

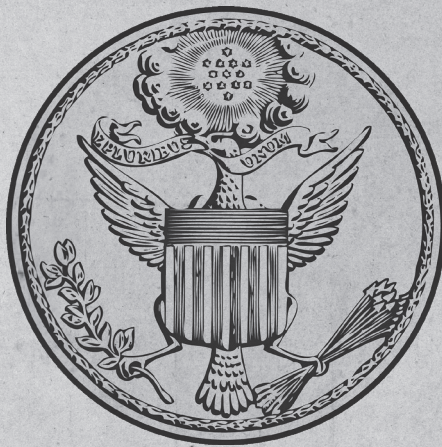
UNITED STATES CIVICS

CIVICS—HIGH SCHOOL

A Curriculum for Home Educating Families

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FOR TOMORROW'S LEADERS

May God be glorified in your stand for freedom.



“For no people will tamely surrender their liberties, nor can any be easily subdued, when knowledge is diffused and virtue is preserved. On the contrary, when people are universally ignorant, and debauched in their manners, they will sink under their own weight without the aid of foreign invaders.”¹

—Samuel Adams

1 *The Founders' Constitution* Volume 1, Chapter 18, Document 6 <http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/v1ch18s6.html> The University of Chicago Press



INTRODUCTION



“These principles form the bright constellation which has gone before us and guided our steps through an age of revolution and reformation. The wisdom of our sages and blood of our heroes have been devoted to their attainment. They should be the creed of our political faith, the text of civic instruction, the touchstone by which to try the services of those we trust; and 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.”

—Thomas Jefferson’s Inaugural Address

No doubt, that moment of wandering has been a long one. As a nation, we’ve slipped considerably from the “bright constellation” of the Founders’ principles. The vision of liberty that Washington, Jefferson, and Adams held dear is fading—and fading fast. And now, more than ever, it is high time to retrace our steps, re-educate our youth, and return to principles of our founding.

That’s where civics comes in. As Jefferson implied, the liberty we enjoy in America cannot merely be the creed of our political faith, it must form the text of our civic instruction. The next generation must be taught—and taught deliberately—those principles central to maintaining our system of government.

What exactly is civics? In a nutshell, civics is the study of how our government works and the part we play in it. We study civics to understand how God uses ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things in the realm of politics.

Take Patrick Henry. If anything characterized Patrick Henry’s early life, it was failure. His first two businesses went bankrupt. His farming attempt left him in the red. And fire demolished his young family’s home. His life was ordinary—if not unusually difficult. But he had a will, and six weeks of reading borrowed law texts transformed him into the fiery patriot whose “Give me Liberty” speech left an indelible impression on our history.¹

That’s the beauty of our form of government. It doesn’t take nobility to change the course of our nation. Ordinary people can make their voices heard—in the voting booth, through lobbying, and even in positions of leadership at the capitol. You don’t necessarily need a lot of money or an elite ancestry. If you work hard and care for others, you *can* influence this great nation we call home.

In reality, involvement in politics is inevitable. If you live in this country, you have an impact on the course of our history, either for worse or for better. Even if you do nothing but sit in your house, you’re making a clear statement to our government: “I don’t care to exercise my rights, and I would rather you

¹ David J. Vaughan, *Give Me Liberty: The Uncompromising Statesmanship of Patrick Henry*, (Nashville: Cumberland House, 1997), 34-36.

make all the decisions for me.” Those who want the government to spoonfeed them wake up to find tyranny at the end of the spoon.

Recently, I joined a team of young people in a campaign to get evangelical Christians to vote. We were in a pivotal state that would determine the future of politics on many levels, and we were eager to convince as many people as we could. Repeatedly throughout the week, we would hear people say, “Politics just isn’t my thing.” I could sense the frustration in the voice of the team members. “Don’t they realize they live in this country?”

Not into politics? Is that like not into football, or golfing, or whatever? Or is it a basic denial of our system of government: a republic designed to be ruled by the people?

