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The Factors that Contribute to the Rise of Conservative Political Movements Throughout American History

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The Factors that Contribute to the Rise of Conservative Political Movements Throughout American History

By

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Abstract


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There have been numerous political movements based on conservative ideology throughout the course of American history. However, the question still remains as to why these conservative movements occur and what plays a role their uprising. My thesis hypothesized that there are three factors that contribute to the surfacing of conservative political movement in American history- a deviation from republican principles such as constitutionalism and virtue, a perceived threat to individual liberties by infringement through policies involving taxation and economic regulation and the aggrandizement of power by the federal government beyond inherent constitutional limits. These three factors were examined through the analysis of three case studies where which a CPM was understood to have developed- the Jefferson Presidency in the early 1800’s, the New Deal Era during Franklin D. Roosevelt’s presidency in the 1930’s and the Tea party movement in contemporary politics. Based on the examination of these case studies, observed through the lens of the three theorized factors, I have found a strain of continuity. The implications of this research provide a characterization of CPMs in the United States and allow for the future prediction of the development of a CPM when these three factors are present American politics.
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Chapter 1: The Theoretical Foundations of American Politics

When veteran trader and financial analyst, Rick Santelli, stepped onto the floor of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange on the morning of February 19, 2009 and prepared his pre-market opening update for the viewers of CNBC’s Squawk Box, he never anticipated that his ensuing comments would lead to the launch of a grassroots movement that has since played a significant role in the shaping of American politics. Often referred to as the 21st century’s “shot heard ‘round the world,” Santelli fiercely attacked President Obama’s mortgage bailout plan on-air and called for viewers to launch a contemporary tea party offensive in response (Pappas 2010). Enraged with Obama’s proposal to assist homeowners facing foreclosure by refinancing their mortgages, Santelli deemed the administration’s recent actions as rewarding “bad behavior” and asked other members on the trading floor “If we really wanted to subsidize the losers’ mortgages [and]... how many of you people want to pay for your neighbor’s mortgage that has an extra bathroom and can't pay their bills” (Squawk Box 2009). He referenced the Founding Fathers of the United States, saying that they would be rolling over in the graves at the expansion of the federal government. Santelli’s unintended, yet passionate outburst, complete with dramatic gesticulations and intonation, against President Obama’s housing market bailout instigated a fire within the hearts and minds of countless Americans.

Santelli’s rant provoked sizable reaction from the American public and resonated particularly within the conservative community. Kathryn Jean Lopez (in Etheridge 2009) of the National Review Online described the American public as...
“fed up” with the way the government was operating and Santelli’s diatribe gave way to the notion that “there was an alternative worth fighting for.” Another contributor to the NRO, Larry Kudlow (Ibid) remarked, “Team Obama… is enlarging moral hazard. It is expanding its welfarist approach to economic policy. And with a huge expansion of government-owned zombie lenders Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, Team Obama is taking a giant step toward nationalizing the mortgage market.” The uprisings from other key figures of a conservative mentality were alike in their anger towards the Obama administration for aggrandizing the powers of the central government beyond its acceptable scope and justified this outcry through a reliance on the principles in which the United States was founded upon, namely republicanism and federalism. People disapproved of the expansionist approach towards the executive powers the White House was taking and were unhappy with the resulting operation of US government. Santelli channeled the existing dissatisfaction of the American people, vocalized it on a national news syndication and, as a result, acted as the catalyst figure for the movement. While there was opposition from liberals who questioned the soundness of Santelli’s argument and his underlying motivations for contempt, the extraordinary organization of a high degree of conservatives across the nation into a massive grassroots movement was remarkable.

The occurrence of this isolated event in America’s recent past can be accredited with the revival of a conservative spirit inculcated within a considerable portion of the American public. Santelli spoke to the particular infringement of individual liberties by expansionist policies promoted by the national government.
His outcry, in addition to growing opposition from outraged conservatives, instigated the creation of numerous factions across the country that were apart of an overarching movement called the Tea Party movement. The obvious connotation of the contemporary Tea Party to the revolutionary actions of the colonists during the 1770’s represents the rationale for the Tea Party and other conservative political movements throughout American history.

This reaction from a conservative base has arisen numerous times throughout the course of American history starting with revolutionary actions of the Boston Tea Party in 1773. While conservative movements have been recognized as an integral part of US political history, the reasons behind their creation have not yet been thoroughly explored. What dynamics must be present in order for a conservative response to occur? I hypothesize that there are three factors that must be at play in order for the uprising of a conservative sentiment to come about in the United States. These factors are a deviation from republican tradition (mainly by the rejection of virtue), the perceived threat to individual liberty, the aggrandizement of power by the federal government. In order to analyze the presence of these factors in American history, I will analyze three different periods when conservative political movements (CPM) arose and determine whether these factors were present in the period before the CPMs emergence. The Jeffersonian presidency, the New Deal era and the modern Tea Party movement will be the focus of the case studies in this paper. The work done in this thesis will prove to be important because conservative movements have had an inexorable and undeniable presence in the American political system.
Classical Republicanism

Political theorists have been in an open dialogue since ancient Greece regarding the principles for organizing a political regime. What method of government provides a superior institutional framework to ensure the success of a political unit? How do we accurately measure the level of success of a particular regime and logically compare its perceived success rates to other distinct forms of government? Two notions of government, one a philosophy and the other a form, that have emerged from this discussion have been republicanism and federalism. Republicanism, in the most basic sense, is an ideology of government where leaders are elected for an established period of time by a majority of citizens and create laws that serve to benefit the population under rule. Though there has been an identifiable evolution of republicanism from its classical conception into modernity, this ideology has continuously been identified with civic virtue, political participation by the governed body and small political communities (Hess 2000, 154). Federalism refers to “a means of governing a polity that grants partial autonomy to geographically defined subdivisions of the polity” (Feeley and Rubin 2008, 12). Federalism maintains the necessity of having both small, autonomous states as well as a single central government. From even the basic definitions of these two forms of government, an inextricable link between republicanism and federalism can be observed. The emphasis of maintaining the autonomy of local political communities in order to provide the best and most virtuous governance to a defined group of citizens demonstrates an intersection between republican thought and federalism. By understanding the roots of classical federalism and then
examining the evolution of republican thought into contemporary society, one can conceive republicanism’s connection to federalism as well as their connections to the foundation of the United States.

**The Origins of Classical Republicanism**

The significance of political philosophy that academics of ancient Greece and Rome have imparted on the modern world has been invaluable. The discourse of these eminent ancient philosophers, such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, on the study of politics and its connection to society has resulted in various doctrines of political thought. A byproduct of classical political philosophy was the conception of classical republicanism, typically attributed to Machiavelli during the Florentine Renaissance (Guarini 1990, 18). Historian J.G.A. Pocock (1971, 85) writes that classical republicanism “articulated the positive conception of liberty... a style of thought... in which... the development of the individual towards self-fulfillment is possible only when he... acts as a citizen... in conscious and autonomous decision-making political community.” Rooted in the fundamental goals of civic virtue and political participation, one aspect classical republicanism is generally identified with is the promotion of small, self-governing communities. It was the Greek view that a worthwhile life, often referred to as Aristotle’s “good life,” was only achievable through the creation of very small political groups (Aristotle 350 BCb; Diamond 1973). Should a unit of government be large, a loss of value and good governance would occur undermining the objectives of virtue. Through the literature of Plato, Aristotle and Cicero, among other ancient philosophers, the foundation of classical republicanism based on virtue through these small political entities was established.
The Greek city-state served as the basic unit of government during ancient times. James Madison (1787) notes in *Federalist 10* that the ancient Hellenic republic, or city-states, represented “...a society consisting of a small number of citizens, who assemble and administer the government in person.” This idea of politically engaged citizens operating in a community that was relatively small resulting in the good life served as the underpinnings to the classical republicanism of ancient philosophers. Plato (367 BC) writes in his piece *Statesman* that a statesman is necessary because they are the only ones capable of distributing “to those in the city that which with the mind and art is most just, and can keep them safe and make them better.” According to Plato, the role of the statesman is to act in the best interest of the city by being moral and ensuring that their every action addresses the needs of the people and guides them. As lecturer Kyle Scott (2011, 51) observes, Plato’s model leader would be an individual with a just soul who was capable of functioning in close contact with law receivers in order to determine what is best for them. However, a statesman is unlikely to rule, according to Plato, therefore written laws provide the second best regime. Those who create the laws must have an intimate knowledge of the needs of the people for the purpose of making proper, just laws for the law receivers. Both circumstances require the presence of a small-scale society so that a just ruler or lawmaker would be in constant awareness of the condition of the law receiver. Without these conditions, despotic rule will reign.

Aristotle takes Plato’s notion of good governance through small political communities and expands upon its basic theory. Plato’s prodigy introduces to
classical republicanism, the idea of the *polis*, which was defined as “a moral community of men permanently united as a people by a common way of life” (Rahe 1994, 17). In his work *Politics*, Aristotle (350 BCb, 1293a35) describes how “man is a political animal” and, as a result, engages in associations with others in pursuit of the good life.” While human nature leads man to partake in the political community for the utilitarian function of self-preservation, it also involves individuals in the *polis*, which exists to promote virtuous living and offers the opportunity to live the good life. Yet Aristotle does not believe in a direct correlation between population and virtue. Rather, he points out in *Politics* that history demonstrates how it is challenging for a populous city to possess good government (Ibid, 1326a25).

Aristotle’s (350 BCa, 1160a27-30) discussion of friendship in *Nicomachean Ethics* provides insight into the bonds of camaraderie that the *polis* strove to achieve and how political scale determined the level of this. Aristotle (Ibid) regards friendship and political life on the same level and individualizes each community by saying “...the kind of friendship prevalent in each will be determined by the kind of community it is.” Each political community shared a deep-seated like-mindedness as a result of a common *patrioi nomoi*—pertaining to ancestral traditions and laws (Rahe, 94). The sense of *patrioi nomoi* was unattainable by a group of individuals that failed to share this connection. Aristotle argued that the citizens of a city were required to know one another’s character because without this mutual understanding, “the distribution of offices and the giving of decisions will suffer” and this “...is what obviously happens where the population is too large” (Aristotle 350 BCb, 1326b7). The larger a population is, the harder it becomes to govern
virtuously because there is a lack of understanding throughout the political unit. As a result, political actors will be unable to fulfill their duties adequately and virtuous living will become unattainable. Therefore, it is crucial for friendships within political communities to be established for the purpose of good government and this familiarity was only achievable in a small-scale community. The moral core of Aristotle’s classical republicanism emphasizes the centrality of the connection between reason, liberty and virtue (Jonathan Scott 2002, 67). Aristotle’s support for the polis as a small-scale political entity comprised of political actors who share a common thread provided an integral element to the foundation of classical republicanism.

Many other ancient philosophers wrote about what is now referred to as classical republicanism and the benefits of citizens engaging small political communities in order to achieve the good life. A scholar of Rome, Cicero was also active in the dialogue concerning classical republicanism. The philosopher’s three volume work De Officiis, or On Duties, described his thoughts on the most virtuous way to live, act and fulfill moral obligations. Cicero (44 BC, 22) writes, “We do not live for ourselves alone; our country, our friends, have a share in us.” There is an inherent connection between man, his political association and his political associates disallowing him from pursuing solely individual objectives. According to Rahe (1994, 92), Cicero remarked how the men of the ancient city had “…a permanent, moral bond: they were brought into association (sociatus)… not only by a community of interest (utilitatis communione), but also by fundamental agreement regarding the character of justice (iuris consensus).” Cicero reiterates both Plato and
Aristotle’s key conclusions about the unions of men and their aims to be moral individuals. In addition, figures such as Polybius and Plutarch expanded upon the works of the Greek philosophers. This collection of classical literature on the topic of classical republicanism by ancient philosophers surfaced thousands of years later during the Renaissance and has since been evaluated, analyzed and further developed by contemporary political theorists.

**Evolution of Republicanism: From Classical to Modern**

The Renaissance in Europe, and particularly Italy, from the 14th century to the 17th century represented a period of cultural and intellectual rebirth. As was the case in classical antiquity, political theory was a significant theme explored by scholars during the Renaissance and thereafter. Intellectuals attempted to develop systems of government that would produce fulfillment and stability for a population but also constantly confront the insecurity and unstable nature of the real world (Pocock 1975, vii-xi). These individuals referred to the works of Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero among others in order to build off of these ancient philosophers’ work on the subject of political theory, and particularly classical republicanism. Although the application of republicanism evolved to fit the needs of contemporary society, the fundamental values of republicanism were maintained. The moral core of classical republicanism, which focused on the realization of virtue through the active participation in small political communities, stayed with future elaborations of republicanism demonstrating continuity. While the exterior of classical republicanism’s evolution into modernity has transformed into seemingly
contradictory manifestations, the underlying essence of republicanism has remained constant throughout time.

One political theorist who strove to interpret previous philosophers’ work on classical republicanism was Niccolo Machiavelli. Machiavelli’s *Discourses on the First Decade of Titus Livy*, written in the early 16th century, expresses the philosopher’s sympathies towards republicanism as the best regime based on his personal political beliefs. Through an analysis of the Roman republic, he deems a republic is the most ideal political order because “A people is more prudent, more stable and of better judgment than a prince” (Machiavelli 1883, 177-178). Here, Machiavelli emulates the work of classical philosophers by addressing the virtue of citizens. According to Machiavelli, in a fully constitutional regime, *vivere libero*, or freedom for the community, is the goal of the regime, which is attained by the active participation in politics by citizens (Nederman 2009, 254). The public is better able to perceive the common good and pass just laws accordingly in order to maintain liberty because they are concerned with the possibility of oppression by a higher authority. When they fear said oppression, the public is more likely to rise up in defense of their liberty. Machiavelli (1883, 254) speaks to the importance of the republic in his *Discourses* when he says:

> It is beyond question that it is only in republics that the common good is looked to properly... The opposite happens when there is a prince; for what he does in his own interests usually harms the city... as soon as tyranny replaces self-government [the city] ceases to make progress and to grow in power and wealth.
The control of one dominant figure is in irreconcilable opposition with vivere libero because of a prince’s private and personal interest instead of the public’s interest and the common good. Machiavelli speaks to the inherent freedom of self-governing republics in contrast to unavoidable slavery of the people under tyrants as well as the best princes. The republic of Rome thrived because of its value for a republican government in smaller units of community. Roman virtue was preserved in its ability to make law that benefited the common good. However, as the republic lost power to corrupt and tyrannical rulers, virtue decayed. Machiavelli’s desire to replace the monarchy of Florence with a new Roman republican order is perceived through this analysis (Shklar 2002, 266). As Quentin Skinner (2002, 141) summarizes Machiavelli’s republicanism “…in the form of two connected propositions: first, that no city can ever attain greatness unless it upholds a free way of life; secondly, that no city can ever uphold a free way of life unless it maintains a republican constitution.” Here, the connection between freedom and republican form of government are in a direct relationship. The traditional undertones of Machiavelli’s writing in his Discourses allude to the foundations of the classical republicanism of ancient philosophers.

During the latter half of the eighteenth century, French philosopher Charles-Louis de Secondat, baron de La Brède et de Montesquieu further developed the concept of republicanism ostensibly diverse from Machiavelli’s. Montesquieu (1721, 160) writes in Letter 81 of his piece Persian Letters about government, “the most perfect is that which attains its object with the least friction; so that the government which leads men by following their propensities and inclinations is the most
perfect.” This speaks to the idea that virtue of man will allow for the creation of just laws and, by default, the most perfect form of government. His commentary on political theory continues in his work entitled The Spirit of the Laws. Montesquieu diverges from Machiavelli’s wish for a new Roman republican order in favor of a more modern and expansive application of republicanism to the contemporary political world. He writes in The Spirit of Laws, Montesquieu (1748, 8) writes:

   Laws should be adapted to the people for whom they are framed... to the nature and principle of each government, ... they should have relation to the degree of liberty which the constitution will bear; to the religion of the inhabitants, to their inclinations, riches, numbers, commerce, manners, and customs.

   Here, Montesquieu reveals the importance of catering laws to the interests of the people who will be abiding by them. Law-abiding citizens living in stable, non-despotic regimes will have the opportunity to live good lives and experience liberty. In this case, a shift from classical republicanism’s virtue to an emphasis on liberty is demonstrated. Political liberty is defined by Montesquieu as a citizen’s “tranquility of mind arising from the opinion each person has of his safety. In order to have this liberty, it is requisite the government be so constituted as one man need not be afraid of another” (Ibid, Book XI). In order to secure this liberty, laws should not overstep their boundaries beyond concerns of public safety and security. This will allow for political liberty and a citizen’s sense of secure freedom to prosper.

   Montesquieu’s interpretation of the most ideal government required that the laws of a political unit were representations of the interests of the citizens who will
abide by them and that these laws ensured security without limiting political liberty. What was the proper size of a political community capable of accomplishing these requirements? In accordance with the doctrines of both the ancient philosophers and Machiavelli, Montesquieu, according to Martin Diamond, professed that smaller units allowed for patriotic virtue to be stimulated in the public (Diamond 1973, 134). This was, in essence, the principle of republicanism. However, a small republic has the potential to be destroyed by a foreign force and this potential eliminates the citizenry’s required sense of security. Large empires, on the other hand, were also dangerous because of their proclivity towards despotic authority and internal vice. The solution Montesquieu (1748) speaks of in Book IX: Of Laws in the Relation They Bear to a Defensive Force of The Spirit of Laws is that of a federal republic where a system of checks and balances is in place. The government would be divided into three distinct sections that maintained republican virtue and whose “plurality of modes”, in effect, removed the possibility of despotism because no one subdivision was more powerful than another and represented the interests of all citizens (Hess 2000, 31). In this system, smaller states, whom are still afforded the guarantees of autonomy, will join together for the common purpose of defense allowing for the advantages of both small and large political units to be realized. The separation of powers between executive, legislative and judicial branches of government, the respected autonomy of small political communities and the assurance of security demonstrated Montesquieu’s new approach to republicanism that would influence the Founding Fathers in America but the underlying influence of an emphasis on sovereignty held firm to classical republicanism.
Republicanism in the United States

The colonists’ declaration of independence from the control of the Great Britain in 1776 symbolized not only a break from the restrictions imposed by a nation an ocean away but also the opportunity for experimentation of governmental organization by way of republicanism. In Gordon S. Wood’s *The Creation of the American Republic 1776-1787*, Wood (1969, 131) discusses how republicanism for Americans “added a moral dimension, a utopian depth, to the political separation from England” beyond its straightforward implications of the “elimination of a king and the institution of an elective system.” The Founding Fathers, particularly James Madison, relied on their predecessors’ theoretical analyses of republicanism as a foundation for creating the American system of government. Britain’s egregious actions against the American colonies, including taxation without representation, indicated the mother country’s corruption. The *res publica*, or common good, would only be upheld by the proper representation of the people (Ibid). With American virtue in jeopardy, colonists were determined to become an independent, sovereign entity from the tyrannical clutches of British control and lead a successful campaign against Britain during the American Revolution (Hess 2000, 31).

After the revolution and a period of experimental government, the Founding Fathers drafted the Constitution in 1787. The creation of the Constitution was dictated by a desire to rectify grievances of the past, such as infringement on individual liberties and toleration of the British Parliament extending their powers beyond acceptable limits, in order to ensure republican virtue, a la the classic philosophers as well as Machiavelli and Montesquieu, in a newly formed America.
They were charged with promoting its ratification in each state. Working under the pseudonym “Publius,” James Madison, Alexander Hamilton and John Jay, wrote a total of 85 individual essays that collectively made up *The Federalist*. The proposed United States Constitution diverged seemingly from the fundamental requirements of the classical republican model, explicitly in its union of a large territory. It was up to the authors of *The Federalist* to elucidate to the American public how the large extent of territory and vast population of people were compatible and required by republicanism and its extension, virtue.

James Madison was the predominant voice that spoke to the congruency of the Constitution with republicanism. A core principle of republicanism was to maintain small political communities for the purpose of retaining virtue. To label America, which was comprised of many states and a massive territory, seemed counterintuitive to a key pillar of this ideology. James Madison strove to remedy this seeming paradox by exploring the ways in which the Founding Fathers utilized republicanism to form the Constitution, without breeching a fundamental characteristic of it. The first way dealt with the representation of citizens within bodies of government. The framers believed that the people have the right to be sovereign, however, they felt that in order to address sovereignty of a greater population on a larger scale they needed to operate under a system of representation (Ibid). The expansive size of American territory, as a result, worked to the goals of republicanism because through the election of officials, the regime would “be an entirely popular state based on the consent of the governed” (Shklar 2002, 275).
There would also be a sense of republican virtue that was inherently instilled in the government of the Constitution as imagined by Madison and discussed in *Federalist #10*. Madison resolved the ambiguity by speaking to the relative number of interests that would be represented in a larger body as opposed to a small one. Factions arising from the variance of conviction among units of citizens would be unable to break apart the republic because no particular group would be able to impose its will, sometimes despotic, over the rest of the population (Ibid). There would be a greater chance of gridlock among the competing factions, unless lawmakers could achieve consensus. Gridlock, he believed, in theory would operate to achieve virtuous legislation because controversial bills would not be able to pass in lawmaking bodies without the consent three different levels of government approval (House of Representatives, Senate and the president). Madison does address the importance of maintaining the small political communities characteristic of classical republicanism by pointing out a weakness if units are too large. He indicates that representatives will be “Too little acquainted with all their local circumstances and lesser interests” (Madison 1787, 56). The natural loyalties of the people would remain with the state because they were of a more known political community. The remedy to this was the division of political branches by federalism and the institution of checks and balances among these sections. The result was tri-fold: the interests of all citizens would be represented, the emergence of despotic rule was impossible and smaller constituencies would have their matters handled by more localized officials. The American interpretation of republicanism, endorsed by the essays of some of the Founding Fathers, allowed for the
modernization of the classical model that guaranteed both change and stability within the republic operated symbiotically.

French political scientist, Alexis de Tocqueville’s examination of the American political institution in his *Democracy in America* strengthened the interpretation of the United States’ dependence on republicanism. Tocqueville’s (1835, 397) piece presented a commentary on American political life built upon his observances during a trip to the New World. Based on the origins of American life, he writes:

Thus the nature of the country, the very manner in which the colonies had been founded, and the habits of the first immigrants all united to develop township and provincial liberties to an extraordinary degree. Hence in the United States the sum of all institutions is essentially republican.

De Tocqueville acknowledges the formation of the colonies as essentially small political communities characteristic of classical republicanism. In addition, he addresses the unification of the Union and the centralization of government powers, but describes why it is successful and fundamentally still republican. “In all the American republics the central government is only occupied with a small number of matters important enough to attract its attention. It does not undertake to regulate society's secondary concerns” (Ibid, 478). The main function of America’s central government, according to de Tocqueville, was to address specific primary matters of society. It would remove itself from the responsibility of encroaching on the secondary matters of society and allow more localized communities to handle those issues. Here, again, is the presence of the mutually beneficial relationship discussed in *The Federalist*. De Tocqueville’s commentary on American political life
demonstrates the perceptiveness of even a foreign to understand the underlying republican foundations of American government.

