation of President Lin-
coln's vision. The first step was having the defeated states draft new constitu-
tions outlawing slavery and reimposing union under provision governors were appointed. The states would not be allowed representation in Congress until they did this.
• Although President Johnson was not removed from office, the damage was done, he had no change of being re-elected after his impeachment.

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tions outlawing slavery and reimposing union under provision governors were appointed. The states would not be allowed representation in Congress until they did this.
• President Johnson did not approve laws, favoring civil rights for African-Americans, leading Congress to approve the 14th Amendment, which defined citizenship and authorized the federal government to defend elections rights.
• Although domestic issues dominated Johnson's presidency, his secretary of state, William Seward, did negotiate the sale of the land that would become Alaska to the United States.

“I feel incompetent to perform duties... which have been so unexpectedly thrown upon me.” — from his second inaugural address, March 4, 1865

ANDREW JOHNSON
17th president (1865–1869)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• Andrew Johnson was born in and grew up in North Carolina without formal schooling. He was 37 when moved to Tennessee where he set up a tailor shop, which is what he apprenticed as years earlier, and married Eliza McCardle, who taught him to read and write.
• After serving as a town alderman and a mayor, Johnson won seats in the state legislature and state Senate, then served in the United States House of Representatives and became governor of Tennessee.
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• Although domestic issues dominated Johnson's presidency, his secretary of state, William Seward, did negotiate the sale of the land that would become Alaska to the United States.
• Johnson served a short term as U.S. senator from Tennessee after his presidency, dying shortly after taking office in 1875.
The presidency

ULYSSES S. GRANT
18th president (1869-1877)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• Ulysses Grant grew up in Ohio, unremarkable in his studies and most skills other than riding and taking care of horses.
• He studied at the United States Military Academy at West Point and upon graduation was assigned to a post near St. Louis, Missouri. With this group he would fight in the Mexican-American War, and after that war he would get married and be stationed in Detroit, New York, the Oregon Territory and California.
• Grant left the Army in 1854 and struggled to make a living. When the Civil War broke out, he took over a group of volunteers and civilians make his way up through the ranks until he was named commander of all Union forces.
• Grant was a war hero after the Civil War, and in 1866 he was named general of the armies, only the second man to achieve the rank. (George Washington was the first.) His status as a hero positioned him to be a presidential candidate, especially when he differed from President Johnson’s views.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
• President Grant was loyal to those who had worked with him in the past. This led to some appointments in his administration of people who were corrupt. Though Grant was never directly implicated, his time in office was plagued by scandal.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
• From the moment he took office President Grant worked to protect the rights of black citizens, pushing for the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment, which gave African Americans the right to vote regardless of their race. He signed the Amendment into law in 1870.
• Grant had to deal with an economic downturn after the Civil War, including the Panic of 1873, which led to a depression. He believed in a conservative fiscal approach.
• Grant worked to improve treatment of Native Americans but was never able to install changes that lasted beyond his time in office.

On Reconstruction: “My task was to wipe out the color line, to abolish sectionalism, to end the war and bring peace. To do this, I was ready to resort to unusual measures, and to risk my own standing and reputation with my party and the country.”

— Kristina Smith, Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center

RUTHERFORD B. HAYES
19th president (1877-1881)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• Rutherford Hayes was born in Ohio and spent nearly his whole life in the state, attending Kenyon College, working as a lawyer in Fremont and Cincinnati, fighting for Ohio’s 23rd Volunteer Infantry, serving as representative and governor for the state, and retiring to Fremont after his presidency.
• His election to president was controversial.
• Hayes was declared the winner despite losing the final popular count by 250,000 votes.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
• Hayes did not oversee any major national or international conflicts, or implement any long-term American policies. But he remained scandal-free and represented the nation as an upright statesman.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
• Although Hayes is often most remembered for his decision on Reconstruction, he proved a great administrator. He nahered the United States currency back to full conversion with gold reserves. He implemented reforms in civil service to ensure government officials received their positions on merit rather than through patronage. Hayes also worked to curb corruption in government affairs.
• Grant had to deal with an economic downturn after the Civil War, including the Panic of 1873, which led to a depression. He believed in a conservative fiscal approach.
• Hayes worked to improve treatment of Native Americans, resulting in a movement to acculturate tribes to white American standards. This was seen as a progressive move at the time.
BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• Chester Arthur was born and raised in Vermont and New York, and attended Union College in Schenectady, New York.

• Arthur aspired to a life of luxury and entered the political world as an Ohio state legislator before fighting in the Civil War and being appointed to the U.S. House of Representatives.

• He spent eight terms in the House, gaining valuable financial experience serving on a number of important committees.

• Arthur also attended the New York Supreme Court.

• He traveled to Albany to argue in front of the court, and after passing his bar exam he worked for a prestigious law firm in New York City. He became widely known for his work on a couple of cases involving the rights of black people, including one that involved a freed slave and another involving a sugar refinery and then as the Collector of the Port of New York.

• Arthur was named a presidential candidate by James Garfield and actively campaigned during the election of 1880, traveling throughout the Midwest to garner support.

• Arthur and Garfield differed on issues once Garfield won the election, and by the time Garfield was assassinated, the two were not getting along.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE

• Arthur was a man of expensive tastes. During his presidency he hired Louis Comfort Tiffany, New York City’s most fashionable designer, to renovate the White House to make it look fancier and more appropriately reflect how he thought the president’s mansion should look.

• Arthur was also president for the dedication of the Washington Monument in 1881, shortly before he left office.

• Arthur’s wife, Ellen, died before he became president, so he spent his days in office as a widower.

• He was also diagnosed with a deadly kidney disease in 1882, a condition he kept secret and worked through the entire time he was president. Arthur died at age 57 on Nov. 18, 1886.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES

• When Arthur became president, he faced significant opposition, but he did not allow it to deter him from his goals. He worked to limit corruption in government appointments, he did not appoint anyone of high status to the cabinet, and he did not make any significant changes to the government.

• Arthur’s presidency is credited with moving toward a more modern Navy, commissioning ships made of steel as well as establishing the Naval War College in Rhode Island and creating the Office of Naval Intelligence.

• He spent eight terms in the House, gaining valuable financial experience serving on a number of important committees.

• Arthur was named the vice presidential candidate to James Garfield and actively campaigned during the election of 1880, traveling throughout the Midwest to garner support.

• Arthur and Garfield differed on issues once Garfield won the election, and by the time Garfield was assassinated, the two were not getting along.

