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**1. TITLE AND SUBTITLE:**

**DEMOCRATIC LANDSLIDE 2012!: A Cyclical Approach to Realignment in America**

**2. SYNOPSIS:**

Forget what the pundits have told you about the war in Iraq, the economy, terrorism, and gay rights—none of these issues will change the inevitable outcome of the 2004 election. The result is predetermined, and this book will tell you who will win: we need only follow the specific cyclical pattern that has run throughout American history since the days of Washington. We can also predict 2008 with a fair amount of certainty, and the result in 2012 is inevitable: a Democratic landslide and the start of a new political era.

**3. CONCEPT AND RATIONALE:**

Major realignment of party control in America has historically occurred approximately once every generation: Jefferson and the Democratic-Republicans in 1800; Jackson and the Democrats in 1828; Lincoln and the Republicans in 1860; McKinley and the Republicans in 1896; and FDR and the Democrats in 1932. Each of these presidents inaugurated new eras of party control and remade the political status quo. Since 1860, when the two modern parties emerged, the change has taken place every 36 years.

Richard Nixon won the presidency in 1968 but failed to lead his party to take control of Congress. This led many to claim that America had entered an age of ‘dealignment,’ giving neither party the upper hand. Appropriately enough, this election was thirty-six convenient years after 1932.

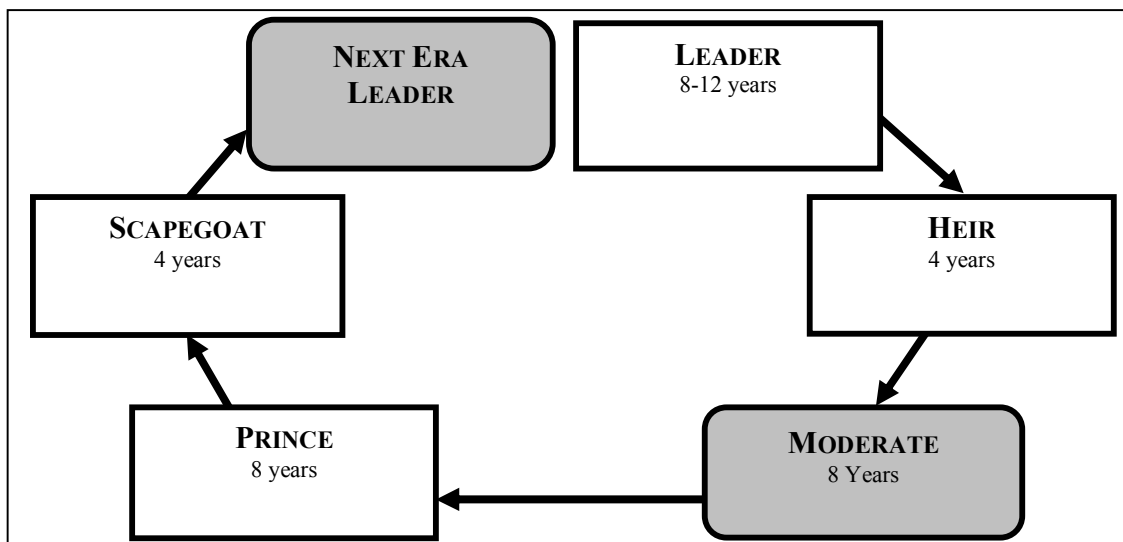
When do most theorists believe this era of dealignment will end? In the words of UPI political analyst James Chapin, “the cyclical pattern of American politics, with its regular 36-year turns, suggests that America should be due for a realignment in 2004.” But numerical correlation does not guarantee cause. With little real evidence and no understanding of the structural changes taking place, strategists from both parties feverishly plan how they will profit from the inevitable shift.

The wait will be longer than they think. The election of 1968 was a mistake, and in the context of a clear and quantifiable historical cycle, it was a switch to the Republican Party that came four years early. Nixon had the potential to convert the political status quo, but the Civil Rights Movement and Vietnam, the resignation of the president and vice president (followed by Ford’s unelected presidency) threw the cycle into disorder.

Nixon’s presidency did not start a new era, dealignment or otherwise. Rather, his administration was a temporary disruption. A brief review of 20<sup>th</sup> century history reveals that it was Ronald Reagan, not Nixon, who started the next and current era of American politics. Indeed, a cross-generational comparison shows that the elections and administrations of today are following an identical progression of previous eras.