Our system of government *was* intended to be ruled by people—and that means you! Throughout this course, you will learn not only how to get involved in your federal, state, and local levels, but also how this country was originally designed and what that means for you as the next generation of American citizens.

Of course, there are more reasons to get involved politically than merely the fact that you live in the U.S. Perhaps more than in any other nation in the history of the world, we have been given an enormous privilege—and responsibility. The Founders’ generation could hardly imagine someone so apathetic that he wouldn’t even make the effort to go vote. The cost of liberty was high, and our founders were willing to pay it. Nathan Hale, a martyr of the War for Independence in his early twenties, lamented, “I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country.” John Adams wrote, “Posterity, you will never know how much it cost the present generation to preserve your freedom. I hope you will make good use of it. If you do not, I shall repent in heaven that ever I took half the pains to preserve it.”² From our fateful war with mother England to the courage at Benghazi, and even to this very moment, hundreds of thousands of men and women have given their lives, and many more put theirs on the line, for the liberty we all enjoy. We have the esteemed privilege and painful duty of upholding that liberty and honoring the legacy for generations more to come!

As Christians, we have even more reason to make an impact in our society through government and politics. Christ left us with the mandate to “go therefore and make disciples of *all nations*.”³ Christ’s Kingdom transforms not only our personal lives but also our families, churches, and governments. We, in the pages of the Bible, have all that we need to create and sustain God-glorifying government systems, and it is our duty to apply His Word right where He has put us.

But there’s a motivation even beyond applying the Bible to every area of life. As sinners now reconciled with our Creator, we should have a passion for God to get the glory in all things—and that includes politics. That’s right. We can exalt God as much in politics as in supporting a charity, going on a mission trip, or leading a Bible study. *Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*⁴

Are you excited now? Politics isn’t just inevitable, it’s a responsibility and privilege that Christians can seize to take dominion and glorify God!

2 Buckner F. Melton, *The Quotable Founding Fathers* (Washington D.C.: Potomac Books, 2004), 224.

3 Matthew 28:19.

4 1 Corinthians 10:31.



But I'm too young!

At this point, you're probably wondering how this ever applies to you. After all, you might not even be old enough to vote yet. But let me assure you, young people can make an enormous impact on our nation. In fact, in some ways, you have abilities you may not have when you're older.

Let me tell you about a young friend of mine, a nine-year-old girl. This girl along with her family, has traveled the nation knocking on doors, making phone calls, and urging people to uphold biblical values on the ballot. In fact, when people open their doors to find a little girl sacrificing her time to make a difference in her nation when she can't even vote, they don't get much of an excuse to stay home on election day!

One homeschool graduate had the faith to run for county commissioner at the age of twenty-one. His odds weren't great—his opponent was the incumbent and a well-known talk show host in the community. That summer, between college semesters studying for a political science minor, this young man single-handedly knocked on 20,000 doors across his community. Sure enough, today he's serving as a county commissioner and standing up for biblical values in the public sphere.

These sorts of things were not uncommon amongst the Founding Fathers. In this book, you'll learn about the real—and forgotten—first president of our nation: Peyton Randolph. At the age of eighteen, Randolph attended the elite Inner Temple law school in London⁵ before becoming the Virginia Attorney General at the age of 27.⁶ Alexander Hamilton was only 22 when he served as Washington's secretary,⁷ and a surprising number of signers of the Declaration of Independence were under 35.

Can I actually make a difference?

Campaigns have been lost or won by less than 100 votes. That could be the difference between picking up the phone and urging people to vote for an hour or handing out literature for a day in your neighborhood. Your work matters.

When my brother was sixteen, he came across a proposition on the local ballot to increase taxes to support the public schools. It was only a week or two before the election, and as far as he knew, he was the only one opposing the bill. He penned a letter to the editor of our local newspaper and created a simple pamphlet outlining his position. He grabbed a friend, and together they handed out their pamphlets at a local gathering. Amazingly, the bill failed to pass.