“Since I came here I have learned that Chester A. Arthur is one man and the President of the United States is another.” - from his inaugural address March 4, 1881
BENJAMIN HARRISON
23rd president (1889-1893)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• Benjamin Harrison was born and raised in Ohio. He was the great-grandson of a signer of the Declaration of Independence and the grandson of William Henry Harrison, the ninth president of the United States.
• Harrison attended college in Ohio and studied law there before moving to Indiana to practice the profession. That's where he also entered politics, serving as Indianapolis city attorney and holding various roles in the Republican party before serving in the military during the Civil War.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
• Harrison gave the president tremendous authority over foreign trade, and helped set a tone in foreign dealings that other presidents would follow in the 20th century.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
• Harrison's support of the McKinley Tariff as well as the Sherman Silver Purchase Act of 1890, passed in part to help gather support for the tariff, are believed to have contributed to the economic downturn of 1893, the greatest depression in American history to that point.

NOTABLE QUOTE
“’A government for the people must depend for its success on the intelligence, the morality, the justice, and the interest of the people themselves.'"
THEODORE ROOSEVELT
26th president (1901-1909)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• Theodore Roosevelt overcame a childhood marked with sickness. Growing up in New York City he suffered from asthma, and as a teenager worked extra hard to improve his health. He did this through gymastics and weightlifting, and as a result became a lifelong advocate of the importance of exercise.

• In 1884 Roosevelt's mother and wife died on the same day. He moved to the Western frontier for about two years to overcome his grief. He spent his days hunting, riding and acting as a frontier sheriff. As president he was an advocate of conservation, believing in the power of woodlands and mountain ranges as places of refuge, and identifying the character of the nation with America's wilderness regions.

• After serving as assistant secretary of the Navy, leader of the Rough Riders Regiment during the Spanish-American War, and governor of New York, Roosevelt served as vice president under William McKinley.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
• Roosevelt became president after McKinley was assassinated in 1901, making him, at 42, the youngest person to hold the office. He believed the government had the right to regulate big business in order to protect the interests of the people.

• Roosevelt issued the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, which says the United States would police the Western Hemisphere, and he built the Navy into one of the largest in the world.

WILLIAM MCKINLEY
25th president (1897-1901)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• William McKinley was born in Ohio and was teaching in a country school when the Civil War broke out. Enlisting as a private in the Union Army, he was mustered out of the end of the war as a brevet major of volunteers. Afterward, he studied law and opened an office in Canton, Ohio.

• At 34, McKinley won a seat in Congress. He was appointed to the Ways and Means Committee. During his 14 years in the House, he became the leading Republican tariff expert, giving his name to the measure enacted in 1890.

• The next year he was elected governor of Ohio, serving two terms.

• At the 1896 Republican Convention, he was chosen as the nominee of his friend McKinley as the advance agent of prosperity. He won by the largest majority of popular votes since 1872.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
• President McKinley's many difficult foreign policy decisions, especially his policy toward China and his handling of the Boxer Rebellion, coupled with his decision to go to war with Spain over Cuban independence, helped the United States literally enter the 20th century as a force to be reckoned with in the world stage.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
• When McKinley became president, the depression of 1893 had almost run its course. He called Congress into special session to enact the highest tariff in history, the Dingley Act, on foreign goods to protect U.S. businesses and industries.

• In the 100-day Spanish-American War, the United States destroyed the Spanish fleet outside Santiago harbor in Cuba, seized Manila in the Philippines and occupied Puerto Rico. The U.S. eventually annexed the Philippines, Guam and Puerto Rico.

• McKinley's second term, which had begun suspiciously, came to a tragic end in September 1901 at the Buffalo Pan-American Exposition when a deranged anarchist shot him twice. He died eight days later.

— White House Historical Association via the William McKinley Presidential Library & Museum

NOTABLE QUOTE
"War should never be entered upon until every agency of peace has failed." — from his first inaugural address March 4, 1897

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• After serving as assistant secretary of the Navy, leader of the Rough Riders Regiment during the Spanish-American War, and governor of New York, Roosevelt served as vice president under William McKinley.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
• Roosevelt became president after McKinley was assassinated in 1901, making him, at 42, the youngest person to hold the office.

• Roosevelt is considered the first modern president because he significantly expanded the influence and power of the office.

• Roosevelt used the media as a “bully pulpit” to influence the American people.

• Roosevelt became the first president to leave the country during his term in office when he visited Panama in 1906 to see the construction of the Panama Canal.

On foreign policy: “Speak softly and carry a big stick.”

— Theodore Roosevelt
WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT
27th president (1909-1913)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• William Taft was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1857.
• He attended Yale University and went on to study law at the University of Cincinnati.
• Taft worked his way through the court system first as a lawyer and then as a judge. He served on the Cincinnati Supreme Court before being named U.S. solicitor general in Washington, D.C. Taft was appointed to the Sixth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, and was a law professor and dean at the University of Cincinnati Law School.
• Taft aspired to serve on the United States Supreme Court, but his wish helped him win the presidency. This helped him decide to break out and accept President McKinley’s request that he go to the Philippines Islands, which had become a U.S. protectorate, and set up a government there. After he did that, running down two opportunities to become a Supreme Court justice in the meantime, Taft returned to the United States and served as President Roosevelt’s secretary of war.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
• Taft was elected president on the strength of his predecessor’s endorsement and promise to continue the policies of President Roosevelt.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
• Taft oversaw passage of the 16th and 17th amendments to the Constitution, which allowed for the implementation of an income tax and the direct election of senators, respectively.
• Taft broke from Roosevelt’s ideology when he signed a tariff reduction bill that Roosevelt and his supporters didn’t think was low enough, and he dismissed the chief justice, which caused friction in the Republican Party.
• After leaving office Taft taught at Yale University Law School until 1932. That year President Harding appointed him chief justice of the United States Supreme Court, where he served until 1930 as the only president to also become chief justice.

