



# CONSTITUTION 101: THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION SCHOLAR EXCHANGE



*We* ... *People*



# THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

Why did the founding generation decide to write a new Constitution?

How did the U.S. Constitution differ from the Articles of Confederation?

What were some of the main compromises reached by the delegates at the Constitutional Convention?



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# THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

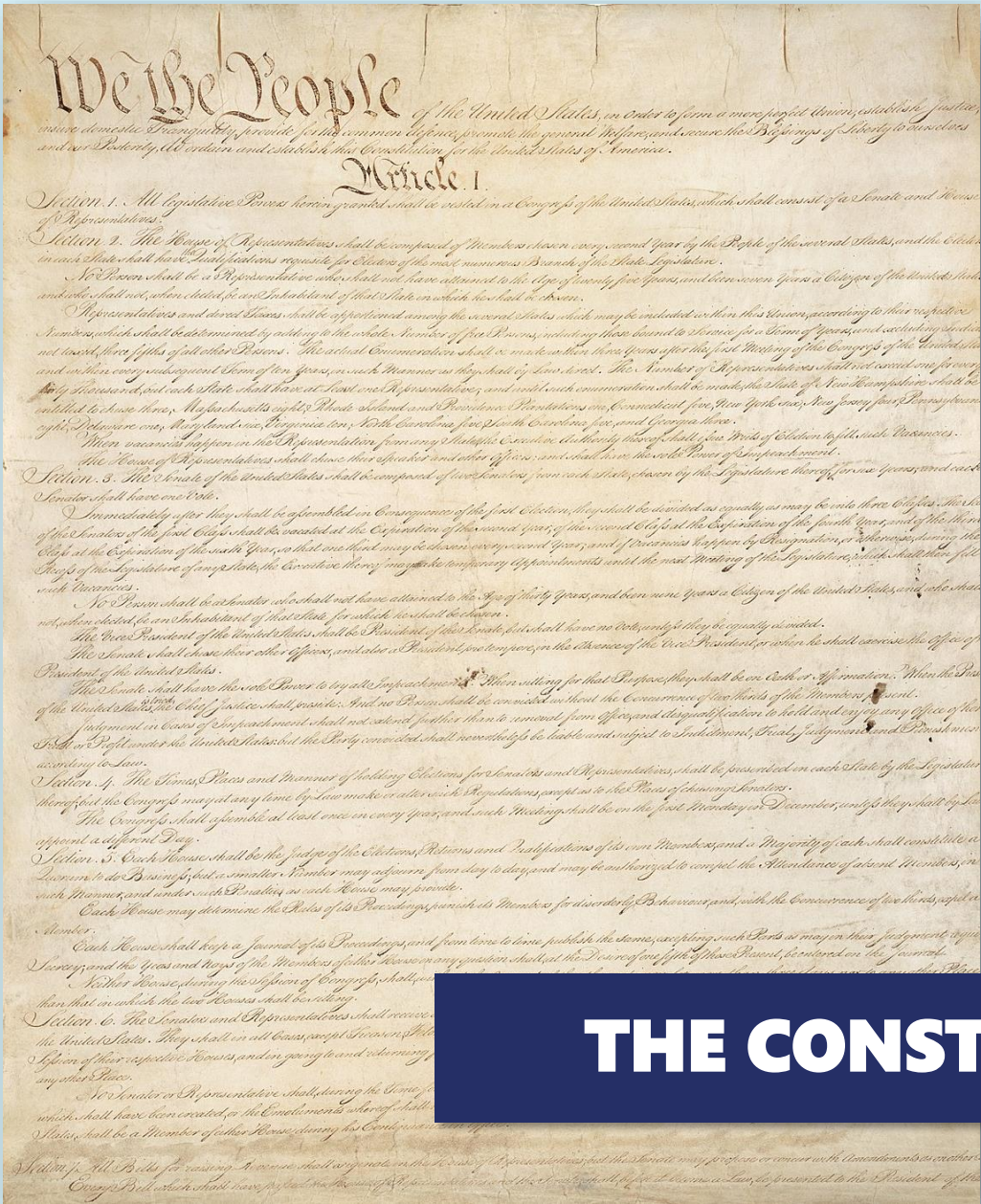


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# THE CONSTITUTION



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# THE CONSTITUTION

## The Preamble

Beginning with its famous words, “**We the People,**” the Preamble expresses the founding generation’s commitment to popular sovereignty, meaning a national government driven by the American people.