The evolution of classical republicanism into modernity can be easily seen through the progression of political theorists’ work over the ages. Beginning with ancient philosophers and transitioning throughout time and place until reaching American society, the modernization of classical republicanism in its application to contemporary political order in America is palpable. Initially promoting small political communities, such as Greek city-states, in order to experience the good life, republicanism has transformed in order to accommodate the conditions of more expansive territories. However, through the addition of concepts such as representation and plurality of modes, the essential underpinning of virtue has remained. In addition, the American application of federalism in its political organization has aided in the preservation of republican ideas. To better understand the continuity of republicanism in America, its connection to and intersection with federalism must be dissected.

**Intersection of Republicanism with Federalism**

As the progression from classical republicanism, defined by classical philosophers, to modern republicanism, based on the works of theorists like Machiavelli, Montesquieu and our Founding Fathers, is set forth, its connection to basic elements of federalism can be seen. Federalism is typically understood to be a coalition of states that is united under a central government. However, individual states still retain a degree of autonomy (Feeley and Rubin 2008). Political theorists have addressed the necessity of a small political community consisting of close,
personal relationships between citizens and decision-making bodies in order to achieve virtuous government. The Greek city-state represented a confined area converse to the expansive territory of the United States proposing a seeming contradiction between republicanism and its utility in America. Nevertheless, James Madison and the rest of the Founding Fathers sought to remedy this seeming paradox by proposing federalism as a solution to the ambiguity between a united nation of states and republicanism’s value of small political communities. *The Federalist* was a collection of essays compiled by the Founding Fathers’ in hopes of promoting the ratification of the proposed United States Constitution. Within these essays, the framers strove to convince readers that a conflict with republican principle didn’t exist but rather “the new form of federalism was simultaneously to be a good republican and that the new form of government at the centre was also republican through and through” (Forsyth 1993, 16). Based on the scholarship of the Founding Fathers of the United States Constitution, as well analyses from additional academics, the intersection of republican political thought and federalism within American political life can be distinguished.

The American republic was founded on the principle the people possess the only legitimate source of power and, as such, are the only group vested with the authority to institute government. The notion of government being by the people and for the people represents significant tenet of republicanism. Hamilton (1787, 123-132) writes in *Federalist #22* “The fabric of American empire ought to rest on the solid basis of the consent of the people. The streams of national power ought to flow immediately from that pure, original fountain of all legitimate authority.”
According to Hamilton, the people decide upon the scope of national power because they represent a real, reasonable source of power. The people instate government, so in return they have control over the vested autonomy of various divisions. Kyle Scott (2011, 51) works off of this concept by describing how, “...Federal regimes, by placing the law-making body closer to the people, can be more familiar with the condition of the society and the individuals within it, this it is in a better position to assess the needs and demands of the people for which it makes laws.” Both Madison and Kyle Scott address the republican idea that the people being governed account for the most important authority and that it is critical that their needs be met in order for a regime to achieve serving its people virtuously. But how, then, does federalism promote the best system of government according to republican values when its very core of its structure includes the consolidation of powers into a central government?

The presence of three safeguards- elections of representatives by citizens, separation of powers and checks and balances- attributed to federalism promote local political communities, protection of liberties, restriction of each branch of government and opportunity to operate virtuously. In Federalist #39, Madison (1787, 227-232) distinguishes a republic as a system of representation where, “a government which derives all its powers directly or indirectly from the great body of people, and is administered by persons holding their offices.” Madison professed in other papers, including Federalist #10, that representation allowed for those that were best qualified to serve the needs of their local communities were able to be voted into office by their peers making it superior to democracy and self-
government (Forsyth 1993). Gordon Wood (1969) also spoke to the benefits of elected representatives, demarcating it as the best way for people to have sufficient virtue and intelligence to choose individuals who would adequately represent them in government. Wood’s argument demonstrates how the federal concept of representation, even in a national government, will be able to speak for the small political communities they represent. As a result, the sovereignty of the people is preserved. As for the separation of powers, the division of government into three distinct branches- executive, legislative and judicial- adequately reconciles Montesquieu’s aversion to despotism, corruption and laws exceeding their just limits (Kyle Scott 2011). Each branch will be delegated a specific function in which they are required to operate within the bounds of. Coupled with the separation of powers are checks and balances on those branches to ensure that the perimeters of each are not crossed. According to Hess (2000, 31), checks and balances “would ensure that all interests were represented; it would also ensure that there was not one particular power or branch that could gain complete hegemony.” Both representation of the people resulting in virtue and the defense against despotism are essential to the checks and balances among the branches of government. The three protections against the acquisition of greater national power inherent in the federal system, allowed it to be congruent to the ideals of republicanism.

The intersection of federalism and republicanism in the case of American government is demonstrated through the writings of the Founding Fathers in *The Federalist* and the works of several other key scholars since then. The constant strand of government for and by the people within smaller political communities
has been infused in each manifestation of republicanism is complimentary to American federalism's emphasis of preserving to a degree individual state sovereignty. In addition, though federalism seems to be in conflict with republican thought due to the presence of centralized power, the inherent qualities of federalism including representation chosen by the people, the separation of powers and the inclusion of checks and balances promote virtuous government in line with republicanism. While republicanism and federalism in their respective applications to the American political system are not mirror images of one another, they do both find common ground in several key tenets of each. The profound impact that both republicanism and federalism had on the Founding Fathers’ conception of the United States is crystal clear after a thorough analysis of their work in The Federalist and scholarship of later academics.

**American Conservatism**

The definition of the word “conservatism” according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary is “a political philosophy based on tradition and social stability, stressing established institutions, and preferring gradual development to abrupt change” (Merriam-Webster). The question becomes, how does conservatism in the United States manifest itself and what exact traditions, customs and beliefs, including those that are political, economic and social, are American conservatives trying to preserve? The previous sections detailing scholarly work discussing the evolution of republicanism and its intersection with federalism offer insight into a correlation of these topics to American conservatism. American conservatism has tapped into the philosophies of republican thought and federalism with the intention of extracting
critical elements from both. These components include maintenance of republican tradition through acting virtuously and upholding the Constitution, protection of individual liberties by preserving constitutional rights and political checks and restrictions on power particularly concerning the federal government (Kirk 1982, xv). As an extension of these values, American conservatism is often associated with upholding the Constitution through strict construction of its wording, preservation of freedoms, promotion of free market principles, lower taxes and minimal federal intervention among other attributes. Through the selective integration of key precepts derived from these two philosophies, coupled with its application to US politics, conservatism has proven to be a dominant political force in America.

Conservatism does not provide a collective prescription for which to understand its application between societies because each possesses its own unique ethos. Inherent in this depiction of conservatism as lacking an overarching cross-cultural connection is the influence of republicanism and its emphasis on small political communities. The principles of conservatism will vary from country to country based on a contemporary understanding of Aristotle’s *patrioi nomoi*. Kieron O’Hara (2011, 92) develops this postulation by concluding that conservatives tend to want to preserve these individualizing characteristics depending on their location, placing it in contrast with many other ideologies’ advocates that tend to agree on comprehensive goals regardless of location. Contributing to the dialogue on conservatism, leading intellectual during the 1950’s, Russell Kirk (1982, xiv-xv) explains:
Conservatism offers no universal pattern of politics for adoption everywhere. On the contrary, conservatives reason that social institutions always must differ considerably from nation to nation, since any land’s politics must be the product of that country’ dominant religion, ancient customs, and historic experience.

This all is to say that conservatism generally differs across communities because each endeavors to preserve their own inherent customs and traditions. As a result, the United States has developed its own, specialized version of conservatism that speaks to this idea of preserving custom, based on republican principles, and also strives to retain a degree of state sovereignty to preserve individual state ethos’.

There are several key characteristics agreed upon by distinguished conservative thinkers that demonstrate an implicit continuity to conservatism within the American political system. The first characteristic involves maintaining republican tradition by way of upholding the Constitution and acting virtuously. Scholar Harvey C. Mansfield wrote “Based on the Constitution and its tradition—legal, political, and intellectual- conservatism in America should be American in origin, style and content” (Mansfield 2007, 55). The foundations of the United States, according to Mansfield, are grounded in conservative principle by way of republicanism. Because conservatives work to maintain the tradition that is inherent in the Constitution, Mansfield finds that it is possible to define conservatism as American. Often erroneously charged as uncompromisingly opposed to change by certain academics, American conservatives are traditionally more cautious when it comes to the transformation of these existing institutions.
established by the Constitution. According to Kieron O’Hara (2011, 16), they “wish to manage [change] and ameliorate the associate risks.” Virtue also comes to play a role in the value of upholding the republican aspects of the United States as seen in the Constitution. Conservatives see defending the “inevitability and goodness of virtue against those who believe that it might be good or might be inevitable that our need for it wither away” (Lawler 2007, 113). Conservatives have adopted the notion of protecting virtue, reminiscent of classical republicanism, and, in their eyes, have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to sustaining this ideal. Therefore, corruption is seen as intolerable and a defiance of this conservative ideal. This is unacceptable because it undermines the ultimate goal of virtuously leading citizens by a moral authority (Kirk 1892, xv). The combination of preserving republican values by maintaining constitutional tradition as well as upholding virtue have come to be characteristic of the conservative doctrine.

A second characteristic of American conservatism is the protection of individual liberties. This meant that the rights of citizens, as outlined in the Constitution, were to be preserved. Often times, this can be seen in connection to vehement conservative protection of economic liberties in America. This idea serves to convey why American conservatives are major proponents of capitalism and the concept of laissez-faire. Van Dyke elaborates on this point by discussing his interpretation of economic conservatism. He recognizes conservative “emphasis on individual liberty, private property, the free market, personal responsibility, and political decentralization. From their point of view... government should be cut down in size, taxes and the regulatory activities should be reduced and laws leading
to ‘excessive’ litigation should be change” (Van Dyke 1995, 156). Taxes are one of the main violators of these economic rights, sometimes being associated with breaching property rights protected in the constitution. Due to the nature of taxes, conservatives had traditionally adopted a position of opposition to the increase in taxes. The concept of individual liberty is important to conservatives based upon the value they place upholding constitutional principles.

The third overarching characteristic of American conservatism is concerned with rejection of a large federal government in favor of promoting smaller political communities. Often called the “Father of Conservatism,” Edmund Burke (1795, 32) wrote in his piece *Scarcity*:

My opinion is against any overdoing of any sort of administration and, more especially, against this most monstrous of all meddling on the part of authority: the meddling with the subsistence of its people . . . . [One must] manfully . . . resist the very first idea, speculative or practical, that it is within the competence of government . . . to supply the poor with necessaries . . . . To provide for us in our necessities is not in the power of government... The people maintain them and not they the people. It is in the power of government to prevent much evil; it can do very little positive good in this, or perhaps in anything else.

Burke believed that government, especially large political units, should refrain from too much intervention in the lives of those it governs. Here, again, lies conservative preference for small government in alignment with republican values. The ideals conservatives emphasize and the governmental aspects they feel should be reduced
are engaged in an inverse relationship with one another. For example, the larger
government is, the less individual liberty is present and vice versa. This rationale
exists due to conservative belief in the constraints of the federal government that
were included by the Founding Fathers for the purpose of avoiding a regression
back towards a version former British control. By placing power in the hands of
citizens, rather that the federal government, individual liberty and virtue was better
protected. The prominence American conservatives place on the constraints
imposed on government powers also demonstrates a connection to federalism’s
system of checks and balances as well as the separation of powers.

While modern in its concrete conception, several elementary tenets of
conservatism extend deep into the roots of the political and social institutions of the
United States. The fundamental beliefs of American conservatism reveal its
connections to specific aspects of both republicanism and federalism. Based on the
ideals of upholding republican tradition and virtue, preserving personal liberties
and limiting the scope of the federal government, American conservatism has
impacted the US political system significantly. Forthcoming will be a discussion of
specific CPMs that have taken place in US history and that were instigated by the
escalating conservative criticism against the actions of the federal government in
hopes of preserving conservative ideals for the American people. As Machiavelli
described in his Discourses, the public is likely to rise up in defense of their liberty
when they fear oppression by a higher authority, in this case the central
government.

Explanation of Case Studies
Now that the foundational elements of the political theories concerning republicanism, federalism, American conservatism and their ties to the American political system have been established, it is necessary to move forward with the intention of this thesis: understanding why CPMs occur. The main objective is to investigate CPMs that have taken place in the United States in order to determine why CPMs occur and what dynamics play a role in their uprising. I have hypothesized that there are three factors that contribute to the surfacing of CPMs in American history—deviation from republican principles such as constitutionalism and virtue, a perceived threat to individual liberties by infringement through policies involving taxation and economic regulation and the aggrandizement of power by the federal government beyond inherent constitutional limits. These three factors have been chosen because they have been observed to be basic elements that make up the foundation of American conservatism. They each also have origins in republicanism and federalism, two key components to the make-up of the US political system.

What, then, serves as the best method for analyzing CPMs and determining what role, if any, the hypothesized three factors play in the formation of these movements? Case studies will allow for a close investigation of actual periods in American history where conservative movements have arisen. I plan to examine three specific time periods, the Jefferson presidency, the New Deal Era, and the Tea Party movement in contemporary politics, which are considered to represent periods of conservative backlash. The case studies were chosen on the pretense that they each represent vastly different time periods in a social, economic, political and
cultural sense as well as a vast assembly of diverse political actors. However, all three case studies are seemingly joined together by the presence of a conservative response and potential conservative movement.

The remainder of this thesis will examine these three specific time periods through the lens of the theorized factors, deviation from republican tradition, a perceived threat to individual liberty and the aggrandizement of power by the federal government. Both primary and secondary sources relating specifically to these case studies will be observed in order to determine a number of questions. Why do conservative political movements arise? Does the hypothesis concerning the three factors hold any merit? If not, is the presence of one or two of them necessary for a conservative political movement to arise? Are there any other factors revealed throughout these case studies that can be deemed necessary in order for the emergence of a conservative political movement? It is the hope of this thesis to prove that there are strands of continuity characteristic among each case study that reveal the validity of the hypothesis that the emergence of CPMs is due to the rejection of republican tradition, a perceived threat to individual liberty and an expansion of federal power.
Chapter II: The Jeffersonian Presidency and the Tertium Quids

There have been countless examples of political insurgency throughout the course of American history, including those based on conservative philosophies. Often times these movements arise from an individual or group objecting to the decisions and policies of a constituted authority. The dissenters can become a faction that are aligned according to analogous grievances and attempt to concert a counterattack against the governing body they feel is acting in contrast to their objectives. It is has been said that the first of these movements, deemed a third party movement, that occurred in the United States was initiated by the Tertium Quids, or the Quids for short (MacPhee 1965). The Tertium Quids, led by Virginian statesmen John Randolph, formed as a splinter group of the Jeffersonian Republicans in 1806 after a growing dissatisfaction with the administrative policies of Thomas Jefferson (Carson 1986). The Quids strove to conserve the principles the American republic was founded upon, which they believed were being jeopardized by the actions of the Jefferson administration.

Due to the conservative, republican convictions of this movement, the Tertium Quids are the first case study that will be examined in this thesis. This particular group will be analyzed through the lenses of the three factors that contribute to the development of a conservative political movement (CPM)- the deviation from republican tradition, a perceived threat to individual liberty and the aggrandizement of power by the federal government (and, conversely, the rejection of localism). Through the investigation of the presence of these three factors in the
period preceding the surfacing of the Quid movement in 1806, I hope to
demonstrate how each factor is critical to an eventual CPM in American history.

**Historical Background**

After the total ratification of the Constitution, which was written based upon
republican principles, and the inauguration of President George Washington in
1789, the United States began operating according to the framework laid out by the
Founding Fathers (Tate 2005). The goal of most individuals wielding political power
after the Revolutionary War was to create a stable American republic, through the
powers invested to them by the Constitution, that roughly fulfilled the promises
made by the Declaration of Independence in 1776 (Chambers 1963). This proved
difficult because the United States represented an expansive republic over a large
extent of territory, which created an unprecedented political experiment for those
in government. There was contention in regards to the correct path political leaders
should take in order to achieve this idea of a “more perfect union.” It did not take
long for the factions that James Madison (1789) discussed in *Federalist #10* to
materialize within the decision making bodies of the government. Different groups
of varying political philosophies began forming almost immediately, polarizing
lawmakers. Two factions that emerged at the forefront of these political engines
during the 1790’s were the Federalists, founded by Alexander Hamilton, and the
Republicans, led by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison (Chambers 1963). The
stark contrasts between these two factions were fundamental in the political
disposition of the leaders and their followers.
The two most contentious philosophical theories that arose in the 1790’s to instigate political division between the Federalists and the Republicans were the rigidity of the degree to which the Constitution was to be interpreted and the rights of the states versus the rights of the federal government (Chambers 1965). The first notion, concerning the Constitution, arose during 1791 when Alexander Hamilton proposed to Congress the creation of a Bank of the United States (Mayer 1994). The establishment of the Hamilton’s bank and the duties it was to perform fell beyond the legitimate powers of Congress granted by the Constitution. Although it was acknowledged that the Constitution was the foundation for American government, the question became how closely must elected officials interpret the words of the document based on the Founder’s original intent? Two schools of thought emerged from this debate- one of loose, broad construction and the other of strict construction. Federalists considered themselves loose interpreters and believed that the federal government had the right to exercise powers that the Constitution did not explicitly forbid contingent that it was in the best interest of the country based on the “necessary and proper” clause (Ibid). Federalist Alexander Hamilton (1791), a proponent of broad construction, wrote “the powers contained in the constitution of government... ought to be construed liberally, in advancement of the public good.” Republican advocates for strict construction regarded this view as dangerous to the institution of republican government because it would detract from the defined limits of power. They believed that government was required to operate within the realm of powers specifically enumerated to it by the Constitution (Bailey 2007). The leader of the Republicans, Thomas Jefferson (1791) declared that
“to take a single step beyond the boundaries thus specifically drawn around the powers of Congress, is to take possession of boundless field of power, no longer susceptible of any definition.” Republicans are identified with a conservative ideology because they wished to conserve the traditions of the Founding Fathers by adhering to a strict construction of the Constitution. The controversy surrounding this issue of interpretation divided officials into two distinct camps.

The bank debate between Federalists and Republicans was only exacerbated by a consequential argument concerning distinctions between states’ rights and federal rights. While Federalists and Republicans acknowledged the rights of states, their demarcation of states powers as compared to federal powers was different. The issue of states’ rights, being of the same token as construction of the Constitution, further divided Hamilton and the Federalists from Jefferson and the Republicans. Federalists favored a centralized government, wishing to assert federal authority over state governments, while Republicans strove to confine federal power in favor of state jurisdiction (Moran 1904). Hamilton ([1782] in John Hamilton 1850, 201) wrote, “There is something noble and magnificent in the perspective of a great Federal Republic, closely linked in the pursuit of a common interest, tranquil and prosperous at home, respectable abroad.” Federalists, who were typically pro-Britain, believed that strong America would be achieved by the concentration of power in the federal government, similar to a model of the republican version of the British monarchy (Wood 2011). Conversely, Jefferson (1791) quoted the Tenth Amendment, which said “all powers not delegated to the United States, by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to
the States or to the people,” to argue for the protection of states’ rights. Strict constructionists Jefferson and Madison both believed that government was supposed to be “by the people” and the best way to achieve this was by promoting the rights of states that were inherently closer to constituents. In essence, Federalists trusted the federal government as the best way to secure a strong Union while Republicans regarded the states and the people as the vehicle for accomplishing this.

A degree of dissimilarity between Federalists and Republicans existed, however both groups regarded themselves each as the embodiments of the nation’s will rather than political parties (Goodman 1967). They both agreed on the authority of the Constitution and the inherent powers of both the states and the federal government, yet the practical expression of these beliefs differed on the basis of proper execution. Hamilton and the Federalist’s believed that they represented a legitimate authority who strove to protect the country from those allied with Revolutionary France seeking to undermine the union while Jefferson and the Republicans described themselves as a temporary faction whose goal was to protect the United State from turning back into a Federalist charged monarchy (Wood 2011). Neither opposing faction recognized the authority of the other resulting in extreme partisan friction. According to Gordon Wood (2011, 245), the political factionalism of the 1790’s resulted in “one of the most passionate and divisive decades in American history.”

In the 1790’s, the dominant political conservatism that was characteristic of Jefferson, Madison and the rest of the Republicans permeated southern politics, with
followers promoting the importance of states’ rights (Tate 4). Republicans in Congress approached problems, both foreign and domestic, by operating within a framework of strict construction (Risjord 1965). Republicans maintained their values of strict construction and states rights while simultaneously criticizing the actions of the Federalists as anti-republican. Particularly in Virginia, the state legislature of the early 1790’s outwardly expressed its concerns for the stability of republican liberty, particularly the preservation of individual state sovereignty, resulting in the popularization of opposition to many Hamilton policies (Banning 1978). Jefferson supporter and Virginia statesman John Taylor (Definition of Parties 1794, 12) warned, “Usurpations upon constitutional principles, if suffered to acquire maturity, will only yield to the dreadful remedy of civil war; but if faced in their infancy, an amputation may be冒险ed without danger to the body politick.” Republicans were determined to undermine any Federalist policy that was based on a broad construction of the Constitution in order to preserve republican values. The Virginian legislation’s remonstrance against funding various Hamiltonian policies created a “systematic ideology that justified a persistent opposition to Federalism and contributed to that opposition’s growth from the dimensions of a congressional faction to those of a great national party” (Banning 1978, 264). Americans worried that the Federalists in power during this period were taking a path towards the reintroduction of the monarchy (Wood 2011). As a result, the ideology of maintaining the republican tradition that the country was founded upon became prevalent throughout both Virginia and the rest of the country, adding to an already substantial base of Republican supporters. It was the pervasiveness of conservative
ideology during the antebellum period in the south would later serve as the foundation of the Tertium Quids’ platform.