WOODROW WILSON
28th president (1913-1921)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• Woodrow Wilson was born in Virginia, and before he was 20 years old his family would move to Augusta, Georgia, Columbia, South Carolina, and Wilmington, North Carolina.
• Wilson studied at Davidson College in North Carolina and at the College of New Jersey, which later became Princeton University. He practiced law in Atlanta for a short time before pursuing a Ph.D. in history and political science.
• Wilson taught at Bryn Mawr College, Wesleyan University and Princeton, and published a number of books before becoming president of Princeton University in 1902.
• The work he did at Princeton and afterward as governor of New Jersey gained him the national profile he needed to win the presidential election in 1912.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
• Shortly after taking office, President Wilson explained his vision of his role as president to a joint session of Congress, becoming the first president to address Congress personally since John Adams.
• Many historians think of Wilson as the man who set the example for the modern activist president, moving the president from someone who worked on an equal or lesser level with Congress to the dominant branch of government.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
• Wilson served a second term of office during his time as president, granting women the right to vote.
• Among the economic policies of the Wilson administration was the Federal Reserve Act of 1913, which established the Federal Reserve Board and empowered it with the ability to adjust the interest rate, a system still in place today.
• World War I broke out early in Wilson’s first term, and for the first three years of the war Wilson believed America’s best approach was to follow its tradition of neutrality. But when German submarine attacked boats that resulted in the deaths of American citizens, the United States was forced to enter the war.

NOTABLE QUOTE
• “These ... are the things we shall stand for, whether in war or in peace... that governments derive all their just powers from the consent of the governed and that no other powers should be supported by the common thought, purpose or power of the family of nations.” from his second inaugural address March 4, 1917.
WARREN HARDING
29th president (1921-1923)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• Warren Harding grew up in Ohio and had a number of jobs before entering politics. He was a teacher, then involved in law, insurance and journalism as publisher of a local newspaper.
• Harding had good relationships with most politicians because he avoided being very critical in the newspaper, and he was elected to the Ohio state Senate.
• He returned in mid-year of his newspaper career until he was elected to the United States Senate in 1914. As a U.S. senator, Harding was absent for more sessions than he attended.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
• Harding considered the presidency a ceremonial position rather than one where he could make a big impact.
• His administration was filled with corruption, and though he himself had progressive views on race and civil rights, the shortcomings of his administration caused him to be widely regarded as the worst president in American history.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
• Some members of President Harding’s administration were accomplished and quite good at what they did. But many others were later charged with defrauding the government, and some of them went to jail. The most notable scheme to rock the administration was the Teapot Dome Scandal, where Harding’s secretary of the interior, Albert Fall, accepted bribes from private oil companies in exchange for allowing them access to oil reserves in Wyoming and California.

ALVIN COOLIDGE
30th president (1923-1929)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• Calvin Coolidge was born in Vermont and attended Amherst College in Massachusetts. After graduating, Coolidge stayed in Massachusetts to study law, then opened up a practice in Northampton, Massachusetts, where he also began his political career.
• Coolidge started as a member of the local Republican Club, then advanced to City Council, was a city solicitor, county clerk and chairman of the local Republican Party organization; served on the state legislature; then was elected mayor of Northampton, state senator, lieutenant governor, then governor of Massachusetts.
• Coolidge was selected to be Warren Harding’s running mate, and served as vice president for two years before Harding died suddenly. Coolidge learned the news while vacationing in Vermont. Coolidge’s father John, a justice of the peace, administered the oath of office for his son in the middle of the night.

“TO LIVE UNDER THE AMERICAN CONSTITUTION IS THE GREATEST POLITICAL PRIVILEGE THAT WAS EVER ACCORDED TO THE HUMAN RACE.”

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
• Theodore Roosevelt called him the only other vice president to finish another president’s term, then run for and win an election himself. But Coolidge repeated the feat in the 1924 presidential election after finishing Harding’s first term, unscathed by the scandals that constantly impacted his predecessor.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
• Coolidge was known as “Silent Cal” for the fact that he didn’t enjoy making small talk at social gatherings, but in fact he had created the term for radio! At least once a minute, he had his press conferences and was an oft-photographed president.

• President Coolidge wanted to maintain the economic success the country was experiencing during his time in office. His administration cut taxes and took credit for the prosperity of the time, but these policies contributed to the Great Depression on the horizon.
• During Coolidge’s presidency the Federal Radio Commission was created (later to be known as the Federal Communications Commission), which just the growing radio industry under federal regulations.
• Latin American countries met during Coolidge’s presidency to address the issue of American intervention in the area—the U.S. had troops in the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Haiti and was active in Cuba and Mexico. President Coolidge traveled to the meeting in discussion matters with the other countries, which led to better relationships down the road.

• Coolidge chose not to run for another term, leaving the presidency viewed favorably by many Americans.
BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• Franklin Delano Roosevelt was born and raised in a privileged family in Hyde Park, New York. He was tutored at home until age 14, and after attending a private school for his high school years, graduated from Harvard College.
• Franklin admired his distant cousin Theodore Roosevelt, who was president during the years Franklin was at Harvard, and this was one of the things that spurred him to enter politics.

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• Herbert Clark Hoover was born in 1874 in West Branch, Iowa. He became an orphan at age 9.
• In 1891, Stanford University opened its doors and Hoover was part of the founding class. He graduated in 1895 with a degree in geology and had met his future wife, Lou Henry.
• Unable to find employment, Hoover took jobs in California mining potash ore carts. Eventually he landed a job with Louis Jolin, a mining consultant in San Francisco. Jolin quickly promoted him and recommended him to the Hewitt Mining Company to manage their gold mines in Western Australia. Although only 23, Hoover was given the job.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
• FDR became governor of New York just around the world five times and became a self-made millionaire with interests on six of the seven continents.
• Hoover did initiate economic policies such as the Reconstruction Finance Corporation that laid the foundation for later recovery.

NOTABLE QUOTE
• “Being a politician is a poor profession. Being a public servant is a noble one.”

NOTABLE QUOTE
• “Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.”

Franklin D. Roosevelt
32nd president (1933-1945)

“Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.” — from his first inaugural address

Herbert Hoover
31st president (1929-1933)

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“Being a politician is a poor profession. Being a public servant is a noble one.”
BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• Harry S. Truman was born in 1884 in Missouri. After graduating high school he worked as a timekeeper for a railroad construction contractor, then as a clerk in two Kansas City banks before returning home to help his father run the family farm for more than 10 years.

• When the United States entered World War I in 1917, Truman helped organize the 2nd Regiment of Missouri Field Artillery of the Missouri National Guard, which was quickly called into federal service in France. Truman was promoted to captain and given command of the regiment’s battery D.

• Truman joined the reserves after the war, rising to the rank of colonel.

• From 1919 to 1922 he ran a men’s clothing store in Kansas City with a friend. The store failed in the post-war recession. Truman narrowly avoided bankruptcy.

• In 1924, Truman was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Missouri’s Third District.