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# THE CONSTITUTION

## Articles I through III

Establishes the three branches of government

- **Article I** gives us the legislative branch—Congress—tasked with making the laws.
- **Article II** lays out the executive branch—led by a single president—responsible for enforcing the laws.
- **Article III** outlines the judicial branch—with a Supreme Court as the nation’s highest court—with a duty to interpret the laws.



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# THE CONSTITUTION

## Articles IV through VII

- **Article IV** addresses the relationship between the states and their citizens, how to handle the admission of new states, and how to govern federal territories. (It also includes the infamous Fugitive Slave Clause.)
- **Article V** sets out the process for amending the Constitution.
- **Article VI** establishes the supremacy of national law over the laws of the states. It also bans religious tests for national office.
- **Article VII** sets out the process for ratifying the Constitution.



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# THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION



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**“... league of  
friendship ...”**

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# 13 STATE GOVERNMENTS



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# THE PHILADELPHIA CONVENTION

May 14 to September 17, 1787



Pennsylvania State House

*“.. sole and express purpose of revising the Articles ...”*



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## THE KEY COMPROMISES

- The Connecticut (Great) Compromise
- The Electoral College
- The Three-Fifths Compromise
- The Slave Trade Clause



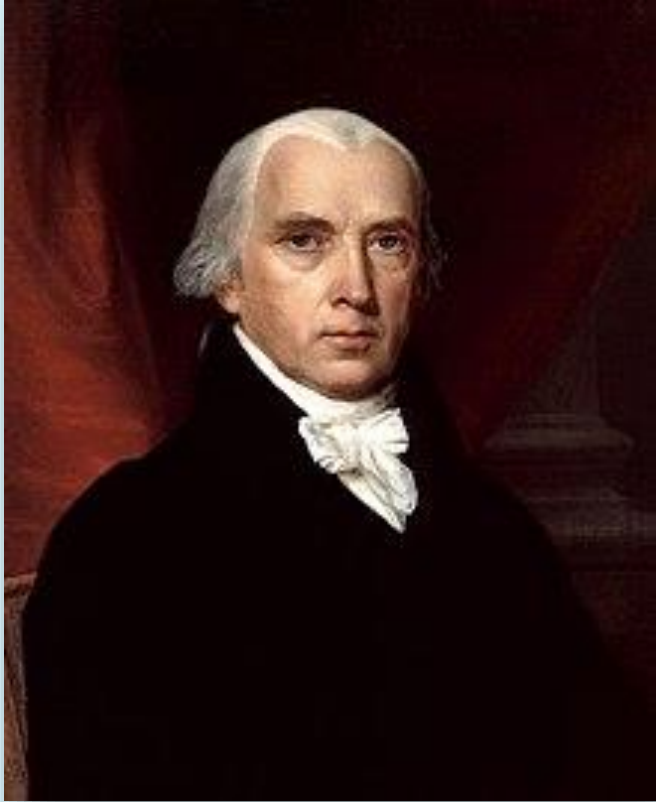
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# DEBATES OVER REPRESENTATION



Madison and Wilson supported a national legislature based on **proportional representation.**



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# DEBATES OVER REPRESENTATION

## The Virginia Plan

- Legislative branch consisting of two chambers.
- Each of the states would be represented in proportion to their size.
- The national legislature would have the power to address issues that were beyond the ability of any single state government to handle.
- The legislature could also veto state laws that it found to be against the national interest.



