

The Artios Home Companion Series

Unit 28: The New Millennium

Teacher Overview

America looked to the new millennium with bright hopes, with a growing economy promising greater prosperity and little interference from foreign affairs to affect the daily lives of most Americans. A dreaded, worldwide computer-based threat known as Y2K never materialized when the clocks rolled to January 1 in the year 2000, and the world released a collective breath of relief.

The 2000 presidential campaign stirred controversy when the close race between George W. Bush and Al Gore was stalled by disputed vote counts in Florida and the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Bush. During this time, the economy experienced a downturn when the “dot.com” industry lost value, giving indication of deeper economic woes, which indeed developed into recession.

The Bush administration worked smoothly with Congress for several months before the Democrats gained control of the Senate—when a senator from Vermont switched from the Republican Party to become an Independent.

Throughout Western Europe, where 12 nations had joined their markets together to form the European Union (EU) in 1992, conservatism was regaining some of the popularity it had enjoyed during the time following the Cold War. Although Tony Blair and his “New Labour Party” defeated the Conservatives in Great Britain in 1997, Blair maintained centrist policies in order to preserve public support. France and Germany followed a similar pattern, with socialist-leaning leaders turning to conservative methods to address economic difficulties.

In Eastern Europe, however, newly elected Vladimir Putin instituted undemocratic policies in pursuit of greater centralized control. In response, Bush initiated substantial changes in U.S. relations with Russia. In Asia, he expressed regret after a U.S. surveillance aircraft collided with a Chinese fighter jet, which sparked an international dispute when the U.S. spy plane was forced to make an emergency landing on the Chinese island of Hainan. China is the only major nation that remained Communist into the new millennium, although North Korea and Cuba continue to maintain totalitarian governments.

Hostilities in the Middle East also deepened during this time. Iran, an old ally of the U.S., was now ruled by an Islamic republic set in place by Islamic radicals after overthrowing the shah in 1979. Taliban terrorist forces had control of Afghanistan, instituting radical Muslim rule and committing acts of terrorism against secular Muslim governments. Al-Qaeda, led by wealthy Saudi Osama bin Laden, carried even more hatred toward nations considered to be “enemies of Islam” and launched more sinister attacks. Although bin Laden’s initial target was Saudi Arabia, the network increasingly set its sights on the U.S. because of its support of Israel and for interfering in the Gulf War.

Americans remained generally unconcerned by these developments until a few hours after dawn on the morning of September 11, 2001.



The logo created by The President's Council on the Year 2000 Conversion, for use on Y2K.gov

Leading Ideas

Honesty is a character quality to be desired.

The Lord detests differing weights, and dishonest scales do not please Him.

— Proverbs 20:23

The Bible provides the ethics upon which to judge people and nations.

— Exodus 20:1-17

God is sovereign over the affairs of men.

From one man He made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and He marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.

— Acts 17:26

Key People and Events

al-Qaeda
Jihad
Osama bin Laden
President George W. Bush
Taliban
War on Terror
Khalid Sheikh Mohammed
Mohammed Atef
Department of Homeland Security
The Patriot Act
Operation Iraqi Freedom
Global War on Terrorism
Saddam Hussein
CIA Director – General David Petraeus
dot.com bubble

Vocabulary

Lesson 1:
insurgent

Lesson 2:
none

Lesson 3:
none

Reading and Assignments

In this unit, students will:

- Complete three lessons in which they will learn about **America at the start of the 21st century**, journaling and answering discussion questions as they read.
- Define a vocabulary word.
- Conduct research on **the events of September 11, 2001** and create their own timeline.
- Make a chart on a piece of paper with two columns. In one column, list the legislation, issue or event listed in the article that occurred during the Bush administration. In the other column, describe that legislation, issue or event in as much detail as possible.
- Visit www.ArtiosHCS.com for additional resources.