• In 1922, Truman was elected to the U.S. Senate. He had significant roles in the passage of the Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938 and the Transportation Act of 1940. After being re-elected in 1940, Truman gained national prominence as chairman of the Senate’s Special Committee to Investigate the National Defense Program, which came to be called the Truman Committee.

• In 1945, Truman was elected to the United States Senate. He was the chairman of the Committee on Civil Rights and encouraged the Justice Department to argue before the Supreme Court on behalf of plaintiffs fighting against segregation.

• Truman was successful in achieving a fairly peaceful economy, but only a few of his social program proposals became law.

• In 1948, Truman was nominated to run for vice president with Franklin D. Roosevelt. On Jan. 20, 1945, he took the vice-presidential oath, and after Roosevelt’s unexpected death only 82 days later, he was sworn in as president.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
• Truman later called his first year as president a “year of decisions.” He oversaw during his first two months in office the ending of the war in Europe. He approved the dropping of two atomic bombs on Japan in August 1945. This first year of Truman’s presidency also saw the founding of the United Nations and the development of an increase-ingly strained and confrontational relationship with the Soviet Union.

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES
• Central to almost everything Truman undertook in his foreign policy was the desire to prevent the spread of communism in the aftermath of World War II. The Truman Doctrine was an enunciation of American willingness to provide military aid to countries resisting communist insurgency; the Marshall Plan sought to revalue the economies of the nations of Europe in the hope that communism would not thrive in the midst of prosperity; the North Atlantic Treaty Organization built a military barrier confronting the Soviet-dominated part of Europe.

• The one time during his presidency when a communist threat seemed a non-existent one—when North Korea invaded South Korea in June 1950—Truman responded by sending unleashed war.

• Truman was successful in achieving a fairly peaceful economy, but only a few of his social program proposals became law.

• He issued executive orders desegregating the armed forces and forbidding racial discrimination in federal employment. He also established a Committee on Civil Rights and encouraged the Justice Department to argue before the Supreme Court on behalf of plaintiffs fighting against segregation.

— Harry S. Truman Library & Museum

“IT IS AMAZING WHAT YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH IF YOU DO NOT CARE WHO GETS THE CREDIT.”

— White House Historical Association via WhiteHouse.gov

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BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
• Dwight Eisenhower was born in Texas and raised in Kansas. He attended the United States Military Academy at West Point.

• After Pearl Harbor, Gen. George C. Marshall called Eisenhower to Washing-ton for a war plans assignment. He commanded the Allied Forces landing in North Africa in November 1942; on D-Day, 1944, he was supreme commander of the troops invading France.

• After the war, he became president of Columbia University, then took leave to assume supreme command over the new NATO forces being assembled in 1949.

• In 1953, the signing of a truce brought an armistice, along the border of North Korea. The death of Russian dictator Josef Stalin that year caused shifts in relations with Russia. New Soviet leaders consented to a peace treaty neutralizing Korea. Meanwhile, both Russia and the United States had developed hydrogen bombs. With the threat of such destructive force hanging over the world, Eisenhower, with the leaders of the British, French and Russian govern-ments, met at Geneva in July 1955.

• In September 1955, Eisenhower suffered a heart attack. After several weeks, he left the hospital, and in February 1956 doctors reported his recovery. In November that year he was elected for his second term.

• As desegregation of schools began, he sent troops into Little Rock, Arkansas, to enforce his order as head of the federal court; he also enforced the complete desegregation of the armed forces.

• Eisenhower concentrated on maintaining world peace. He watched with pleasure the development of his 20th-Foreign-Policy program—the “loose but firm” nations for peaceful purposes.

— Dwight D Eisenhower

“IT IS AMAZING WHAT YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH IF YOU DO NOT CARE WHO GETS THE CREDIT.”

— White House Historical Association via WhiteHouse.gov

Dwight D. Eisenhower
34th president (1953-1961)
BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

• John F. Kennedy grew up in a wealthy family in Massachusetts. He battled various illnesses in his youth, some of which continued to bother him into adulthood, but after graduating from Harvard University he was well enough to join the U.S. Navy in World War II. He was awarded the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps Medal for Valor and a Purple Heart for his actions in the war.

• His first political job was in Washington, D.C. as an aide to a Texas congressman.

• During the Great Depression, Johnson worked as the Texas director of the National Youth Administration, and at age 28 won a seat in the House of Representatives.

• Johnson served in the Naval Reserve during World War II. He was awarded the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps Medal and the Purple Heart.

• His first political job was in Washington, D.C. as an aide to a Texas congressman.

• Johnson's domestic agenda was dominated by civil rights efforts. He created the Peace Corps. He was a big supporter of the space program and laid the groundwork for the moon landing that took place in 1969. He increased the United States' presence in Vietnam.

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SUCCESSES AND FAILURES

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NOTABLE QUOTE

"This is what America is all about. It is the star that is not reached and the harvest that is sleeping in the unplowed ground." — from his inaugural address Jan. 20, 1965
Richard Nixon
37th president (1969-1974)

Background/Early Life
Born in California in 1913, Richard Nixon attended Whittier College and Duke University law school before beginning the practice of law. During World War II, he served as a Navy lieutenant commander in the Pacific. On leaving the service, he was elected to Congress from his California district. In 1950, he was U.S. Senate seat. Two years later, Gen. Dwight Eisenhower selected him as his age, 39, to be his running mate.

Nominated for president by acclamation in 1960, he lost by a narrow margin by John F. Kennedy. In 1968, he again won his party’s nomination, and went on to defeat Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey and third-party candidate George C. Wallace.

How He Defined the Office
“People have got to know whether or not their president is a crook. Well, I’m not a crook. I earned everything I’ve got.”

Successes and Failures
• His accomplishments while in office included revenue sharing; the end of the draft, new anticrime laws and a broad environmental philosophy to the Supreme Court. One of the most dramatic events of his term occurred in 1972, when American astronauts made the first moon landing.

• The summit meetings with Russian leader Leonid I. Brezhnev produced a treaty to limit strategic nuclear weapons. In 1974, his secretary of state, Henry Kissinger, negotiated disarmament agreements between Israel and its neighbors, Egypt and Syria.

• In his 1972 campaign for office, Nixon defeated Democratic candidate George McGovern by one of the widest margins on record.

