

THE PRACTICAL ORIGINS OF THE RHETORICAL PRESIDENCY

ABSTRACT: As readers of The Rhetorical Presidency might expect, the Framers' remarks at the Constitutional Convention revealed a deep concern about popular political ignorance—and a desire to shield the new government from it. However, when it came to designing the presidency, the Founders seem to have been less intent on insulating sitting presidents from the mass public than on guarding the presidents' selection itself against elite factions that might take advantage of the public's ignorance. The resulting constitutional structure left the actual relationship between the president and the public open-ended. In short order, even the most restrained, patrician presidents took advantage of the opportunity to invoke, and to shape, public opinion—setting the stage for Andrew Jackson's, and his Democratic successors', more aggressive presidential populism.

Jeffrey Tulis's *The Rhetorical Presidency* revolutionized our understanding of the American presidency. According to Tulis, the modern presidency is at odds with its own founding principles; and by assuming a leading, demagogic role in national politics, modern presidents have wrought a fundamental transformation in the polity itself.

The Founders' constitution, in Tulis's view, provided the theoretical basis of presidential practice stretching from George Washington to William McKinley. Presidents were to avoid rhetoric meant to appeal to the masses on matters of public policy. Presidents were therefore, at first,

Terri Bimes, Department of Political Science, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720, bimes@berkeley.edu, thanks Stephen Skowronek, Richard Ellis, and Bruce Miroff for their helpful suggestions.

Critical Review 19(2–3): 241–256
© 2007 Critical Review Foundation

ISSN 0891-3811 print, 1933-8007 online
DOI: 10.1080/08913810701766124

“public” figures mainly in the sense of making ceremonial speeches, producing inaugural addresses, and submitting annual messages to Congress; but they were not “popular” leaders (Ceaser et al. 1982, 238) in the sense of leading, following, or claiming to follow public opinion.

Woodrow Wilson, according to Tulis, articulated a theory of presidential leadership that broke sharply with the original understanding of the president’s constitutional role. The new, Wilsonian view “prescribed” popular leadership by the president as strongly as the first constitution had “proscribed” it (Tulis 1987, 5). Wilson’s theory fundamentally transformed the constitutional order. Yet since the original, formal constitutional structure has remained in place, the result, in Tulis’s view, has been the uneasy coexistence of opposing theories of the president’s place in the political system.

The idea that the current order embodies dueling conceptions of appropriate presidential leadership captures an important feature of contemporary American politics. The expectation that the president will routinely attempt to rally the public behind his policies is coupled with discomfort when the president fails to stay above the political fray. The concept of dual constitutional orders has also served as a motivating example in other scholarship, such as Karen Orren and Stephen Skowronek’s (2004) treatment of institutional change, in which collisions among inconsistent political orders drive political development.

From the start, however, presidential practice highlighted the difficulties in preventing presidents from engaging in popular leadership, regardless of the original theory of the president’s public role. Even the earliest presidents took actions that opened the door to the later populist rhetoric of Andrew Jackson, Martin Van Buren, James Polk, Andrew Johnson, Grover Cleveland, William Jennings Bryan, and other nineteenth-century Democrats. While, in the twentieth century, Wilson did much to lay out the theoretical foundations for popular presidential leadership, he drew upon an understanding of the Constitution that had been given shape by more than a hundred years of prior presidential behavior.

Founding Fears of an Ignorant Public

The spirit of the first constitution, according to Tulis, was opposed to public appeals on the part of the president. No specific article of the Constitution spells out this doctrine; rather, it is to be gleaned primarily

from the way the Framers designed the executive branch, as well as the general suspicion of popular leadership that is found in the *Federalist Papers*.