National Institutes of Health
National Science Foundation
No Child Left Behind Act
Medicare Act of 2003
Kyoto Protocol
Clear Skies Act
John Kerry
Abu Ghraib Prison
“Marriage penalty”
Vladimir Putin
Prime Minister Stephen Harper of Canada
Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany
Prime Minister Tony Blair of the U.K.
President Vicente Fox of Mexico
Hurricane Katrina

2008 recession
Executive Privilege
Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP)
Wall Street Bailout
Supreme Court Justice John Roberts
Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito
Hillary Clinton

John McCain
President Barack Obama
Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor
Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan
The Tea Party
Osama bin Laden

Lesson One

History Overview and Assignments September 11, 2001 and the War on Terror

On September 11, 2001, in a simple set of maneuvers, al-Qaeda terrorists traumatized the nation like no other single event since Pearl Harbor. No one who lived during that time will ever forget the footage of onlookers crying out in horror when each of the Twin Towers finally collapsed to the ground. In the worst attack in history on American soil, radical Muslim terrorists had deliberately targeted civilians at locations symbolizing American wealth and power.



The collapse of the South Tower of the World Trade Center. Photo by Norman Sanders

Vocabulary

insurgent

Reading and Assignments

- Review the discussion questions and vocabulary, then read the article: *September 11, 2001 and the War on Terror*.
- Narrate about today's reading using the appropriate notebook page. Be sure to answer the discussion questions and include key people, events, and dates within the narration.
- Define the vocabulary word in the context of the reading and put the word and its definition in the vocabulary section of your history notebook.
- Doing additional internet research, create your own timeline of the events of September 11, 2001.
- Visit www.ArtiosHCS.com for additional resources.

Key People, Places, and Events

al-Qaeda
Jihad
Osama bin Laden
President George W. Bush
Taliban
War on Terror
Khalid Sheikh Mohammed

Mohammed Atef
Department of Homeland Security
The Patriot Act
Operation Iraqi Freedom
Global War on Terrorism
Saddam Hussein
CIA Director – General David Petraeus

Discussion Questions

1. How did President Bush and the United States respond to the terrorist attack? Be specific.
2. Why was the Department of Homeland Security created, and what was its role?
3. Why were there objections to the passing of The Patriot Act?
4. Why did President Bush attack Iraq and its leader, Saddam Hussein?
5. What type of tactics did the forces of Saddam Hussein use against the allies?
6. Why did U.S. support for the war begin to weaken?
7. Describe the fate of Saddam Hussein.

September 11th, 2001 and the War on Terror

by Mary E. Hall, MPA

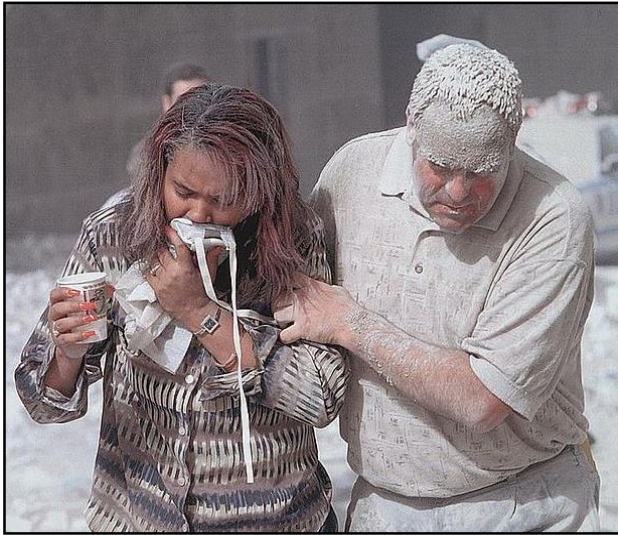
Americans started their day on September 11, 2001 like any other Tuesday, caring for their families and heading to work. At 8:46 am, their feelings of security were shattered forever when American Airlines Flight 11, with a crew of 11 and 76 passengers, flew into the North Tower of the World Trade Center in New York City. Suppositions of pilot error or equipment failure were dashed eighteen minutes later when United Airlines Flight 175, with a crew of 9 and 51 passengers, barreled into the South Tower.

The impact of these collisions, coupled with the explosions of the airliners' fuel tanks, destroyed the Twin Towers, killing nearly 3000 people in a single attack.

Thirty-four minutes later, American Airlines Flight 77, bound for Los Angeles from Dulles Airport in Virginia, slammed into the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. Then

at 10:03 am, United Airlines Flight 93 crashed in a field in Pennsylvania, thwarted by passengers from reaching its hijackers' intended target—likely the White House or the Capitol Building.