Reagan’s revamping of the political status quo and his landslide electoral victories parallel the success of presidents William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt, and later FDR. George Bush followed Reagan, treading in the footsteps of similarly anointed successors William Taft and Harry Truman, yet all three of these men were challenged by in-party rebellions during their campaign for reelection: Teddy Roosevelt took on Taft, the Dixiecrat revolt defied Truman, and Ross Perot opposed George Bush. Consequently, these presidents were followed by opposition party moderates: Woodrow Wilson, Dwight Eisenhower, and Bill Clinton won by accepting the basic tenets of the incumbent political order. The cycle can be traced onward until the end of the era, with the same identifiable stages found in every age since George Washington. It is not the passage of time, in 36-year gaps or otherwise, but the fulfillment of these stages that brings realignment.

Why does the cycle repeat itself? In the words of philosopher Andres Bonifacio, “History never repeats itself; it is the people who repeat themselves.” Activists, parties, and voters are reacting to the same motivational stimuli across the ages, and consequently, the presidents and candidates who run are remarkably similar. Starting with a look at the presidents, each era can be explained using the same model.



**The LEADER**

THOMAS JEFFERSON, ANDREW JACKSON, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, WILLIAM MCKINLEY & THEODORE ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT, (RICHARD NIXON) and RONALD REAGAN

Each era starts with the *Leader*. This president brings his party to dominate the political institutions and, most importantly, redefines the political order on new terms. Whether the new status quo be Reagan’s small government philosophy or the populist principles of Jackson, this president defines the rest of the era. Popular and successful, the party worships this president as the political gold standard for the remainder of the era.

The opposition holds pockets of regional strength, but no national candidate is able to articulate an acceptable alternative to the *Leader’s* new agenda. Progressive Republicans Alfred Landon and Wendell Wilkie were unable to put a dent in FDR’s New Deal

juggernaut, just as Walter Mondale and Michael Dukakis were no match for the Reagan Revolution. The opposition tries to run on their traditional platform that had delivered victory in the past, but fail pitifully when challenging the newly established political order.

The stability of the entire era rests on the shoulders of this president, and the cycle is at its most unstable position when a new *Leader* comes into office. The premature departure of no less than three *Leader* presidents—Abraham Lincoln, William McKinley, and Richard Nixon—has thrice in history put the cycle into severe danger of instability. Lincoln’s replacement by southern Democrat Andrew Johnson destabilized the cycle and threw the post-Civil War era into disarray. The other two cycles survived: Theodore Roosevelt succeeded McKinley and secured the Progressive Republican majority in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and Ronald Reagan took office shortly after Nixon was forced from office.

### **The HEIR**

JAMES MADISON, MARTIN VAN BUREN,  
WILLIAM TAFT, HARRY TRUMAN, and GEORGE H. W. BUSH

The *Leader* commands such political authority that he can virtually assure the victory of an appointed successor. The *Heir* wins an election that is more an indication of the *Leader*’s popularity than anything else.

Things are never easy for the inheritor of the partisan throne, and the *Heir* soon finds that he is unable to fill the *Leader*’s shoes. To make matters worse, the new president is unable to manage the balancing act of satisfying all the divergent constituencies of the majority party. The party soon splits along factional lines. Boggled down in a leadership crisis, confusion in the majority party, and more often than not a third-party rebellion, the electorate decides that a change is in order, albeit a small one.

### **The MODERATE**

WILLIAM HARRISON & JOHN TYLER, ZACHARY TAYLOR & MILLARD FILLMORE,  
WOODROW WILSON, DWIGHT EISENHOWER, and BILL CLINTON

With an average of sixteen years out of power, the opposition is more than happy to provide that change. The nomination of the *Moderate* is the product of the opposition’s reluctant moderation. Party activists finally realize they must move to the center if they hope to win, and grudgingly accept a restrained centrist.

This candidate wins because he accepts a centrist version of the status quo, and woe to the *Moderate* who misinterprets his mandate. Remember the Clinton health care plan? Such a drastic move so soon after the Reagan Revolution was easily defeated after it was painted as a return to ‘Big Government,’ a political idea that Clinton wisely rejected in his second term after settling for a quasi-conservative legacy defined by welfare reform and free trade. Eisenhower’s only change to the established order was making the New Deal fiscally responsible, and the Whig presidents did nothing to stop slavery or reinstate the National Bank (killed by Jackson in 1832). Even though the opposition party takes

control of the White House, the extent to which they can change the country's direction is limited by the receptivity of the political culture.

The opposition wins the White House but they cannot hold Congress. Clinton, Eisenhower, and the Whigs held the presidency for eight years but a majority in Congress for only two. (Only Wilson did better, keeping a Democratic majority for six years.)

### **The PRINCE**

GEORGE WASHINGTON, JAMES MONROE, JAMES POLK & FRANKLIN PIERCE, WARREN HARDING & CALVIN COOLIDGE, JOHN F. KENNEDY & LYNDON JOHNSON, and GEORGE W. BUSH

Despite the centrism of the *Moderate*, his administration was simply agonizing for the majority party—a usurper was allowed to govern with impunity for eight torturous years! As that next election approaches close, the powerbrokers of the majority party search far and wide for a candidate who can paper over factional disputes and prioritize party unity. To mute the divisive tendencies of purist activists, the party nominates the *Prince*.

