

ELECTION OF 1912



William H. Taft
Nicholas Butler
(James Sherman)

Republican Incumbent
From Cincinnati, OH

Lawyer and Jurist
U.S. Solicitor General
U.S. Court of Appeals
Governor-General of Philippines
U.S. Secretary of War
Provisional Governor of Cuba
Chief Justice



Woodrow Wilson
Thomas Marshall

Democrat
From Staunton, VA

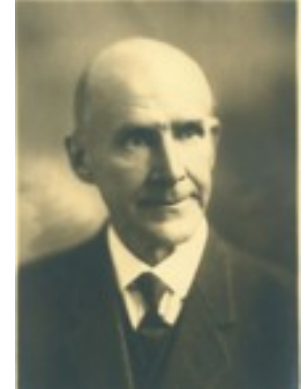
Political Scientist
President of Princeton
Governor of New Jersey



Theodore Roosevelt
Hiram Johnson

Progressive Party
From New York, NY

Historian
Spanish-American War
Assistant Secretary of Navy
Governor of New York
Vice President (6 Months in 1901)
President from 1901-1909



Eugene Debs
Emil Seidel

Socialist
From Terre Haute, IN

Indiana Senator
Union Leader
Also ran in 1900, 1904,
1908, and 1920

Other opponents: Eugene Chafin (Prohibition Party) and Arthur Reimer (Social Labor Party)

Background:

- Republicans were in control of the presidency for 16 years prior to the election of 1912.
- Standard Oil company was declared an unreasonable monopoly by the Supreme Court and was ordered to dissolve under the Sherman Antitrust Act in 1911.

Republicans:

- At the National Convention in June, Republicans re-nominated incumbent Taft.
- Roosevelt asked his supporters to leave, claiming that Taft had betrayed the progressive platform.
- This caused the party to split; Taft had the support of party leaders and Roosevelt had the support of the people.

Democrats:

- House Speaker Champ Clark was largely supported for the Democrat nomination but could not get a 2/3 vote
- Instead, William Jennings Bryan used his influence to support Wilson who was more moderate than Clark.

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The Campaigns:

- The incumbent Taft was never really a contender and most public attention was spent on Roosevelt and Wilson.
- New Nationalism: Roosevelt supported an interventionist government with large power to regulate
- New Freedom: Wilson advocated for antimonopoly policies and returns in favor of small businesses

The Issues:

- How to deal with trusts
 - Wilson supported elimination of big, monopolistic businesses (called trusts)
 - Roosevelt wanted to preserve trust but have power to regulate them
- Women's suffrage
 - Wilson believe this was a state's issue
 - Roosevelt openly campaigned in support of women's suffrage
- Whether tariffs should be used to protect trade in the United States.
 - Wilson criticized tariffs
 - Roosevelt supported them

The Results:

- Wilson won the election in a landslide with 435 electoral votes and over 6 million popular.
- Roosevelt had 88 electoral votes but only lost to Wilson by 2 million votes.
- Taft received 8 electoral votes with 3 and a half million popular votes.
- Debs received just under 1 million.



The Effects:

- Wilson enacted the Federal Reserve Act in December 1913
 - This reformed the American financial and banking system
 - Created the Federal Trade Commission
- Pushed the Clayton Antitrust Act through Congress
- Spent several years trying to keep America out of WWI
- Passed the 16th and 17th amendments, allowing a federal income tax to be put in place and calling for a direct election of Senators.
- Allowed the introduction of segregation into several federal departments.

Blue: Wilson and Marshall
Yellow: Roosevelt and Johnson
Red: Taft and James Sherman

Interesting Facts:

- This was the last election in which a third party candidate beat one of the two major party candidates.
- While accepting his nomination, Roosevelt told reporters that he felt as strong as a "bull moose," which lead to the party's nickname, the Bull Moose Party.