One of the key tenets of Tulis's argument is that the Framers rejected both popular and congressional election of the president because such mechanisms would have made the president too dependent on public opinion. Instead, with the creation of the Electoral College, the Framers sought a presidency that, like the constitutional system as a whole, would be able to "withstand the temporary delusions' of public opinion" (Tulis 1987, 39). The Electoral College plan, in this regard, was a keystone of the Framers' design to close the door to presidential demagoguery. (Tulis [1987, 33-35] also cites the four-year presidential term, the extended republic, and the act of founding itself as forces reining in demagoguery.) By placing presidential selection outside the direct control of the general public, the Framers hoped to insulate the president from public opinion once he took office. Presidential candidates, in turn, would have a difficult time wooing a temporary body of electors who were of high standing in the community.

However, the debates at the Convention over the presidential selection process reveal that the Framers did not address the question of presidential demagoguery directly. This is not to say that they weren't worried about the capacity of the public to make informed judgments about presidential candidates. George Mason held that leaving "the choice of a proper character for a chief magistrate to the people would be as unnatural as to refer a trial of colors to a blind man," and his view was not anomalous (Madison [1787] 1987, vol. 1, 368). Elbridge Gerry asserted that the "people were uninformed" (*ibid.*, 388). Roger Sherman also worried that the people would "never be sufficiently informed of characters" (*ibid.*, 365-66). And earlier in the Convention, Madison had contended that "the people immediately should have as little to do as may be about the Government" (*ibid.*, 78).

But when it came to the presidency, what most troubled the Framers about the public's political ignorance was that groups of opportunists could take advantage of it, getting the people to elect a factional candidate posing as one concerned with the general welfare. Distrust of popular election arose less from the fear that presidents would capitalize on public ignorance, or that they would be captives of public opinion than, that manipulation of the elections by factions might distort the presidential selection process itself.

Thus, Gerry declared popular election a “radically vicious” plan because “the ignorance of the people would put it in the power of some one set of men dispersed through the Union and acting in concert to delude them into any appointment” (Madison [1787] 1987, vol. 2, 433). Charles Pinckney, a delegate from South Carolina, feared that “a group of active and designing men” from “the most populous States, by combining in favor of the same individual,” would exercise undue influence in a popular election (*ibid.*, vol. 1, 366–67). Gouverneur Morris contended that the rich would take advantage of people who had no property by buying their votes from them (*ibid.*, 288).

Popular election of the president faced several other problems at the Convention. It disadvantaged the smaller states; it did not allow slaves to contribute to the electoral strength of Southern states; and it did not guarantee that one candidate would gain a majority, given the parochial nature of voters (Madison [1787] 1987, vol. 1, 388; vol. 2, 430). These issues bore even less directly on the relationship between the public and presidential governing practices than did the Framers’ worries that public ignorance would enable elite groups to control presidential elections.

Some alternative to popular election was probably guaranteed, but the final version of the Electoral College (it was proposed in at least five different forms) was particularly suited to sidestepping cleavages based on state size and slavery. The argument that the Electoral College was a way to refine public opinion through deliberation, or to distance the president from the public, was never made at the Constitutional Convention (Ellis 1999; Nichols 1998).

If the Framers had been primarily concerned with setting up institutional boundaries between the president and the public, having the president elected by the national legislature would have likely been the best method. But congressional selection failed to provide the president an independent base of authority, which proved a decisive stumbling block. The Electoral College addressed this problem, without committing the Framers to a particular relationship between the president and the people. Indeed, the decision to allow state legislatures to direct the manner in which electors are appointed provided scant protection against a populist presidency, and in setting the rules for choosing electors for the first presidential election (1788), the state legislatures displayed a slight tendency toward popular selection. Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts opted for variants of the direct popular election of electors, while Connecticut, Georgia, New Jersey,

and South Carolina used legislative appointment of electors. By 1832, direct popular election of electors became the preferred method, with only South Carolina retaining the legislative appointment of electors (Rusk 2001, 131).