Another group of fourteen-year-olds had the guts to invite the two nominees for their state governor to a debate. The men agreed, and the group found themselves in charge of hosting and moderating a now customary debate. They had made a difference.

Over the course of this book, we'll be delving into the ins and outs of American government and how you can start getting involved yourself. Are you ready?

5 Thomas Patrick Chorlton, *The First American Republic 1774-1789: The First Fourteen American Presidents*, 4.

6 Moncure Daniel Conway, *Omitted Chapters of History Disclosed in the Life and Papers of Edmund Randolph*, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1888), 9.

7 Mary Stockwell Ph.D, Alexander Hamilton, MountVernon.org, accessed November 14, 2016, <http://www.mountvernon.org/digital-encyclopedia/article/alexander-hamilton>

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Although this course is geared toward high-school students, we've designed it be adaptable so you can teach the whole family. I'd encourage you to read the lessons and recommended books aloud, allowing the younger ones to do something hands-on to aid in the listening process.

Even if young children might not catch everything the older ones do, they'll still learn and enjoy being like the "big kids." For high school students, you can increase the writing assignments and assign some independent reading books to bring the course to their level.

Let me warn you, there's no way you can get through all the recommended books, field trips, and lesson ideas I've highlighted. You know your students. I don't. Pick what topics interest them and delve further into those.

Each Unit Section contains a main lesson along with several other important highlights. Please see the following two pages to understand the format and purposes of these highlights.

At the end of each Unit, I've included questions, reviewing the major topics of that Unit. I would suggest using these as a basis for discussion and to encouraging your student(s) to explain what they have learned in their own words. These questions could also be used as a sort of written assignment or test to wrap up the Unit.

Most importantly, remember that completing a book doesn't mean your students have the adequate skills to become well-informed citizens. As the United States Office of Education wrote in 1919, "When history instruction is limited to finishing a book or covering so many pages, one may be certain that the great, abiding historical values and civic ideals are being neglected. When civic instruction is found only in the eighth grade, one may be sure that the pupils are getting civic information rather than civic training."¹ Instead, seek to use this book as a guide to give your students the training and experience they need to make a difference in our society. At the end of the day, what your students observe in your own personal patterns of citizenship will leave the most indelible stamp in their minds!

1 "An Educational Study of Alabama," The United States Department of the Interior Bulletin, no. 41 (1919), 35.





Books

I've recommended lots of books as potential read-aloud material for younger students, or for older students as personal reading assignments. Under the book's title, I give a short description to help you decide what books might serve your family best. I'll also specify if the book is Elementary (illustrated for younger students), Read-aloud (suitable for the whole family), or Middle school or High school (typically an in-depth biography or non-fiction work for those interested in the topic).

Another note: Unless you're blessed with a large budget, don't buy all these books new! Many of them will be available at your local library or through interlibrary loans. Or, if you're a book-lover like me, sign up for library cards in all your surrounding counties to get the most options!



Original document excerpt

The greatest danger of studying history is relying solely on second-or-third-hand accounts. Failing to return to original sources is the best way to allow revisionist ideas (politically-correct interpretations that are often incorrect) to creep in and taint how we think of the world. To guard against this, I've included original document excerpts in the Unit Sections. Sometimes you'll be reading key documents like The Mayflower Compact or The Bill of Rights. Other times, I've chosen more obscure passages that help us understand the culture of another era. Some of these excerpts may be at higher reading levels than your students are accustomed to. That's okay. Plodding through more difficult literature (whether on their own or read aloud) will enable them to increase their reading comprehension and vocabulary. If you need to, keep a dictionary handy to look up new words.



Fun Terms

Many of the Unit Sections will have new or unfamiliar words to some of the readers. You will notice that these uncommon words are **bolded** in the text, and each will have a corresponding definition at the end of that section in the **Fun Terms** box. These words are all defined again in an alphabetical listing in the Appendix at the back of this book for easy searching.