In a simple set of maneuvers, al-Qaeda terrorists traumatized the nation like no other single event since Pearl Harbor. Aircraft throughout the nation were grounded and all flights were canceled, creating an eerie silence that lasted for days while Americans huddled around news broadcasts showing victims leaping to their deaths from upper floors of burning skyscrapers and rescue personnel doing all they could to assist survivors. No one who lived during that time will ever forget the footage of onlookers crying out in horror when each of the Twin Towers finally collapsed to the ground.



Dust-covered survivors after the collapse of the World Trade Center towers. Photo by Don Halasy

Americans responded with a surge of patriotism, flying American flags on homes and cars while contributing generously of their time and money to aid victims of the attacks. “God Bless America” was sung for months at baseball games and across the airwaves. A spirit of national repentance spread throughout the land as millions flocked to churches seeking God’s mercy and protection.

In the worst attack in history on American soil, radical Muslim terrorists had deliberately targeted civilians at locations symbolizing American wealth and power. While nations around the world offered sympathy and support, jihadists (the Muslim term for those waging a “holy war”) in Mideast nations celebrated in the streets.

When the hijackers were identified as al-Qaeda terrorists led by Osama bin Laden, President Bush declared a War on Terror, teaming the American military with other Allied forces to bring to justice those responsible for the attacks and launch a global assault against all forms of terrorism. With tremendous public support, this multinational coalition struck at the Taliban

regime in Afghanistan, using “smart weapons” to minimize civilian casualties while destroying terrorist training camps and overturning the government. With help from local anti-Taliban forces, the Taliban government was ousted and Afghanistan began to rebuild itself as a nation. A number of September 11 instigators, such as Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and Mohammed Atef, were either killed or captured during these operations. Osama bin Laden was not caught, however, until Navy Seals raided his compound in Pakistan and shot him down in 2011.



Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the principle architect of the Sept. 11 attacks, after his capture in Pakistan in 2003

In the U.S., the Bush administration created the office that later became the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and encouraged passage of the Patriot Act to facilitate the capture and conviction of terrorists. While congressional support for the act was overwhelming, many Americans decried the law’s infringement upon privacy rights. Certain provisions were later declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court.

Bush continued to deploy military forces to root out terrorist organizations, striking before they could launch additional attacks. Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, who

continued to threaten peace and was rumored to have developed biological and chemical weapons of mass destruction, was one of his primary targets. Invading Iraq with a multi-national force in 2003 in an action called Operation Iraqi Freedom, the U.S. soundly defeated the Iraqi military within two weeks. Prolonged fighting ensued, however, when an insurgency of Iraqi and other terrorists from neighboring nations rose up against the new government, employing guerilla-style warfare including suicide bombings and roadside explosive devices called IEDs (improvised explosive devices). Sunni and Shiite Muslim factions fought against each other, and both groups attacked the ethnic Kurdish population.

American support for U.S. involvement waned when it became evident that no weapons of mass destruction would be found, but others argued that what was now known as the Global War on Terrorism needed to continue—and that it was preferable to fight this war in Iraq than in the U.S.



Statue of Saddam being toppled in Firdos Square after the US invasion

On the 13th of December 2003, American forces captured Saddam Hussein in a camouflaged hole in the ground on a farmhouse property northwest of Baghdad. He was tried for crimes against humanity by the Iraqi Special Tribunal and executed by hanging on December 30, 2006.



Saddam Hussein after his capture

Insurgent activity intensified after Saddam's execution, and President Bush responded with an Iraq War troop surge, employing counter-insurgency tactics developed by CIA director General David Petraeus. Other operations continued with the goal of eliminating terror organizations throughout the world, concentrating in areas in the Middle East as well as the Philippines, the Sahara, and the Horn of Africa.



Global War on Terrorism Service Medal

Lesson Two

History Overview and Assignments The George W. Bush Administration

Despite ongoing debate, George W. Bush's presidency is generally acknowledged as one of the most consequential in American history. In the face of challenges brought on by large-scale terrorist attack, an economic crisis of massive proportions, and an unrivaled natural disaster, President Bush succeeded in thwarting further attacks and in achieving a number of conservative objectives while supporting Christian values throughout his tenure in office.