The Framers' decision to leave the selection of presidential electors to the states by no means suggests that they intended the selection system to foster presidents who led, or were led by, the public. The concept of a plebiscitary presidency, or, more generally, of a president heavily dependent on public opinion, would have run directly counter to their fears of public ignorance. Even the two main supporters of a popularly elected presidency, Gouverneur Morris and James Wilson, did not suggest that the president should reflect, let alone shape, public opinion. Morris described the presidency in these terms at the Constitutional Convention:

The executive Magistrate should be the guardian of the people, even of the lower classes, agst. Legislative tyranny, against the Great & the Wealthy who in the course of things will necessarily compose—the Legislative body. The Executive ought to be so constituted as the great protector of the Mass of the people. (Madison [1787] 1987, vol. 1, 383)

The words *guardian* and *protector* suggest not popular or plebiscitary democracy, but a trustee-like version of leadership, where the president exercises his own independent judgment about the public good. Morris seems to have thought that the president should serve much the same role as a monarch: a virtual representative of the public's interests, rather than a direct representative of their opinions. The president would balance the interests of the "great and wealthy" and the "Mass of the people." Similarly, James Wilson, who thought that the mode of election would induce the president to style himself as "MAN OF THE PEOPLE," did not mean "leader or servant of public opinion." Instead, Wilson's presidents would be similar to Morris's: they would supervise the people's governance with "paternal care and affection" (Ellis 1999, 149).

Going Out

Even though they feared an ignorant public, then, the Framers did not provide clear guidelines about how to navigate between popular

legitimacy and leadership—nor, indeed, about how presidents should affect, or be affected by, public opinion at all. These issues were left to Washington and his successors to deal with. The presidency and its relationship with the public would be a work in progress, defined by practice more than by doctrine emanating from the Constitutional Convention. And, indeed, a quasi-monarchical model of the presidency soon emerged—and, almost as quickly, began to disintegrate.

Faced early on with the need to make many decisions about the proper protocol for the nation's first chief executive, Washington chose restrained and patrician practices across many facets of the presidency, including his relationship with the public. Ralph Ketcham (1984, 4) shows that in these respects, Washington based his presidency on Bolingbroke's model of the patriot king.

According to Bolingbroke, the patriot king derived his authority from his own character and virtue, and hence did not need to be overly receptive to, or formative of, public opinion. He was a popular leader only in a very limited sense. He enjoyed the respect and good will of the people at large, but did not actively try to gain popular support for his policies, nor to justify his decisions by the public's approval of them. These practices had their roots in the English monarchy—and were often criticized on just those grounds.

The dilemma for early Chief Executives was to figure out a way to reinterpret these "monarchical" actions as democratic ones rooted in the authority of the people. And they did find ways to do so, departing repeatedly from the strictures of patriot kingship and edging towards a more aggressive political and popular role. Through these cracks in patrician leadership, one sees hints of the Jacksonian model of the presidency, in which the president claims to be the best spokesperson for the national will—an instrument of public opinion.

Although Washington came close to enacting the model of the patriot king, he was aware that establishing a strong presidency required gestures to underscore the president's ties to the people, even as he tried to maintain the respect and awe normally reserved for a distanced king (Washington [1789] 1939, vol. 30, 319–21). In a letter to John Adams, he inquired:

1st Whether a line of conduct, equally distant from an association with all kinds of company on the one hand and from a total seclusion from

Society on the other ought to be adopted by him [the President]? And, in that case, how is it to be done? (Washington [1789] 1993, vol. 2, 245)

Washington's presidency was marked by attempts to find the right balance between seclusion and accessibility. For example, Washington held levees in which those who were "respectably dressed" could see him (Washington [1789] 1993, vol. 2, 247-48; see MacDonald 1994, 214); but these gatherings were formal and stiff affairs, lasting just a single hour each Tuesday. One contemporary observer described how Washington stood at the fireplace and greeted each visitor with a bow. After he talked very briefly to all of the visitors, Washington resumed his place in front of the fireplace and each citizen proceeded to bow to the president as he or she left the room (Elkins and McKittrick 1993, 49-50). By holding levees, Washington acknowledged that it was important to be accessible to the public. At the same time, the regal choreography maintained distance between the president and the people. Indeed, the levees were frequently criticized in the Republican press for being suggestive of monarchy (Ellis 2006, 14-15).