Three key factors decide the selection of the *Prince*. First, the candidate must be of partisan royalty. Second, he must be politically uncontroversial and not the favorite son of a particular faction. Third, he must remind the party and the people of the good 'ol days when the *Leader* was in power. With these credentials, the *Prince* appeals to the activist base of the party and the national electorate to claim victory.

After four years in office, every *Prince* has won a stunning reelection. Nevertheless, eight years later, the opposition takes control and a new cycle begins.

- In 1792, George Washington, the first president and first *Prince*, won reelection with the last unanimous vote in the Electoral College. Eight years later, Thomas Jefferson and the Democratic-Republicans took power.
- In 1820, James Monroe ran for reelection unchallenged as the *Prince* of the Republican Era. Eight years later in 1828, the populist Jacksonian Democrats took control and started a new era.
- In 1852, Franklin Pierce, the second one-term *Prince* of the Era, won all but four states and destroyed the moribund Whig Party. Eight years later in 1860, the nascent Republicans won with Abraham Lincoln.
- In 1924, Democrat John Davis lost to Calvin Coolidge in the worst showing of any major party candidate in modern history. But eight years later in 1932, the New Deal Democrats took over.
- In 1964, Lyndon Johnson claimed the largest percentage of the popular vote in history. Eight years later in 1972, Nixon won a landslide reelection.

Following the cyclical model we know exactly what to expect in 2004: George W. Bush, the *Prince* of the Conservative Era, will overwhelmingly defeat the Democratic challenger. But what is to come eight years later? I believe history points to only one conclusion, hence the title of this book.

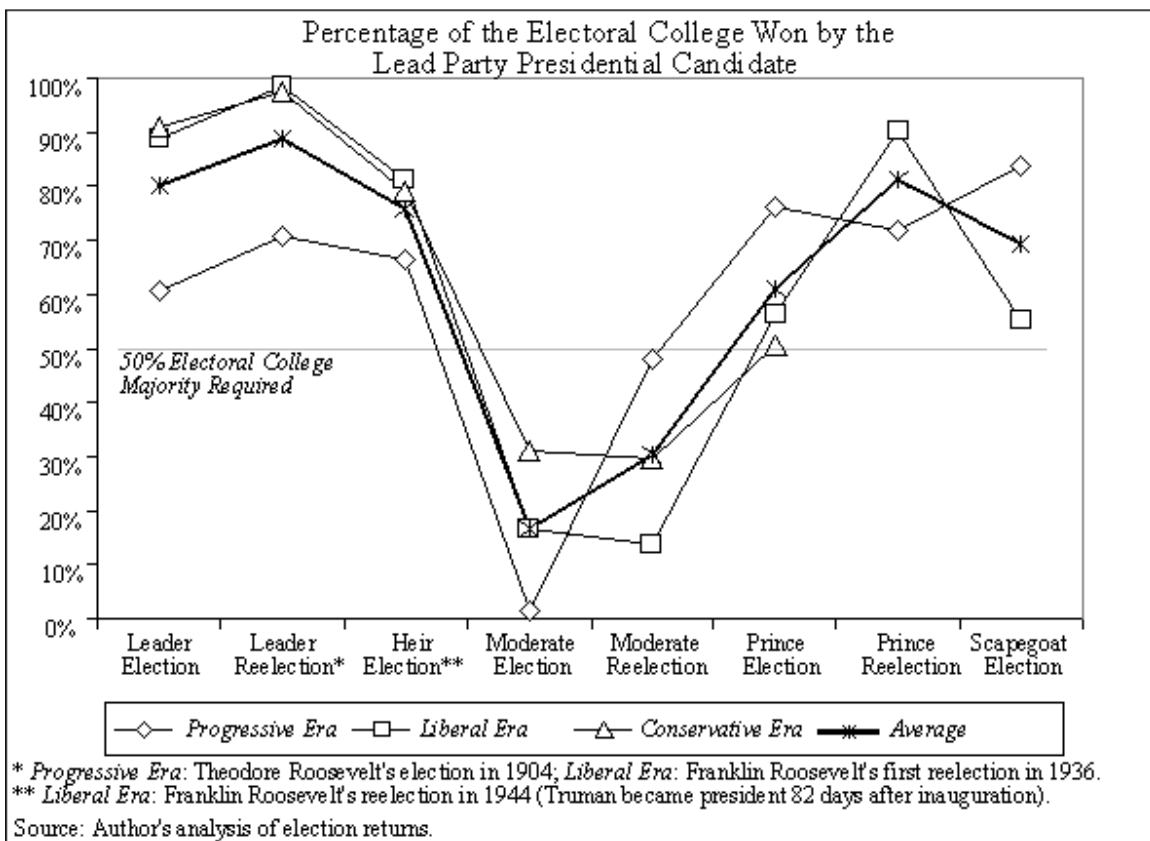
### **The SCAPEGOAT**

JOHN ADAMS, JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, JAMES BUCHANAN,  
HERBERT HOOVER, and JIMMY CARTER