Two particular pieces of legislation that arose from this sentiment of political conservatism focused on the sovereignty of states was the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions written by James Madison and Thomas Jefferson, respectively, in 1798 (Bailey 2007). The resolutions were written in response to Congress’s enactment of the Alien and Sedition Acts, which were passed in mid 1798 in order to strengthen the powers of the federal government after threat of war with France. The Alien and Sedition Acts were comprised of four separate acts that were all designed to place stringent regulations on residents of the United States. The Naturalization Act extended the waiting period from four to fifteen years for aliens seeking citizenship while the Alien Act and Alien Enemies Act each allowed for the deportation or incarceration of aliens deemed a threat to the safety and security of the United States (Moran 1904). The Sedition Act allowed for the imposition of fines or imprisonment for individuals that spoke out, either in print or speech, against and criticized the actions of the US government (Ibid). Many felt that the nature of these acts violated the enumerated powers granted to both Congress and the President by the Constitution. According the Norman K. Risjord (1965, 15), the Alien Acts were of “questionable legality in the discretion they left to the President” while the Sedition Act was a “direct violation of the First Amendment” making it blatantly unconstitutional. In a letter written in October of 1798, Thomas Jefferson called the acts “an avowed violation of the Constitution” (Ford 2009, 450). Republican statesman John Taylor (1798), concerned that the Sedition Act was being used to
expand centralized power and undermine individual liberties, warned that "one usurpation begat another." Republicans also believed that the passage of these acts by the Federalists was to purposely unnerve bases of predictable Republican support, French and Irish immigrants, and to prevent opposing parties from criticizing the Federalist agenda (Banning 1978). Republican party leaders felt it necessary to launch a counterattack that would shed light on the perceived unconstitutionality of these acts.

Collaboration between Thomas Jefferson and James Madison resulted in the creation and distribution of the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions. Both resolutions asserted that Congress’s enactment of the Alien and Sedition Acts were unconstitutional on the grounds that the federal government not only utilized powers that were not granted to it, but enacted congressional powers that were also explicitly prohibited to it by the Constitution (Bailey 2007). Jefferson (“Draft of the Kentucky Resolutions” 1798) pointed to several examples of this flagrant disregard for the Constitution, including his argument that the Tenth Amendment and First Amendment said that the states, not Congress, retained “to themselves the right of judging how far the licentiousness of speech and of the press may be abridged without lessening their useful freedom.” Republican’s believed that if the federal government was to be the sole evaluator the constitutionality of its actions, the US would gradually shift away from the ideals of a republic towards a despotic system. The Virginia Resolution (Virginia Senate 1798) denounced the federal government’s inclination
To enlarge its power by forced constructions of the constitution charter...so as to destroy the meaning and effect of the particular enumeration which necessarily explains and limits the general phrases and so as to consolidate the states by degrees into one sovereignty... which would be to transform the present republican system of the United States into an absolute, or at best, a mixed monarchy.

Jefferson believed that through a strict interpretation of the Constitution, it could be understood that the essential powers of government were given to the state because they were in closer contact with constituents and were more likely to observe their rights (Risjord 1965). Therefore, the resolutions asserted that because sovereign states had voluntarily joined the union under an agreed upon compact, with certain limited powers assigned to the federal government, they inherently had the right to interject and deem federal legislation unconstitutional (Ibid). Madison’s version of sovereign states’ interposition was more moderate when compared to Jefferson’s resolution, which outlined the process to be used for the nullification of federal bills considered to be unconstitutional (Jefferson 1798). The outcry of Republican opposition to the Alien and Sedition Acts demonstrated their fundamental beliefs in the importance of states’ rights and established Jefferson as a strict constructionist who was a protector of these republican values. The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions would come to be known as the Principles of ’98 and would serve as a basis for the Tertium Quid movement.

The growing tensions between the Federalists and the Republicans during the 1790’s resulted in a heated race to gain the presidency during 1800. The
Republicans were behind Thomas Jefferson while the Federalists backed incumbent John Adams. The themes of the Republican campaign for the presidency played upon the public’s growing dissatisfaction with federal legislation including various repressive laws, a large standing army and navy as well as land and stamp taxes (Banning 1978). They denounced the mounting trend of centralization to the federal government that had become characteristic of the Federalists. Strict constructionist Jefferson’s chief pamphleteer, John Taylor, put forth the idea that a candidate who applied a broad construction view to the Constitution would lead America down a slippery slope- one that was familiar due recent questionable legislation like the Alien and Sedition Acts (Bailey 2007). Republicans appealed to the American public’s deepest fears of regression back to a monarchial government. Federalists shot back attacking Jefferson’s sympathies towards the French and their recent revolution, claiming that the French chaos and bloodshed could spread to the newly established and still vulnerable United States. They believed that a strong central authority would reduce the excess of popular majorities and could put the country on the right track (Wood 2011). Jeremy D. Bailey (2007, 132) writes how the partisan election of 1800 represented the culmination of the polarization of politics during the 1790’s that was “as much a contest of the meaning of the new Constitution as a fight over who would rule.”

In the end, after much controversy over an electoral tie with fellow Republican Aaron Burr, Jefferson and the Republicans won the coveted presidency. Jefferson stated that his election to the executive office in 1800 “was as real a revolution in the principles of our government as that of 1776 was in its form”
His words revealed his sincere beliefs that he had saved the republic from becoming a monarchy under Federalist control (Wood 2011). With tensions running high due to the schism between the political parties, the Republican president was committed to overturning policies of the past administration in order to return the country to its republican foundations but also wished to reconcile with his Federalist foes in the hopes of achieving bipartisan cooperation (Banning 1978). Virginian John Randolph ([1801] in Carson 1986, 74), referencing the conservative principles of 1798, stated after the Jefferson victory “We should on this occasion... that we do not take their [Federalist] principles with their power; ... we advance the same principles now when in possession of power, that we did, when we scarcely had any prospect of getting into power.” Randolph, like other Republicans, considered it his mission to help Jefferson reverse the Federalist policies of the era before by restoring constitutional principles, protecting citizen’s liberty and reducing executive power. Republicans relied on the “principles of 1798” as their mantra for governing, stressing “a low national budget, a conservative interpretation of the Constitution, elimination of the national debt, and more direct action by the state and local agencies than the Federal government” (Carson 1986, 74). However, the Republicans did not represent a harmonized, single-minded group but rather one of politically similar individuals from diverse geographic areas representing varied interests. Jefferson’s acquisition to the presidency during a period of political rift began impacting his relationship with members of his own party, magnifying these assorted interests. It was during the Jeffersonian presidency that intra-party discord began taking root, which would
gradually lead to the formation of the splinter group, the Tertium Quids (MacPhee 1965).

**Factors that Contribute to CPMs**

The 1790’s proved to be a period in American history when political tensions were high and the creation of competing factions was prevalent. To understand the emergence of the Quid’s as a conservative political movement, specific events that transpired from the inauguration of Thomas Jefferson to the presidency in 1801 to the founding of the Tertium Quids in 1806 must be observed. Jefferson assumed the presidency as a Republican who was a proponent of states’ rights and a strict constructionist interpretation of the Constitution. Republicans expected the Jefferson presidency to be guided by these republican principles, however, expectation did not meet reality and over the course of his two terms as president many party loyalists began questioning Jefferson’s commitment to these particular republican values. Several politicians that were of the same mind at the beginning of Jefferson’s presidency, like John Randolph and John Taylor, did not imitate Jefferson’s evolution to a more centrist view of governing and were left on the periphery of the Republican party. As a result, the critique of the Jefferson administration from these particular individuals accumulated over the course of several years. The analysis of these specific complaints in accordance with the three hypothesized factors will contribute to the acceptance of each of these factors’ presence during the Jeffersonian Presidency. For the purposes of this case study, the group that remained on the periphery of the Republican party during the Jeffersonian presidency but before the division of the Tertium Quids will be referred
to as the Old Republicans. The objective of the Old Republicans was to conserve the principles of the 1790’s by restricting the power of the government to the sphere specifically assigned by the Constitution and precedent (Kirk 1951). The reader will come to understand the grievances held by the Old Republicans, which were to ultimately catalyze the Quid movement, all fall under the categories of deviation from tradition, a perceived threat to individual liberty and the aggrandizement of power by the federal government.

**Factor 1: Deviation from Republican Tradition**

In his anti-Hamilton pamphlet, *An Enquiry into the Principles and Tendency of Certain Public Measures*, John Taylor of Caroline (1794) spoke of fearing the trajectory of government policy due to the increased potential for corruption and, consequently, rejection of republican virtue. Of John Randolph’s belief in the importance of upholding the Constitution, Russell Kirk wrote, (1951, 33) “Proper constitutions, [Randolph] held, are the product of social experience; they are rooted in custom and prescriptions, which have a deeper validity than mere positive law.” The ideas of the leaders of the future Quid movement, Taylor and Randolph, each encapsulated the conservative doctrine of the vast majority of Republicans prior to 1800- it was necessary to maintain the virtuous republican tradition of the Founding Fathers and the Constitution in order to preserve freedom and liberty (Kirk 1951). The role of the Constitution was to act as a written instruction for elected officials, with the purpose of securing the foundations of republican government and individual rights for which the Revolutionary War was fought. Therefore, the Constitution was to be interpreted under a strict construction view
and followed closely. Self-serving interpretations of the Constitution exceeding the letter of the law might be tempting and result in temporary benefits, but they must be avoided, according to these Republicans, to uphold principle (Kirk 1951). By drifting away from this ideological perspective with loose interpretations of constitutional meaning, the United States would, in effect, lose sight of its republican foundations. Maintaining the tradition of the Constitution through strict construction proved to be the most momentous way to preserve the Founding Fathers’ conception of the country according to Republicans.

When Jefferson assumed the presidency, he spoke of his commitment to the preservation of these traditions in his inaugural speech of 1800. He highlighted what he thought to be indispensable beliefs of our government, including virtuous governance, personal liberties and states’ rights, and discussed how these beliefs would be what guided the policies of his administration. Jefferson ([1801] in The Papers of Thomas Jefferson 2006, 150) asserted “should we wander from them in moments of error or of alarm, let us hasten to retrace our steps and to regain the road which alone leads to peace, liberty, and safety.” He had already established himself as a Republican with strict construction views of the Constitution in his career prior to and during the election, demonstrating his affinity for tradition. Republicans were elated that the time of Federalist rule was over and that a Republican, who they believed would uphold these values, was now in charge. However, several Republicans believed that Jefferson demonstrated a tendency to drift away from tradition in favor of a reinvention of custom suitable to his agenda.
over his two terms as president angering many who considered themselves to be Jefferson loyalists.

Two isolated incidents, both involving the acquisition of property by way of perceived corruption, arose during the beginning of Jefferson’s presidency and tested his dedication to upholding republican tradition. The first was the Yazoo Controversy, which was a spillover issue from the previous administration. In 1795, a corrupt Georgia legislature under Federalist control was bribed to sell thirty-five million acres of land to four land companies for a nominal sum (MacPhee 1965). Shortly after, the public discovered the deal was corrupt so the legislature was swept and a new group was elected who rescinded the sale of the land and declared the contract null and void. The Yazoo land, however, had been sold to third-party buyers unaware of the fraud creating controversy. When Georgia ceded its western territory to the federal government in 1802, Jefferson put together a cabinet level commission, headed by James Madison, to work out a settlement with the purchasers who did not sell their land back after hearing of the bribery (Chambers 1963). The commission suggested that the claimants be bought off because it would be less expensive to do so rather than engaging in a long drawn out lawsuit (Johnson 1929). In the eyes of staunch Old Republicans, the commission’s recommendation exuded barefaced corruption and their perception that Jefferson lacked a firm stance on the issue resulted in their further outrage. By engaging in acts of corruption, the republican virtue that conservatives adhered to was essentially lost.

John Randolph led those Republicans who opposed the deal and submitted a series of declaratory resolves in 1804 criticizing the commission’s suggestion. He
upheld Georgia’s power as a sovereign state to nullify a deceitful contract and he strove to ensure that a settlement was not reached (Risjord 1965). Randolph was averse to compromising with a group of individuals who he believed to be thieves and regarded that the federal government backdoor deal as just as corrupt. In a letter to Joseph H. Nicholson, Randolph ([1803] in Kirk 1951, 91) wrote “I will never consent, voluntarily to become a vassal of a privileged order of military and monied men... he who will not assert his place in society deserves to be trampled under foot.” Randolph’s letter spoke to the outrage of the rest his Old Republican followers at the violation of what they felt was Republican purity and refused to compromise with selfish, greedy interests. Randolph successfully halted any decision on the Yazoo Controversy for a period of time based on the arguments of states’ rights and corruption of republican values. In 1805, however, the 8th Congress, supported by Jefferson and his administration in the desire for expediency, passed the Yazoo Resolution at a vote of 63 to 58 (MacPhee 1965). For Old Republicans, the entirety of the Yazoo affair appeared to be riddled with corruption and fraud carried out by greedy politicians. Jefferson demonstrated a complete disregard, according to Randolph, for the virtue of republican principles instilled in the Constitution in regards to the Yazoo Controversy. While Jefferson had no part in the suggestions of the commission, Old Republicans took his lack of opposition to bargaining with crooks in favor of a speedier end to the controversy as his rejection of republican virtue. Though Randolph lost the battle over the Yazoo settlement, he effectively planted a seed in several ardent Republicans minds questioning the Jefferson administration.
The second incident that further divided Jefferson and Old Republicans was the attempted territorial acquisition of the Floridas, particularly West Florida, between 1805 and 1806. Under Spanish control, the small strip of land that made up West Florida, which contained vital waterways and a natural harbor, was of interest to the United States (Risjord 1965). Instead of seizing West Florida through military force, it was decided that it would be acquired through the brokering of a financial deal. US diplomats journeyed to Madrid in order to negotiate the transition of the land to American hands but France, headed by Napoleon, intervened in the discussions due to their grasp on a failing Spain. French foreign minister, Talleyrand, suggested that France would be willing to see to it that Spain settled the Florida question if the US provided France with two million dollars in compensation (Johnson 1929). Talleyrand’s proposal was scandalous and ill-mannered, but Jefferson knew that the bribery of France would allow the US acquire the desirable land and avoid military action. The President wrote in a letter to John Colvin “Ought the Executive, in that case, and with that foreknowledge, have to secured the good to this country, and to have trusted to their justice for the transgression of the law? I think he ought, and that the act would have been approved” (Jefferson [1810] in Ford 2009, 147). He believed the outrageous and backdoor nature of France’s demands, which threatened virtuous republican principle and went around typical legislative procedure, would be admissible if the deal was beneficial to the US. Jefferson was then charged with presenting the proposition to members of Congress and chose to do so in a manner that could be considered secretive.
Upon hearing of Jefferson’s plan to acquire West Florida through the appropriation of federal money, Old Republicans garnered opposition. They believed that the US should be not party to the flagrant bribery of France coercing Spain to give up its property (Risjord 1965). Many, including Randolph, thought the proposition reeked of Federalist corruption characteristic of the 1790’s and would, in effect, undermine republican virtue (Bruce 1922). The Constitution did not permit the bribery of other nations, especially under the auspices of a self-serving matter such as the Florida question. Old Republicans believed that Jefferson and Madison were demonstrating an obvious desire to operate outside the confines of constitutional tradition in order to meet the demands of a corrupt request by the French enraged members of the Old Republicans division of the Republican party (Ibid). They acted to combat the passage of the bill granting the two million dollar appropriation by delaying a congressional vote on the matter and making the intentions of the bill and the secret process of its passage known to the public (Risjord 1965). During the 9th session of Congress, John Randolph seized the opportunity to make public the corruption of the Jefferson administration. To members of the House on Jefferson and his cabinet, Randolph said “Let them take off the injunction of secrecy. They dare not... they dare not come out and tell the nation what they have done... most of the evils which the United States now suffered proceeded from the measures of the Executive” (Annals of Cong., 9th Cong., 1st sess., 566). Randolph’s outward disgust with the secrecy surrounding the questionable Florida deal resulted in the removal of the injunction of secrecy and the publication of all pertinent documents. Though the Two Million Bill passed in the face of certain
Republican opposition, the subsequent diplomatic transaction failed (Bruce 1922).
The Old Republican’s campaign against the United States acquisition of West Florida through questionable means proved to be successful, leaving the land in Spanish hands for several more years. The Florida question also lent a hand in creating an even greater division of the fracturing Republican party, with members taking the side of President Jefferson or that of Old Republican John Randolph.

The Yazoo Controversy and the Florida question both proved to be instances where a bloc of Republicans believed Jefferson and his administration knowingly approved the federal governments’ engagement in shady deals with corrupt parties. Old Republicans, who believed in the conservative principle of maintaining virtue in government, saw these two events as the rejection of both virtuous republican custom and dependence on the Constitution. According to David A. Carson (1986, 77):

To Randolph, corruption meant more than incidental bribery, embezzlement or private aggrandizement of government officials. It meant rather a more comprehensive degeneration of public morality which, if left unattacked and unremedied, would result in the decay and dissolution of the American political system.

Randolph ([1802] in Bruce 1922, 272) wrote in a letter that Old Republicans were determined “to punish delinquents without respect to their political professions.” According to Old Republicans, Jefferson shifted away from the republican principles he promoted prior to his election during the Yazoo Controversy and the Florida question. In neither case, Old Republicans felt, did the President rely on
constitutional principles, which were designed to include a degree of republican virtue, in order to conduct deals with third-parties. The dependence of Old Republicans on the maintenance of both tradition and republican virtue in American government was directly impacted by Jefferson’s actions during the Yazoo Controversy and the Florida question. Both issues resulted in various degrees of fissure of the Republican party that would eventually lead to the Tertium Quids.

**Factor 2: Perceived Threat to Individual Liberties**

Tension arising from Old Republicans’ view that Jefferson was not adhering to republican tradition by way of virtue was further aggravated by their sense that the President was jeopardizing the freedom of the people. The liberty of citizens was a fundamental principle in the republican philosophy and those that considered themselves Old Republicans strove to ensure those freedoms for the American people. John Taylor argued in his *New Views on the Constitution of the United States* (1823) that people, not governments, were sovereign and, therefore, the people inherently possessed the right of self-government. John Randolph shared Taylor’s views on the power of the people and promoted the philosophy that federal governments served as a battleground between individual liberties and the intrusive power of the state— with power always corrupting and jeopardizing freedom (Banning 1978). Old Republicans operated under the notion that a frugal, limited government was the best way to preserved republican simplicity and individual freedoms. In order to protect the freedoms of American citizens, elected officials need to ensure that the power intrinsic in the Constitution remained in the peoples’ hands and not larger government entities. Jefferson maintained this
protection of individual liberties in his inaugural speech of 1801 but the legislation that came up for debate during his presidency indicated to members of the Republican party that sometimes these freedoms conflicted with the Jefferson agenda. Both Taylor and Randolph, as well as the rest of the Old Republicans, attempted to fight all directives that encroached upon individual liberties of citizens, including rejecting bills that called for new taxes or new accessions of power to branches of the government (Kirk 1951).

Old Republicans interpreted several of the Jefferson administration’s economic proposals to be ruinous to the American economy and vehemently combated them. They were opposed to all regulation of commerce and finance by the national government, such as the Hamilton’s bank, because they felt it detracted from the market economy and restricted individuals’ economic choices (Ibid). One of the most contentious bills that Old Republicans feared would infringe on individuals’ economic liberties was Gregg’s Resolution, which was proposed in 1806 after issues arose concerning Great Britain’s interference with American ships and sailors. The resolution, backed by Jefferson, was created in order to punish Great Britain for its actions and called for the total non-importation of goods and wares produced in Great Britain (Bruce 1922). While the Gregg Resolution was intended to act as a policy of commercial retaliation that hurt the British economy, Old Republicans, who were predominantly southern politicians representing the agrarian south, felt that it would cripple Americans as well. Many Southerners were dependent on the British goods and felt the Gregg Resolution sacrificed their agricultural interests by disallowing the use of staple products (McMaster 1883).
They believed the bill would inflict a significant harm upon Southern agriculture by substantially decreasing their revenue, increasing taxation on important goods, instigate retaliation by the British and deprive them of products crucial to their subsistence (Ibid). John Randolph accused the resolution of detracting from individual liberties and acting as Jefferson's way of expanding the executive power by placing restrictions on exports and taxes on imports that would cripple sectors of American economy (Annals of Cong., 9th Cong., 1st sess., 560). The stark opposition of John Randolph and the Old Republicans, among other officials, during a weeklong debate proved to be successful. The Gregg Resolution was determined to be too strong and a more moderate resolution was passed that did not impact Southern farmers to a severe degree (McMaster 1883). The issues with the non-importation of the Gregg Resolution would later surface in 1807 with Jefferson's embargo on British goods causing an uproar from the Tertium Quids, however, this particular bill was shot down due to the backlash it received.

John F. Devanny Jr (2001, 390) commented on how John Randolph and John Taylor believed “the primary end of any economic policy was the preservation of a patrimony of political and economic independence and virtue bequeathed by the Revolutionary generation to the nation. Any policy that threatened this patrimony... was anathema to these men.” Randolph and Taylor despised any legislation proposed by the Jefferson administration that infringed upon the economic liberties of citizens, like the Gregg Resolution. Representing geographical regions that were dependent on agricultural prosperity, they felt as if Jefferson and his Northern Republican supporters were endangering the livelihood of Southern constituents.
By proposing policies that disregarded Southern interests, Old Republicans felt that Jefferson was taking a stance against the freedoms and interests of a segment of society (Johnson 1929). The intrusion of Jeffersonian policies on the economic liberties of southern citizens raised the concerns of the Old Republicans and separated them even further from the President.

**Factor 3: Aggrandizement of Power by the Federal Government**

In addition to a perceived deviation from republican tradition and encroachment on individual economic liberties, Old Republicans were concerned with what they saw as Jefferson’s expansion of executive power. In *Federalist #45*, Madison (1787) wrote, “The powers delegated by the proposed constitution to the federal government are few and defined. Those which are to remain in the State governments are numerous and indefinite.” Building upon this idea, Thomas Jefferson ([1801] in *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson* 2006, 151) wrote in his inaugural speech of 1801 that a general principle of American government was “support of the State governments in all their rights, as the most competent administrations for our domestic concerns and the surest bulwarks against anti-republican tendencies.” Both Madison and his political ally Thomas Jefferson believed that the Constitution provided a blueprint for an extended republican system that was a combination of national and federal powers- with states retaining sovereignty despite a limited national government (Bradburn 2009). The enumerated powers of the federal government written in the Constitution were established in order to ensure that states’ rights were not encroached upon. Jefferson came into the presidency as a Republican who was a champion of states
rights’ and limited federal power. In spite of this, Old Republicans believed that the policies of his administration proved to work against these ideals by expanding the powers of the national government. This had been seen in the Florida question as well as the proposal of the Twelfth Amendment, which would essentially remove the power of state delegations (particularly small states) in the House of Representatives to choose the President (Bailey 2007). They believed that Jefferson was operating outside his initial party stance as a Republican- this time by lessening the sovereignty of the states. According to Jeremy D. Bailey (2007, 4), many of Jefferson’s actions during his presidency appeared to “[violate] the Jeffersonian creed by lessening the authority of individual states” to this particular faction known as the Old Republicans.