Washington also sought to maintain this balance on his two major tours of the country, one through New England in 1789, and the other through the South in 1791. Unsure about the propriety of such tours, Washington first consulted with James Madison, Henry Knox, Alexander Hamilton, and Chief Justice John Jay. All four advisers gave their approval, believing that the tour would create goodwill toward the newly formed national government, as well as permitting Washington to *gauge* public opinion (Washington [1789-1790] 1993, 163n3). Like the levees, however, these events were scripted and formal in nature. Washington's remarks were ceremonial in substance and avoided any detailed discussion of public policy. Along the tour, Washington talked with elite community leaders about policies such as the excise tax on liquor, but these discussions were out of the earshot of the general public.

The criticism most often lodged against these highly choreographed ceremonies, too, was that they were more fitting for a king than for a democratically elected president. Yet they laid important groundwork for Jacksonian practices, and helped citizens who often identified themselves with their states or localities to think of themselves as members of a unified American people (Burns and Dunn 2004, 58).

Going Public

Washington's successors generally did not follow his example in going on tour. Thomas Jefferson ([1743–1823] 1853, vol. 5, 101–2) based his decision not to do so on his workload, as well as on his reluctance to appear to be seeking public adulation. The next president to take an official tour was James Monroe in 1817, and he transformed the quasi-monarchical practice.

For sixteen weeks, Monroe traveled up and down the Northeast coast and then out West, trying to build public support for his plan to fortify the military after its devastating defeat in the War of 1812. In his replies to the welcoming addresses of mayors, business and governing elites, and citizens, Monroe combined his role as commander-in-chief with that of a popular leader. In New York City, for example, Monroe declared that “it is in the spirit of the laws which I am called to execute, it is in the spirit of the people whom I represent, to provide amply for the security of every port.” He pledged to be the people’s “faithful organ” (Waldo 1820, 38), but in reality, he was trying to shape public opinion, not respond to it. Appropriately, then, Andrew Jackson was the next president to embark on a tour.

While going out on tour is a form of popular leadership that closely parallels Tulis’s rhetorical president, who routinely “goes public,” the early presidents also made extensive use of written communications to test the boundaries of patrician norms. In his Farewell Address, Washington went over the heads of Congress to appeal directly to the people. Washington delivered his message to David Claypoole’s *American Daily Advertiser*—addressed to the American people, not Congress—on September 19, 1796, and it was reprinted in newspapers across the country by the first week in October.

Clearly the timing of the message, just before the election of 1796, was political. Washington’s tardiness in announcing whether he was going to run again had left the Republicans in disarray, since nobody wanted to mount a challenge to the revered president. His Address took advantage of the situation by bestowing his favor on the Federalist candidate, John Adams. The Address has therefore been called an early, partisan “campaign document” (Elkins and McKittrick, 1993, 94), although in the body of the message, Washington used a stance of nonpartisanship to achieve partisan ends—lashing out at the partisanship of Republican politicians who opposed the Jay Treaty, which his administration had negotiated with Britain.

The paradoxes did not end there. Washington warned his fellow Americans about a “small but artful and enterprising minority of the community” who sought to replace the “delegated will of the nation” with the “will of party.” The ultimate authority being invoked against the Republicans, then, was the very majority whose ignorance had been feared by so many of the Framers. The threat to the public is indeed, Washington maintains, its ignorance, which is being manipulated by a minority of “designing men” who threaten to stir “geographical discriminations” by misrepresenting “the aims and opinions of other districts.” Parties are especially dangerous, Washington ([1796] 1907, vol. 1, 214) says, because they open the door for foreign powers to “tamper with domestic faction, to practice the art of seduction, to mislead public opinion, [and] to influence or awe the public opinion.” Yet it is public opinion to which he appeals.