Upon the *Prince's* departure from office, the majority party is typically able to elect one last president. It does not take long for the administration of this president, rightly nicknamed the *Scapegoat*, to fall apart at the seams. Whether personal failings or the inevitable split in the party, the country became disillusioned with each of these presidents—not just the man himself, but the very political ideology he represents. The bitter irony is that, at the same time, party activists see the *Scapegoat* as a traitor of party doctrine. Meanwhile, a major makeover takes place in the opposition party, a new *Leader* steps forth and brings a new political order to national acceptance. The partisan roles are reversed and the cycle begins anew.

\* \* \*

Does this sound like an exercise in over-analysis? Simplified as it may be, this model is an accurate description of every era of our political history. To those still not convinced, take a look at the election returns from the post-McKinley presidency starting in 1897.



This pattern, while occasionally lapsing into moments of temporary instability, has remained remarkably consistent. The *Leader* wins election and then a stronger reelection; the *Heir* wins by a smaller margin; the *Moderate* wins election and reelection

by running on majority party issues; the *Prince* wins election and an overwhelming reelection; and the *Scapegoat* wins once, only to fail soon afterwards.

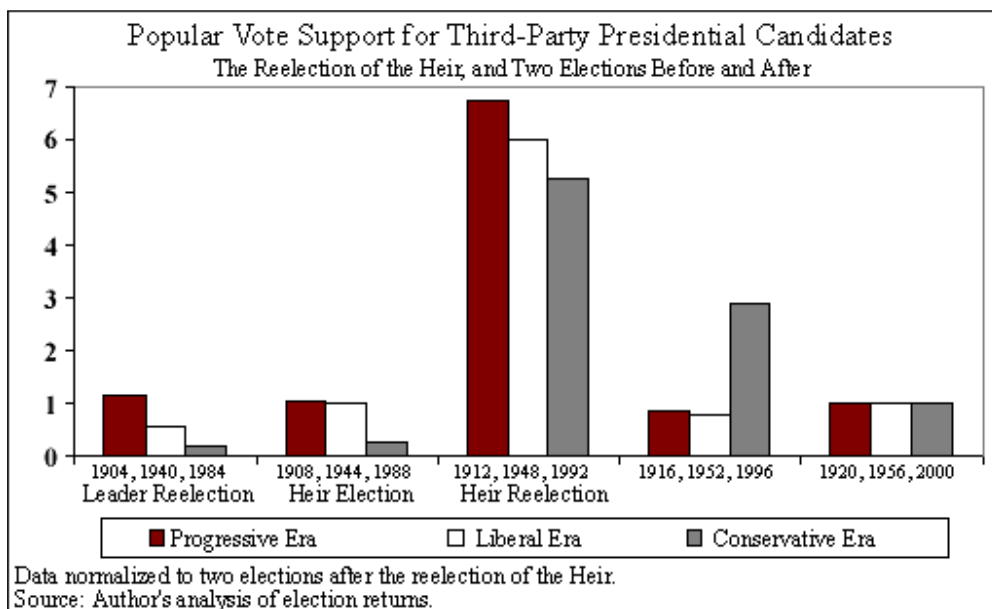
Presidential actors embody the major stages of the cycle, but we must allow for the inclusion of other players for a more complete picture. Electoral actors—the *Saboteur*, the *Crusader*, and the *Turncoat*—play decisive roles in shaping the long-term outcome.

**The SABOTEUR**

MARTIN VAN BUREN (1848), THEODORE ROOSEVELT (1912),  
HENRY WALLACE & STROM THURMOND (1948), and ROSS PEROT (1992)

The political missteps of the *Heir* result in the desertion and third-party candidacy of the *Saboteur*, who leaves the majority party for independent territory. Van Buren’s crusade on the Free-Soil Party platform in 1848 helped Whig *Moderate* Zachary Taylor take power just as Roosevelt’s “Bull Moose” candidacy gave the presidency to Woodrow Wilson. Strom Thurmond and Henry Wallace ran against Harry Truman in 1948, while Ross Perot inadvertently helped Bill Clinton unseat incumbent President Bush in 1992. This disunity in the majority party, coupled with the moderation of the opposition party, is what allows for the election of the *Moderate*. (*Heir* Truman survived despite two *Saboteur* insurgencies, but the delay was temporary, and *Moderate* Dwight Eisenhower won four years later.)