UNIT 1

THE THREE BRANCHES OF OUR GOVERNMENT

The Legislative Branch

- 1.1 The House of Representatives
- 1.2 The Senate
- 1.3 The Life of (a) Bill

The Executive Branch

- 1.4 The House of Representatives
- 1.5 The Senate

The Judicial Branch

- 1.6 The Court System



“For the LORD is our judge; the LORD is our lawgiver; the LORD is our king; He will save us.” (Isaiah 33:22)



1.1-1.3 THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Do you remember the purpose of the legislative branch from our discussion of the separation of powers? If you're thinking that it makes the rules, then you are right! The legislative branch *creates* law. Because in a republic like the U.S., the law is king, our Founders realized the legislative branch could easily dominate the other branches. That's why they separated this branch into two distinct bodies: the House of Representatives and the Senate. In the next few lessons, you'll be learning how these two groups work together to make our laws.

1.1 THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



“But experience had taught us a distrust of that security; and that it is necessary to introduce such a balance of powers and interests, as will guarantee the provisions on paper. Instead therefore of contenting ourselves with laying down the Theory in the Constitution that each department ought to be separate and distinct, it was proposed to add a defensive power to each which should maintain the Theory in practice.”¹
—James Madison

The House of Representatives is the lower house of our **bicameral** legislature, and it's also the house that's most democratic, that is, tied to the people. To make sure representatives stay in tune to the people, they are elected every other year. With this system, representatives are motivated to make decisions that will benefit their **constituents** so as to be reelected. Every two years, both the House and Senate begin a new “congress,” a two-year cycle beginning after each general election numbered from the first one in 1789 until now. For example, the 119th Congress began in January 2025 after the November 2024 elections. Each Congress is divided into two “sessions,” the name given for the series of meetings throughout the year beginning on January 3.

How many representatives are there? If you remember the **Great Compromise**, you'll recall the lower house (the House of Representatives) is based on population while the upper house (the Senate) is based on the number of states. Although each state sends only two senators to the Capitol, they must choose their delegates to the House, called representatives, based on the state's population.

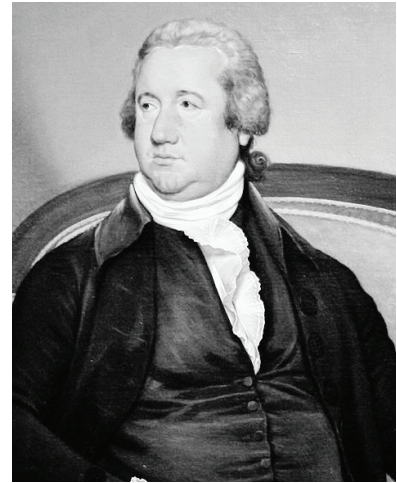
Now, the Constitution specifies that a state can't have more than one representative for every 30,000 people. The state of Colorado, for example, has eight representatives for a little over six million

1 James Madison, *The Anti-Federalist Papers and the Constitutional Convention Debates*, 123.

people. That's about one for every 750,000 people. Why can't we have 23—one for each 30,000? Back in 1911, Congress passed a law limiting the number of representatives to 435. Look at it this way, if every 30,000 people in the US had one representative, the House would have 10,800 members by now!² Whew! Would that take a big building, or what!

Leadership

Although 435 representatives are still a large group, the House has a structured system of leadership to ensure business runs smoothly. First, the entire House gathers and elects a **Speaker of the House** from the **majority party** at the beginning of each new congress. The speaker oversees the entire House of Representatives as well as his majority party. And, if both the president and vice president were to die, the Speaker of the House would be the next in line to become president.