Washington’s Farewell Address embodied the tensions confronting patrician leadership in a democracy. Even Washington, who was so steeped in ideas of patrician statesmanship, ended up engaging in popular politics. Although he stopped short of articulating a role for the president as a popular tribune, Washington established a direct line of communication between the president and the public, casting his opponents as anti-democratic. (In a final irony, they portrayed themselves as the party of the people.) Into the breach between Washington’s abstract allegiance to nonpartisan patrician leadership and his practice, several of his successors would step.

Thus, for example, two years into his term, Washington’s immediate successor, John Adams, encouraged popular fury against France in response to what became known as the “XYZ affair.” Adams’s actions make it difficult to maintain that presidents rigidly shunned the “popular arts” during the patrician period.

The French prime minister had sent three agents of the French government (called X, Y, and Z) to ask U.S. representatives in Paris how much the United States was willing to pay, in bribes to French officials and loans to the French government, in order to secure a treaty. When the affair was exposed, the American public erupted in a groundswell of opposition against France. Petitions and memorials attacking France and supporting the government flooded the president’s desk in the summer of 1798. Expanding upon Washington’s example, Adams spent hours each day crafting responses to these petitions, which were then reprinted in newspapers (Kohn 1975, 211). In 1798 alone, Adams composed over 48 separate replies directed to the Inhabitants of the County of Lancaster,

Pennsylvania; the Young Men of Boston, Massachusetts; the Soldier Citizens of New Jersey; and myriad other groups (Adams [1798] 1854, vol. 9, xi–xiv; see Hoffman 1997, 62). While Adams struck a cordial tone, these addresses made explicit policy and partisan claims. For example, Adams ([1798] 1854, vol. 9, 183) thanked the citizens of Philadelphia for their “approbation of . . . the particular measures of the government,” as well as for their “generous feelings of resentment at the wrongs and offences committed against it, and the menaces of others still more intolerable.” The partisanship did not go unnoticed by Adams’s opponents. Jefferson ([1798] 1995, vol. 2, 1044) reported his displeasure with the president’s public lobbying in a private letter to Madison. While “indiscreet declarations and expressions of passion may be pardoned to a multitude acting from the impulse of the moment,” he wrote, “we cannot expect a foreign nation to shew that apathy to the answers of the President, which are more Thrasonic than the addresses” of “the public at large.”

Jefferson’s criticism of Adams notwithstanding, his own presidential practices further tested the boundaries of patrician leadership. He relished his role as leader of the people, and thought that it was essential to rally popular confidence in him. A year after the end of his presidency, Jefferson (quoted in Ketcham 1984, 105–106) wrote:

In a government like ours, it is the duty of the Chief Magistrate, in order to enable himself to do all the good which his station requires, to unite in himself the confidence of the whole people. This alone, in any case where the energy of the nation is required, can produce a union of the powers of the whole, and point them in a single direction, as if all constituted but one body and mind.

Jefferson’s image as leader of the people was doubtless helped by his authorship of the Declaration of Independence—and by the propaganda of the popular press. In the Declaration, Jefferson had stated that all “just powers” exercised by a government are derived from and founded upon the consent of the people, a theme that recurs throughout his writings. Republican newspapers picked up on this leitmotif, heralding Jefferson as the “the Mammoth of Democracy.” In the Federalist newspapers, however, Jefferson’s attachment to democracy was depicted as a central flaw in his theory of government, one that would bring the people under the tyranny of a demagogue (Peterson 1970, 636–38). The Federalists’ attacks on Jefferson’s character and democratic commitments, however,

only enhanced the public's perception of Jefferson as a popular leader (Malone 1948, vol. 4, 24).