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# DEBATES OVER REPRESENTATION



Delegates from smaller states, like Patterson of New Jersey, supported **equal representation**.



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# DEBATES OVER REPRESENTATION

## The New Jersey Plan

- A one-house legislature with each state—regardless of its size—receiving one vote.
- Expand the powers of the national government to address the needs of a growing nation.



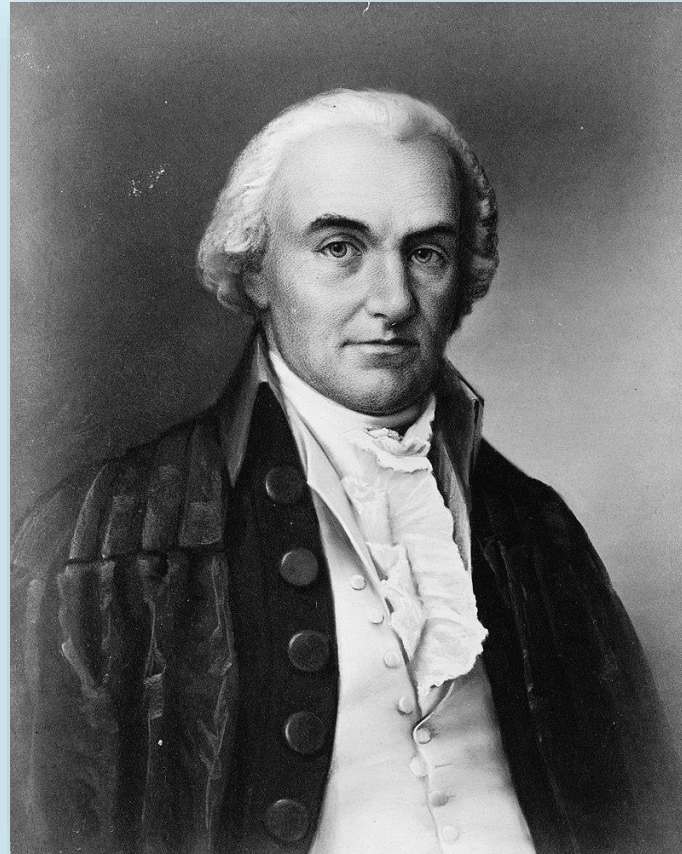
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# DEBATES OVER REPRESENTATION



Roger Sherman and Oliver Ellsworth of Connecticut proposed a compromise.



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# DEBATES OVER REPRESENTATION

## The Connecticut (Great) Compromise

- Congress would consist of two houses—a House of Representatives and a Senate.
- The House would be elected on the basis of proportional representation—giving larger states more seats than smaller states.
- At the same time, the Senate would be elected on the basis of equal representation, with each state—regardless of its size—receiving two Senators.