Perhaps the biggest example of the centralizing powers of the government was the Louisiana Purchase. The acquisition of territory initiated by the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 represented an act of Jefferson’s executive power that was questionable in its constitutionality. Due to political realignments in Europe, the area of land between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains, known as Louisiana, transferred from Spain into the hands of Napoleon and the French (Chambers 1963). Concerned with Napoleon’s close proximity to US territory, President Jefferson sent diplomats Robert R. Livingston and James Monroe over to France in order to engage in negotiations for the purchase of the land (Ibid). The treaty of the purchase was brought to both the Republican-led Senate and House and passed by an overwhelming majority. The United States, under the guidance of Jefferson, successfully purchased over 800,000 square miles of land for a sum of
fifteen million dollars from France (Moran 1904). The Louisiana Purchase represented both a vast expansion of US territory, effectively doubling it, as well as an increase in government centralization.

While the Louisiana Purchase made it though Congress effortlessly, there were questions raised, both by members of Congress and Jefferson himself, as to the constitutionality of the deal. Unlike the air of corruption that surrounded the Yazoo Controversy and the Florida question, the Louisiana Purchase had been a legitimate business transaction between two sovereign parties. However, there was cause for concern as to what constitutional power Jefferson was operating under when he granted Livingston and Monroe the permission to negotiate the deal. The Constitution did not include explicit instruction that the president had the power to negotiate the purchase of land from foreign governments (Chambers 1963). Jefferson (1803) acknowledged his lack of power and wrote to John C. Breckenridge in 1803 that:

The Constitution has made no provision for our holding foreign territory, still less for incorporating foreign nations into our Union. The Executive in seizing the fugitive occurrence (Louisiana Purchase), which so much advances the good of their country, have done an act beyond the Constitution.

Jefferson suggested the creation of a constitutional amendment providing this power to him, however, in the interest of time and fearful of Napoleon’s retraction of the deal, he decided to bring the motion to Congress. The majority of Republicans, including John Taylor and John Randolph, supported Jefferson’s expansion of federal power under the arguments that there was presidential supremacy in foreign affairs
and that states had given up their rights to territorial acquisition when they ratified the Constitution surrendering this power to the federal government (Bailey 2007). The Louisiana Purchase represented a not only an unconstitutional power grab by the federal government but also the dissolution of the power of the states already in the Union by the addition of more states who would have a say in the US government (Ibid). It is true that many Republicans supported the measures to purchase the territory of Louisiana from France but this act by Jefferson demonstrated drift away from his Republican roots by expanding federal powers. While opposition was not met during the Congressional proceedings regarding the Louisiana Purchase, it is interesting to note that in 1805, John Randolph (Annals of Cong., 8th Cong., 1st sess., 434). claimed that because of the precedent it set, “the Louisiana purchase was the greatest curse that ever befell us.” Randolph saw the deal as another instance of Jefferson blatantly discarding his party values, this time by enlarging the powers of the national government without constitutional consent. He saw his initial support, as well as the rest of the Old Republican’s support, as a mistake that set a dangerous standard. By revoking his defense of the Louisiana Purchase, he was able to maintain his ideological consistency as a staunch conservative. The Louisiana Purchase provided fuel for the Quid movement that was soon to arise.

**Tertium Quid Movement**

In 1806, during the debate on the non-importation of goods to Great Britain, John Randolph declared that he was willing to meet others on the ground called *quiddism* (Carson 1986). Randolph’s proclamation represented his inevitable break
with the Jefferson administration based on his differences with the President in regards to political theory and principle. Taylor highlighted Jefferson’s role in the Quid schism by laying the blame on the President’s administration for not placing itself squarely on pure republican values and not overturning laws that did not agree with these principles (Taylor [1806] in Risjord 1965). Disdain towards Jefferson for his actions on numerous issues, including the Yazoo Controversy, the Florida question, the Gregg Resolution and the Louisiana Purchase among others, finally led to the division of a “third party.” Joined by the likes of John Taylor, Joseph Hopper Nicholson and Nathaniel Macon among others, the Quids strove to uphold the principles of the Republican party, based on the “principles of ’98,” that they felt were being ignored by Jefferson. Randolph ([1813] in Devanny Jr. 2001, 389) declared these principles to be

Love of peace, hatred of offensive war, jealously of the State Governments towards the General Government and of the influence of the Executive Government over the co-ordinate branches of that Government; a dread of standing armies; a loathing of public debt, taxes and excises; tenderness for the liberty of the citizen; jealousy, Argus-eyed jealousy of the patronage of the President.

The unwavering tenets of the Quids, particularly those of John Randolph, guided their protest of Jefferson and the subsequent presidents who, they felt, jeopardized these ideals.

While the success, or lack thereof, of the Tertium Quid movement can be seen through a variety of spectrums, they played an undeniable role in American politics.
The Quids, though small in numbers, were influential in the power that each member held in the government causing Jefferson to consider them a threat (Chambers 1963). They tended to be outvoted by the Republican majority, however, the opposition of the Tertium Quids to Jefferson riled up factional divisions in other parts of the country resulting in the further fracture of the Republican party (Ibid). They fought, although in vain, the passage of Jefferson’s Embargo Act of 1808, the salt tax, the National Bank and the war with Britain (Risjord 1965). They threw their support behind James Monroe in the 1808 presidential election as a means to block Madison from gaining the nomination (Chambers 1963). Randolph’s ill-tempered nature gradually discredited the goals of the movement, however, his resilience to uphold the conservative principles of ’98 remained throughout the course of his time as an elected official (Johnson 1929).

**Conclusion**

The ascent of the Republicans to power in 1800 with the election of Thomas Jefferson provided an opportunity for the US to get back to its republican roots upon which the country was founded. However, the party’s lack of cohesiveness, with members representing differing geographic and political interests, led to its eventual splintering into various factions. The Tertium Quids, led by John Randolph and John Taylor, represented one group that emerged from the political fragmentation of the Republican party. The faction felt that Thomas Jefferson was not living up to their expectations of a Republican executive who promoted the principles of ’98 and governed by conservative republican tradition. The Quid schism was initiated by this collection of ardent Republicans upset with Jefferson on
the basis of three distinct grievances- a deviation from republican tradition based on
a perceived corruption surrounding the Yazoo Controversy and the Florida
question, a sense of threat to individual liberties due to encroaching federal
economic policies and the aggrandizement of power by the federal government seen
in the Louisiana Purchase. While the Tertium Quids gradually declined in power and
influence after their emergence in 1806, their presence was of notable importance
to future political movements of the United States.

The precursor to the Quid movement successfully halted the determination
of the Yazoo Controversy until 1810 and the acquisition of Florida until 1819 (Kirk
1951). By relying on the pen of Taylor and the tongue of Randolph, the Quids
succeeded in obstructing and prolonging the passage of legislation they believed
threatened the foundation of certain republican values. In addition, the unwavering
political philosophy of the Tertium Quids, calling for a return to the conservative
principles of ’98, the preservation of individual liberties and a limited federal
government in favor of greater state sovereignty, influenced the beliefs of future
politicians, such as John C. Calhoun (MacPhee 1965). The Tertium Quids, cited as the
first third party movement in American history, had a profound impact on future
conservative factions of political dissenters protesting policies of the federal
government (Ibid). The Quids, led by John Randolph and John Taylor, were the first
to demonstrate how a perceived deviation from republican tradition, danger to
individual freedoms and enlargement of central powers in the United States will
result in the emergence of a conservative political movement.
Chapter III: The Roosevelt Presidency and the New Deal Era

The United States has had a tumultuous history in regards to the contention between rivaling political philosophies. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the rise of the Tertium Quids was a direct result of ideological discrepancies between the Jefferson administration and various members of Congress, including John Randolph and John Taylor. The Quid faction arose in protest of Jefferson’s policies, which they perceived as a threat towards the foundations of republican government. Deemed as the first third-party movement in the United States, the Quids created a precedent of dissent from the executive power in America, which future movements, particularly conservative ones, resembled in regards of their reaction to similar stimuli. One such period of conservative dissent that later came to pass in the United States was subsequent to the Great Depression as a reaction to the New Deal.

The third chapter of this thesis will discuss the New Deal era and focus on the conservative backlash that arose in response to President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s policies. FDR’s New Deal was characterized by immense centralization and a fundamental change in the relationship between the federal government and American citizens (Lowndes 2008). Conservatives perceived a fundamental transformation in the role of the federal government during Roosevelt’s presidency via New Deal policies and reacted by protesting this changes. Unlike the unified front taken by the Teritum Quids under the leadership of Randolph and Taylor, the conservative movement during the New Deal constituted several factions that held issue with FDR and his New Deal. The American Liberty League and the
Conservative Coalition, among other groups, interpreted the legislation enacted by
Roosevelt's administration as a direct attack on the institution of republican
government. Though, not operating under the same banner of protest, the
grievances held by these various factions displayed both continuity and solidarity
among the interests they were struggling to protect. Once again, the conservative
backlash that can be seen in response to the policies of the New Deal fall under the
categories of the three factors that lead to a conservative political movement:
development from republican tradition, perceived threat to individual liberties and
aggrandizement of power by the federal government.

**Historical Background**

The robust economy of the United States during the 1920's, driven by
innovative technologies, consumer goods and the housing market, provided
Americans with a sense of unremitting economic prosperity (Schneider 2009). The
Republican leadership of Harding, Coolidge and Hoover ushered in a decade of
conservative aims including the restraint of federal growth, decreased taxes and the
promotion of business expansion through the practice of laissez-faire (Ibid).
President Herbert Hoover believed that “The sole function of government is to bring
about a condition of affairs favorable to the beneficial development of private
enterprise” (Hoover [1932] in Waddell 2001, 26). Hoover, like many of his
counterparts, believed that even the slightest interference of the state in American
business could be detrimental to the capitalistic system and throw off the delicate
balance of power between the two. This doctrine proved to win favor with
corporate officials, who were granted greater freedoms with which to run their
businesses. As a result, thriving relationship between Republican controlled federal powers and business leaders developed, insulating the government from other class forces including the elderly and factory workers (Waddell 2001). The 1920s were an ideal atmosphere for American businesses, due to the absence of government intervention in the capitalistic economy, and promised quick, easy riches for those that involved themselves in the world of enterprise. Australian H.G. Adams observed in 1928 that “American [was] an employer’s paradise” (Bernstein 1969, 144).

However, the affluence of the Roaring Twenties came to a swift end in October of 1929 when the stock market crashed on a day known as Black Tuesday causing immediate and disastrous results. For a system that had been viewed as successful under Republican control, the crash drastically changed the conventional wisdom of the time. According to Brain Waddell (2001, 29),

The depression undermined the legitimacy of the prevailing accommodation between class forces and the state, reduced the leverage and prestige of businessmen over and within the states system, increased the authority of national officials and especially the president within the U.S. state system, and awakened popular class forces to the potential of political action.

The stock market crash initiated the onset of the Great Depression and put the United States economy in a rapid downward spiral that had a crippling effect on the majority of Americans. Scholar Amity Shlaes (2007) wrote how the crash of 1929 and the ensuing depression were triggered by deflation of currency, fiscal issues at the Federal Reserve and in banks, a loss of international trade and government intervention due to a lack of faith in the marketplace. Statistically, stock value on the
New York Stock Exchange dropped from $87 billion in 1929 to $19 billion in 1933 and it was estimated that in September of 1932 there were 10 million people completely unemployed and 25 million people without a source of income (Degler 1984). The United States, under the direction of President Herbert Hoover, was experiencing economic devastation that reached astounding heights.

President Hoover’s political theory rested on his conservative belief that the executive power should be severely restricted according to Article II of the Constitution but with the country facing dire conditions, he began to act within his presidential means (Bernstein 1969). In January of 1932, the president turned to the federal government to meet the needs of the American people with activism. Within the next two hundred days, he pushed through a bill that eased mortgage debt, enlarged banking reserves, and increased credit for farmers and developers (Lichtman 2008). Hoover attempted to combat the advent of the Depression by means of public relations, reaching out to both businessmen and the American people. He met with leaders of business, farm and labor, pleading with them to sustain wage levels and keep payrolls steady (Phillips-Fein 2009). He strove to instill hope within the American public, promising in a 1930 speech that America had “passed the worst and with the continuity unity of effort we shall rapidly recover” (Hoover [1930] in Angly 1932). Hoover also spoke with media outlets, urging them to refrain from reporting too negatively about the state of the economy in fear that they would aggravate the situation. In addition, he advocated national and state public works, suggested a bank holiday, created the Federal Farm Board and the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, and signed into law a bill providing
some federal relief for the poor (Doenecke 2003). In spite of Hoover’s glib actions, the economic situation worsened along with the American public's faith in the president and his conservative executive style. The public felt that, despite Hoover’s actions, the Depression was continuing to wreaking havoc. Unemployment was still on the rise, the economy was severely devastated and investors began running to banks to exchange their US dollars for gold. During his run for re-election in 1932, he said,

The function of government in these times is to use its reserve powers and its strength for the protection of citizens and local governments... It is not the function of the government to relieve individuals of the responsibilities to their neighbors, or to relieve the private institutions of their responsibilities to the public (Hoover [1932] in Scheider 2009, 16).

Hoover’s desire to maintain his conservative ideals of limited government while still attempting to combat the effects of the Depression seemed to fall short in the minds of Americans, who rejected the failing administration by voting for Democratic candidates from 1930 to 1932. The American public was desperate for an alternative.

That beacon of hope came in the form of Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt. Son of an affluent family and equipped with a famous last name, FDR made his way up the political ladder serving as a New York State Senator, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy during Woodrow Wilson’s Administration and the Governor of New York. He established himself as a progressive liberal who took a stand against corporate power, wanted to alleviate plight of urban poor and favored expansive role for
government (Maney 1992). Eventually chosen as the Democratic nominee for the 1932 presidential election, Franklin D. Roosevelt promised during his acceptance speech at the Democratic National Convention “a new deal for the American people... [based on] bold, persistent experimentation” riling up support from a devastated nation (Roosevelt [1932] in Peters and Woolley). The liberal ideology of FDR, professing greater regulation and spending for relief, provided an appealing contrast to Hoover's conservatism (Lichtman 2008). After a turbulent period of minimal government intervention, voters started to reject Hoover's conservatism and began to place the responsibility of remedying the Great Depression on the federal government. This shift towards increased involvement resonated with FDR's liberal voice, with liberalism, in this sense, referring to an ideology that promotes progressive change in contrast to conservative resistance to change (Phillips-Fein 2009). As a result, during the 1932 presidential election, Hoover lost the executive power to the charismatic Democrat, who swept the county and gained 57.4 percent of the popular vote to Hoover's 40 percent (Doenecke 2003).

The inauguration of Franklin D. Roosevelt on March 4, 1933 marked a turning point in American politics, with Democrats securing a stable presidential and congressional majority for the first time since the Civil War that they would maintain until the late 1960's, and signaled the public's faith in the new president to take action against the Depression (Schneider 2009). FDR notably said in his inaugural speech of 1933 “We have nothing to fear but fear itself” (Roosevelt 1933, 178). He instilled a newfound hope in a futile American public with rhetoric pledging effective federal intervention in economic and social realms that would
lead to positive change. Roosevelt’s liberal vision for reviving the country rested in
his primary goal of getting people back to work in addition to increasing the US’s
purchasing power, protecting farm owners and their land from foreclosure, uniting
relief programs and coordinating transportation and communication initiatives
(Ibid). In order to meet these objectives, FDR asked Congress to bestow upon him a
broad executive power “to wage a war against the emergency, as great as the power
that would be given to me if we were in fact invaded by a foreign foe” (Ibid, 181).
Having been given the vote of confidence by the American people, Roosevelt
announced his plan to push full steam ahead by employing federal powers
aggressively to resuscitate the nation.

Roosevelt envisioned a “new deal,” based on a liberal ideology of government
intervention, that focused on what historians call the three R’s: relief, recovery and
reform, in order to address the all-encompassing disparity of the American public
during the Great Depression (Eden 1989). The first task of FDR’s plan, relief,
involved taking immediate action to combat the rapidly deteriorating economy and
provide support to the poor and unemployed. Recovery referred to creating
temporary programs designed to revive consumer demand and return the economy
back to normal levels of operation. Finally, reform constituted of making permanent
changes to the economy designed to prevent another depression. FDR appointed a
cabinet of acclaimed professionals, called his “Brains Trust” which including Henry
Morgenthau Jr. Harold Ickes and Frances Perkins, to aid him in carrying out his
mission (Doenecke 2003). It was President Roosevelt’s belief that the successful
implementation of the three R’s of the New Deal, accomplished by an expanded
executive authority and cooperative Congress, would remedy the perils of the Great Depression and put the United States back on course. It was a plan that provided a stark contrast to the presidential style of Hoover, who favored non-interventionism, and threw conservative politicians for an undesirable loop. The severity of FDR’s gravitation away from the executive approach of former President Hoover resulted in backlash from factions of opposition among both politicians and business leaders. The conservative response to FDR’s New Deal began with the famous first Hundred Days of Roosevelt’s presidency and continued throughout the entirety of his tenure and the New Deal.

Factors that Contribute to CPMs

The focus of this particular case study is to examine the New Deal Era during the Roosevelt presidency with the intention of analyzing specific events that received conservative criticism. The events within each factor are arranged chronologically, but do not correlate to a time frame among one another. It is important to point out that Roosevelt assumed the executive power in 1932 as a liberal Democrat who saw a degree of government intervention as the solution to a depressed US economy and proposed the expansion of the executive power during his campaign for the presidency. Unlike the Tertium Quid case, FDR’s known political philosophy diverged from key conservative values so there was no expectation of the new president to uphold a set of principles characteristic to conservatism. Rather, conservative factions, comprised of both Republicans and Democrats, were able to mobilize early on in Roosevelt’s first term in order to combat forthcoming legislation they believed would jeopardize conservative
republican values. It is also important to note that within this case study, we see the expansion of involvement in a CPM to include not only politicians and government officials, but also business leaders and other key players in the economy. This demonstrates an evolution of American political involvement to include participants beyond the scope of political power thus representing more people with broader interests. The New Deal era, therefore, is fundamentally different from the Jeffersonian presidency in historical context as well as in relation to specific grievances. However, there are still palpable reflections of the three factors that contribute to CPMs during the New Deal era effectively demonstrating a theme of continuity between the first case study and the second.

Factor 1: Deviation From Republican Tradition

In a 1932 address to two thousand businessmen at San Francisco's Commonwealth Club, Roosevelt called “for a reappraisal of values” and proclaimed “the day of enlightened administration has come” (Roosevelt 1932, 173). FDR’s desire for the re-definition of rights necessitated a departure from American political tradition and the establishment of a new administrative state to be given a central role in political, economical and societal planning. The New Deal, as proposed by Roosevelt prior to its execution and interpreted by conservative outlets, was to fundamentally modify and reform the very foundations of the United States, including the Constitution through the reorganization of the executive power. Former GOP chair from 1928-29, Hubert Work, warned that only a portion of conservative leaders were all that was “standing between this nation and the wrecking of its institutions of government” by Roosevelt’s New Deal (Work [1933]...
in Lichtman 2008, 59). In effect, Roosevelt’s order constituted a relatively revolutionary idea, according to conservative thinkers, that intended to alter the operational norms and conventional wisdom of the United States (Eden 1989). The liberal overtures alluding to change that were imbedded in both FDR’s Commonwealth Club speech and his 1933 inaugural address foreshadowed the forthcoming changes in the interaction between government, businesses and the American people.

Roosevelt’s famous first hundred days in office consisted of an unprecedented barrage of legislative activity aimed at providing relief to the public. His first move as president was to declare a four-day national bank holiday and sign into law the Emergency Banking Act, created by conservative bankers, which authorized the Federal Reserve to issue new bank notes, addresses questions of the gold standard (which would later cause issues with conservative factions) and instructed Treasury officials to monitor the reopening of banks in order to curtail the sudden collapse of the banking system (Doenecke 2003). Roosevelt also devoted himself to cutting federal wages, congressional salaries and veteran benefits, all together saving millions of dollars, with the proposal of his “Bill to Maintain the Credit of the United States.” These two initial actions of “orthodox deflationist intentions”, both in a sense extensions of Hoover’s previous efforts, calmed the fears of the business community as well as conservative politicians who were concerned with a drastic overhaul of federal control upon FDR’s arrival into the presidency (Waddell 2001, 30). Shortly after, though, the president shifted gears and began enacting numerous programs, known as ABC programs due to their reference in
acronyms, engineered by the government that appeared to many conservative thinkers to be anathema to American tradition.

Over the course of the first hundred days, the Roosevelt administration with the help of Congress passed fifteen major relief and recovery measures. The first major program of the New Deal was the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA), which served to drive up the price of goods and get people back to work. There were three major components created by the act: the Public Works Administration (PWA), new labor rights for American workers and the National Recovery Administration (NRA) (Shlaes 2007). The Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA), established by the Agricultural Adjustment Act, was another New Deal strategy, which was designed to oversee the payment of subsidies to farmers who agreed to curtail their output of crops in order to reduce surpluses. Yet another was the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), which was created for the purpose of providing temporary aid to states providing relief programs to citizens, as well as creating new welfare institutions (Hawley 1989). The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) and Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) were some among the many other initiatives developed during this time. He promoted his ABC programs through radio broadcasts known as Fireside Chats where Roosevelt would explain the policies of his administration in a way that was comprehensible to the average citizen. The Fireside Chats served as a comfort to the American public, evoking a sense of personal connection between the listener and Roosevelt and alleviating severe national anxiety (Maney 1992). The broad sweep of activity initiated by FDR during the first hundred days of
his presidency gave off an impression to the public that he was doing all he could to effectively combat the Great Depression.

While American citizens viewed Roosevelt as a friend and a savior, conservative criticism from both politicians and business leaders sprung up challenging FDR’s New Deal as dangerous to American tradition. Many believed that the enactment of several New Deal programs, particularly the NRA, were established without proper authority and could be considered unconstitutional, inherently rejecting republican desire to uphold the Constitution as well as violating the property rights of citizens. They rallied around their charge against Roosevelt as a leader who expanded his executive powers beyond those enumerated to him and exuded “fascist repression” and “communist collectivism” (Lichtman 2008, 59). Senator Simeon D. Fess of Ohio wrote in a 1933 letter that President Roosevelt was taking “complete power of Fascism... [with] his inner cabinet of professors who [were] steeped in socialism” (Fess [1933] in Ibid, 59). Former President Hoover added to the dialogue by claiming that Roosevelt had “violated principles which reach to the very foundation of our nation” (Hoover [1933] in Ibid, 59). Conservatives felt that at the core of the New Deal was a philosophy that did not reflect traditional values of American government, but instead those of other countries, such as the Soviet Union. One such example of their dissatisfaction with the New Deal during 1933 dealt with Roosevelt’s stance on the gold policy. Gradually implemented, Roosevelt removed the US from the gold standard and allowed the dollar to depreciate with the hopes of promoting controlled inflation (Shlaes 2007). A mandate followed requiring all persons in the possession of gold to
surrender it to the government. This process angered conservatives, like publisher Carter Glass and budget director Lewis Douglas, who believed it to be a discouraging plan that meant national repudiation and the end to western civilization (Glass [1933] and Douglas [1933] in Doenecke 2003). Roosevelt's abandonment of the gold standard, a currency referred to directly in the Constitution, and mandate for all citizens to give up their gold was unconstitutional in the eyes of conservatives. The aggressive first hundred days of FDR coupled with growing antagonism from conservatives reached new heights of dissention in the following year.