Frederick Muhlenberg,
First Speaker of the House

Under the Speaker's authority, a **majority leader** and a **minority leader** represent their parties to the rest of the House. The majority and minority parties are currently either Democrat or Republican, depending on which party holds the most seats in the House. For example, in the first session of the 119th Congress (beginning in 2025), there were 220 Republicans and 215 Democrats, making the Republicans the majority party.³ The majority and minority leaders also have assistant leaders to aid them in their roles.

In 1897, political parties began to choose **whips**,⁴ party leaders who head up the party's legislative program in the House. Today, the whips help control how a party's bills get introduced. In addition, each party chooses a leader for their party **caucus**, (sometimes called conference), which includes all the representatives that belong to that party.

Committees

Imagine all the different laws Congress passes—everything from food regulation to military decisions, and the list goes on and on! To help keep this overwhelming amount of information organized, the House of Representatives began dividing itself into committees so each could take care of a certain area of law. During the first Congress in 1789, they created the first committee: The Committee on Ways and Means.⁵ Currently, there are 20 standing committees. Although different representatives serve on different committees, everyone belongs to the Committee of the Whole House. The committees, each

² Based on a US population of around 324 million as of 2017, www.census.gov, accessed January 18, 2017.

³ "Congressional Profile," Office of the Clerk, accessed February 21, 2017, http://clerk.house.gov/member_info/cong.aspx.

⁴ "Republican Whips (1897 to Present)," History, Art & Archives United States House of Representatives, accessed February 21, 2017, <http://history.house.gov/People/Office/Republican-Whips/>.

⁵ "History," The Committee on Ways and Means, accessed February 21, 2017, <https://waysandmeans.house.gov/history/>.



led by a representative known as the chairman of the committee, consider bills to be introduced. We'll learn more about this process later.

Commissions

Commissions, the final organizations that help the House run smoothly, vary quite a bit. They tend to serve as advisory bodies or help administer the law in some way. Some are temporary, others are permanent. Occasionally, a law will automatically create a commission, or the House may pass a resolution to create one.⁶ Commissions don't even necessarily have to only include House or Senate members, as many are made of private citizens. But just like committees, commissions enable the House to better organize its many responsibilities. Currently, many of the House commissions are for the purpose of aiding other nations. For example, the House has a "Congressional Executive Commission on China," which helps monitor China's obedience to international human rights standards.⁷

Did You Know?

Does serving as a representative sound like fun? It's definitely a lot of work, but representatives make a huge impact on the direction of our nation. After all, they're the ones who help make law! You might consider interning for one of the House's 20 committees for a summer while you're in high school or college. It would be an eye-opening experience into how our government works.



Fun Terms

Bicameral: A legislature with two bodies: an upper house (we call it the Senate) and a lower house (the House of Representatives).

Constituents: Those who live in a community represented by a certain leader. In this case, a representative's constituents are the people who live in their district and elect them into office.

Speaker of the House: The leader of the House of Representatives.

The Majority Party: The political party that holds the most seats in the House.

6 "The House Explained," The US House of Representatives, accessed February 21, 2017, <http://www.house.gov/content/learn/>.

7 "Frequently Asked Questions," Congressional-Executive Commission on China, accessed February 21, 2017, <http://www.cecc.gov/about/frequently-asked-questions>.

The Minority Party: The political party that holds the fewest seats of the two main parties in the house.

The Majority Leader: The leader of the majority political party in the House of Representatives.

The Minority Leader: The leader of the minority political party in the House of Representatives.

Party Whip: A leader elected by each political party to help head up their legislative plan.

Party Caucus: The group that includes all the members of a certain political party.