As the graph below shows, support for third party presidential candidates has drastically spiked during the reelection of the *Heir* in the last three cycles.



Each of these third party candidates claimed to be the heads of new parties, but there were few serious (or at least successful) candidates for Congress or Governor in any of these parties. In fact, the *Saboteur* has historically returned to the majority party fold. Van Buren tried to reorganize the northern Democrats around antislavery principles,

Roosevelt became Wilson's fiercest critic during World War I, Thurmond ran for the Senate as a Democrat in 1954, and Perot endorsed George W. Bush over the candidate of his own Reform Party in 2000.

### **The CRUSADER**

THOMAS JEFFERSON (1796), ANDREW JACKSON (1824), JOHN FRÉMONT (1856),  
AL SMITH (1928), and BARRY GOLDWATER (1964)

Breaking with the accommodationist policies of the opposition party under the *Moderate* that strategically fought on terms dictated by the enemy, the *Crusader* defiantly advocated a new vision for America. Each of these candidates lost their bids for the presidency, but their efforts put a political movement in motion that later elected a new *Leader*. Thomas Jefferson (1796) and Andrew Jackson (1824) lost their first bids for the presidency but helped build support for victory four years later. John Fremont (1856) was the first to demand the abolition of slavery, and while his platform was too radical he trail-blazed the anti-slavery path for Abraham Lincoln. Al Smith (1928) advocated a liberal vision of a proactive federal government and opened the field for Roosevelt's New Deal, while Barry Goldwater (1964) denounced all forms of government intrusion, from social security to federally enforced civil rights, and sparked a movement that would bring Ronald Reagan record-breaking landslides.

Ahead of their time and the wrong man for the job, the *Crusader* acts to prepare the opposition party for the next era, putting in motion an unstoppable political movement that changes the political landscape.

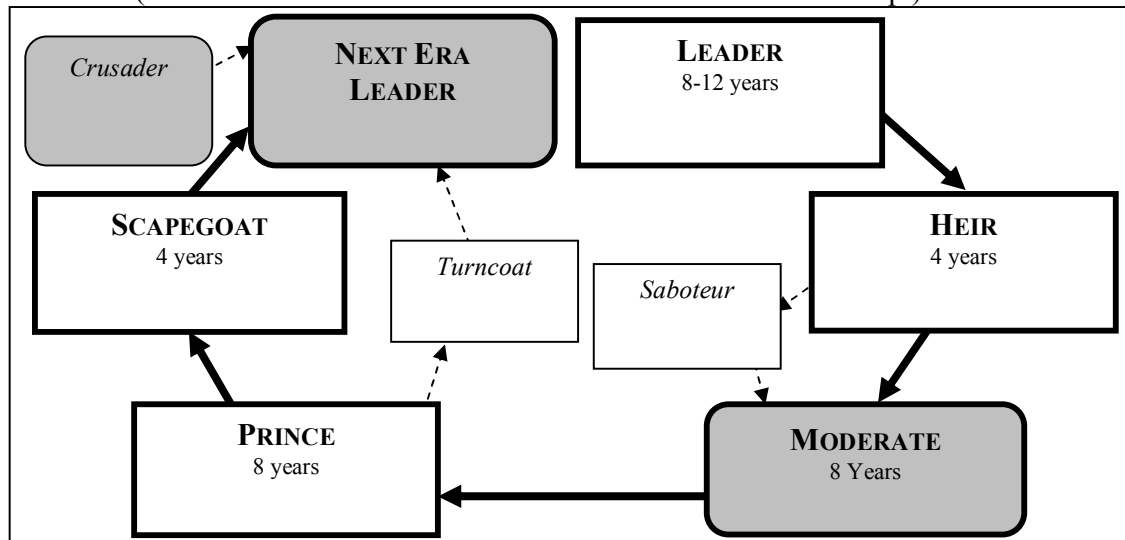
### **The TURNCOAT**

HENRY CLAY (1824), STEPHEN DOUGLAS (1860),  
ROBERT LA FOLLETTE (1924), and GEORGE WALLACE (1968)

At the same time the *Crusader* emerges from the opposition party, the *Turncoat* leaves the majority party at the head of a mutiny. Running as an independent on the grounds that the majority party has disenfranchised a vital constituency, this electoral actor enters the presidential election as a rogue candidate on an independent platform.

Unlike the *Saboteur*, the great irony of the *Turncoat* is that his campaign hurts the opposition party more than the majority party he deserted. Henry Clay (1824) deprived Andrew Jackson the presidency by taking the Midwest, Stephen Douglas (1860) ran as a Northern Democrat and won two states that later went Republican, Robert La Follette (1924) gathered most of his support from former progressive Republicans on their way to the Democratic Party, and George Wallace (1968) took his votes from 'Dixiecrats' and populist southerners. As luck would have it, the *Turncoat* is good for the majority party in the short-term but fatal in the long run. His candidacy acts as a halfway point for voters in transition to the opposition party, and in the end, those who backed his independent campaign become part of the incoming majority.