1934 saw the formation of several conservative groups that rose up against a New Deal they believed to be deteriorating republican tradition. In June of 1934, the Republican National Committee was one of the first political organizations to draft a “Statement of Principles,” which outlined their criticisms of the New Deal. The manifesto stated “We must not see destroyed in four years a civilization which has been centuries in building” and advocated for “American democracy, working along American lines, in accordance with the spirit of American institutions” (“Statement of Principles” [1934] in Lichtman 2008, 60). They argued that the New Deal's seeming disregard for established norms was dangerous to the core principles that formed the United States. Another group that arose in protest to the New Deal was the American Liberty League. The League was a non-partisan organization that was comprised of wealthy businessmen, like the du Pont brothers, General Motors executive Donaldson Brown, as well as politicians, such as Al Smith and John W. Davis, who sought to use the rule of the Constitution to “combat radicalism, preserve property rights, uphold and preserve the Constitution” (The American
They claimed to shatter class-consciousness and speak on behalf of the silent masses like the work force. The League created anti-New Deal literature that disseminated conservative ideals of upholding the Constitution and conservative criticism of FDR’s New Deal policies. Titles of the pamphlets included “The Way Dictatorships Start” and “Will It Be Ave Caesar?” alluding to the wrongdoing of the Roosevelt administration. The apparent disconnect between wealthy Liberty League members and an impoverished majority hindered the magnitude the League’s influence, but they still managed to somewhat effectively combat the New Deal.

These were only two among many protests of a conservative nature against the policies of the New Deal. Support for these groups grew as certain federal actions were deemed questionable by a broader audience.

Issues with the NRA proved to divide New Dealers from those who were unsure of the success and constitutionality of the program. The NRA was designed to emulate the War Industries Board (WIB) of WWI however it would be operating during times of peace. The NRA was given the responsibility of establishing industry codes that addressed issues such as minimum wage, maximum hours of work, child labor laws, prices and labor relations (Hawley 1989). Unfortunately, the expressed goals of recovery and getting people back to work had not been successful. The NRA codes were being increasingly violated due to a lack of reinforcement and there was a question as to whether the program was constitutional at all (Shlaes 2007). Republican Senator William E. Borah from Idaho challenged the NRA during a 1934 congressional session arguing that the New Deal program would eliminate
independent, small businesses, enlarge executive powers and had the potential to lead to a price-fixing scheme against consumers, inherently violating property rights (Borah 1934). Many others saw the NRA as federal control over economic life, a reflection of dictatorship and an obstacle to recovery. Liberty Leaguer Al Smith questioned “where the flag of the Constitution still stands” (Smith [1933] in Ibid, 55). The outcry by the masses, fueled in large part by conservative arguments, put the NRA in a state of stagnancy that led to the eventual demise of the entire enterprise. After a brief effort by FDR to revitalize the administration, the Supreme Court ruled that the actions of the National Recovery Administration was unconstitutional and declared the program illegal (Phillips-Fein 2009).

Conservatives who believed the NRA usurped American tradition were once again riled up in 1937 during Roosevelt’s court-packing scheme. Tensions rose between FDR and the Supreme Court after it was decided that the NRA was unconstitutional. Roosevelt believed that the Court was behaving as a policy making body that was “reading into the Constitution words and implication which are not there, and which were never intended to be there” (Roosevelt [1937] in Lichtman 2008, 94). His anger towards the Supreme Court due to their lack of support for his New Deal, combined with his confidence after winning a landslide re-election in 1936, resulted in the president’s proposal to expand the size of the Supreme Court. Roosevelt crafted legislation that gave the executive the power to nominate an additional judge for every justice that declined to retire after the age of seventy (Litchman 2008). If passed, FDR would have been able to increase the size of the Supreme Court from nine to fifteen in addition to increasing the chances of having
his New Deal programs supported by the Supreme Court. Conservatives viewed this proposal to be a blatant example of the president attempting to undermine the judicial branch and, in essence, throw off the balance of power within the federal government as established by the Constitution. In response to the proposed bill, a group of senators from both parties, led by Democrat Josiah W. Bailey and called the Conservative Coalition, created a *Conservative Manifesto* that detailed what they considered extreme programs of the New Deal and outlined a statement of ideals and list of demands (Lowndes 2008). They pledged to “erect appropriate safeguards under the common-law principles and self-reliant spirit on which we must depend,” demonstrating a desire to uphold republican principles of constitutional adherence and virtue, which was seemingly being diluted particularly by Roosevelt’s court-packing plan (*Conservative Manifesto* [1937] in Moore 1965, 36). Included in the demands were calls for a balanced budget, reduced taxes, the promotion of states’ rights and a reliance on traditional American government. The coalition refused to let Roosevelt be allowed to proceed with a dictatorial power grab that would effectively override constitutional principles. They promoted their ideas throughout Congress and asked fellow members to join their petition against the plan.

Unfortunately, many elected officials, while agreeing with the substance of the manifesto, chose to distance themselves from the effort for various reasons. While the manifesto was limited by officials refusal to sign it, the notion that Roosevelt was undermining the Constitution and its republican values did resonate with Congress who chose to not support the president’s bill.
The rapid passage of numerous New Deal programs during the first hundred
days of Roosevelt’s presidency and the legislation that was to follow provided a
cause for concern for conservative politicians and business leaders. Events such as
the abandonment of the gold standard, the unconstitutionality of the NRA and the
perceived corruption of FDR’s court expansion plan caused conservative individuals
to meet on a common ground of striving to protect traditional republican values of
the Constitution and American government. The rise of factions of Roosevelt
opposition, such as the Liberty League and Conservative Coalition, struggled to
conserve these values by drawing attention to what they believed to be FDR’s
deviation from them. This alliance between like-minded conservatives only grew in
strength when considering the second factor that causes CPMs: perceived threat to
individual liberties.

**Factor 2: Perceived Threat to Individual Liberties**

During FDR’s acceptance speech for the presidential nomination he claimed
“Throughout the Nation, men and women, forgotten in the political philosophy of
the Government of the last years look to us here for guidance and for more equitable
opportunity to share in the distribution of national wealth” (Roosevelt [1932] in
Peters and Woolley). Alluding to an essay by Yale professor named William Graham
Sumner, Roosevelt spoke to the “forgotten man” promising, that if elected, to act
upon his behalf (Shlaes 2007). The “forgotten man” in Roosevelt’s speech was
referring to those who were victim to the policies of the 1920s and were
experiencing the perils of the Depression the hardest- the poor man, the old man,
the sick man, the workingman and anyone else that required government
assistance. This liberal notion revealed Roosevelt’s belief that the federal government was given the responsibility of broad paternalistic intervention. He wished to alleviate the stresses of the most helpless individuals by enacting policies that were to level the playing field among Americans. Roosevelt hinted in this campaign speech that the days of laissez-faire, free enterprise and unregulated capitalism characteristic of Republican control in the 20’s were over, alarming some conservatives who cherished these freedoms. When Roosevelt assumed the presidency in March of 1933, his liberalism came to fruition in the New Deal programs enacted, even within the first hundred days. As FDR began encroaching on the individual liberties of free market according to conservative interpretation, conservative factions began pushing back in protest demonstrating an even greater polarization in New Deal ideologies.

The most contentious issue relative to perceived threat to individual liberty was that of labor. From a conservative perspective, Roosevelt had already expressed his preference for individuals on the economic totem pole and waged war on the business community. Beyond the NRA’s questionable constitutionality and perceived usurpation of republican principles, as discussed in the previous section, the New Deal program represented one of the administrations first attempts to begin restricting the freedoms of business. The controversial NRA contained a provision in Section 7(a) that was conceived to encourage unionization. Most businesses did not have unions causing less than six percent of workers in 1933 to be members of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) (Doenecke 2003). Between May and August of 1933, a small pickup in industry caused the margin between the
cost of living and earnings to increase. Labor disputes emerged throughout the country instigating a wave of strikes with some breaking out in violence (Waddell 2001). Workers’ demands included better pay, shorter hours, and union recognition with collective bargaining. Fearful of the potential damage to an already fragile economy, Roosevelt created the National Labor Board (NLB) in 1933, which was then abolished and succeeded by a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). Neither committee had any teeth to enforce their recommendations allowed corporations to ignore them entirely and proved to be ultimately ineffectual in promoting peace between employers and employees. With the labor disputes unresolved, the relationship between employees and workers was held in limbo.

The National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), also called the “Brass Hats,” was a group of conservative businessmen formed in the late nineteenth century who were determined to keep free enterprise alive and combat government concessions to labor unions (Schneider 2009). The Brass Hats emerged as an organization in at the forefront of New Deal opposition and dedicated themselves to preserving the political, social and, most importantly, economic liberties afforded to them in the 1920’s. They sought to organize like-minded conservative business leaders into a collective that promoted capitalism, rallied against labor unions and defended the ideological and practical rights of employers (Phillips-Fein 2009). NAM held issue with the New Deal’s push for industrial planning and collective bargaining and believed that programs like the NRA was socialism at its worst (Schneider 2009). Leaders felt that business was suffering because “The public does not understand industry largely because industry itself has made no real effort to
tell its story” and it was their duty to educate Americans (Tedlow in Phillips-Fein 2009, 14). NAM worked to enlighten the public on the story of business by spending nearly $1.5 million on a numerous media outlets like radio, newspaper and direct mail (Schneider 2009). The impressive organization and tactical skill of NAM aided in one of the biggest struggles against FDR and his New Deal.

The Wagner Act, also called the National Labor Relations Act, proposed to Congress in 1935 “protected collective bargaining through federally supervised and certified union elections and prohibited unions run by companies and unfair labor practices” (Lichtman 2008). NAM was in vehement opposition to the passage of the Wagner Act believing that it violated the Constitution under the conditions that jurisdiction over manufacturing and labor conditions was a right held by the state and not the federal government (Emery [1935] in Doenecke 2003). Many, including NAM and the Business Advisory Council, felt that the Wagner Act would be extremely detrimental to the public interest, partly by impacting the production cost of goods which would in turn influence prices, and jeopardize the autonomy of individuals running businesses (Lichtman 2008). Conservatives believed that the law represented yet another example of the federal government stepping in and exerting power where they had no jurisdiction. The Wagner Act, they felt, was a direct assault against the business community and republican liberties, restricting their economic freedoms and negatively impacting the way they conducted business. The Liberty League joined NAM and other interest groups in the fight against the Wagner Act and members from both factions lobbied and testified against its passage in Congress (Phillips-Fein 2009). Though the act passed, both
NAM and the Liberty League challenged the decision in court and urged other employers to actively disobey the order. NAM went as far as calling for amendments to the Wagner Act that “served the ‘welfare of the public’ by balancing union and employer rights” (Lichtman 2008, 64). Thomas Girdler, a member of NAM who had originally welcomed the NRA under the belief that it would help small companies better compete with large businesses, revoked his support based on the Wagner Act’s empowerment of labor unions (Schneider 2009). Girdler advised the American Iron and Steel Institute that “we are not going to recognize any professional union” and later said after the sit-down strikes that crippled the auto industry in early in 1937 that “I wouldn’t have a contract, verbal or written with an irresponsible, racketeering, violent Communist body like the [Congress of Industrial Organizations]” (Girdler [1936] and [1937] in Ibid, 25). Girdler’s fervent opposition to the Wagner Act was emblematic of conservative hostility, in that he saw the bill as a direct assault on the rights of employers in favor of the rights of employees. The passage of the Wagner Act in 1935 was a huge win for both labor unions as well as New Dealers. Despite this, conservative criticism of the bill drew on important values of constitutionality and the preservation of individual rights to make the public question the motives of the Wagner Act.

In addition, Roosevelt proposed and passed tax hikes targeted at the rich in order to fund various programs of the New Deal. The Revenue Act of 1935, also known as the “soak the rich” tax, created a wealth tax that increased the tax on higher incomes, corporations, gifts and estates (Lichtman 2008). A proposed constitutional amendment was also included in the bill which, if passed, would
authorize federal, state and local government securities to create a general taxation of income (Blakey and Blakey 1935). Roosevelt said “if a government is to be prudent its taxes must produce ample revenues without discouraging enterprise; and if it is to be just it must distribute the burden of taxes equitably” (Roosevelt [1935] in Blakey and Blakey 1935, 673). The outcry from both Democrat and Republican conservatives labeled the bill as yet another infringement on individual liberty and property by the Roosevelt administration. Conservatives saw the revenue bill as blatant socialism, based on the notion of sharing the wealth. The opposition’s statement in the minority report of the Senate Finance Committee claimed that the bill was not a revenue measure because it violated “every sound principle of taxation,” which in turn breached the principles of individual rights because of the nature of taxation removing money from the hands of those who earned it (Minority Report of the Senate Finance Committee [1935] in Blakey and Blakey 1935, 687). Progressive taxation, according to conservative philosophy, was a form of unnecessary government intervention in the finances of citizens and private businesses. In this case, the proposed tax was seen not to be a form of revenue for the government, but rather a means of punishing individuals for their success by taking directly from their monetary property. Because conservatives interpreted the bill’s revenue intake to be “incidental” rather than the sole intention, they believed the Revenue Act of 1935 violated property rights set by the Constitution. In addition, the faction believed that the way to recovery was to support the accomplishments of those making more, typically those who were in the business community, because it was these people that would generate revenue and
put Americans back to work. However, they saw the revenue bill as

A bill to confiscate property; to discourage business and prevent its expansion; to create greater inequalities in the inequitable distribution of existing tax burdens; to promote unemployment and to obstruct recovery; to jeopardize the financial position of the government; and for other improper purposes (Ibid, 688).

Rather than encouraging recovery, the proposed bill would effectually stifle it and therefore should be prevent from passing. They believed the tax would result in the decentralization of wealth and business for social means, used to fund government programs of the New Deal. Against conservative protest of infringement on individuals’ rights, Congress passed the bill, excluding the proposed constitutional amendment, in 1935. The heated opposition to the Revenue Act of 1935 failed in blocking the passage of the bill due to the Roosevelt administration’s stronghold on members of Congress.

Roosevelt’s platform to accommodate the “forgotten man” at the bottom of the economic threshold unintentionally created the parallel problem with a different victim. According to conservatives, the desire to cater aid and regulation towards a specific demographic of people effectually marginalized another group. Business owners and corporate executives suffered the brunt of New Deal policies and were forced to assume the role of the “forgotten man.” FDR’s plan restricted their freedoms to conduct their businesses accordingly and forced them to meet the demands of labor unions in order to avoid penalties by the Wagner Act. FDR also imparted harsh taxes on higher income individuals, which conservatives saw as a
violation to the property rights laid out in the Constitution. Conservative factions like NAM, the League and other similar bases strove to resist the passage of these acts by arguing that they undermined individual liberties and rejected previous notions of free enterprise. While it is true the Roosevelt administration saw more victories than the conservative dissenters did, these factions planted seeds of conservatism in the minds of the American public. With the examination of the third factor that contributes to a CPM, the aggrandizement of power by the federal government, an undeniable connection between all three factors will demonstrate how the combination of them equaled a CPM.

Factor 3: Aggrandizement of Power by the Federal Government

The main grievance conservatives held against the Roosevelt administration was the vast increase in power of the federal government. Beginning in 1933 with the passage of the Economy Act granting Roosevelt the power to reorganize the executive branch to increase effectiveness, the New Deal radically expanded the powers of the national government (Hawely 1989). Roosevelt’s ABC programs passed during the first hundred days were created in order to provide reform in a vast array of areas including finance, agriculture and labor and resulted in increased federal intervention and regulation beyond previous limits. Various other measures enacted that targeted relief for the American people, recovery of the economy and reform of industry were unprecedented in their effects. As a result of the federal government’s unparalleled activity, conservative objections arose from several outlets calling foul on the Roosevelt’s administration. The actions described in previous sections were all, in some sense, an example of expanding federal powers.
American Liberty League labeled the New Deal bureaucracy “a vast organism spreading its tentacles over the business and private life of the citizens of the country” and ultimately hindering any chance of recovery or prosperity (“Federal Bureaucracy in the Fourth Year of the New Deal: A Study of the Appalling Increase in the Number of Government Employees...” [1936] in Phillips-Fein 2009, 12). Conservatives, like those in the League, felt that Roosevelt’s federal expansion was an effort to permanently increase the scope of executive power under the guise of trying to alleviate a crippling Depression. Some drew attention to members of the Roosevelt administration’s friendship with prominent Soviets and claimed that the path the US was on with New Deal policies led towards socialism and communism (Waddell 2001). It was with the introduction of Social Security legislation and perceived ramifications of the bill that conservatives would experience one of their most intense battles with the Roosevelt administration.

Roosevelt’s State of the Union Address in January of 1935 outlined a fresh approach to the New Deal. He discussed unemployment insurance and old-age pensions as part of a new comprehensive social security program designed to reduce hazards of the American people. FDR claimed that “The Federal Government is the only governmental agency with sufficient power and credit to meet this situation” (State of the Union Roosevelt 1935, 217). Here, he emphasized the capacity of the federal government as the only viable option to help remedy the desperation of the American public. While the number of Americans over the age of 60 had more than doubled since 1900, almost half the states in the US did not provide old age pensions and those that did were inadequate. In addition, over
twenty percent of the nation’s labor force was still unemployed (Shlaes 2007). In order to combat these problems, Roosevelt presented a plan that was served three chief roles: establish a national pension for citizens over 65, create a program for unemployment insurance and provide federal aid to states for the care of the disabled, dependent mothers and children, and for public health services (Doenecke 2003). The program would be paid for by payroll taxes, according to Roosevelt. The legislation, known as the Social Security bill, was FDR’s attempt to establish a new bureaucracy that served to administer social insurance to Americans, like a safety net, and fundamentally alter the relationship between government and citizen.

Conservative opposition to Social Security, based on the grounds that Roosevelt and the federal government had no right to enact such a bill, arose almost immediately after its proposal. Dissenters’ objections lay in the notion that Roosevelt was creating a welfare state that went beyond constitutional limits and that would undermine the principles of American individualism. Members of the Liberty League argued the plan would violate states’ rights, prove to be fiscally irresponsible and would result in detriment to the economy (Phillips-Fein 2009). The crux of the League’s argument rest in the belief that the federal government, who had already breached the limits of their inherent powers during the course of the New Deal, was overstepping their constitutional bounds to fulfill a liberal goal of providing for citizens beyond their granted powers. Leaguers, joined by members of NAM, also claimed that payroll taxes and other mandatory forms of federal action would hold back the growth of the US economy and, consequently, result in economic inefficient and reduction of basic freedoms (Glenn and Teles 2009). NAM
supporter and Congressman Daniel Reed claimed that Americans would experience “the lash of the dictator” and said that they would “submit themselves to a fingerprint test” (Schlesinger 1965, 311). Former president Herbert Hoover ([1935] in Ibid, 57) joined in the dialogue, in a speech to a group of Californian Republicans, claimed that,

The American people have directly before them the issue... of rejecting [individual liberty] in favor of the newly created system of regimentation and bureaucratic domination in which men and women are not masters of government but are the pawns and dependents of a centralized and potentially self-perpetuating government

Conservatives, like Hoover, saw Social Security as the beginning of a trend of citizen’s dependence on the central government to provide them with relief when they were unable to do so themselves. If the Social Security bill successfully passed, conservatives feared that it would lead to a welfare state in the United States and result in a newfound dependence on the government that would be in conflict of republican virtues such as localism. If citizens depended on programs of the federal government to provide for their livelihood, then the principles inherent in small, political communities would cease to exist. Following this line of reason was Frank I. Peckham, self-proclaimed protector of republican virtue and representative for the Sentinels of the Republic, who testified at the Senate hearings on Social Security (Glenn and Teles 2009). The Sentinels of the Republic was a group founded in 1922 “in opposition to all measures that tend to further and further to centralize power and responsibility in the Federal Government of Washington over various sorts of
matters” (Ibid, 59). Peckham argued that old-age pensions were not the responsibility of the federal government but rather that of state governments so the bill as executed by the federal government would be fundamentally unconstitutional. Conservative outcry against the Social Security bill perceived it as dangerous to the bounds of restricted federal authority and felt that it would foster a precarious and immeasurable dependence on the federal government.

Once again, conservative backlash could not overcome the power FDR had over Congress. The Social Security Act of 1935 passed in the House and the Senate and was signed into law by Roosevelt on August 14, 1935. Conservatives fought the legislation after its passage but continued to fear the increasing power of Roosevelt’s administration and what they saw to be a slippery slope towards a welfare state. In conservatives’ minds, according to Ellis W. Hawley (1989, 82), “the problem lay with power hungry bureaucratic aggrandizers who were seeking to turn... emergency administration into a bureaucratic establishment.” The New Deal era represented the US government assuming a paternal role and creating a trend towards increased government regulation and centralized power through the legislation passed by a Roosevelt supporting Congress. Conservative fear over the expansion of federal power warranted continued protest against the liberal policies of the Roosevelt administration. Even Supreme Court Justice Brandeis exclaimed “we’re not going to let this government centralize everything” (Brandeis [1935] in Shlaes 2007). The conservative movement to fight the New Deal and its liberal philosophies was imminent and forthcoming.

New Deal Conservative Movement
Based on the evidence, there was not one specific moment that can be unequivocally determined as the emergence of a CPM during the New Deal era. The myriad of groups championing conservative doctrines that arose (and often times faded away) over the course of Roosevelt’s presidency in reaction to the New Deal removes the ability to pinpoint this exact time. However, the impact that these factions had on the New Deal legislation and the modern day conservative movement is undeniable. Described as the “conservative armada,” with the “main battle fleet” including the Republican Party, NAM and the American Liberty League accompanied by “lesser warships” like the Sentinels, began to set sail against the New Deal in full force (Lichtman 2008, 85). Comprised of impassioned conservatives opposed to the liberal institutions of the New Deal, the members of the movement against the Roosevelt administration and its supporters fought relentlessly to prevent the passage of proposed legislation and battle already existing forms of New Deal programs.