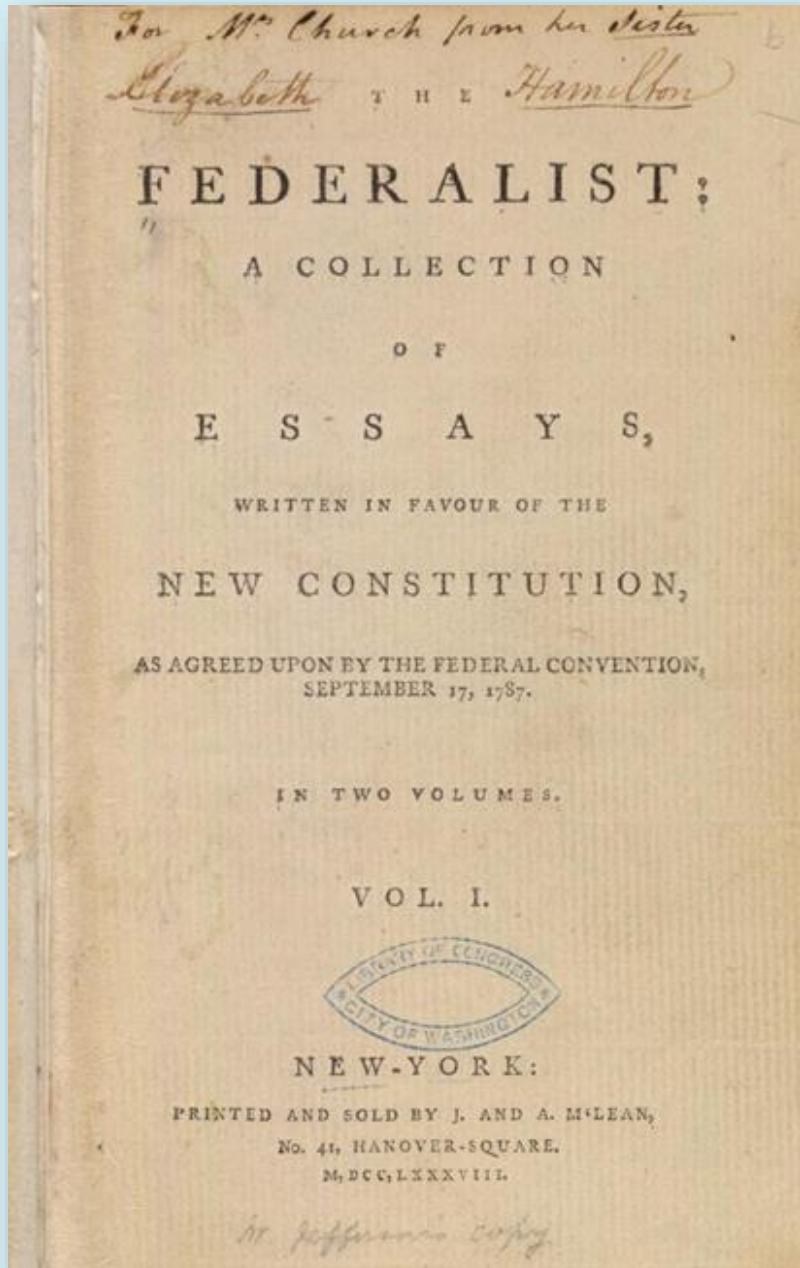


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# THE FEDERALIST PAPERS

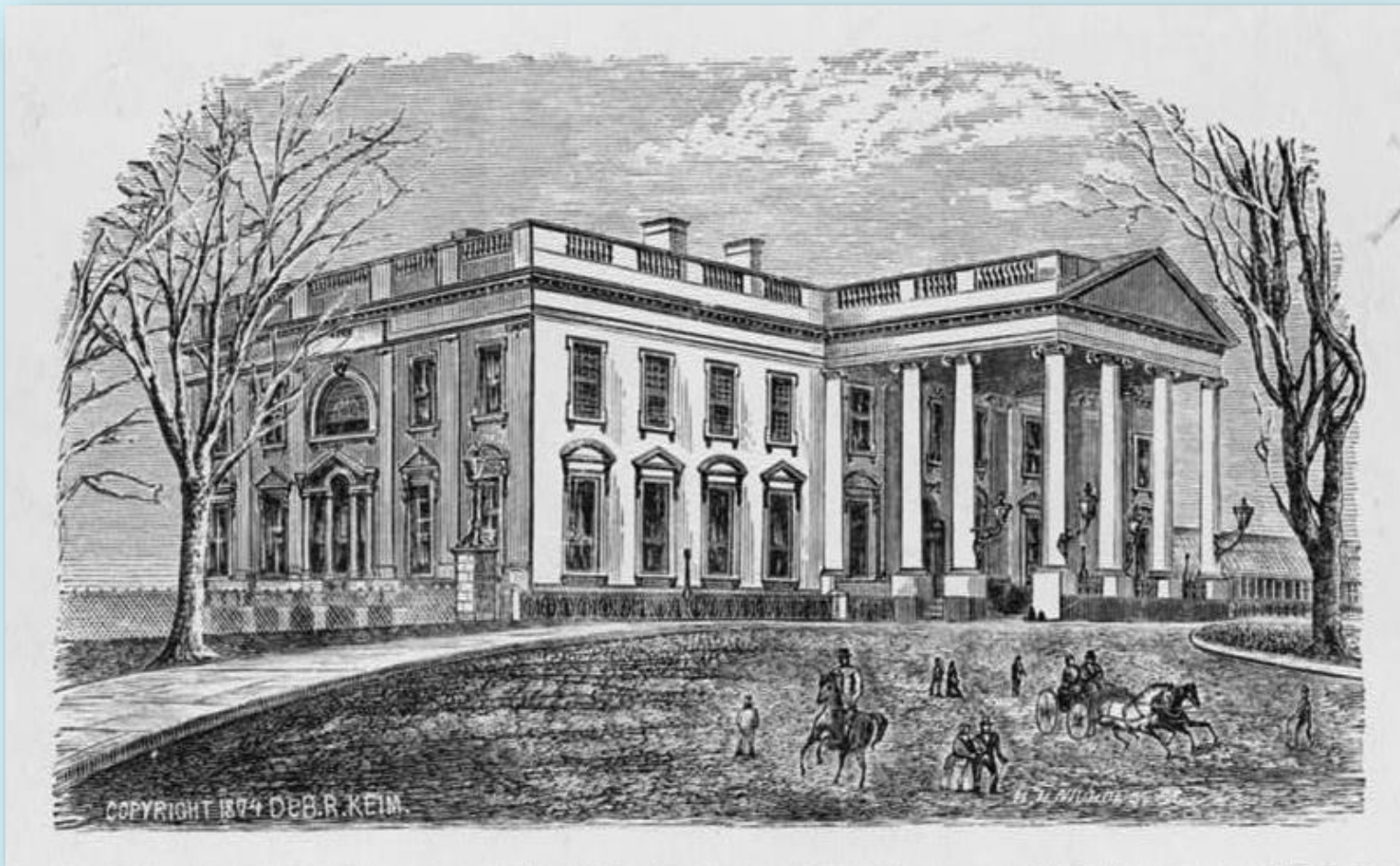