• Within a few months, his administration was embroiled over the so-called “Watergate” scandal, stemming from a break-in at the offices of the Democratic National Committee during the 1972 campaign. The break-in was traced to officials of the Committee to Re-elect the President. A number of administration officials resigned; some were later convicted of crimes connected with efforts to cover up the affair. Nixon denied any personal involvement, but the courts forced him to yield tape recordings which indicated that he had, in fact, tried to direct the investigation.

• As a result of unrelated scandals in Maryland, Vice President Spiro T. Agnew resigned in 1973. Nixon nominated, and Congress approved, House Minority Leader Gerald R. Ford as vice president.

• Ford and what some termed “almost certain impeachment, Nixon announced on Aug. 8, 1974, that he would resign the next day to begin “that process of healing which is so desperately needed in America.”

Gerald Ford
38th president (1974-1977)

Background/Early Life
• Gerald Ford was born in Omaha, Nebraska, but moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan, when his mother left a troubled relationship with his father. She remarried in Michigan and Ford, who was born Leslie Lynch King Jr., changed his name to Gerald Rudolph Ford Jr., in honor of his stepfather, after he graduated college.

• Ford was a star center on the University of Michigan football team, and he turned down contracts with the Detroit Lions and Green Bay Packers to attend law school at Yale University, where he also coached football.

• After graduating law school Ford returned to Michigan to practice law, and after the attack on Pearl Harbor served in the Navy during World War II.

• Ford’s growing interest in politics culminated with a successful bid for a seat in the United States House of Representatives in 1948, where he served until he was picked to become Richard Nixon’s vice president in December 1972.

How He Defined the Office
“...replacements...”

• Ford’s presidency is unique in that he is the first man to achieve the office without having been elected to either the presidency or the vice presidency. He was named Spiro Agnew’s replacement by Richard Nixon after Agnew resigned. He then succeeded to the presidency eight months later after Nixon’s resignation.

Successes and Failures
• President Ford suffered an immediate decline in popularity when, a month into his time in office, he issued a pardon to President Nixon for his role in the Watergate scandal. He hoped the pardon would put Watergate behind him, but instead it angered many Americans — as well as members of Congress — who wanted to see Nixon face consequences.

• Ford’s time in office was dominated by an economic decline, inflation and unemployment were at their highest levels since World War II, and the country increased its dependence on foreign oil, the price of which kept increasing.

• Ford inherited America’s “visto, and worst of all the policies of detente and war in the countries.

• The book on the Vietnam War closed during Ford’s presidency when he ordered the evacuation from Saigon of all United States personnel and South Vietnamese citizens with connections to the U.S.

• Ford narrowly edged Ronald Reagan for the Republican nomination in the 1976 primaries, but lost the presidency to Jimmy Carter, ending his time in office.
BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

Ronald Reagan was born in Illinois and attended Eureka College near Peoria. After graduating he became a radio sports announcer, and in 1937 he won a movie contract in Hollywood, in the 1940s and 50s he appeared in 52 films.

As president of the Screen Actors Guild, Reagan became embroiled in disputes over the issue of communism in the film industry; his political views shifted from liberal to conservative. He toured the country as a television host, becoming a spokesman for conservatism.

He served on the county board of education, then went to Georgia State University, where he became a union organizer. In 1952 he ran for and was elected to Congress, where he served until 1961, when he ran for governor of Georgia. In 1966 he was elected governor of California by a margin of 35 percent but sought to improve relations with the Soviet Union. In dramatic meetings with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, he negotiated a treaty that would eliminate intermediate-range nuclear missiles.

In 1986 Reagan obtained an overhaul of the income tax code, which eliminated many deductions and reduced the tax rate. He also obtained legislation to stimulate economic growth, curb inflation, increase employment and strengthen national defense. He embarked upon a course of cutting taxes and government expenditures, refusing to deviate from it when the strengthening of defense became a large deficit.

By ordering naval escorts in the Persian Gulf, he maintained the free flow of oil during the Iran-Iraq war. After evidence came out that Libya was involved in terrorism, sending American bombers against Libya.

PRESIDENTIAL VICTORIES

Ronald Reagan was elected president in 1980, winning 51 percent of the vote. He was re-elected in 1984, winning 59 percent of the vote.

In 1981 he signed a bill into law that would eliminate intermediate-range nuclear missiles.

Ronald Reagan was known for his strong stance on the issue of human rights. He believed that human rights were not just a Western concept but a universal human value.

Ronald Reagan was committed to reducing the role of government in the economy. He believed that the government should provide a safety net but that the free market should be allowed to operate as much as possible.

Ronald Reagan was also known for his strong stance on defense. He believed that the United States needed to maintain a strong military in order to protect its interests.

Ronald Reagan was a skilled negotiator. He was able to achieve important agreements with the Soviet Union, such as the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty.

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BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
- George Bush grew up in a wealthy family that stressed going back through public service. His father was an investment banker and later a U.S. senator from Connecticut.
- Bush served in the Navy and was a pilot during World War II. At 19, he was the youngest pilot in the Navy. On one of his 58 combat missions his plane was shot down and he was rescued at sea.
- Bush attended Yale University after the war and upon graduating moved to Texas, where he worked in the oil industry.
- Bush entered politics by serving as a Republican Party chairman in Texas. After losing an election for U.S. Senate, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1966.
- Bush ran for the Republican nomination for president in 1980 but was not successful.
- Bush was the first sitting vice president to win a presidential election.

BILL CLINTON
42nd president (1993-2001)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
- William Jefferson Clinton grew up in a small hometown school was able to attend a mock political convention in Washington, D.C. On that trip Clinton was able to shake President Kennedy's hand during a ceremony at the White House Rose Garden. Clinton's political ambitions from that day on were to become president of the United States.
- Clinton returned to Washington for college, where he attended Georgetown University and worked as a clerk for the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee.
- Clinton graduated from Yale Law School where he would meet future wife Hillary Rodham and returned to Arkansas where he would be elected governor at age 32.
- Clinton ran for the presidential election in 1992 after allegations of marital infidelity, which he addressed directly, as well as criticisms over his involvement in the Vietnam War draft. Controversy would follow Clinton throughout his time in office.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
- Clinton was the first Democratic president to win back-to-back terms since Franklin Roosevelt.

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE
- Clinton graduated from Yale Law School where he would meet future wife Hillary Rodham and returned to Arkansas where he would be elected governor at age 32. He served one term before losing a bid for re-election (becoming the youngest former governor in American history), then won four more terms as governor of Arkansas.
- Clinton won the presidential election in 1992 after allegations of marital infidelity, which he addressed directly, as well as criticisms over his involvement in the Vietnam War draft. Controversy would follow Clinton throughout his time in office.