The movement against the New Deal was characterized by both failures and successes. Conservative groups failed to repeal or revamp a single important New Deal program and enact legislation during this period that was favored by a majority of conservatives, though conservative legal challenges to the New Deal were effective until 1937. Organizations such as the Liberty League were not taken seriously as a result of their membership by the richest in society and sometimes lost their credibility as the voice for the majority of the American public (Eden 1989). In addition, various conservative factions were untrusting of one another, with their distaste for the New Deal not great enough to overcome other differences,
and prevented any form of unification for the movement. They also lost control of the White House throughout the entirety of the Roosevelt presidency, preventing conservatives from making any real headway. However, through the persistence of the League and NAM, among others, conservatives saw the end of the NRA, the rejection of FDR’s court-packing plan and increased their representation in Congress. For the next twenty-five years, they successfully limited significant domestic expansion to a Roosevelt created liberal state (Lichtman 2008). They battled tirelessly against the new system of government established by the New Deal such as labor unions, federal welfare programs and government regulation of the economy. According to many scholars, it was the struggle against the New Deal that helped bring about the modern conservative movement that culminated in the Reagan’s 1980 presidential victory (Phillips-Fein 2009).

**Conclusion**

In order to combat the crippling effects of the Great Depression on the American public, President Franklin D. Roosevelt promoted his New Deal aimed at relief, recovery and reform. Sensed to be a liberal assault on the republican foundations of the United States government, a conservative movement arose in protest to various pieces of legislation proposed and passed. Conservative organizations fought against the unconstitutionality of the NRA and FDR’s court-packing scheme, protested the passage of the Wagner Act and the Revenue Act of 1935 and attacked the Social Security Act of 1935. The opposition operated under the belief that the Roosevelt administration was illegitimately expanding the federal power to establish a bureaucratic state that was pro-regulatory, pro-intervention
and sought to create a newfound dependence of American citizens on the national government. It was the mission of conservative challengers to prevent FDR from passing his liberal agenda and putting the republican foundations of America in jeopardy.

Ironically, there is a school of academics that believe the New Deal was not as liberal as interpreted by conservative opposition but rather, in fact, moderate and possibly even conservative in nature. Allan J. Lichtman (2008, 58) writes, “Scholars have aptly noted that FDR’s reforms were incremental, modestly funded, and designed to rescue the capitalist economy.” Academics such as Irving Bernstein wrote that the New Deal did not go far enough to create the change that was needed to remedy the ills of Depression and Amity Schlaes claims that it wasn’t until the United States entrance into World War II that the United States fully recovered. The discrepancy by academics as to how conservative the New Deal really was provides insight into the importance that conservative perception had on their movement against the New Deal. The perceived deviation from republican tradition, threat against individual liberties and aggrandizement of federal powers was enough to motivate a conservative base to protest FDR’s New Deal policies. Groups such as the American Liberty League, the National Association of Manufacturers and other conservative minded organizations surfaced in order to protect the values of the conservative philosophy. Though not entirely successful in its endeavors during Roosevelt’s presidency and promotion of the New Deal, the conservative movement that arose in opposition fueled a rising sentiment of conservatism in the American public that eventually resulting in the election of Republican Ronald Reagan in 1980.
Chapter IV: Modern America and the Tea Party Movement

On a cold night in December of 1773, approximately a hundred enraged American colonists from all walks of life boarded three British trading ships stationed at Griffin’s Wharf in Boston harbor. They broke open 340 chests containing more than 46 lbs of tea and dumped the consignment, worth £10,000 in 1773 or $1 million today, into the ocean below (Carp 2010). Elevating tension and turmoil over the lack of American colonist representation in the British Parliament resulted in colonists’ distrust of and resentment towards Britain. The dissidents who dumped the tea were angered by the taxation imposed by King George III and the British Parliament and the recent passage of the Tea Act, which gave the British East India Company a monopoly on the American tea market by allowing the company to sell tea directly to customers and completely bypass traders and wholesalers (Unger 2011). They based their actions on a political ideology concerning the opposition of taxes, the violation of colonists’ rights and the questionable legitimacy of British authority. The incident, later to be known as the Boston Tea Party, unleashed a slew of pent up economic, social and political grievances held by American colonists. Shortly after the dumping of tea, Bostonians began violent riots, parades, protests and political mobilization in resistance to Britain that had never seen before in the United States (Carp 2010). As Samuel Adams said in a speech during August of 1776 “It does not take a majority to prevail, but rather an irate, tireless minority, keen on setting brushfires of freedom in the minds of men” (Adams in Armey and Kibbe 2010, 36). It was the rebellious protest of the Boston Tea Party that would act as a catalyst to the greatest revolution in
American history. It was also the ideological foundations of the Boston Tea Party of 1773 that would serve as a model for a division of the American population over 200 years later.

The third and final case study that will be used to analyze the three hypothesized factors that contribute to conservative uprisings in America is the modern day Tea Party movement. After Rick Santelli’s 2009 rant regarding Obama’s mortgage bailout plan and call for the organization of a contemporary movement reminiscent of the 1773 Boston Tea Party, conservative outlets sprung up all over the country. This modern day conservative uprising is understood by its members to be an emulation of the 1773 Tea Party, operating under similar gripes and beliefs of those patriots who started the American Revolution. The Tea Party movement, in the eyes of self-described Tea Party Patriots, is a national grassroots organization aimed at restoring the founding principles of the United States including fiscal responsibility, constitutionally limited government and free markets (Tea Party Patriots). This particular case study does not represent a unified Tea Party, but rather a loose association of local, grassroots groups operating under similar grievances and overall objectives. By investigating the causes that led to the surfacing of the Tea Party movement, it will be demonstrated that each complaint falls under the categories of deviation from republican tradition, perceived threat to individual liberties and aggrandizement of power by the federal government.

**Historical Context**

Conservative revival during the latter half of the 20th century, as seen by the election of Ronald Reagan, has been attributed with laying the ideological
groundwork for the contemporary Tea Party movement (John O'Hara 2010, Zernike 2010). The resentment of conservatives during the Roosevelt presidency and the New Deal, due to the establishment of liberal policy measures like the welfare state, threat to individual liberty and increased government intervention, continued to grow in post-war America. In an effort to transition from the periphery of American politics into the forefront, conservatives began organizing like-minded individuals, fundraising to bring in capital, actively recruiting potential new members and mobilizing voters to institutionalize their political ideology (Bjerre-Poulsen 2002). Republican politician Barry Goldwater’s 1960 publication of *The Consciousness of a Conservative* provided a compelling testament of conservative lexicon and personal conviction that ushered in a new articulation of conservatism that resonated with the American public. *Consciousness* discussed domestic issues, such as states’ rights, freedoms of citizens, elimination of social welfare programs and strict construction of the Constitution, which he felt comprised the core of the conservative ideology. In *Consciousness*, Goldwater (1960, 15) wrote:

> I have little interest in streamlining government or in making it more efficient, for I mean to reduce its size. I do not undertake to promote welfare, for I propose to extend freedom. My aim is not to pass laws, but to repeal them. It is not to inaugurate new programs, but to cancel old ones that do violence to the Constitution or that have failed their purpose, or that impose on the people an unwarranted financial burden. I will not attempt to discover whether legislation is “needed” before I have first determined whether it is constitutionally permissible. And if I should later be attacked for neglecting
my constituents "interests," I shall reply that I was informed that their main interest is liberty and that in that cause I am doing the very best I can.

In the 120-page text, he spoke to the importance of adhering to constitutional constraints in order to uphold the intention of the Founding Fathers. Federal programs in place that violated inherent powers were to be done away with in an effort to limit the scope of federal government and respect the rights of states. In addition, the government was to operate strictly within its constitutional bounds for the purpose of ensuring individual liberties, including acting responsibly with taxpayer money. Goldwater’s limited government, individual liberties, adherence to the Constitution and fiscal responsibility summarized a newfound conservative ethos that had previously been muddled by conflicting strains of right-wing theory.

As a result, Goldwater and his *Consciousness* had a significant influence in the accumulating strength of right-wing grassroots involvement in the 1960's and 70's (Zernike 2010). Many Americans saw the piece as a beacon of conservative political faith that initiated a “right-turn” in the population's attitude towards their relationship with the federal government (Bjerre Poulsen 2002, 296).

The growing conservative bloc stimulated by Barry Goldwater’s *Consciousness* began taking hold of the public's political leanings and played a significant role in the election of Ronald Reagan to the presidency in 1980 and 1984 (Gottfried 1993). Reagan personified the principles of conservatism espoused by Goldwater and his election embodied the American public's confirmation that they wanted the federal government to return to performing its basic functions, inherent in the Constitution, with the least cost and intervention possible (John O'Hara 2010).
According to Tea Party-ers Dick Armey and Matt Kibbe (2010), Reagan fueled the idea that small federal government was the ideal means to achieving peace and prosperity and helped America regain its national confidence and produce a thriving economy. Conservatism had been institutionalized and professionalized starting with Goldwater in 1964 and continuing to Reagan in 1980 with the establishment of think tanks, national organizations, political consultants and assemblies of everyday citizens representing conservatism as a positive, popular political program (Gamble 2009). Reagan’s legacy of small government, preservation of individual liberties and fiscal responsibility, begotten by Barry Goldwater, changed the trajectory of conservative politics in America and was to be used as a guide for political success later on. John O’Hara (2010, 40) of the Heartland Institute, a conservative think tank, wrote of the years following Reagan’s presidency, “Republicans lost their principled ground and thus lost elections… thus when principles fall by the wayside, so does electoral support.” Republican officials failed the conservative ethos, penned by Goldwater and popularized by Reagan, in the decades subsequent to Reagan’s tenure resulting in a loss of support by Americans, according to right-wingers. Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan’s quintessential conservatism was reignited in the new millennium and served to establish the theoretical foundations of an escalating conservative movement.

Flash forward to the 2000 presidential election between Republican George W. Bush and Democrat Al Gore. A strong economy that produced a budget surplus and a lack of real foreign threat placed the Democrats in prime position to maintain their control in the White House (Lichtman 2008). Yet the 2000 presidential
election between Bush and Gore left Americans divided. The race between the candidates proved to be a close one, with the winner to be determined by the person who was able to identify best with undecided voters and clinch battleground states, such as Florida, Tennessee and Ohio. A University of Michigan National Election Studies survey revealed that the “most important problems” facing the United States were education, social welfare and medical care, surpassing other concerns such as defense, foreign affairs and immigration (Critchlow 2011, 258). In addition, the results of a survey conducted by Arthur H. Miller and Thomas F. Klobucar claimed that 80 percent of all Republicans, half of all independents and 40 percent of all Democrats considered themselves conservative (Ibid, 258). It appeared that a majority of Americans, who claimed they were conservative, were prioritizing traditionally liberal issues. Bush appealed to this seeming paradox by running a campaign based upon what he called “compassionate conservatism,” which meant employing conservative principles of individual responsibility, free enterprise, low taxes and reduction of government spending to improve the general welfare of American society. During the campaign, Bush claimed to be the legitimate heir to the Reagan legacy and declared that it wasn’t Reaganesque to say one thing and do another in a speech attacking Republican contender John McCain (Bartlett 2006). His words echoed what politicians, business leaders and ordinary citizens alike believed to be a promise to restore the conservatism of Reagan’s presidency. His opponent Democrat Al Gore, in an effort to distance himself from the scandal of the Clinton administration, failed to capitalize on the prosperous economy and surplus ushered in by the previous president. Gore moved to the left Clinton on issues,
branding him as a liberal in a society whose majority identified themselves as conservatives. The end result was a win in the popular vote for Gore but an electoral win for Bush. For the first time since 1953, a Republican was inaugurated in the executive office with control of the Congress (Lichtman 2008). It was a win for conservatives, who believed that the advent of George W. Bush’s presidency would ensure the return to the conservative, republican principles of the Goldwater/Reagan type.

The newly inaugurated President Bush’s task as executive, according to his campaign rhetoric, was to sustain prevalent conservative thought and pursue an agenda according to an ideology reminiscent of Reagan’s. He came out strong in the first hundred days of his administration, filling his cabinet with an assemblage of notable conservatives including Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz and Douglas Feith and pursuing the implementation of conservative policies. He proposed a $1.35 trillion tax-cut bill, supported local solutions to addressing entrenched social issues, and endorsed measures aimed at strengthening America’s educational system through his “compassionate conservatism” (Los Angeles Times 2001). Bush also made a point of rolling back key policies of the Clinton administration including rejecting the international Kyoto Accords on greenhouse gas emissions. He restored Reagan’s vision of a nuclear shield by rejecting the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and increasing America’s missile force (Lichtman 2008). Bush’s actions solidified a nearly unanimous support from Republican figures, including a large conservative base that celebrated his fiscal policies. From the conservative perspective, Bush was on track to fulfilling his campaign promises of “compassionate conservatism” and
redirecting the US towards path favorable to the right-wing principles of Goldwater and Reagan.

However, the events that transpired on September 11, 2001 forever changed the political conversation in the United States and largely altered President Bush’s tactic in the executive office. The orchestrated hijack of four places by Islamist terrorists resulted in the loss of almost three thousand lives and billions of dollars in economic damages. Regarded by Donald T. Critchlow (2011, 264) as the “most destructive foreign assaults on American soil in modern times,” 9/11 exposed a weakness in the hegemonic powers of America that needed to be remedied. The terrorist attacks consumed the attention of Americans and catalyzed Bush’s War on Terror that was to become the focus of his administration. As a result, his conservatism was fundamentally changed from a domestic emphasis to an international one. The redirection of the executive agenda as a result of 9/11 led to political, economic and social repercussions that severely impacted the building momentum of conservatism in America.

The initial partisan support from Congress that presented a unified front around Bush’s post-9/11 policies started to dissipate with the advent of questionable policies scrutinized by conservative critics. Protest from conservatives arose in response to legislation they felt undermined the traditions associated with their ideology. communicated in Goldwater’s *Consciousness of a Conservative*. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2002, a construct of President Bush and Senator Ted Kenney (MA-D), was a multi-billion dollar program designed to increase educational accountability in schools by implementing standardized tests to improve the
performance of public schools (Lichtman 2008). The bill embedded the federal government into the education system, effectively diminishing state controls, in contradiction to Goldwater's (1960, 34) claim that the constitution “was not intended to, and therefore it did not authorize any federal intervention in the field of education.” Opponents like Congressman Judd Gregg (NH-R) and Representative Ron Paul (TX-R) complained that NCLB would cost an outrageous amount for legislation that was blatantly unconstitutional and promoted increased government intervention in sectors that were of state’s concerns. Of the same token was Bush’s Medicare Modernization Act (MMA), which was a new entitlement program for senior citizens on Medicare and was designed to add prescription drugs and preventative health care benefits to coverage plans (Schneider 2009). The $400 billion act produced the biggest government overhaul of the Medicare program since its creation in 1965. The Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank, questioned where the funds for the program, which was estimated to add $2 trillion to the already $5 trillion projections for Medicare by 2030, were to come from (Critchlow 2011). Heritage warned that, yet again, American taxpayers would foot the bill of the overhaul and should expect to see massive tax hikes in the future. Conservatives, like historian Bruce Bartlett and senior policy analyst Brian Riedl, also worried that the psychological implications of MMA would advance Americans’ entitlement mentality and further entrench the welfare state into government policy (Lichtman 2008). Both NCLB and MMA were part and parcel efforts for the continuation of social engineering by the federal government that the conservative
ethos of Goldwater and Reagan fought to dismantle from the New Deal/Great Society era.

Other contentious matters arose during Bush’s first term that alarmed conservatives and caused them to question Bush’s adherence to the conservative agenda. They saw Bush’s support for campaign finance reform in 2002, a perceived violation of the constitutional principle of free speech, as a contemptuous breach of the oath of office (Bartlett 2006). Previously pledging his commitment to vetoing bills of this nature that stifled the rights inherent in the Constitution, many supporters began to doubt his self-described consistency and commitment, which were traits he labeled as Reaganesque. Conservative restlessness was further highlighted by Bush’s support of steel tariffs and amnesty for illegal immigrants (Ibid). The War on Terror, epitomized by the recently initiated Iraq War, also increased distrust by conservatives and the American public of Bush’s intentions when the claims of Saddam Hussein’s possession of “weapons of mass destruction” were unfounded after US invasion (Critchlow 2011). Some conservatives, like Dick Armey and Ron Paul, were in vehement opposition to US military action in Iraq earlier than others. Though Armey voted for the Iraq War Resolution of 2002, he outwardly spoke of his unease that an unprovoked attack against Iraq would violate international law and detract from global support of Bush’s desire to oust Saddam Hussein. Paul voted against the resolution, questioning if the intentions of the attack were legitimate. Paul later said that Bush “misled us” directly in reference to the Iraq war and lack of proof regarding WMDs (Paul 2007b). Author Sam Tanenhaus ([2003] in Bartlett 2006, 10) verbalized this unease in an essay asking if Bush was a
conservative in any sense of the word remarking "What alarms these conservatives... is not so much specific policies of the Bush administration as its appetite for an ever-enlarging, all-powerful government, a post-9/11 version of statism." Goldwater's conservatism disparaged big government while Bush's seemed to embrace it wholeheartedly according to angry right-wingers. A diminishing regard for upholding the Constitution and reducing government intervention, were only exacerbated by the administrations spending record.

When Bush entered the White House in 2001, Clinton had left him with a $128 billion budget surplus (Lichtman 2008). By 2004, that number had diminished drastically to a $413 billion deficit predominantly due to hefty tax cuts coupled with a 17 percent increase in government spending. Discretionary domestic spending swelled more rapidly than total spending and, according to conservative financial analyst Stephen Moore ([2005] in Lichtman 2008), Bush's fiscal policy had done "exactly the opposite of what was promised by Republican leaders when they first came to power in the 1990s." Fiscal irresponsibility by the Bush administration, due to policies that seemingly destabilized conservative principles, led some to question if the President's dubious principles were worth supporting in the 2004 presidential election. Many believed that he was an “imposter” or a “big government conservative” who was fundamentally redefining contemporary conservatism and that his drift from conservative principles together with his inability to join together dissimilar conservative coalitions would result in a “conservative crack-up” (Bartlett 2006, 15). The American Conservative Union, the country's oldest and largest conservative group, probed whether voting Bush out of the office in 2004 would
lead to a great conservative victory later on, much like Gerald Ford’s defeat followed by Reagan’s victory later on (Ibid). Bush won re-election by a small margin over Democrat John Kerry, however many conservatives who had remained silent during the President’s first term and re-election campaign unleashed a counter-offensive that gained momentum throughout Bush’s second term and into his predecessor, Barack Obama’s presidency.

The policies pursued and passed by the Bush administration during his first term gradually eroded his standing with conservative supporters both in Congress as well as within the general public. Growing conservative dissent was palpable as Bush won re-election over Democrat John Kerry and began his second term in office. There was waning conservative support of Bush due to controversial policies that failed to embody the ethos of Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan, which strove to “erode the centralization of political power; restore authority to traditional institutions and to civil society; rely on the free market in economic life; and base social life on voluntary associations and community” (Thompson 2007, 3). In a country whose majority considered themselves “conservative” (as opposed to liberal), the Bush agenda had failed to meet ideological expectations. This mounting hostility was further exacerbated by the election of liberal Democrat Barack Obama. The conservative frustration that arose during both the Bush and Obama administrations aided in awakening a sleeping giant in February of 2009 that would have a profound impact on the political atmosphere of the United States.

Factors that Contribute to CPMs
This third and final case study examines George W. Bush’s second term in office and the beginning of Barack Obama’s presidency in regards to rising conservative frustration. Once again, the events within each factor are arranged according to chronological order, however, they are not linear in time among the three factors. In this particular case study, conservative opposition is seen in response to the policies of a president of a “conservative” Republican background as well as a president of a liberal Democratic background. Political affiliation according to outraged conservatives played no role their equal opportunity critique of both Bush and Obama. It is also important to point out the involvement of not just politicians and businessmen like the previous case studies, but also an undeniable outcry from ordinary Americans, particularly through outlets of social media and involvement in political protests. Though elite leadership, like Dick Armey, Ron Paul and Sarah Palin, will predominantly serve as the evidence for conservative backlash, they are understood to be the mouthpieces for the masses of citizens angry with Bush and Obama. This increased level of participation beyond previously traditional bounds of politicians and business leaders demonstrates the contemporary democratization of involvement in political protest. Citizens that were outside the formal political process were the ones who were pushing for extensive change, driven by solely by their political passion and principles. To the members of Tea Party organizations, they are part of a populist movement that represents the ordinary American and appeals to the general masses. While there are variables in the Tea Party case that are dissimilar to the two previous case studies showing a separation between the three, the presence of the three hypothesized factors that
contribute to CPMs that will be evaluated in this study illustrates continuity between all three examinations of CPMs throughout American history.

**Factor 1: Deviation from Republican Tradition**

Conservative skepticism was at an all-time high going into the second term of President George W. Bush. Running on a record that was marked by NCLB, MMA, campaign reform finance, steel tariffs, amnesty for illegal immigrants and the perceived false pretenses of the Iraq War, Bush had diminished his base of conservative support. With a drift from conservative principles that characterized his first term, many considered if President Bush would shift farther away from the ideological base because he would not need the bloc’s votes for re-election. The *Washington Post* ([2005] in Bartlett 2006, 15) reported, “In many ways, Bush is... accelerating the trend toward a bigger, more activist government that was started early in his presidency.” Bush’s deviation from the conservative principles, a la Reagan, that he promoted during the 2000 presidential election appeared to be thrown out the window in favor of policies that would win him political clout, no matter the cost. Bartlett (2006, 131) discussed Bush’s desire to “bribe” certain demographics of voters, like the “so-called soccer moms,” by passing bills that spoke directly to their interests, in the case of soccer moms with the creation of NCLB.

Initiated by the President’s suspect rationale for invading Iraq, conservatives became increasingly concerned of the true intentions of the Bush administration. They were troubled with the thought that the republican virtue inherent in the Constitution and drafted by the Founding Fathers was being placed in jeopardy by the President’s actions. Concerns of a seemingly corrupt agenda during the Bush
administration translated over to Obama’s presidency, elevating conservative anxiety over a rejection of republican tradition.