As president, Jefferson repeatedly displayed the difficulty of containing presidential popular leadership. Jefferson routinely planted stories in the *Intelligencer* in an effort to persuade the public and members of Congress to support his policies (Laracey 2002, 58–64). While he concealed his identity in those instances, he more publicly pushed forward the idea of presidential popular leadership in his inaugural addresses, as well as in his public letter to the New Haven merchants and his justification of the Louisiana Purchase.

In his first inaugural, Jefferson called the 1800 election a “contest of opinion” that had been “decided by the voice of the nation.” This time, more had been at stake than a choice of character; the election presented a clash between two rival policy agendas. Jefferson included a summary of the winning Republican program that had, he claimed, been given a mandate through his victory: no entangling alliances, states’ rights, economy in public spending, the dissolution of the national debt, encouragement of agriculture, and the establishment of a free press (meaning an end to the Sedition Laws). Four months later, in July 1801, Jefferson returned to the theme of his mandate in order to respond to the New Haven Merchants, who criticized the removal of one of Adams’s Midnight Appointees. Claiming that in the 1800 election, “the public sentiment . . . declared itself, and burst open the doors of honor and confidence to those whose opinions they more approved,” Jefferson ([1801] 1943, 517) argued that “the will of the nation, manifested by their various elections, calls for an administration of government according with the opinions of those elected.”

Jefferson staked out new ground for presidential authority in justifying the Louisiana Purchase. The constitutionality of acquiring such a large tract of land by treaty, and of accepting the inhabitants of these territories as American citizens, was dubious. Jefferson ultimately pushed these constitutional concerns aside, reasoning, in accordance with Locke’s treatise on prerogative power, that leaders may act in furtherance of the public good without the prescription of the law. In a letter to Senator John Breckenridge, Jefferson emphasized that while he may have stepped “beyond the Constitution,” his act was justified in that he had acted to “advance the good of the country.” It was now incumbent upon members of the Senate, such as Breckenridge, “to throw themselves on their country” and ratify the treaty with France. In approving the treaty, they would not be

“disavowed by the nation.” Jefferson argued that legislators should not act on the basis of the “metaphysical subtleties” of the Constitution, but rather on the president’s own reading of the popular will (as cited in Johnstone 1978, 69–75). He explained in another letter (Jefferson ([1803] 1830, vol. 4, 3) that he would rather “ask an enlargement of power from the nation, where it is found necessary, than to assume it by a construction.” Acting on behalf of his vision of the public good was insufficient to make the Louisiana Purchase legitimate. Jefferson believed that he needed the public’s support to authorize this expansive use of presidential power.

Even while he staked out new sources of presidential authority, Jefferson attempted to limit the radical implications of these claims by placing them within a broader context of deference to Congress. Thus, in his second inaugural address, Jefferson ([1805] 1907, 363–64) attributed the measures of his first term to the “zeal and wisdom” of the legislature, and humbly refused to “arrogate” any credit to himself (quoted in Cunningham 1978, 6). Directly endorsing strong presidential power would have placed Jefferson in conflict with the anti-executive bias of his own party. The Democratic-Republicans had attacked the “monarchical” tendencies of the Federalist party during Adams’s administration. Thus, Jefferson was constrained not only by adherence to dwindling patrician norms, but by the Republicans’ commitment to the legislature as the seat of popular authority. Jefferson summarized the dilemma he faced when he wrote, in 1806, that his

situation is difficult; and whatever we do is liable to the criticisms of those who represent it awry. If we recommend measures in a public message, it may be said that members are not sent here to obey the mandates of the President, or to register the edicts of a sovereign. If we express opinions in conversation, we have then our . . . back-door counsellors. If we say nothing, “we have no opinions, no plans, no cabinet.” (Quoted in Cunningham 1978, 193)

Given the choice between these three methods, Jefferson felt most at ease with the hidden-hand maneuvers of “back-door” persuasion. He confidentially drafted bills and had members of Congress introduce them as their own; he appointed floor leaders to be his personal lieutenants in Congress; he directed his cabinet members to act as political liaisons with Congress; and he subtly lobbied members of both parties at White House dinners (Young 1966, 162–63). Publicly, Jefferson may have asserted a principle of presidential deference to the legislature; privately, he was, in

the words of Federalist Senator James Hillhouse, the “prime Mover and Minister” of Congress (quoted in Cunningham, 1978, 193).

