

1787 Constitutional Convention

Weaknesses of the AOC

- Allowed for “unbridled republicanism” (i.e., a system where an elected group of reps is beholden to the will of the people) → greed and self-interest
- Conservatives want to safeguard wealth, position, property
- No economic regulation= *some* states in bad economic shape (though by 1786 most of this had been fixed)

1787 Philadelphia Convention

- 55 delegates from 12 states (all but RI) meet to revise AOC
- Decide to scrap the AOC rather than revise
- Issues: balance power between large and small states, executive power, slavery, safeguarding against a too powerful government

Feds vs. Anti-feds

- Federalists: in favor of the Constitution, tended to be wealthy, live in cities, more educated. Washington, Hamilton, Madison, Jay, Franklin
- Anti-federalists: thought Constitution protected the wealthy, ignored states' rights, tended to be poorer, live in the backcountry, farmers, demanded a bill of rights. Samuel Adams, Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson.

Federalist Papers

- arguing for the ratification of the Constitution. The essays led to New York approving the new government, making it official in 1788.
- *Federalist #10* argues for a representative democracy to protect against a “tyranny of the majority”. Madison argued that educated representatives would vote for the good of the whole country.
- *Federalist #51* argued for three separate branches of government with checks and balances, to prevent a monarchy from occurring again.
- *Federalist #78* argued for an independent judiciary, appointed for life, with the power of judicial review

- What is the purpose of government?
- Is a strong government necessary to protect the interests of the people? Or does too much government lead to a loss of liberty?
- Can the average citizen be trusted to govern? Or should we seek an educated elite to run the country?
- Are people generally good? Can we trust that those in power will do what's best for the people? Why or why not?
- What rights are vital to the safety and prosperity of a nation? Are gun rights included in this list? Why or why not?