President George W. Bush

Reading and Assignments

- Read the article:
The George W. Bush Administration.
- Narrate about today's reading using the appropriate notebook page. Be sure to include key people, events, and dates within the narration.
- Make a chart with two columns on a piece of paper. In one column, list the legislation, issue or event listed in the article that occurred during the Bush administration. In the other column, describe that legislation, issue or event in as much detail as possible.
- Visit www.ArtiosHCS.com for additional resources.

Key People, Places, and Events

dot.com bubble
National Institutes of Health
National Science Foundation
No Child Left Behind Act
Medicare Act of 2003
Kyoto Protocol
Clear Skies Act
John Kerry
President George W. Bush
Abu Ghraib Prison
"Marriage penalty"
Vladimir Putin

Prime Minister Stephen Harper of Canada
German chancellor Angela Merkel
Prime Minister Tony Blair of the U.K.
President Vicente Fox of Mexico
Hurricane Katrina
2008 recession
Executive Privilege
Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP)
Wall Street Bailout
Supreme Court Justice John Roberts
Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito

The George W. Bush Administration

by Mary E. Hall, MPA

Bush's First Term

The course of the Bush Administration was largely set by the 9/11 attacks, but the president did not allow the War on Terror to completely deter him from other objectives. After entering the office during a time of sluggish economy after the bursting of the "dot.com" bubble, President Bush gained a good bit of popularity by signing a sweeping tax cut into law in June, 2001. Although the terrorist attacks impacted the economy, signs of improvement were evident by 2003, and another tax cut was passed that year.



President George W. Bush signs a \$1.35 trillion tax cut into law on June 7, 2001.

In the areas of health and education, the president increased funding for the National Institutes of Health and National Science Foundation in addition to developing the *No Child Left Behind Act*, designed to reduce the gap in student

performance between income levels. Bush also signed the Medicare Act of 2003, which provided federal help in paying for prescription medications.



President Bush addresses the media at the Pentagon on September 17, 2001.

With respect to environmental policies, Bush stated clear opposition to the Kyoto Protocol, which sought to establish mandatory emissions limits, enforcing compliance with emissions-trading sanctions. Instead, Bush created a task force to streamline energy projects and developed the *Clear Skies Act*, which would have amended the *Clean Air Act* by instituting emissions trading programs. The proposed legislation was not passed by Congress, however.

Reelection Campaign

Republicans garnered two Senate seats in 2004, which swung control to the right side of the aisle, while four Republican seats were gained in the House. Bush built his reelection campaign strategy around defeating liberal senator John Kerry of Massachusetts. While Kerry was an

honored Vietnam veteran, he had opposed the war, and this detracted from his public support. Questions also surfaced concerning Kerry's service record and the validity of his combat medals.

Bush's approval ratings were low at the start of the campaign due to economic decline, increased violence in the Middle East, and controversy concerning U.S. treatment of war detainees at Abu Ghraib Prison in Iraq. His military record was criticized as well, because he had managed to skip over a long waiting list for a position in the Air National Guard, and detractors further claimed that he failed to complete all his duty requirements once he held it.

Bush gained support, however, by expressing his desire to make his tax cuts permanent, asserting that these cuts were aiding economic recovery, and by advocating tax loopholes for job creation. He also had the approval of the evangelical Christian community because of his firm stance on family value issues, and he'd gained popularity among women and Hispanics during his first term.

When the votes came in, Bush was the clear winner by more than 3 million.



President Bush delivers his second Inaugural Address.

Bush's Second Term

After the election, Bush placed high priority on reviving the economy by authorizing more tax cuts and abolishing the "marriage penalty" which required higher taxes of many married couples than if they'd filed individually. He also stated clear intentions to reform Social Security and immigration policy, strengthen public education, place limits on medical malpractice suits, and continue waging the War on Terror.