The inclusion of these new electoral actors allows the theoretical model to become more intricate. (Dashed arrows indicate an indirect but causative relationship.)



There are occasionally exceptions, most recently President Nixon's election in 1968, but because this cycle frames the structural changes of each era, it can be used to accurately chart and predict long-term political change.

#### 4. TABLE OF CONTENTS:

##### Chapter One: The Gunson Cycle

- The first chapter briefly examines the prevailing political orthodoxy of realignment and explains the thinking behind the Gunson Cycle. This chapter has been summarized in Section 3 of this proposal.

##### Chapter Two: Beyond Left and Right

- America is habitually divided into left and right, liberal and conservative. This chapter sorts through that confusion of two-dimensional classification and enters the realm of political culture. The four traditions of American political culture—conservatism, progressivism, populism, and liberalism—are the real dividing lines and allow a contemporaneous perspective of history.

#### ***PART ONE: THE PRE-MODERN PERIOD***

##### Chapter Three: The Federalist Prelude and the Republican Era

- It begins with George Washington and John Adams in the 'Federalist Prelude.' In this incomplete cycle, the new federal government needed a president who could appeal to all the factions—not a *Leader* but a *Prince*—hence the unanimous election and reelection of General Washington, who held no firm positions and appealed to all sides of the political spectrum. *Scapegoat* John Adams was an unsuccessful president who oversaw the fall.
- The first full era began in 1800 with the election of Thomas Jefferson. Even in the nascent political environs with just tens of thousands of voters, there was only



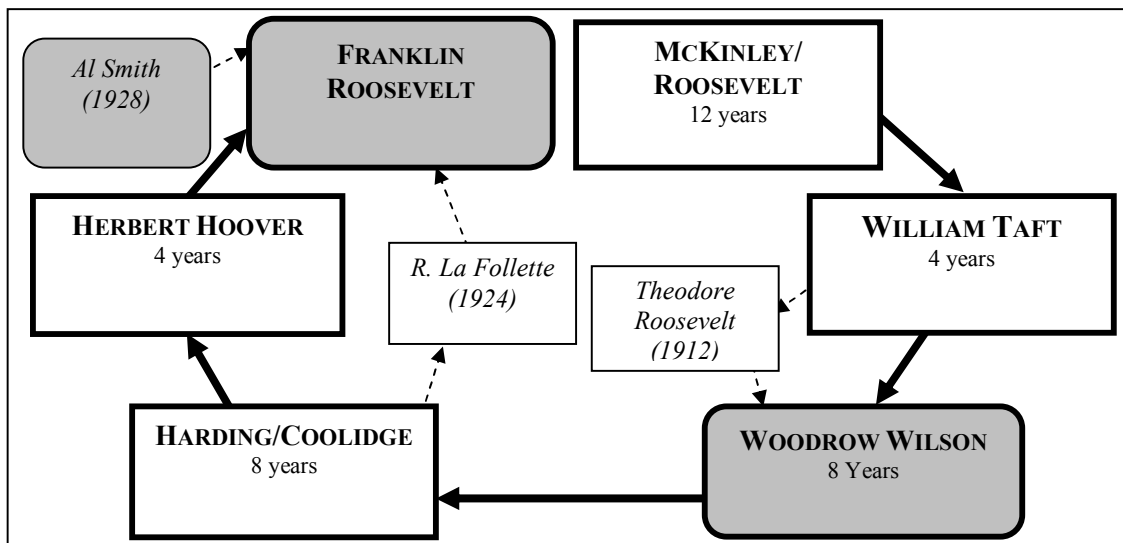
**Chapter Five: Civil War and Reconstruction**

- Abraham Lincoln would have been the *Leader* of a new era, but his assassination, compounded with the confusion of Civil War, the chaos of Reconstruction, and the corruption of the Gilded Age caused the cycle to falter and fail. It is no coincidence that few Americans are familiar with the ‘bearded presidents’ of the post-Civil War era, as the power of the executive was dismantled and Congress became the dominant branch of government.
- There were hints of the cycle—Grant faced a *Saboteur* rebellion during his reelection, and a *Moderate* Democrat, Grover Cleveland, eventually claimed the White House in 1884—but distinct and quantifiable stages of change did not occur. This era, spanning from 1861 to 1896, is a hole in the historical basis of the theory, the details of which will be addressed in this chapter.