The Framers’ Fluid Practical Legacy

With the presidency of Andrew Jackson, the constraints posed by norms of patriot leadership lost much of their remaining force. Jackson injected into the new Democratic party’s founding principles a vision of presidential leadership directly contrary to the proscription of popular leadership that Tulis finds in the Framers’ constitution. For Jackson, the president was the direct and, therefore, the best representative of the people. Whereas Jefferson had submerged his claim to popular authority within a broader message about deference to Congress, Jackson staked out a more unencumbered base of popular presidential power, one that challenged the representative nature of Congress.

The clearest statement of the new creed came in Jackson’s Removal of Deposits message, during the so-called “Bank War.” In this message, Jackson ([1833] 1907, vol. 3, 1226) declared that his re-election was “a decision of the people against the Bank,” and that by removing deposits from the Bank, he was simply “carrying into effect their decision so far as it depends upon him.” Yet this popular-policy mandate directly challenged the authority of Congress, which had passed a bill (vetoed by Jackson before the election) rechartering the National Bank of the United States.

Even as Jacksonian Democracy laid out an aggressive vision of presidential popular leadership, the Whigs were refining the view that the Constitution forbids such practices. Henry Clay (quoted in Remini 1971, vol. 1, 516), majority leader of the Senate and Jackson’s opponent in the 1832 election, responded with grave concern to Jackson’s argument:

Sir, I am surprised and alarmed at the new source of executive power which is found in the result of a presidential election. I had supposed that the Constitution and the laws were the sole source of executive authority . . . that the issue of a presidential election was merely to place the Chief Magistrate in the post assigned to him. But it seems that if, prior to an election certain opinions, no matter how ambiguously put forth by a candidate, are known to the people, those loose opinions, in virtue of the election, incorporate themselves with the Constitution, and afterwards are to be regarded and expounded as parts of the instrument.

The constitutional ambiguity of the president's relationship to the public created the space for these dueling theories of appropriate practice. While Washington and the first few presidents hewed closer to Clay's constitutional theory, their own practice veered into claims of popular authority. With Jackson's arrival on the scene, two sharply polarized visions of the president's relationship with the public reached full flower.

Over time, the Whig doctrine of restrained popular leadership have largely faded—but not entirely. The norms of patriot leadership that Tulis identifies with the first presidential constitution still influence our expectations of presidential leadership, even while being overlaid with the expectation that the president will both heed and rally public opinion. But instead of attributing this uneasy combination to the theory of Woodrow Wilson or the practice of Theodore Roosevelt, it is best understood as emanating from the earliest presidents' efforts to come to terms with an inherently ambiguous role. The Framers did not seek to encourage popular leadership, but by creating a single officer as the head of a representative government, and by allowing for a popular role in that officer's selection, they created an opportunity for presidents to exert popular leadership in battles over public policy. These opportunities, evidently, were irresistible.

NOTES

1. Ketcham (1991, 22) contends that Jefferson viewed “wide public support as an informal substitute” for a more formal constitutional amendment.

REFERENCES

- Adams, John. 1854. *The Works of John Adams*. Ed. Charles Francis Adams. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Ceaser, James W., G. E. Thurow, J. K. Tulis, and J. M. Bessette, 1982. “The Rise of the Rhetorical Presidency.” In *Rethinking the Presidency*. Ed. Thomas E. Cronin. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Cunningham, Noble. 1978. *The Process of Government under Jefferson*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Elkins, Stanley, and Eric McKittrick. 1993. *The Age of Federalism*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, Richard J. 1999. *Founding the American Presidency*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Ellis, Richard J. 2006. “‘Your Truly American Tour’: James Monroe and the Emergence of a Popular (and Rhetorical) Presidency.” Manuscript.