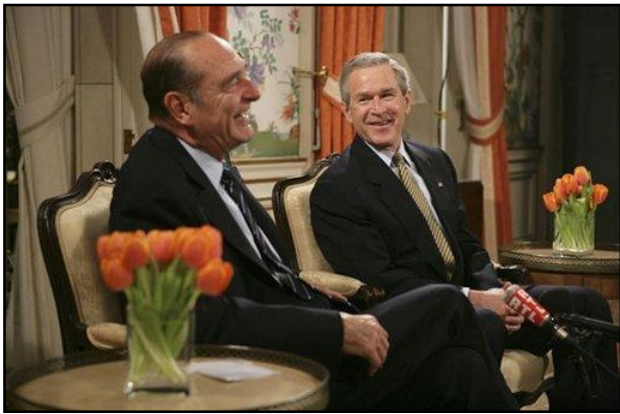
One month after his second inauguration, Bush embarked on a European tour in hopes of improving relations between Europe and the U.S. During this trip he met with leaders from throughout the world, concluding at the Slovakia Summit—the first time a sitting U.S. president visited this nation since its independence in 1993—and met with Russian president Vladimir Putin to discuss Russian democracy, along with other international topics like the Mideast situation and nuclear talks with North Korea.



President George W. Bush and Slovak President Ivan Gasparovic in Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia

After the tour, Bush strove to maintain friendly relations with allies, meeting with newly elected Prime Minister Stephen

Harper of Canada and German chancellor Angela Merkel, who supported pro-market changes to German law and won an easy reelection after the nation's lagging economy revived during her first term. It's said that Bush maintained a close relationship with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the U.K. and President Vicente Fox of Mexico, although formal diplomatic interactions with these nations were often uneasy. France, which had tried to remain neutral during the Cold War, criticized U.S. intervention in world affairs. With an expanding Muslim population, the nation resisted Bush's call to help fight the battle against terrorism, despite its support during 1991 Gulf War operations.



At the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Summit, President George W. Bush meets with French President Jacques Chirac in Brussels, Belgium

Midterm Election Swing

The midterm elections in 2006 swung control of Congress, along with the majority of state governorships, to the Democrats. This, combined with criticism of federal disaster relief efforts after Hurricane Katrina in 2005, along with a recession which struck the nation in 2008 (due to an oil price upsurge paired with a mortgage lending crisis), sent the president's approval ratings spiraling downward.



New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin, Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco, President Bush, and Louisiana Senator David Vitter meet on September 2, 2005 in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

In addition, the Bush Administration received criticism for making extensive use of Executive Privilege, for instigating a "White House shakeup" in which a number of Cabinet members were replaced, for the Justice Department's midterm dismissal of seven U.S. Attorneys, for allegedly violating due process regulations and other Constitutional protections through anti-terrorism surveillance activities, for disregarding treaty obligations, and for obstructing justice in a CIA leak scandal in which the name of a covert agent was publically made known.



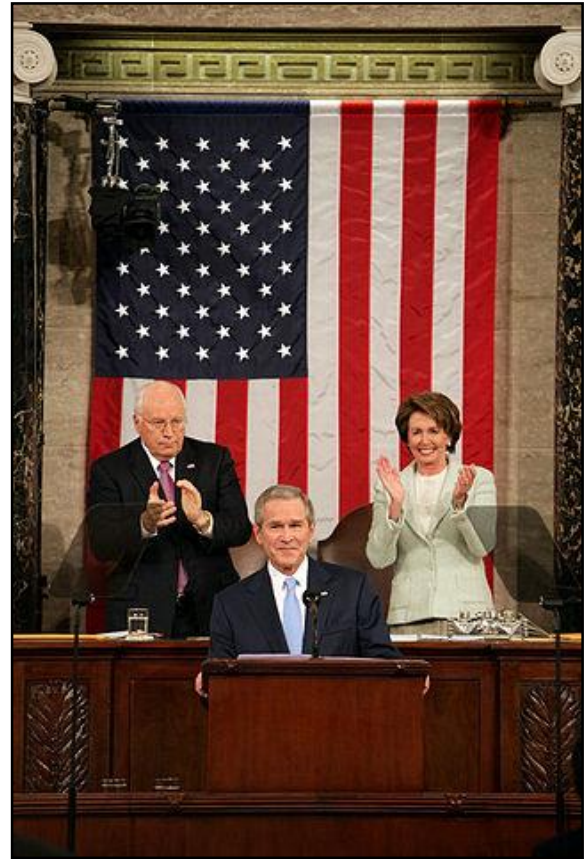
Incoming Speaker of the House Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and incoming House Majority Leader Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD) meet with President George W. Bush at the White House.