**PART ONE: THE MODERN PERIOD**

**Chapter Six: The Progressive Era**

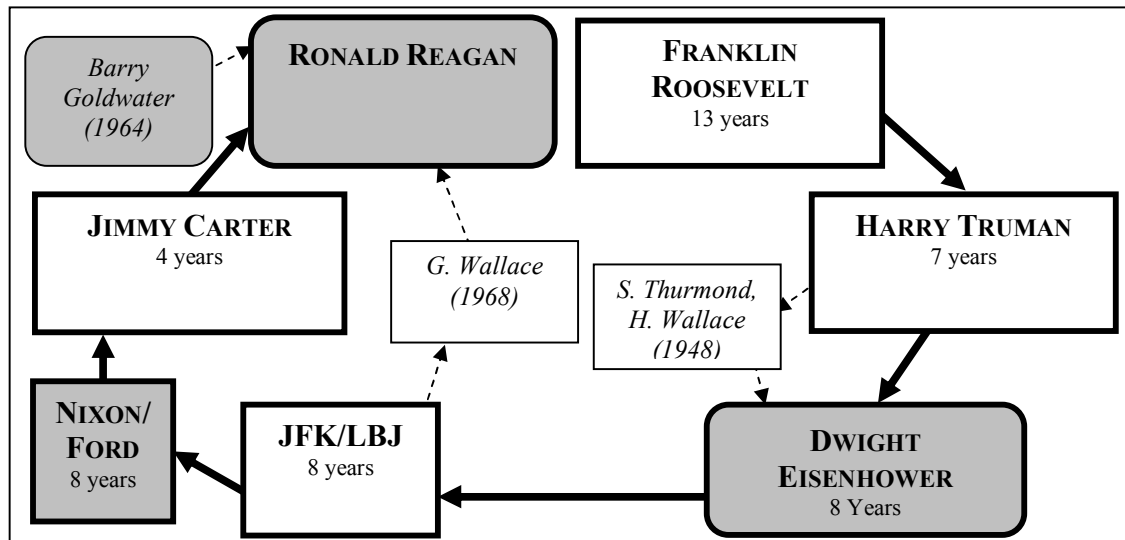
- With the emergence of America as we know it (45 states were in the Union when McKinley was elected), the rise of William McKinley in 1896 marked a new age and a new period of politics and the start of the Modern Period of cycles. The Progressive Era, an age of Hamiltonian good government reforms and expanded federal power marked the first era of the Modern Period where the first cycle ran flawlessly, despite the death of two incumbent presidents.



**Chapter Seven: The Liberal Era**

- The fall of the progressive Republican consensus and FDR’s win in 1932 is widely attributed to the onset of the Great Depression. But was that truly the case? This text is not the first to claim otherwise. As political scientist James Sundquist famously noted in *Dynamics of the Party System*, the rebel campaigns of La Follette and Smith, combined with the internal fracture of the Republicans set the stage for the Democrat’s comeback in 1932, and the depression only amplified a change that would have occurred anyway. Democratic dominance

during the Liberal Era followed predictable developments. Even Harry Truman's win in 1948, despite facing two *Saboteur* insurgencies, did not stop the cyclical rotation, at least until Richard Nixon's win in 1968.