The aftermath of 9/11 caused Bush to deviate from his conservative footing in order to wage a War on Terror that would come to define his campaign. The surge of patriotism that manifested as bipartisan support in Congress provided the ideal conditions for Bush to pass legislation he deemed necessary to combat the threat of terrorist attacks on American soil and abroad. Conservatives claimed that Bush wasn’t held constitutionally accountable by members of a GOP Congress, allowing him to drastically deviate from republican tradition and constitutional constraints. The air of secrecy that characterized the White House post-9/11 fueled unease of politicians questioning the motives behind such behavior. The measures taken by staffers in the White House to ensure privacy, including encouraging federal agencies to reject Freedom of Information Act requests and using private e-mail accounts to avoid fulfilling requirements for the preservation and disclosing of federal information was the root of concern for conservatives. Larry Klayman ([2002] in Lichtman 2008, 447), director of Judicial Watch, said “We see an unprecedented secrecy in this White House that... we find very troubling... true conservatives don’t act this way.” Ron Paul went so far to say that the Bush administration felt lying was necessary to maintain the state, which constituted a clear attack the Bush administration for what Paul saw as a deviation from republican morality and virtue by acting corruptly. Bush complimented the Iraq invasion with the creation of the Department of Homeland Security and passage of the USA PATRIOT Act in 2002, which provided sweeping powers of surveillance to
the federal government (AOL News 2011). Conservative Congressman James Sensebrenner Jr. (WI-R) cried “The FBI has had a gross overreach” with their newfound increase in power (Sensebrenner Jr. [2003] in Lichtman 2008). Conservatives who didn’t waver from the principles of strict constitutionalism said the PATRIOT Act did away with the 4th Amendment and gave government officials unwarranted privileges to spy on citizens in the name of national security. A question arose regarding how a country could act virtuously if it held a power that was in direct violation of its guiding principles. The uncertainty of motives regarding the War on Terror was only exacerbated when the US military failed to find evidence of WMD’s in Iraq after American invasion, seemingly putting into perspective the intention of the Iraq war and the legislation that was targeted at fighting terrorism.

The growing frustration of conservatives with the Bush’s War on Terror and lack of constitutional checks that resulted in morally defunct legislation continued into his second term. A division of conservatives believed there was growing evidence that the White House deliberately exaggerated claims of WMD, calling into question the Bush’s justification for launching a preemptive strike on Iraq as well his integrity as a leader of republican principles. Opposition to the extension of the PATRIOT Act arose in 2005 from a conservative base that had grown since the initial passage of the bill in 2002. Republican Larry Craig voted against the extension of the act and pushed a bi-partisan bill that would provide the tools for law enforcement agencies to use in an effort to combat terror but would still protect the liberties of the American people. In 2006, the renewal of the Patriot Act was passed in addition
to a new bill called the Military Commissions Act of 2006, which gave the executive branch the power to define people as “unlawful enemy combatants” who could be detained indefinitely (Critchlow 2011). The new law allowed the federal government to deny detainees constitutional rights of habeas corpus and safeguards against coerced testimony. Author James Bovard commented in American Conservative that “the new law- far more dangerous than the more controversial Patriot Act- is perhaps the biggest disgrace Congress has enacted since the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850” (Bovard [2006] in Lichtman 2008). Yet again, the Bush administration demonstrated a fundamental violation of the written words of the Founding Fathers. Many felt that, as the saying goes, absolute power corrupts absolutely. The failure to find WMDs, the key to Bush’s justification for invasion of Iraq, as well as the passage of unconstitutional legislation created distrust of the Bush administration on behalf of a portion of conservative politicians. They felt his justification for legislation catered to combating the War on Terror stood on rocky ground and perceived that their underlying motives, often in contradiction with the Constitution, did not emulate republican virtue that the US was founded upon. Barack Obama also gave support to the extension of the Patriot Act in February of 2011, and though the proposition failed initially in Congress, Obama signed the four-year extension in May of 2011 (AOL News 2011). The continuation of Bush policies under the Obama administration furthered escalating conservative fear of federal corruption by means of unconstitutional behavior.

Conservatives, who were becoming increasingly concerned with the perceived corruption of the Bush administration, were additionally troubled by
Congress’s growing tendency to include “pork” into legislation. Lawmakers have placed a growing reliance on the inclusion of extraneous clauses in controversial legislation an effort to satisfy the interests of politicians whose vote is the determinant in whether or not a bill would pass. This practice is known as pork barrel spending, which is a political term referring to fattening up legislation with the addition of extra funding, called earmarks, that represents special interests. The inclusion of pork for the purpose of winning votes is at its core a rejection of republican principles, mainly virtue, because it is a blatant form of corruption. In its barest form, it is the inclusion of funding for special interests in exchange for a vote.

During the Reagan administration, the President made it a point to veto special interest, pork barrel politics according to his conservative fans. Though Bush promised to veto any measure that included earmarks, Congress quickly learned that his bark was greater than his bite. Heritage Foundation’s Michael Franc ([2002] in Bartlett 2006, 131) called Bush’s warning “an empty threat.” Bush’s failure to crackdown on pork barrel spending over his tenure opened the floodgates for Congress to bulk up legislation with irrelevant clauses, despite attempts by those, like conservatives who saw the practice as corrupt, to police it. According to watchdog group, Citizens Against Government Waste, there has been more pork barrel spending during the Bush administration than any other president previously (Bartlett 2006). By the transitive property, fattened up bills only meant more profligate government spending.

Countless bills passed during the Bush tenure were believed by conservatives to be riddled with pork and consequently drove up federal spending.
A 2005 transportation bill exemplified the corruption associated with pork barrel spending and enraged a portion of outspoken conservatives who felt the nature of the bill deviated from republican tradition. Seeing an opportunity to benefit from the trend of expanding government, both Republicans and Democrats helped pass a $286 billion transportation bill that included more than six thousand individual state-based projects accounting for $24 billion of the plan’s total cost (Lichtman 2008). Included in the transportation bill, was a $2.3 million clause for landscaping on the Ronald Reagan Freeway triggering Republican John McCain ([2005] in Lichtman 2008, 451), who voted against the bill, to ask, “I wonder what Ronald Reagan would say.” Bush’s Troubled Assets Relief Program (TARP), which will be described in greater detail in the following section, was called “an appallingly bad plan... [that was] an engine of corruption” by Republican Newt Gingrich ([2008] in Ibid, 121). TARP, in the minds of conservatives, was an example of egregious pork barrel spending riddled with hidden tax exemptions for non-banking beneficiaries like NASCAR and Burger King. These corrupt spending practices under the Bush administration added to an already increasing deficit that was to be intensified by the Obama administration.

Obama’s $787 billion stimulus package, another topic to be further explored in a later section, represented one of the worst instances of pork barrel spending in the minds of conservatives adamant about upholding republican principles. Not only did the astronomical spending projections anger conservatives in opposition to the rapidly growing deficit, but the inclusion of “pork” into the bill set them off as well. Creator of the political blog LibertyBell.net, Kelly Carender organized a protest of
120 people against Obama’s “porkulus” plan in Washington (Rasmussen and Schoen 2010). Conservatives and Republicans felt that Democrats were trying to win favor and votes to get the bill passed by adding special clauses in to benefit politicians whose approval was crucial to the bills passage. They fumed over Congress's use of money from the general revenue funds to bail out states and cities with irresponsible spending habits as well as provide money to Democratic interest groups (Ibid). Corruption via the inclusion of pork to bribe key figures for a vote fundamentally demonstrated the rejection of republican tradition, angering conservatives throughout the country. By adding erroneous funding clauses into legislation, federal spending only grew adding to an already large deficit. The lack of executive rejection pork barrel spending by Bush only continued into the Obama administration. While pork had also been in conservative crosshairs, the growing deficit due to federal spending through various programs accentuated the corruption associated with the practice. With conservatives characteristically favoring less government spending, substantial costs incurred do to the addition of pork provided reason for protest. With the injection of pork into bills on the rise coupled with the questionable intentions of Bush’s War on Terror and Obama’s continuation of bills like the PATRIOT Act, corruption on the part of both administrations worked to undermine republican virtue.

Factor 2: Perceived Threat to Individual Liberties

In the eyes of conservatives, fiscal irresponsibility during the Bush and Obama administrations characterized one of the great federal abuses. The big government conservatism of George W. Bush with policies like NCLB and MMA
together the liberal leanings of Barack Obama resulted in legislation that required massive federal spending aggravating a growing national debt. As previously mentioned, Bush entered the White House with a $236.2 billion budget surplus from the Clinton administration (Zernike 2010). By 2008, President Bush had managed to turn Clinton’s surplus into a $458.5 billion deficit and increase the national debt to $10.7 trillion. During his all eight years of his presidency, Bush ran budget deficits of $300 billion annually (Rasmussen and Schoen 2010). The fiscal irresponsibility of the Bush administration instigated Republican presidential hopeful Ron Paul, an ardent libertarian, in 2007 to hold a reenactment of the Boston Tea Party as a reaction to the dramatic increase in federal spending and ballooning of the federal deficit under Bush (Rasmussen and Schoen 2010). Conservatives were angry and Paul’s mock Tea Party foreshadowed the Tea Party movement that had been steadily growing. Obama only added to the deficit with his $787 billion economic stimulus plan and addition of over $4 trillion to the now $14.639 trillion national debt (Zernike 2010). Conservatives were the frontrunners of promoting the idea that it was impossible for the US to spend its way out of debt. The incontestable fiscal irresponsibility and out of control deficit spending of Bush and Obama angered many Americans who believed that they were required to foot the bills of these expenses. While the aftermath of 9/11 was attributed with negatively impacting the US economy, the economic relief efforts on the part of both executives only furthered the brewing financial crisis.

Bush had begun to lose favor with both Republicans and conservative due to profligate spending to fund programs such as NCLB and the Medicare Prescription
Drug Act and to finance two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. While conservatives rallied around his tax cut bill, the reduction in government revenue crippled a nation that had been on a federal spending spree. With increased government spending came an outward rejection of republican/Republican values like balanced budgets, spending cuts and small government. But it was not until the financial crisis of 2008 that the hard realities of Bush’s increasingly bad government policy came to light. 9/11 caused the government to pressure the Federal Reserve to adopt an aggressive strategy of money and credit expansion, which succeeded in lowering interest rates from 6% to 1% (Armey and Kibbe 2010). More dollars in circulation meant more money in the hands of American citizens, which, theoretically, meant greater consumer spending. Economist Judy Shelton described how loose credit could be better utilized and how the excess of money was funneled into sub-prime mortgages, highly speculative financial derivatives and mortgage-backed securities (Shelton in Armey and Kibbe 2010). The artificial boom of prosperity was, in actuality, on its way towards inflation, stagnation and eventual economic pain. The Fed’s unsound policy was coupled with political pressure for those in the mortgage financing industry, like government-sponsored enterprises like Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae, to force banks to give loans to unqualified candidates (Ibid). More people were put in homes they couldn’t afford and homes were appreciated in value creating a housing bubble that was on the verge of collapse. In September of 2008, when the presidential race was heating up between Barack Obama and John McCain, several major financial institutions, including investment house Lehman Brothers, Freddie Mac, Fannie Mae and the world’s largest insurer AIG, went under (Critchlow...
With the nation facing one of the biggest financial crises to date since the Great Depression, President Bush decided to act.

President Bush, with the support of Fed chairman Ben Bernacke and Secretary of the Treasury Henry Paulson, proposed the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008, which included the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) also known as the Wall Street bailout, to address the crisis. TARP provided $700 billion to the federal government to bail out companies that were facing financial ruin. Bush said of TARP in an interview with CNN that he had “abandoned the free-market principles to save the free-market system... to make sure the economy doesn’t collapse” (Rasmussen and Schoen 2010). By admitting he had knowingly defied a fundamental republican tradition, Bush successfully alienated himself from conservatives, like Ron Paul and Michelle Bachmann, livid over the bill. TARP signified to conservatives a rejection of capitalism, where instead of business cycle determining success or failure, the government was instead choosing who would be winners and losers. The government was promulgating the idea that it was necessary to support troubled institutions because they were “too big to fail.” In the eyes of conservatives, the companies that had failed to avoid making risky investments and directly influenced the financial crisis were pulled out of the hole by the federal government completely undermined the economic principles of the US (Armey and Kibbe 2010). Conservative NPO Freedomworks, Cato and other free-market groups, including local grassroots ones, led the fight against TARP. The primary issue conservatives held with TARP was that the bailout of failing companies was to be financed by taxpayer dollars. Republican Michelle Bachmann
(Minnpost 2008) argued “Congress relies too heavily on the taxpayers as an ATM. It’s time for Congress to rein in government spending and pursue a pro-growth tax policy that attracts new investment, production and jobs.” Not only was the government not holding bad companies accountable for their financial mishaps, they were forcing taxpayers to foot the bill. TARP contributed to the early beginnings of the future auto industry bailout as well by putting $17.4 billion into Chrysler and General Motors (Critchlow 2011).

The programs initiated by the Bush administration were carried over into the Obama administration to an even greater degree. After renewing the contract for TARP, Obama introduced his plan to reinvigorate the struggling economy. Based on Keynesian economic principles, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, also known as the stimulus package, called for $787 billion, including $212 billion in tax cuts and $575 billion in spending, with the hopes of alleviating the recession and getting people back to work (Critchlow 2011). The bill would continue TARP policies and also form public partnerships with failing companies like General Motors. Conservatives believed Obama’s stimulus package only provided for greater government spending and lacked tax cuts. In their minds, Obama had followed suit with Bush fiscal practices by continuing and heightening spending patterns. They felt it didn’t do enough in the short-term to help catapult the economy back to success. Senator Jim DeMint (SC-R) claimed the package “… is a spending plan; it’s not a stimulus plan. It’s wasteful. And a lot of the spending is going to end up being permanent” (New York Times 2009). The stimulus bill was predicated on rolling the die with taxpayer money, recklessly hoping that the outcome would be different
than Bush’s failed stimulus plans. DeMint added “We have to decide if we want to be a free-market economy and let the money stay there or if we want to be a government-directed economy, which is where we’re headed” (Ibid). The economic liberties of citizens and companies that did not falter during the economic crisis were being imposed upon by the stimulus package through the spending of money government did not have and must obtain from tax increases. The fiscal irresponsibility of Obama’s plan, according to conservatives, contributed to the rejection of free market principles integral to the backbone of conservatism.

Ultimately, the final bill passed without any Republican support.

The cap-and-trade legislation put forth by Obama also angered conservatives who were concerned with the ramifications of the bill. Cap-and-trade was Obama’s attempt to tackle climate change and reduce the carbon footprint by imposing caps on emission of greenhouse gases. By placing a cost on carbon emissions, businesses would be required to purchase a permit for each ton of carbon they emitted at an estimated price of $13 to $20 (Bloomberg Businessweek 2009). Depending on how much pollution they produced, companies would be able to buy or sell carbon credits from or to other companies (Ibid). The federal creation of a scare new commodity that businesses would be forced to buy would result in higher production costs, which many felt would translate to extra costs passed along to consumers reflected in higher prices. Conservatives worried that cap-and-trade would create a huge financial burden for small business and homeowners, sometimes calling the bill cap-and-tax. A Wall Street Journal (2009) article said, “Putting a price on carbon is regressive by definition because poor and middle-
income households spend more of their paychecks on things like gas to drive to work, groceries or home heating.” At a FreedomWorks rally next to the Washington Monument, conservatives complained that the proposed legislation would devastate industries, like coal mining, and result in a loss of jobs due to rising costs (Zernike 2010). All in all, the damaging unintended consequences inherent in Obama’s cap-and-trade legislation caused all but eight Republicans to vote against the bill (Rasmussen and Schoen 2010). Conservatives, including Michelle Bachmann and Ron Paul, felt that the burden placed on tax payers undermined their individual liberties and this abuse trumped the intent of reducing America’s carbon footprint.

Conservatives had yet another reason to be incensed with the Obama administration over the growing trend of rejection of free markets in favor of government intervention prompted by massive federal spending and increasing taxes for American citizens. Bush’s TARP initiated the first move toward infringing on economic liberties by bailing out failing companies with tax payer money and rejecting basic principles of a free-market society. He also got the ball rolling for Obama for what was to become the bailout of other industries including the auto industry. Obama added insult to injury for conservatives by creating and passing a multi-billion dollar stimulus plan that was based on government spending but failed to include viable tax cuts. His cap-and-trade plan also meant higher costs for the American people in the eyes of conservatives like Ron Paul. In addition, the weak dollar that was created by the financial crisis of 2008 only continued to lose value, reducing the purchasing power of the American public. With the combat of the recession as the primary policy objective of Bush and Obama, their tactics did not
align with those of conservative mentalities. The practice of fiscal irresponsibility on the part of both President Bush and President Obama, as understood by conservative outlets, further fueled the fire of conservative objection.

**Factor 3: Aggrandizement of Power by the Federal Government**

The perimeters of jurisdiction of the federal government had unquestionably expanded under the guide of Republican President George W. Bush and Democratic President Barack Obama. Contrary to conservative ideals of small, limited national government, the policies that were pursued from 2000 to 2009 and beyond provided a stark contrast. Conservatives had hoped that the election of George W. Bush would usher in an era of dismantling the welfare state set up by the New Deal/Great Society and reducing the broad scope of government intervention. Unfortunately, the events that transpired on September 11, 2001 drastically changed the platform of the Bush administration. Instead of legislating to combat and diminish big government, Bush was unable, and unwilling, to push an agenda that restrained the growth of American bureaucracy. Obama’s election only exacerbated right-wing criticism of expanding federal power. His liberal politics directed him towards proposing legislation that undermined the free-market system and pushed government regulation into new frontiers. From the presidency of Bush to that of Obama, America saw an immense increase in the involvement of the federal government instating a visceral response from enraged conservative politicians, organizations and citizens.

Bush and his administration were accused by traditional conservatives of compromising a key principle of conservatism, small government, for the purpose of
political gain. In 2005, conservative consultant Craig Shirley discussed how it was unfathomable to think that, “any moderate Republican would aggressively or gleefully embrace the growth of government or oppose the decentralization of power in Washington” (Shirley [2005] in Lichtman 2008). However, Bush had managed to violate these commandments and desert the ideals he was elected into the executive office for, particularly during his second term, according to a significant branch of right-wingers. Some claimed he was an “imposter” whose endorsement of conservatism was only a tool used to clinch him the presidential election only to be thrown out upon his inauguration. They claimed he undermined free market principles that were at the core of the conservative doctrine. Others labeled President Bush as a “big government” Republican, exemplified by his federalization of education with NCLB and health care with MMA (Critchlow 2011). His favoritism of big government was also seen by his hard-lined policy reaction to 9/11, with the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security and the war with Iraq. Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute Daniel J. Mitchell (2010) called Bush a “statist,” debunking his legacy as a conservative. Citing increases in the federal deficit and government intervention, Mitchell (Ibid) claimed that with the exception of the temporary 2001 tax-rate reduction, every policy promoted by Bush “has been permanent, and a step towards more statism.” The greatest allegation for Bush’s “big government” Republicanism was the passage of his Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008, which included TARP. Bush set off the eventual bailout of failing companies in the financial and auto industry by enacting TARP and undercutting free-market principles. Conservative citizen, and eventual Tea Party
supporter, Mary Rakovich called Bush’s bank bailout “ridiculous” under the pretenses that “If you can’t pay your bills and your business model has failed, you simply close your doors. That was the way it was supposed to work in our system” (Rakovich in Armey and Kibbe 2010, 12). The implementation of political, economic and social policies designed by the Bush administration demonstrated a rejection of small, contained government set at the core of conservatism. The phase out of the Bush era into the Obama presidency increased concerns by conservative coalitions, who felt that big government would not only continue, but also expand under the guidance of liberal Obama.

Conservatives were not far off from their assertions when Obama was inaugurated in January of 2009. Having supported the Bush bailouts during his time as Senator of Illinois, Obama followed suit of his predecessor. He built upon the massive bailouts of the Bush administration’s TARP, invoking a level of government intervention not seen since Roosevelt’s New Deal in the 1930’s (Zernicke 2010). In his continuation of the Bush’s TARP, Obama maintained the bailout of Chrysler and General Motors, despite some Republicans stance to let Detroit fail, and appointed an “auto czar” to confront the impending bankruptcy of the two companies and orchestrate the doling out of federal relief (Critchlow 2011). When both Chrysler and GM eventually filed for bankruptcy, Obama supervised the massive restructuring of each company and provided extra funding on top of the billions of dollars provided by the Bush administration. The federal government was given eight percent ownership in Chrysler and 60.8 percent share in GM after the reorganization was completed. The United Auto Workers, an auto industry union,
also made out handsomely, receiving 55 percent ownership in Chrysler and a 17.5 share in GM (Ibid). The federal government was now, if only temporarily, running private enterprise signaling a massive increase in power. Michelle Bachmann, in voicing protest against the bailouts, said that Obama was not reviving the auto industry, but rather he was taking it over (Ibid). She continued by talking about how the Obama administration was removing private enterprise from the boardroom and replacing them with federally controlled executives. In a capitalistic society that promoted free-market principles, the federal overtake of a failing company couldn’t be farther from the economic principles of the United States according to conservative opponents.

Conservatives were up in arms about the extension of the bailout and the federal government’s profiting off it. They felt that bondholders and other non-union pensioners were shortchanged in favor of UAW and federal interests. They also were appalled with Obama’s willingness to provide even more federal funding to the failing auto companies. In reaction to the growing deficit due to irresponsible government spending, conservatives entrenched in free market principles believed that Obama was throwing a life vest to those that deserved to drown in a capitalistic economy of winners and losers. Automakers, bankers and citizens who practiced poor investment strategies were benefiting from the stimulus package by receiving the hard-earned dollars of American taxpayers (Armey and Kibbe 2010). Obama’s auto-industry bailout was just one of the arenas the new president thrust federal intervention into, according to angry conservatives.
With tensions already running high due to initiatives that immensely enlarged the powers of the federal government, President Obama’s introduction of a multi-billion dollar federal health care overhaul, which opponents labeled as Obamacare, received a severe lashing from the conservative corner. Not to be signed into law until March of 2010, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act proposal enraged right-wingers who felt the bill was one of the federal government’s most significant demonstrations of aggrandizing unconstitutional power. The objectives of Obamacare, reminiscent of Clintoncare, sought to create mandates, places regulations on insurance companies and create new government directed markets (Time Magazine 2009). The overarching goal according to the Obama administration was to provide affordable health care to all Americans. Criticism from the right cried out that Obama’s plan was comparable to modern day socialism by allowing for the government takeover of one-sixth of the US economy (Rasmussem and Schoen 2010). Conservative personality Glenn Beck compared the health care legislation to Pearl Harbor and the Civil War while House Republican Minority Leader John Boehner cried there would be “Armageddon” if the legislation passed (Zernike 2010, 138). Sarah Palin called the healthcare plan “downright evil” and claimed that Obama was created a “death panel” that would deny care to the neediest citizens (Ibid, 83). Encouraged by conservative media outlets, Americans went to town hall meetings and organized protests to speak out against the early beginnings of the bill. Funding of Obamacare also warranted public skepticism, with President Obama promising to cut health care costs at the same time as providing health care coverage to the nearly 50 million people that don’t have it (Time
Ron Paul stated that the federal government, who is already rolling
in immense national debt, simply does not have the funds to carry out the overhaul
of healthcare (Paul 2007a). The proposed overhaul further aggravated
conservatives who were adamant to prevent the federal government from
continuing down the path of increased intervention and fiscal irresponsibility.