Books

The Constitution Made Easy, by Michael Holler. Includes the full text of the Constitution, with explanations in modern-day English written alongside for easy reading. From a conservative perspective. A great way to help younger students read the Constitution. (*Middle school or High school*)

Cappy Tall's Capitol Tales, by Peter W. Barnes and Cheryl Shaw Barnes
A bird's tour of the Capitol building. (*Elementary*)

Washington DC ABCs, by Peter W. Barnes and Cheryl Shaw Barnes
Learn the Capitol through the ABCs. (*Elementary or younger*)

How Congress Works: A Look at the Legislative Branch, by Ruth Tenzer Feldman
Thorough, but fun, illustrated overview of how Congress works. (*Elementary*)

Now that you know how the House of Representatives works, it is a good time to read how our Constitution outlines its job. Below is an excerpt of the Constitution in its original wording. You can find a helpful, modern-day English explanation in the book *The Constitution Made Easy*, by Michael Holler.





Article 1

Section 1

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

Section 2

1: The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

2: No Person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the Age of twenty five Years, and been seven Years a Citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

3: Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons.⁸ The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct. The Number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty Thousand, but each State shall have at Least one Representative; and until such enumeration shall be made, the State of New Hampshire shall be entitled to chuse three, Massachusetts eight, Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations one, Connecticut five, New-York six, New Jersey four, Pennsylvania eight, Delaware one, Maryland six, Virginia ten, North Carolina five, South Carolina five, and Georgia three.

4: When vacancies happen in the Representation from any State, the Executive Authority thereof shall issue Writs of Election to fill such Vacancies.

5: The House of Representatives shall chuse their Speaker and other Officers; and shall have the sole Power of Impeachment.”

—Constitution of The United States of America

8 Updated by Amendments 13, 14, and 16.

1.2 THE SENATE

Do you remember what an aristocracy is? An aristocracy is an elite class or group that tends to rise to the top in leadership. The second body of Congress, the Senate, was designed to be the upper house. The original intention was for the Senate to represent a higher class of society by forming a sort of “natural” aristocracy from the nation’s most talented. Although the Senate changed over time to look much more like the House in its structure, it has still served as a kind of stage for some of our nation’s most influential leaders.

The Senate represents the states equally, with each state sending two senators for a total of 100. Originally, each state’s legislatures chose the senators themselves; but in 1913, Amendment 17 changed the Senate appointment system to direct elections by the people.

To give the Senate a more permanent feel, the Founders created a six-year cycle. Each senator has a six-year term, but every two years, one-third of the senators go up for reelection. This allows the senators enough time to learn their job well without making the Senate too powerful, since senators are subject to the people’s election every six years, even if they are reelected for another term.

Leadership

The Senate has a similar leadership structure to the House, but unlike the House, the Vice President is head of the Senate. He’s not allowed to vote, though, unless there’s a perfect 50-50 tie. In case the Vice President is absent or became president if the current President died, the Senate also has a **President Pro Tempore**.

Like the House, the Senate is split into majority and minority parties with party leaders, assistants, and conference leaders. In the 119th Congress (2025-2027), the Republicans have 53 seats, the Democrats have 45, and the Independents have 2. The majority and minority leaders control what bills will be looked at and get the first chance to introduce legislation on the floor.

The Senate has 16 permanent committees with many subcommittees underneath them. They also have what they call special, or select, committees assigned to certain tasks. Some special committees dissolve once the task is finished, and others are permanent. Also, the Senate and House together have joint committees, with members from both bodies. There are currently four joint committees: Printing, which oversees the government publishing office; Taxation, which assists Congress in making tax laws; Economic, which studies the economy and makes economic suggestions to Congress; and Library, which oversees the Library of Congress and other national centers.

What the Senate Does

Not only does the Senate play a key role in the legislative process, it also acts as a court for impeachment. **Impeachment** means to charge a government official with misconduct.⁹ If the president or some other high-ranking official disobeys the law or acts improperly in his role, the Senate judges the trial. Keep in

9 *New Oxford American Dictionary*, s.v. “impeachment.”

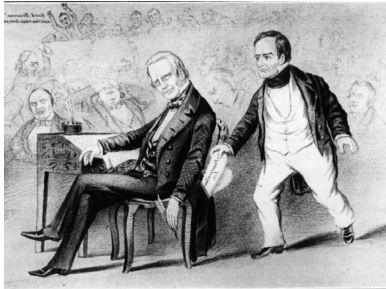


mind that impeachment simply means “charging an official with misconduct,” not necessarily proving him guilty or removing him from office.