- Hoffman, Karen. 1997. "The Institutional Origins of the Popular Presidency." Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago.
- Jackson, Andrew. 1907. "Removal of Deposits Message." September 18, 1833. In *Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789–1897*. Ed. J. D. Richardson. Washington, D.C.: G.P.O.
- Jefferson, Thomas. 1830. *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, 2nd ed. Ed. Thomas Jefferson Randolph. Boston: Gray and Bowen.
- Jefferson, Thomas. 1853. *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson, 1743–1826*. Ed. H. A. Washington. Washington, D.C.: Taylor and Maury.
- Jefferson, Thomas. 1897. "Second Inaugural Address." March 4, 1805. In *Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789–1897*. Ed. J. D. Richardson. Washington, D.C.: G.P.O.
- Jefferson, Thomas. 1943. "Letter to Elias Shipman and Others, a Committee of the Merchants of New Haven, July 12, 1801." In *The Complete Jefferson*. Ed. Saul K. Padover. New York: Duell, Sloan, Pearce.
- Jefferson, Thomas. 1995. *The Republic of Letters: The Correspondence between Thomas Jefferson and James Madison 1776–1826*. Ed. James Morton Smith. New York: W. W. Norton.
- Johnstone, Robert M., Jr. 1978. *Jefferson and the Presidency: Leadership in the Young Republic*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Ketcham, Ralph. 1984. *Presidents above Party: The First American Presidency, 1789–1829*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Ketcham, Ralph. 1991. "The Jefferson Presidency and Constitutional Beginnings." In *The Constitution and the American Presidency*. Ed. Martin Fausold and Alan Shank. Albany: SUNY Press.
- Kohn, Richard H. *Eagle and Sword: The Federalists and the Creation of the Military Establishment in America, 1783–1802*. New York: The Free Press.
- Laracey, Melvin. 2002. *Presidents and the People: The Partisan Story of Going Public*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press.
- Malone, Dumas. 1948. *Jefferson and His Time*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Nichols, David K. 1998. "A Marriage Made in Philadelphia: The Constitution and the Rhetorical Presidency." In *Speaking to the People: The Rhetorical Presidency in Historical Perspective*. Ed. Richard J. Ellis. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.
- Orren, Karen, and Stephen Skowronek. 2004. *The Search for American Political Development*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Peterson, Merrill D. 1970. *Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation: A Biography*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Remini, Robert. 1971. "Election of 1832." In *History of American Presidential Elections 1789–1968*. Ed. Arthur M. Schlesinger. New York: Chelsea House.
- Rusk, Jerrold G. 2001. *A Statistical History of the American Electorate*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
- Tulis, Jeffrey K. 1987. *The Rhetorical Presidency*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Tulis, Jeffrey K. 1996. "Revising the Rhetorical Presidency." In *Beyond the Rhetorical Presidency*. Ed. Martin J. Medhurst. College Station: Texas A&M University Press.

- Waldo, Samuel Putnam. 1820. *The Tour of James Monroe, President of the United States, through the Northern and Eastern States in 1817; His Tour in the Year 1818 Together with a Sketch of His Life*, 2nd ed. Hartford, Conn.: Silas.
- Washington, George Andrus. 1933–1941. *The Writings of George Washington, 1745–1799*. Ed. John C. Fitzpatrick. Washington: G.P.O.
- Washington, George. 1993. *The Papers of George Washington 1788–1793*. Ed. W. W. Abbot and Dorothy Twohig. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia.
- Washington, George. 1907. “Farewell Address.” September 17, 1796. In *Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789–1897*. Ed. J. D. Richardson. Washington, D.C.: G.P.O.