HOW HE DEFINED THE OFFICE
- Clinton was the first Democratic president since Franklin Roosevelt.

After winning the Republican nomination for president in 1980: “Read my lips: No new taxes.”

“T’m grateful for the opportunity to serve. The bad days are part of it. I didn’t run to have a pleasant time. I ran to have a chance to change the country. And if the bad days and the fact that he waited five years after promising not to do so led to his loss in the 1992 presidential election.”

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WITH THE WHITESTONE INVESTIGATION, HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON WAS ONE OF THE MOST ACTIVITY FIRST LADIES IN HISTORY, PARTICULARLY IN HER WORK AROUND HEALTH CARE REFORM.
The first African-American woman to serve in that position. African-American secretary of state, and later Condoleezza Rice, "How he defined the office...

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**How he defined the office**

President Bush’s Cabinet featured Colin Powell, the first African-American secretary of state, and later Condoleezza Rice, the first African-American woman to serve in that position.

**Background/Early life**

- George W. Bush was born in Connecticut, the oldest of former president George H.W. and Barbara Bush’s six children.
- The family moved to Texas shortly after George was born, but Bush attended a private, prestigious high school in Massachusetts as well as Yale University.
- Bush served in the Air National Guard after graduating college, then returned to Texas to work in the oil industry.
- Bush’s early political roots involved an unsuccessful run for a U.S. House of Representatives seat and helping with his father’s presidential campaign. Once George H.W. Bush won election as the younger Bush returned to Texas and was involved in a group that purchased the Texas Rangers baseball team.
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**Background/Early life**

- Obama instantly made history by winning the 2008 presidential election, becoming the first African-American president of the United States.
- The aftermath of the 9/11 attacks saw President Bush make a number of executive decisions, from the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, to authorizations allowing the president to use force against those suspected in the attacks or to prevent future attacks, to the Patriot Act, which allowed for such measures as expanded surveillance, improvements in U.S. intelligence and increased domestic security.

**Successes and failures**

- On Sept. 11, 2001, hijacked planes crashed into the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Virginia, while another plane believed to be headed to the U.S. Capitol or White House crashed in Pennsylvania. After the attack on America, the United States sent troops to Afghanistan and Iraq. The U.S. also went to war with Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein from power. The war centered around the notion that Iraq had stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, but President Bush wanted to instead use Iraq as leverage in his response to the natural disaster, which killed more than 1,500 and left more than 400,000 homeless.

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DONALD TRUMP
45th president (2017)

BACKGROUND/EARLY LIFE

- Donald Trump grew up in Queens, New York, the son of a real estate developer.
- After college, including graduating from prestigious business college Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, Trump joined the family business and eventually took it over. He worked much of his one of the most recognizable figures in New York City, and eventually he hung his work on Fifth Avenue with Trump Tower and with casinos in Atlantic City, New Jersey, he achieved a national profile.
- Trump considered running for president before the 2016 election, even campaigning as a member of the Reform Party in 2000, but used his fame to comment on political matters instead of running for office.
- In 2014, Trump produced and starred in "The Apprentice," an NBC reality series where candidates competed for a chance to work for The Trump Organization.
- Trump used his popularity from the show, as well as his position as an outspoken critic of President Obama, to launch a campaign for the 2016 presidential election.

ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

- Trump ran for president with the campaign slogan "Make America Great Again." He promised to build a wall along the Mexican border that he said he would get Mexico to pay for, to keep Mexican immigrants from coming into the country; repeal the Affordable Care Act; and follow a policy of "Americanism, not globalism."
- Trump emerged from a crowded field of Republican candidates to win the nomination and face former first lady, U.S. senator, and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.
- Despite derogatory comments about women throughout his campaign, a lawsuit settlement involving his venture Trump University, and alleged ties to Russia, Trump won the electoral college vote, though he lost the popular vote to Clinton, and became the 45th president of the United States.

WHILE IN OFFICE

- Trump quickly issued executive orders in office that included starting the wall along the Mexican border, repealing the ACA, and banning travel from the U.S. from seven- mainly Muslim — majority countries.
- Trump spent his first few months in office building his Cabinet. Many of his nominees drew criticism from Democratic crafts before being passed through the Republican-controlled Congress.

"In America, we understand that a nation is only living as long as it is striving. We will no longer accept politicians who are all talk and no action, constantly complaining but never doing anything about it. The time for empty talk is over. Now arrives the hour of action." from his inaugural address Jan. 20, 2017

Checks and balances remain, but the chief of state has unilateral options, too

by Melissa Erickson

More Content Now

The United States is a country that runs on a system of checks and balances, with each branch of government wielding different powers established in the Constitution, the president stands alone. As the most powerful player with unparalleled potential to lead the country, the president commands impressive tools such as executive orders to make hit will into action.

But how does the president's executive orders fill the American system of checks and balances? To find some answers, two experts, Mark Major, a senior lecturer in the political science department at Temple University, and Melissa Erickson, an assistant professor in the political science department at Temple University, examine how our system prevents or allows the president or any branch from exercising too much power.

Back in school we learned that the three branches of government operate with separate powers. At the most basic: The legislative branch (Congress) makes the laws. The executive branch (president) enforces the laws. The judicial branch (court) interprets the laws.

Each branch also has power to keep the others in check. For example, when Congress passes a law, the president can veto it, but Congress can override a veto with enough power. The Supreme Court can declare an act unconstitutional, and the Senate approves the president's nominees for court jobs.

Less well-known are the unilateral powers of the president, or the ways a president can act without the support of Congress and the courts, Major said. Executive orders are just one type of unilateral power available to the president. Others include signing statements, presidential proclamations (such as the Emancipation Proclamation), national security directives and presidential memoranda, Major said.

One of the first things that should be known about a president's executive orders is that they are "a derived power" that is not explicitly stated in the Constitution, Sellers said. Instead, they originate out of tradition starting with Washington and continuing through Trump, Major said.

"Presidents rely on preceident for experience and power. Once one president acts in a certain way, others will follow," Major said.

Historically, presidents use executive orders to direct policy and set agendas, and they are most commonly used in the first 100 days of a presidency and toward the end, Sellers said.

"They want to start by making big changes, then later they'll use different strategies and work with the legislature to get things done," he said.

Former President Barack Obama issued the least amount in the past 120 years, 35 on average, followed by former President George W. Bush with 36 and former President Bill Clinton with 46, according to the Pew Research Center.