“This is the senate, a senate of equals, of men of individual honor and of personal character, and of absolute independence. We know no masters, we acknowledge no dictators”¹⁰

—Daniel Webster



A Political Cartoon of Daniel Webster stealing Henry Clay's Thunder

What must happen to impeach someone? First, the House of Representatives must charge the officer with misconduct by a majority vote. Then, a committee of representatives acts as a witness before the Senate, explaining what he or she did wrong. If the Senate convicts them of the crime with a two-thirds majority vote, the official can no longer hold their office. This is an important application of “law over king” as even vice presidents and presidents must obey this law.

In the history of our nation, only two presidents have ever been impeached. After the Civil War and Abraham Lincoln's assassination, Lincoln's vice president who took over the presidency,

Andrew Johnson, was sympathetic toward the war-torn South. However, Congress had strong Northern tendencies and passed a law stating the president could not remove anyone from office without the Senate's approval. Johnson, however, removed his political enemy (a Northerner) from being secretary of war. The House of Representatives impeached Johnson, but the Senate acquitted him so that he was never removed from office.¹¹

The second presidential impeachment centered around President Bill Clinton lying under oath to a federal grand jury. Clinton was impeached by the House of Representatives but later declared “not guilty” by the Senate.

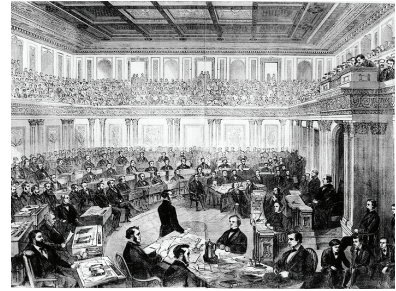
Congress did come close to impeaching President Richard Nixon after the Watergate Scandal in 1974. When Nixon was nearing his reelection as a Republican, he allowed some officials under him to spy on the Democratic Convention's strategy. They were caught, and Congress investigated the scandal with the plan to impeach him. Nixon, however, resigned the presidency before he could appear on trial.

¹⁰ Daniel Webster, *Webster's Speeches*, (Boston: 1897), 6.

¹¹ “Impeachment,” senate.gov, accessed January 19, 2017, http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/briefing/Senate_Impeachment_Role.htm.

Heroes of the Senate

The Senate may have been elite, but it was Daniel Webster, John C. Calhoun, and Henry Clay that gave it fame and power.¹² These three ruled the nation—from the Senate floor. None ever became president. They didn't even like each other. But they succeeded in dominating a nation at the brink of civil war during a time of weak presidential administrations. Webster, Calhoun, and Clay championed the political ideologies of North, South, and West that would eventually clash in the War Between the States. When they spoke—and it was often—the nation trembled. Webster once responded to a debate with a four-hour oration that caused his listeners to unashamedly weep. And the struggle was so intense, Clay almost started a fist-fight right on the Senate floor, and had to be called off.¹³



Senate Floor
1800's

Today, the Senate still plays an important role in preserving the freedoms of Americans. Our senators work hard to represent our state in Washington D.C., and although there are times we need to urge them to promote our liberties, we can be incredibly grateful for their service to our nation.



Fun Terms

President Pro Tempore: An acting president.

Impeachment: Charging a government official with law-breaking or improper conduct.

In response to a series of resolutions Henry Clay proposed before the Senate on the topic of slavery, Daniel Webster delivered a stirring defense of his Northern position before a large audience gathered in the Senate chamber. In his introduction and conclusion included here, he acknowledges the weightiness of the Senate and urges the nation to fight for unity:

¹² Neil MacNeil and Richard E. Baker, *The American Senate: An Insider's History*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 283

¹³ Ibid, 279-84.