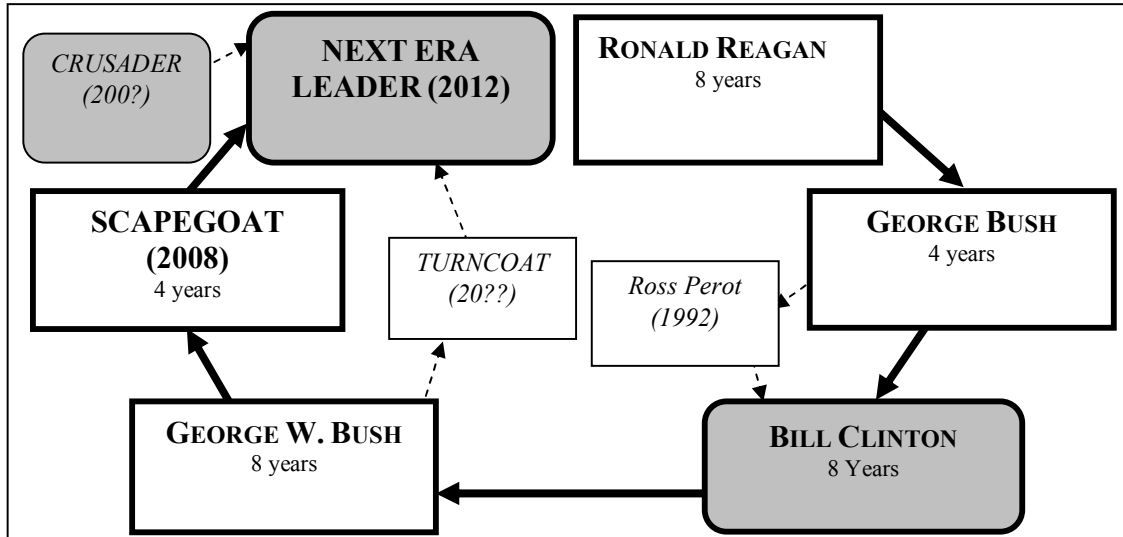
### Chapter Eight: The Nixon Interlude

- In the context of the Gunson Cycle, the peculiarity of President Nixon's administration is clear—he was the first incoming president elected without a majority in either the House or the Senate since *Moderate* Zachary Taylor in 1848, and he is indefinable in the context of the cycle. Indeed, a number of scholars (most notably Martin Wattenberg and Stephen Skowronek) have written that discernable historical patterns of leadership and politics break down with the presidency of Nixon, which has been referred to as 'dealignment' or 'the age of divided government.'
- Yet Nixon, as unusual as his election was, did not permanently disrupt the cycle. His administration was merely an interlude. After eight years of Nixon and Ford, Democrat Jimmy Carter won in 1976 and the cycle resumed its course. Carter did not deliver the Democrats a chance of political redemption but heralded their inevitable fall from power. As the *Scapegoat* of the Liberal Era, Carter oversaw the downfall of the New Deal status quo and the end of the Liberal Era.

### Chapter Nine: The Conservative Era

- The benefit of historical reference becomes instantly clear in the current era: every election since 1980 has followed the predicted trajectory. Ronald Reagan was the *Leader*, winning record-breaking elections and replacing the New Deal political order with a new status quo of small government. The *Heir* was Vice President George Bush, who aggravated party supporters and was inevitably challenged by a *Saboteur* candidate in his reelection campaign, the feisty Ross Perot. This resulted in the presidency of *Moderate* Bill Clinton, and in 2000,

*Prince* George W. Bush beat Vice President Al Gore to claim the presidency for the majority party.



- Democrats are quick to cry that the Republicans stole the 2000 election in the ballot fiasco in Florida. This claim is worthy of consideration, but so is history. In the context of previous cycles, the Florida fiasco was similar to the election of 1960 when Mayor Daley and Lyndon Johnson helped JFK take Illinois and Texas through ballot box stuffing and other dirty tricks. As for the insurgent campaign of Green Party candidate Ralph Nader, his 2.7% of the vote is analogous to the support of independent abolitionist James Birney in 1844. He took just 2.3%, but enough votes to deprive Whig nominee Henry Clay of New York and the necessary Electoral College votes, handing the presidency to *Prince* James Polk.

#### Chapter Ten: Predicting the Future

- The final chapter makes subjective (but educated) predictions of current trends and evaluates the emergence of *Turncoat*, *Crusader*, *Scapegoat*, and *Leader* candidates and presidents.
- Finally, consider this: the political scientists, using their economic models and responsible voter simulations, have guessed wrong on two of the five elections since Reagan became president, forecasting Bush's reelection in 1992 and a Gore landslide in 2000. This cycle would have not just predicted every election of that era accurately, but would have missed only two elections of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### 5. MARKET ANALYSIS:

This book is aimed at an educated readership interested in the future of American politics, a subject with a divergent yet considerable market. There are numerous publications in the field. A recent partisan analysis is **The Emerging Democratic Majority** by John Judis and Ruy Teixeira, published before the 2002 elections, and well received despite criticism over its blatantly biased viewpoint. More academic books include **Who Will Be in the White House?** by Randall Jones, **Predicting Presidential Elections and**

**Other Things** by Ray C. Fair, and **Predicting Politics** by Bruce Bueno de Mesquita. But these texts look only to recent history and refer to concrete factors such as unemployment, the bond market, presidential approval ratings, and public opinion concerning foreign policy. These and other published theories were drastically wrong in the 2000 election (predicting a Gore landslide by margins of 51%-60%). This is not the first major mistake of the political science establishment: similar models predicted the overwhelming reelection of George Bush in 1992.

Pundits and academics are expecting decisive change, with many believing that the 36-year rule designates the next realignment in 2004. This book is aimed at those who want to understand the future of politics and explain why critical realignment will not take place in 2004. The fact that the analysis is non-partisan with specific predictions will lend it more credibility on both sides of the political aisle.

It should be emphasized that this book is stuck between markets, falling somewhere in-between the commercial and academic field. This presents both a problem and an opportunity. Although the book delves deep into history unfamiliar to even educated readers, savvy distribution to key opinion makers who will read and analyze the book just might push the book past the ‘tipping point.’ As the election approaches, publications and even networks will be searching to add a different angle to the increasingly repetitive commentary, and that is where this book fits in.

**6. LENGTH AND TIMEFRAME:**

This book is approximately 95,000 words and 200-300 pages in length, depending on format. There are multiple charts and graphs like those seen above as well as maps of Electoral College results.