Executive order walk a fine line between achieving policy objectives and not making Congress or the courts react.

"It's a delicate balance between what we want to achieve and what can't get away with. Presidents act alone but within the system of checks and balances," Major said.

In recent years, Washington has been plagued by partisan gridlock, and executive orders are a useful tool for a president to make things happen.

"If everything has to be approved by Congress, nothing would get done," said Sellers, who called it "reasonable" for presidents to have some unilateral power.

Any policy changes need to be grounded in existing law, but with so much legislation in recent years, that's not difficult to do, Sellers said.
Questions: Why could a federal appeals court stop the president's travel ban?

Answer: The president acted outside the powers delegated to him by the Constitution, which specifies that Congress shall have the power to make laws regulating immigration. The court found that the executive order unconstitutionally delegated legislative power to the executive branch.

The United States

The People of the United States, in Order to form a perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

ARTICLE I

Section 1

All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

Section 2

The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every Second Year by the People of the several States, and the Electors thereof as in the Article of Confederation are appointed in the States, and the Electors shall have Qualifications of a Citizen of the United States, and who shall be at least twenty-five Years of Age, and shall have been居民 of that State for at least six Years; and each Senator shall have one Vote.

Section 3

Election to fill such Vacancies.

Section 4

The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by Law make or alter such Regulations, except as to the Places of chusing Senators.

Section 5

Each House shall be the Judge of the Elections, Returns and Qualifications of its own Members, and a Majority of each shall be the Quorum necessary for the Formation of a quorum to do Business; but a smaller Number may adjourn from day to day, and by the Consent of a Majority, may be authorized to compel the Attendance of absent Members, in such Manner, and under such Penalties as each House may provide.

The House of Representatives shall choose their Speaker, and other Officers, and shall have the Power of Impeachment.

Section 6

The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the Legislature thereof for six Years; and each Senator shall have one Vote.

Section 7

All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with Amendments as on other Bills.

Section 8

The Congress shall have Power... to declare War, grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal, and make Rules concerningCaptures.

Section 9

The House of Representatives shall determine the Eligibility of the Members thereof, and have all Such other Powers as may be necessary for conducting the Business of the Congress.

Section 10

No Bill shall be passed unless it shall first be read thrice on three different Days, and be committed to a Committee of the Whole House of Representatives, where it shall be open to the consideration of any Member.

Section 11

No Senator or Representative shall, during the Time of their Service, be appointed to any Civil Office under the Authority of the United States, which shall be granted by Law, and which shall be compatible with that Office; but the Congress may by Law grant Rank and Honours.

Section 12

The Electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by Ballot for two Persons, giving a Ballot for each, at least of the分别 of the same Party: and they shall mark well which of the two Persons is for President, and which for Vice President, and the Person having the greatest Number of Votes for President, shall be the President, if such Number be a majority of the whole Number of Electors in the State; and the Person having the greatest Number of Votes for Vice President, shall be the Vice President, if such Number be a majority of the whole Number of Electors in the State; and a Majority of both shall be necessary to the Electors in each State...
without the Consent of the other. In all other Cases excepting those where they shall withdraw the Power of Impeachment, the Senate shall have the sole Power of Conviction:

The Senate and the House of Representatives shall choose President and Vice President for the United States; in Case of the Removal of the President as provided in the last Article, the Same shall have Power to fill up the Vacancy; The President shall have Power to Pardon all Offenders against Law, except in Cases of Treason or Felony; But the Congress may by Law forbid the granting of such Pardons. The President shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed, and shall Commission all the Officers of the United States.

The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States when called into the Actual Service of the United States; He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present agree to the same; and he shall nominate, and by his Appointments to fill up all Vacancies that may happen during the Recess of the Senate, in the Appointment of Merchants, Judges of the Supreme Court, Ambassadors, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not hamstringed by Laws, but who shall have been deposited by the Senate, and the Congress may by Law direct such Depositions to bevacuated, and the Vacancies to be filled up.

The President shall receive a Compensation for his Services, but no other Emoluments during the Term of his Office. He shall have a Seal of Office, and shall sign all the Acts and Papers by the Secretary of State; but if he should fail to sign any of them, the Vice President shall sign such Acts and Papers.

The President shall be answerable to Congress for the Management of the Office of the Executive, and shall render an Account thereof at the Term of his Return. Any two thirds of both Houses of Congress, united, shall be necessary to grant Impeachment against the President. No Title of Nobility shall be granted by the United States, and no Person holding any Office of Profit or Trust under the United States, shall be a Citizen of any Foreign State.

The Congress shall have Power to declare the Quorum necessary for the Passage of any Bill, and to set such Rules and Limitations as may be consistent with the Constitution. The Congress shall have Power to impose a Tax or Duty on Articles exported from any Person.

The Congress shall have Power to determine the Time of chusing the Electors, and the Place of holding their Meeting; and the Congress may by Law direct the Return of the Electors. The Congress shall have Power to make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the Electors, in Cases not provided for by this Constitution.

The Congress may provide for the Case of Impeachment, and the Removal of the President from Office, and the Punishment of his Disobedience to the Law of his Country:

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AMENDMENT XII
(Ratified June 15, 1804)

The Electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by Ballot for two Persons, at least one of whom shall not be an Citizen of the United States; and they shall make a List of all the Persons voted for, and by what Number of Votes each has been voted for, and transmit them,封 closed Packages, to the Seat of the Government, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the Presence of the Senators and Members of the House of Representatives, open all the Certificates and the Votes shall be counted;--The Person having the greatest Number of Votes shall be the President; but if no Person have such Number, then the House of Representatives shall choose from the Persons having the greatest Number of Votes, a President within the next Term of Years. But the House of Representatives shall not choose a President who has not reached the Age of thirty-five Years; and when the Right of Voting for President shall be vested in the House of Representatives, they shall choose a President within the next Term of Years.

AMENDMENT XIII
(Ratified July 9, 1868)

Section 1.

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assembling together, and petitioning the Government for a redress of grievances.

Section 2.

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

Section 3.

No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner authorized by law.

AMENDMENT XIV
(Ratified April 8, 1868)

Section 1.

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any Law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Section 2.