The significant increase in the size and scope of the federal government over
the Bush and Obama presidencies riled up conservative opposition. Believing that
the increased intervention of the federal government in areas like education,
business community and health care effectively undermined the republican
principles of limited government, conservatives instigated a growing opposition
that was at its tipping point. Fiscal irresponsibility as a result of these government
overhaul policies only added fuel to conservative fire. It wouldn't be too long until
Obama’s billion-dollar homeowner bailout plan was the straw that broke the
camel’s back and instigated what would come to be known as “the rant heard 'round
the world.”

The Tea Party Movement

In February of 2009, Obama proposed a $75 billion federal spending bill to
stimulate refinancing homeowners who were in financial crisis due faulty
mortgages and the pop of the housing market bubble (Zernike 2010). On February
19th, CNBC correspondent, Rick Santelli, went ballistic on a live broadcast from the
floor of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange in opposition to Obama’s mortgage bailout
plan. Using dramatic gesticulation and intonation, Santelli rallied against the federal
government’s intervention to subsidize “the losers’ mortgages” and asked the
American people if they wanted “to pay for your neighbor’s mortgage that had an extra bathroom and can’t pay their bills” (Squawk Box 2009). He claimed that the recent actions of the federal government would make the Founding Fathers “roll over in their graves” and continued by saying that he was “thinking of having a Chicago Tea Party” reminiscent of America’s pre-revolutionary days (Ibid). Santelli’s outburst became known as the “rant heard ‘round the world” and within a few days of its airing had gone viral with about a million views on YouTube (Zernike 2010). Scholars, such as Rasmussen and Schoen (2010), claimed that Santelli’s rant provided the impetus for angry conservatives to rise up and, with the help of conservative organizations like FreedomWorks, social media outlets like LibertyBelle.com and partisan news sources like Fox News, begin what is today known as the Tea Party movement.

The modern day Tea Party movement, modeled after the actions of Boston revolutionaries who challenged the British Parliament, is a loose organization of political activists disconnected from the current political establishment (Rasmussen and Schoen 2010). According to Teapartypatriots.org, the overarching mission of each Tea Party division is to restore America’s founding principles of fiscal responsibility, constitutionally limited government and free market economics. Many major players have been identified as leaders of the movement, guiding the mass of citizens who have joined in the protest of Tea Party-ers including FreedomWorks, the Tea Party Patriots, Sarah Palin and Michelle Bachmann among others. At the first National Tea Party Convention in Nashville in February 2010, Palin ([2010] Ibid, 154) told attendees “America is ready for another revolution.”
Since the conservative ascendency of the Tea Party movement, there have been many successes that have catapulted the movement into the spotlight. The April 15th 2009 Tax Day rallies, held across the United States, attracted masses of irate citizens upset with the federal government. Thousands of Americans mailed tea bags to elected officials and even more showed up to political rallies, demonstrating to politicians and the rest of the country how angry Tea Party supporters were (John O’Hara 2010). The political victories of Tea Party backed candidates, such as Bob McDonnell, Chris Christie and Scott Brown, highlighted the movement’s organization capabilities and made them a force to be reckoned with on the political scene (Critchlow 2011). On the other hand, the countless branches of the Tea Party movement have caused critics to question the credibility and competence of the movement. Figures like Democratic former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi labeled the Tea Party movement as mere “Astroturf,” which did not represent the beliefs of the majority of Americans but was instead organized by Republican leaders and the right wing media (Rasmussen and Schoen 2010). Due to the nascent nature of the Tea Party movement, it is still too early to tell whether or not they will be successful in their endeavor to restore the founding principles of the US government. However, the waves they are making currently demonstrate that they have the capability of leaving some sort of legacy on American politics.

Conclusion

The revitalization of a conservative ethos initiated by Barry Goldwater in the 1960’s and popularized by Ronald Reagan in the 1980’s had a steadily growing influence on the American population in recent years. Conservatives hoped that the
ascendency of Republican George W. Bush to the presidency in the new millennium would ensure that a conservative agenda, a la Goldwater and Reagan, would be enacted to restore the republican principles of the Founding Fathers. Unfortunately, Bush’s tendency to stray from his conservative roots in favor of legislation that rejected republican virtue, infringed upon individual liberties and aggrandized the power of the federal government angered many conservatives, including Ron Paul and Michelle Bachmann. Obama further exacerbated the situation by completely denouncing conservative policies, in favor of more liberal approaches to governing. The result of both the Bush and Obama presidency was a staggering national debt, an unprecedented rise in federal powers and conservative outrage.

The result of brewing disenchantment with the Bush and Obama administrations tipped in February of 2009 when financial analyst Rick Santelli had an angry outburst on live TV calling for a “Chicago Tea Party” in response to Obama’s housing bailout proposals. The resulting Tea Party movement had made waves in the American political scene since its emergence around 2009. The loosely connected network of Americans angered by the actions of the federal government has resulted in successes as well as failures. Because the Tea Party movement is still thriving today, it is unclear what the outcome of movement will be. However, it is important to recognize that the presence of the three hypothesized factors, deviation from republican tradition, perceived infringement of individual rights and the aggrandizement of power by the federal government, instigated growing conservative dissatisfaction and aided in the rise of the Tea Party movement.
Chapter V: Conclusion

As demonstrated through this thesis, the history of the United States has been defined by resolute activism opposing perceived transgressions committed by a larger entity. The roots of this vigorous action was traced back to the American colonists during the 1770's, who stood up in the face of oppression by King George III and the British Parliament to instigate a revolution that led to their eventual freedom. The American victory in the Revolutionary War signaled an opportunity for the newly freed colonists to create their own form of government, based on the principles for which they fought bravely for in the war. Guided by influential intellectuals, politicians and leaders, known as the Founding Fathers, during the revolutionary period, the Constitution was drafted, which spoke to the fundamental beliefs, values and morals of the nation. The Founding Fathers, including Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, channeled the ideology of republicanism in its basic elements for the purpose of adding "a moral dimension, a utopian depth, to the political separation from England" (Wood 1969). The republican ideals inherent in the Constitution were incorporated into a federalist system set up by the Founding Fathers.

Due to the reliance of the Founding Fathers on these concepts, republicanism and federalism have proven to be critical elements to the US Constitution, as well as the political culture of America. The classical republicanism of ancient Greece, as discussed by Plato and Socrates, has since evolved through the works of Machiavelli, Montesquieu and the Founding Fathers. To acclimate to modernity, republicanism has shifted from an emphasis solely on small political communities that promoted
the good life to speak to the expansive territory of the United States. The inclusion of representation and plurality of modes by later political theorists has allowed republicanism to maintain its emphasis on virtue. The republicanism of the United States, as understood by the Founding Fathers, speaks to the sovereignty of the people, the importance of virtue, the preservation of liberties and the limitations of a centralized power in favor of states rights. Federalism, by nature, is able to compliment the goals of republicanism by instating a government where which a coalition of states is united under a central government but is still able to retain a degree of autonomy (Feeley and Rubin 2008). The federal government is further separated into three distinct subdivisions, the executive, legislative and judicial branch. To regulate the division of power, a system of checks and balances is imparted with the intention of representing the interests of all citizens, eliminating the possibility for the emergence of despotic rule and allowing smaller constituencies to have their concerns handled by more localized officials. The ideological influences of republicanism and the functional aspects of federalism acted as guiding principles for the Founding Fathers during the conception of the nation and have since played a role in shaping particular strands of American political thought and theory.

The theoretical foundations of American government have played a major role in the formation of various threads of political philosophies. One of the most prevalent political forces to emerge early on in the United States was conservatism. Conservatism, in the barest sense, is associated with adherence to tradition and resistance to change. It strives to protect established political, economic and social
tradition from the forces of change based on the conviction that inherent custom, values and mores should guide the process of change in order to ensure the stability and continuity of a nation. Often times, conservative political theory is seen in opposition to the political theory of liberalism, which promotes progressivism and change as a means to improve society. There have been numerous offshoots of conservatism throughout American history, however there are several readily identifiable canons that have come to demarcate American conservative thought. These characteristics include the preservation of republican tradition through the strict construction of the Constitution and emphasis on virtue, the protection of inalienable individual rights through free-market principles and reduction of taxes, and the protection of states’ rights through the promotion of minimal federal power and intervention. While the American political scene has been dynamic since the establishment of the nation, the underlying core principles of conservatism, based upon the national DNA cast by republicanism and federalism, have remained continuous throughout the history of the United States.

The premise of this thesis was to explore this continuity in order to explain why political movements grounded in conservative ideology have arisen frequently over the course of American history. Based on the ideological foundations inherent in the Constitution and the essential tenets of conservative thought, I hypothesized that there are three overarching factors that must be at play in order for a CPM to occur. These factors are a deviation from republican tradition, perceived threat to individual liberty and the aggrandizement of power by the federal government. If conservatives sensed that all three of these elements were present, then they would
mobilize and launch a counterattack in the name of preserving conservative principles. Case studies constituted the perfect lens through which to examine the possible presence of these factors. By choosing three different cases, a broader range of variables could be represented. It was important to investigate CPMs with diverse conditions because it would provide a clearer indication as to whether a connection did exist among case studies in regards to why CPMs arose (i.e. regardless of the specific circumstances CPMs arose due to the three hypothesized factors). Through the analysis of the Jeffersonian presidency, the New Deal Era and the Tea Party movement, I was able to come to several conclusions regarding the validity of this hypothesis concerning CPMs.

The first of these factors, a deviation from republican tradition, was based upon the tenant of conservatism speaking to the preservation of custom. Two basic applications of republican tradition, which when defied initiated conservative backlash, arose during the analysis of each case study- strict construction of the Constitution and maintenance of virtue. One of the premises for which the Revolutionary War was fought was that the mother country, Britain, was corrupt in the sense of passing legislation, without colonist representation, that tended to benefit their interests at the cost of America's interests. Only through independence and a written constitution, could Americans hope to retain virtue, which was critical to republicanism. With the institutional framework of the resulting Constitution, the Founding Fathers were optimistic that virtue by means of government was achievable. As a result, conservatives clung to the notion of virtuous tradition and strove to protect it. Each case study included at least one, if not more, critical
moment prior to the development of a CPM where both the Constitution and the integrity of the US government were in jeopardy. For the future leaders of the Quids, this rejection of the Constitution by way of corruption manifested in the Yazoo Controversy and the Florida question. The conservatives of the New Deal faced this issue with the creation of the NRA and Roosevelt's court-packing scheme. Tea Party activists saw the questionable motives for the War on Terror and the federal government’s growing tendency to pork up legislation as departures from these aforementioned republican values. The difference between these three time periods is incontestable, however, the underlying rationale for opposition from conservative groups appears to be the same. The Yazoo Controversy in 1804, the court-packing plan of 1937 and the War on Terror beginning in early 2000 are seemingly divergent in specifics but all received criticism from conservative fronts based upon their noncompliance with constitutional principles. They also were carried out under ostensibly corrupt conditions as seen by conservatives in opposition. Corruption, in a republican sense, operated against the principle of virtue. If conservatives hold republican virtue to be true, which by definition they do, then the violation of this by way of corruption destabilizes the premise of conservative values. Therefore, by analyzing the claims of conservatives who spoke out against each of these instances, it was feasible to categorize them under the factor of deviation from tradition. In each case, conservatives demonstrated a steadfast devotion to upholding the Constitution and acting virtuously.

It also is important to note that in two of these cases, the Jeffersonian presidency and the Tea Party movement, that the president under which the
examples occurred were thought to be conservatives in practice. This observation points to the fact that party affiliation was trivial to those who considered themselves stark conservatives. When there is an action that is perceived to be out of line with conservative principles, conservatives are not afraid to openly criticize, regardless of if the administration in power is said to hold the same conservative beliefs or dissimilar ones. It also demonstrates that Republicanism, a party most often identified with conservatives, right-wing values, is not mutually exclusive with conservatism. This observation is imperative to the overall findings of this thesis because it establishes that CPMs are not just in response to liberal, Democratic control. Rather, they arise when any individual or administration in power fails to uphold the principles of conservatism regardless of political leanings. From the evidence presented, republican tradition via adherence to the Constitution and virtue was imperative to the conservative doctrine. Machiavelli’s republicanism, which resonated American conservatism, argued that a state could not uphold a free life unless it sustained adherence to a republican constitution (Skinner 2002). From the cases examined, conservatives clung to the notion that constitutional and virtuous tradition was the key to maintaining stability and a departure from custom would not be prudent.

The perceived violation of individual liberties was the second factor that was postulated to contribute to the emergence of CPMs. Republicanism, by nature, held as a core principle the importance of preserving the inalienable rights of sovereign people. American conservatism, by the same token, also valued the importance of defending the liberty of citizens. American colonists rebelled against the British
government for infringing on their rights, particularly by what they felt was extreme taxation. By achieving independence, they felt these rights would be better protected against entities that disregarded these liberties, hence why the Bill of Rights is included in the Constitution. Due to the historical justifications for the Revolutionary War, the protection of individual liberties is ingrained into American political thought and particularly American conservatism. All three case studies demonstrated in the period before a CPM arose a sensed infringement of freedoms protected by the Constitution, particularly in regards to economic rights. John Randolph, as explained by John F. Devanny, believed that the threat of encroachment upon the independence and inherent rights of man was anathema to the foundation of the United States (Devanny 2001). Based upon the evidence presented, this belief was sustained by subsequent conservatives in opposition to violations of liberties. The Gregg Resolution, the Wagner Act and TARP among other grievances, according to conservative evaluations, breached the rights of citizens. Each perceived violation placed restraints on financial capabilities and decisions of both citizens and businesses. Conservatism in America appeals to the idea of limited regulation of industry endorsing a free-market economy. All three case studies showed how federal regulation of the economy was thought by conservatives to hinder the freedom of choice by both consumers and producers, essentially violating various freedoms of citizens. The Gregg Resolution’s call for total non-importation of goods from Britain was intended to hurt only Britain, however it was thought by many conservatives to also have adverse effects for the agrarian south, whose livelihood depended on the use of British goods. The Wagner Act fundamentally
altered the way companies ran their business and TARP represented a federal bailout of companies that failed in the capitalist system. Each in their own way undercut the liberties of citizens to operate in the free-market system.

Taxes also rose to the forefront of this thesis as a violation to liberties, often times argued by conservatives as a confiscation of property by the federal government. When the government passes laws that threaten to remove this capital from the hands of citizens via taxes or impact the intake of capital by way of stringent regulations, conservatives have demonstrated a tendency to protest. As seen by their negative reaction to the regulation of industry and practice of taxing, conservatives associate capital with liberty. This is an important conclusion to the overall theme of liberty in the conservative mentality because it provides insight why conservatives respond the way they do. Monetary property has become synonymous with individual property, which has been labeled as a right of citizens. This issue has been exacerbated by the practice of the government spending taxpayers’ money, in addition to money that it does not have, adding to the public debt as demonstrated aptly by the third case study. The promotion of fiscal responsibility has become a guiding principle in conservatism as it serves to control government spending, which is in portion funded by taxpayer money. From the evidence provided, conservative held strong to the importance of preserving the liberties of citizens from encroachment by a higher power. When said liberties, including economic ones, are violated, conservatives have demonstrated a tendency launch a counter-offensive to protect these rights often resulting in a CPM. As
Machiavelli (1883) fluently expressed, a public is more likely to rise up in defense of their liberty when they fear oppression.

The third and final factor hypothesized to contribute to the rise of CPMs was the aggrandizement of power by the federal government. Republicanism maintained that small political communities represented the most virtuous environment for governing a population. Conservatism emulated this value by promoting minimal government regulation, reduced to only the powers enumerated in the Constitution. Once again, a justification for the American Revolution can be related to these values held by republicanism and conservatism. Colonists felt that the power held by the British Parliament was unrestricted and the much of the legislation enacted to control the American colonies was unmerited, especially when Britain was governing from an ocean away. To avoid unobstructed federal powers, the Founding Fathers explicitly laid out the powers granted in a manner that limited the central government’s sphere of influence and allowed state government to retain a degree of sovereignty. As Tocqueville (1835) pointed out, the central government was only given minimal responsibilities that were deemed important enough to be under its control. Consequently, the federal government was not bestowed with the power to regulate society’s other concerns, which were handed over to the authority of the states. It was this system, according to Tocqueville, that made the American republic so successful. This value of limited scope of the federal government, as seen in republicanism as well as federalism, was adopted by the conservative doctrine and constituted a major element of the political ideology. Each case study presented several instances where the federal government overstepped its boundaries
resulting in conservative backlash. The Louisiana Purchase under Jefferson, the
creation of Social Security under Roosevelt and the proposal of the Patient
Protection and Affordable Care Act by Obama were three of many examples in each
case where there was an aggrandizement of power by the federal government. Once
more, a stark contrast arises between each of these examples. On the surface, there
does not appear to be a correlation between the acquisition of land and federal
assistance programs. Yet the conservative criticism that arose in opposition to each
of these indicates the presence of continuity among the others. The argument
advanced by conservatives rested on the belief that there was a lack of
constitutional authority of the federal government to engage in these activities. The
Louisiana Purchase compared to “Obamacare” present two seemingly diverse
issues, however the undercurrent of both, according to conservative criticism in the
same. The inextricable link among all three case studies demonstrates
conservatives’ vehement opposition to limiting the federal government within the
confines of its enumerated powers. The examples of overreaching federal powers
and the conservative reaction suppose a high level of importance of maintaining the
sovereignty of smaller political entities, such as state governments, in the minds of
conservatives. From this deduction, one can presume that by limiting the central
power, both republican virtue and individual liberty can be protected sufficiently.
The Founding Fathers’ were dedicated to restricting the powers of the federal
government as to avoid a regression back to the control of a power similar to
Britain. Through the evidence presented in each case study, it is apparent that
conservatives who believe in the importance of upholding these defined powers
have stuck to this principle, protesting instances when the federal government has attempted to overstep these boundaries.

Based on the case studies that were applied to prove the validity of the hypothesis, it can be concluded that each factor represented an integral part of the CPMs examined. The Jeffersonian presidency, the New Deal era and the Tea Party movement all experienced conservative opposition characteristic of each factor prior to the CPMs emergence. While the specificities of each case did not parallel, and sometimes appeared utterly irrelevant to one another, the underlying conservative argument was largely the same. So what implications does this inference have for the soundness of this thesis regarding the three factors? Founded on the evidence presented, American conservatism in its barest form has remained the same since the birth of the United States. Each factor, regardless of the particulars of each time period, was present in America prior to the surfacing of a CPM as indicated by conservative condemnation of federal policies. It also implies that America’s strand of conservatism has deep roots in republicanism due to the Founding Fathers reliance on this ideology during the drafting of the Constitution. Because of this continuity in conservative principles, widely based upon the ideals of republicanism, it is possible to establish the deviation from republican tradition, perceived threat to individual liberties and the aggrandizement of power by the federal government indicators of a forthcoming CPM. The combination of these three speaks to the fundamental values of American conservatism and, therefore, reveal how the presence of each collectively will result in conservative backlash.
There have also been several unexpected conclusions and observations that have been made based on the results of this thesis. The first is in regards to the level of political participation throughout American history. During the Jeffersonian presidency, it was observed that the bulk of conservative criticism came from politicians who were actively engaged in government. As the United States moved to the New Deal era, this base of conservative reaction extended to the business community, with leaders playing a dynamic role in the observed remonstration. The most recent case study, detailing the modern day Tea Party Movement, has revealed the extension of this political activism to include everyday citizens. Though not thoroughly examined, there was evidence of ordinary Americans joining in the promotion of the conservative cause. This is most likely explained by the democratization of the political process. With the advent of new and improved technologies, the diffusion of information to wider facets of life is possible. It would be interesting to examine the impact that advancing technology has on future CPMs as well as other political movements.

Another observation that was made during this examination, based on these three case studies, was that conservative opposition often occurs after periods of conservative prominence or executive control. That is to say that, when conservative ideals have been recently prominent on the political scene, whether by promotion through the president or popularization via a significant individual of near past, a CPM is more likely to occur when these conservative ideals are drifted away from. The Jeffersonian presidency occurred shortly after the founding of the United States where which the country was saturated with republican, and thereby
conservative values. As Jefferson, in the eyes of conservatives, rejected some of these values that had been instilled in people’s minds, backlash occurred. Similar to the New Deal Era, conservative presidents Harding, Coolidge and Hoover preceded the liberal Roosevelt. In the case of the Tea Party movement, Bush’s waning conservative followed by the election of liberal Obama proved to provide yet another straw to the camel’s loaded back. While correlation might not lead to causation, it is interesting to ruminate about the possibility that a period of conservative control followed by a period of opposition to conservative principles, in the minds of conservatives, is an integral part of conservative criticism that leads to a CPM. Both of these observations provided unintended, yet interesting, byproducts of this study.

That is not to say that there have not been flaws with the conclusions that have resulted from this thesis. The chosen case studies have provided a positive assertion of the thesis. However, due to the constraints of time, not all CPMs throughout American history could be examined to irrefutably validate the hypothesis. Other overlooked factors could have potentially arisen to contribute to the thesis. There could also be examples of cases where only two of these factors came into play prior to the rise of a CPM. In spite of this, the factors that were included in this study represent the core tenets of conservatism thus making them the most logical elements that contribute to the development of a CPM. Another flaw with this study was the difficulty with distinguishing factors from one another. In the case of TARP, all three factors could have been applicable to the analysis of the legislation. For the purpose of the case, it was imperative to determine under which
category each piece of evidence fit best in order to ensure fluidity and comprehensiveness. Still, the acknowledged flaws of this thesis do not radically detract from the confirmation of the conclusion.

This thesis is not meant to provide commentary on American conservatism as its understood to be, but to rather address the reasons why CPMs arise in the United States. Conservatives steadfast beliefs, rooted in the foundations of republicanism, have provided a guiding principle for their political actions over the course of American history. Though the particulars of backlash have differed over time, the underlying current of conservatism has remained the same. This continuity has grounded itself in three key values- republican tradition by way of virtue, the preservation of individual liberties and the maintenance of limited federal power in favor of states' rights. Based on this notion, the three factors that have contributed to the rise of CPMs in American history are a deviation from republican tradition, a perceived threat to individual liberties and the aggrandizement of power by the federal government. It is important to remember that whether or not each of these factors existed in reality, conservatives felt they were present and, as a result, formed a counterattack. So why is this conclusion important? In essence, it presents an important characterization of past CPMs and provides a blueprint for which to determine the potential of a forthcoming CPM. This predictor is valuable due to the undeniable impact past CPMs have had on American political history. By better understanding the impetus by which CPMs occur, it is possible to have a better grasp on their intention as well as their motivation. CPMs have imparted critical impression on the history of the United
States and will continue to do so as long as conservatism is a prominent ideology in American culture.
Bibliography


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