In October of 2008, Bush instituted the controversial Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), also known as the Wall Street Bailout, the first of several federal relief programs which authorized the Treasury Dept. to purchase or insure troubled subprime mortgage assets. Little restriction was apparently placed upon the use of the funds granted, however, and much reportedly went to high-level salaries and political contributions.

In the end, George W. Bush's presidency received mixed reviews. Those in favor credit him with the tremendous accomplishment of heading off any major terrorist attacks after 9/11, and many praise his education initiatives and Medicare prescription drug benefit. Republicans credit him with successful appointments of conservative Supreme Court justices John Roberts and Samuel Alito (although his choice of Harriet Miers was highly criticized, and Bush withdrew her nomination) along with his moral integrity—without a hint of personal scandal over two terms.

Opponents criticize Bush's failure to locate evidence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq—which formed the initial justification for the war—as well as his management of tax policy and Hurricane Katrina disaster relief. Critics strongly emphasize that his administration should have anticipated the financial crisis of 2008 and done more to prevent it. Others criticize the “bailout” precedent established by the TARP programs initiated by Bush, which was expanded by his successor into multiple industries. Many conservatives argue that Bush did not do enough to

advance their causes when he had a supportive legislature and feel he should have worked more actively to prevent their midterm election defeat.



President Bush delivers his 2007 State of the Union address during his second term to a U.S. Congress controlled by the Democrats.

Despite ongoing debate, George W. Bush's presidency is generally acknowledged as one of the most consequential in American history. In the face of challenges brought on by large-scale terrorist attack, an economic crisis of massive proportions, and an unrivaled natural disaster, President Bush succeeded in thwarting further attacks and in achieving a number of conservative objectives while supporting Christian values throughout his tenure in office.

Lesson Three

History Overview and Assignments

The Election of Barack Obama

Barack Obama won a decisive victory in November 2008, defeating John McCain soundly in both popular and Electoral College votes. Discontentment over economic woes had swept across the nation, and the divide between moderate and conservative Republicans had widened. The presidential campaign of 2008 had begun early and the candidates fought hard against each other, spending more money than in any other election in American history. In the end, Obama's message of "Hope and Change" and "Yes, we can" succeeded in winning the votes of the majority of the American voters.



President Obama's first-term presidential portrait,
January 2009

Key People, Places, and Events

Hillary Clinton
John McCain
President Barack Obama
Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor
Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan
The Tea Party
Osama bin Laden

Reading and Assignments

- Review the discussion question, then read the article:
The Election of Barack Obama.
- Narrate about today's reading using the appropriate notebook page. Be sure to answer the discussion questions and include key people, events, and dates within the narration.
- Visit www.ArtiosHCS.com for additional resources.

Discussion Questions

1. Describe some of the differences between Senator John McCain and then Senator Barack Obama when they ran against each other for the office of the presidency?
2. What were Senator Obama's campaign slogans?
3. What promise did Obama make with regard to the changes he would bring to Washington politics?
4. Did he keep that promise?
5. How did President Obama effectively nationalize several industries?

6. What was one of Obama's biggest agenda items and initiatives?
7. What were some of the objections to the appointments of Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan?
8. What extremely significant event dealing with the War on Terror is often credited to the Obama administration?
9. What does this article say will determine whether we are successful in eliminating threats that face our nation and Constitution? Do you agree or disagree? Why?

The Election of Barack Obama

by Mary E. Hall, MPA

By the end of the Bush era, discontentment over economic woes was sweeping across the nation, and the divide between moderate and conservative Republicans widened. The presidential campaign of 2008 began early and the candidates fought hard against each other, spending more money than in any other election in American history.

Arizona senator John McCain, a decorated Vietnam POW, gained the Republican nomination by March. The Democratic contest, in contrast, began with ten main candidates but soon narrowed to a heated race between NY senator and former first lady Hillary Clinton, the initial frontrunner, and Illinois junior senator Barack Obama, who sought to become the first African American president of the U.S.

Early Democratic campaign efforts focused on criticism of the war in Iraq and other Bush policies, and the former first lady appeared to have the nomination in hand at the start. Poll support rose steadily for Obama, though, as he proclaimed his popular message that change was coming to America, and he captured the Iowa caucuses in January. This victory, granted largely by first-time caucus attenders, sent his poll number skyrocketing.



Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York, 2008

Candidates began to drop out, and Super Tuesday, the February day when the largest number of states hold their primaries simultaneously, resulted in a virtual tie between Obama and Clinton. Democrats, excited by a race between two possible firsts for president—either a woman or an African American—stirred the Democratic nomination race into an aggressive contest. The primaries resulted in numbers so close that the nomination process, normally completed by March, extended into June. Superdelegate endorsements finally locked the nomination for Obama, which was

effectively sealed when Clinton conceded the race on June 7.

Obama's campaign had adopted the theme that "Washington needs change" in response to Clinton's emphasis on her experience. Once Obama's opponent field narrowed to John McCain, who also highlighted his extensive Washington experience, Obama's team strengthened his message, coining the mottos "Hope and change," and "Yes, we can." Making extensive use of social media promotion, Obama succeeded in projecting an image of himself as a strong, confident leader, and although critics argued that his speeches lacked substance, his popularity soared among young voters and the African American electorate.

Barack Obama went on to win a decisive victory in November, defeating McCain soundly in both the popular and Electoral College votes. His popularity also helped Democrats add to their majorities in both the House and the Senate, giving him a highly supportive legislature.

President Obama's Administration

Despite candidate Obama's promises of change and transparency, his presidential selections for high level positions consisted largely of lobbyists and Clinton Administration officials. His stated priorities consisted of universal health care, full employment, a green America, and a nation that would be respected instead of feared by its enemies.

To these ends, he quickly issued executive orders to overturn bans on federal grants to international abortion services, to shut down the Guantanamo Bay POW detention facility in Cuba, and to raise Dept. of Transportation fuel efficiency

standards. He also lifted federal funding restrictions on embryonic stem cell research and expanded federal funding for children's health care.



President Barack Obama's Inauguration,
January 20, 2009

Contending that the nation's free market system was unable to repair the economic crisis and referring to Bush's TARP program as a precedent, the new president called for massive government intervention, which took the form of bailouts granted to corporations considered vital to the nation's economy. Auto giants made headlines by accepting government bailout funds (with the exception of Ford Motor Co., which declined) and making government-mandated changes to their business methods—with General Motors even accepting the replacement of its CEO with one selected by the government. Through these initiatives, the Obama Administration effectively nationalized several industries.

The economy did not improve, however, and unemployment continued to increase. In addition, the federal deficit quickly swelled to become the largest in the nation's history.

The nation's health care system became President Obama's next target for government intervention, with the proposal

of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act—known as “Obamacare”—a federally run system whereby the government would determine prices and levels for care and require all Americans to purchase health insurance which met government-established standards or pay a fine. Irate critics pointed to ineffective and unwieldy systems of socialized medicine in other nations and warned of similar problems, but the complex bill (more than 2,500 pages long) passed in both houses.



The president and White House staff celebrating the news that the House of Representatives had passed the Affordable Care Act on March 21, 2010.

Obama successfully nominated liberal Supreme Court justices Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan despite opposition to their broad interpretation of the Constitution and their activist belief that minority and economic status of the involved legal parties should play into court rulings.

Controversy also assailed the administration when a community organization called ACORN, which had been instrumental to Obama’s campaign, came under federal investigation for voter

fraud. In July 2009 the president received strong criticism after he commented that law enforcement had acted “stupidly” during the arrest of African American Harvard law professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr. Other outcries arose in response to alleged White House information tracking and to proposed federal control over the Internet.

A national movement called the Tea Party, outraged at the Obama’s administration’s relentless growth of the government with apparent disregard for Constitutional limits on federal power, sprang up prior to the 2010 midterm elections and garnered enough support for Republicans to achieve a landslide victory, winning control of the House and gaining seats in the Senate. On the state level, Republicans also won most of the available governorships and legislative seats.

On May 1, 2011 Osama bin Laden, head of the al-Qaeda network responsible for the 9/11 attacks, was killed in a U.S. Navy Seal raid on the terrorist’s military compound in Pakistan. No country was willing to accept the body, and it was buried at sea. Many credit the Obama Administration for this victory, but the war against terrorism has not yet been won.

Only time will tell whether our efforts will be successful in the end at eliminating the threats that face our nation and our Constitution, both foreign and domestic. The results will be determined by the ideologies and actions embraced by the coming generations