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, counting the whole number of free, including those bound to service for a term of years, and excluding those after the fashion of a census or enumeration. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of the President and Vice President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the Electors for President and Vice President, and Members of the several Houses of Congress, shall be天赋 to the citizens of any State, and of certain persons not citizens of any State, the most numerous branch of the legislature of such State, shall be the basis of representation therein: and the House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the electors in each State shall have as many votes as there shall be Members in the Congress of the United States from such State; which Votes shall be equal to the whole Number of Electors in the most numerous branch of the State legislature.

Section 3.

No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or an Officer of the United States, or hold any Office under them, who, having previously taken an Oath according to law, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or given aid or support to its enemies. A Declaration of War shall in like Manner excuse Members of Congress from such Office, during the Time of the Declared War, so long as such Declaration shall remain in Force.

Section 4.

The Congress shall have Power to declare the Rules of Procedure in the Senate and House, and to punish its Members for contempt and disorderly Behaviour; but no Member shall be convicted of any Crime or War by any other Branch of Government. Theehalf of the two Houses, each House shall have the Power of Impeachment.

AMENDMENT XV
(Ratified Feb. 3, 1870)

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

AMENDMENT XVI
(Ratified July 3, 1913)

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect Taxes on income, from whatever source derived, and on the transfer thereof, and to impose Excise and License taxes. But such Regulations shall be made only in Pursuance of Law, and shall be equally apportioned among the several States, according to their respective Numbers. The Congress shall have Power to fill by Appointment any Vacancy发生 in the Senate, in the case of the Death, Resignation, or Removal of an incumbent Senator; but the term of such appointment shall not be longer than the remainder of the term for which the incumbent was elected. But the Congress shall have no Power to fill any Vacancy which happens during the last Year of any Term, so as to continue that Senator to the next ensuing Term.

AMENDMENT XVII
(Ratified Aug. 27, 1913)

The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, elected by the Legislature thereof for six Years; and each Senator shall have one Vote. Immediately after the first federal election, in each State, the Legislature thereof shall apportion the number of Senators therein, between the several Counties and Cities therein, according to their respective Numbers. The apportionment of the Senators shall be affected every ten Years, by the same method.

Section 2.

The Congress shall have Power to order a new census at any time, and to make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the census.

AMENDMENT XVIII
(Ratified Dec. 5, 1919)

The Congress shall have power to prohibit the importation into any State, Territory, or possession of the United States, of intoxicating Liquors for beverage purposes.

Section 2.

No Person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or an Officer of the United States, or hold any Office under them, who, having previously taken an Oath according to law, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or given aid or support to its enemies. A Declaration of War shall in like Manner excuse Members of Congress from such Office, during the Time of the Declared War, so long as such Declaration shall remain in Force.

AMENDMENT XIX
(Ratified March 23, 1920)

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

AMENDMENT XX
(Ratified Feb. 19, 1933)

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting shall begin at noon on the 3rd day of January, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.

Section 1.

The President of the United States shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Military and Naval Forces of the several States, when in actual Service in the United States: he may require the Opinion, in writing, of the principal Officer in each of the Executive Departments, upon any Subject relating to the Duties of their respective Offices.

AMENDMENT XXI
(Ratified Dec. 5, 1933)

Section 1.

The Eighteenth Amendment to this Constitution is hereby repealed.

Section 2.

This amendment shall take effect ten years from its ratification.
Amendment XXI

The Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States is hereby repealed.

(Proposed Dec. 5, 1932; ratified Dec. 5, 1933)

This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

(Provisional amendment proposed Nov. 16, 1938)

Fifteenth Amendment

The right of citizens of the United States, who are 18 years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of age.

(Proposed Jan. 23, 1964; ratified Feb. 4, 1964)

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Sixteenth Amendment

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on income, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.

(Proposed Feb. 3, 1909; ratified Feb. 3, 1913)

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Seventeenth Amendment

The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the legislature thereof for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote. The electors of Senators and Representatives shall be entitled to receive, within twenty days after an election, a certificate of election from the state which appointed them, signed by the Governor and attested by the Secretary of State.

(Proposed Feb. 7, 1911; ratified Aug. 17, 1913)

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Eighteenth Amendment

The production, transportation, or sale of intoxicating liquors, in violation of the laws thereof, is hereby prohibited.

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

(Proposed Dec. 5, 1917; ratified Jan. 16, 1919)

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Nineteenth Amendment

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

(Proposed Feb. 26, 1919; ratified Aug. 18, 1920)

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Twentieth Amendment

The Congress shall fix the time of choosing presidential electors, and the day on which they shall give their votes, which day shall be the sixteenth day of January in each year, and the Congress may by law provide for the case of a simultaneous vacancies.

(Proposed Dec. 9, 1932; ratified Jan. 23, 1933)

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Twenty-first Amendment

The eighth article of amendment to the Constitution of the United States, prohibiting the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors in violation of the laws thereof, is hereby repealed.

(Proposed Dec. 5, 1933; ratified Dec. 5, 1933)

This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

(Proposed Mar. 10, 1935; ratified Dec. 5, 1938)

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Twenty-second Amendment

No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice, and no person who has held the office of President, or acted as President, for more than two years of a term to which another person was elected President, shall be eligible for more than one term as President.

(Proposed Feb. 27, 1947; ratified Feb. 22, 1951)

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Twenty-third Amendment

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

(Proposed Dec. 5, 1950; ratified Dec. 18, 1961)

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State on account of race.

(Proposed July 23, 1965; ratified Aug. 4, 1968)

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Twenty-fourth Amendment

The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, or for electors for Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State on account of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax.

(Proposed Nov. 6, 1960; ratified Feb. 4, 1964)

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Suffrage in Federal Elections

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.


The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, or for electors for Congress, shall be the same in each State, notwithstanding any law or constitution to the contrary thereon.

(Proposed Sept. 13, 1970; ratified July 1, 1971)

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Twenty-fifth Amendment

Whenever the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that he is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall become President.

(Proposed Nov. 12, 1967; ratified Feb. 10, 1967)

If the President dies, resigns or is removed from office, the Vice President shall become President. If the Vice President dies, resigns or is removed from office, the Chief Justice of the United States shall become President. In case of the removal of the President from office or of his death or resignation, the Vice President shall become Acting President. During the temporary absence of the President from the Senate and the House of Representatives shall meet in the District and perform such duties as provided by law.


The right of citizens of the United States, who are 18 years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State on account of age.

(Proposed July 27, 1970; ratified July 1, 1971)

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Twenty-sixth Amendment

The right of citizens of the United States, who are 18 years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State on account of age.

(Proposed Nov. 6, 1971; ratified Feb. 3, 1971)

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.