*The Framers' broader vision for Congress*



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# DEBATES OVER THE PRESIDENCY



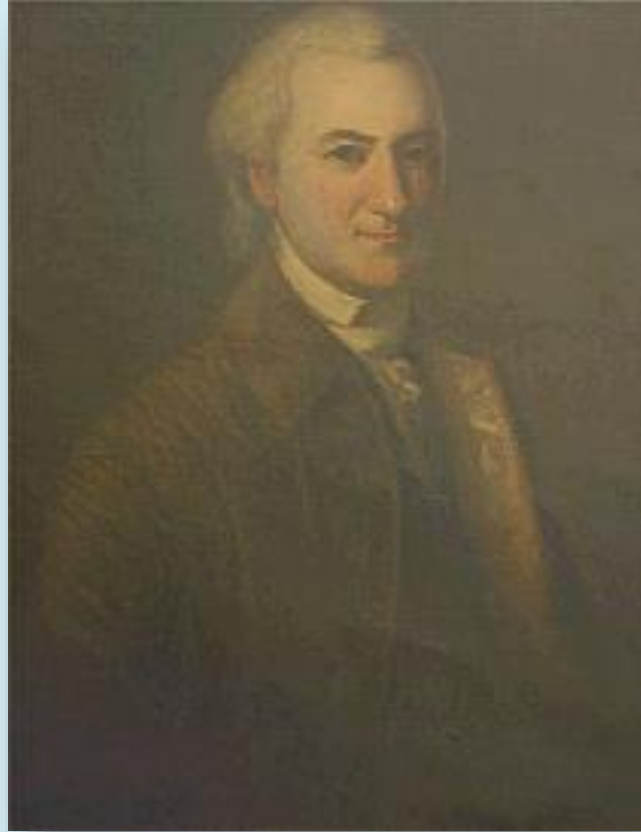
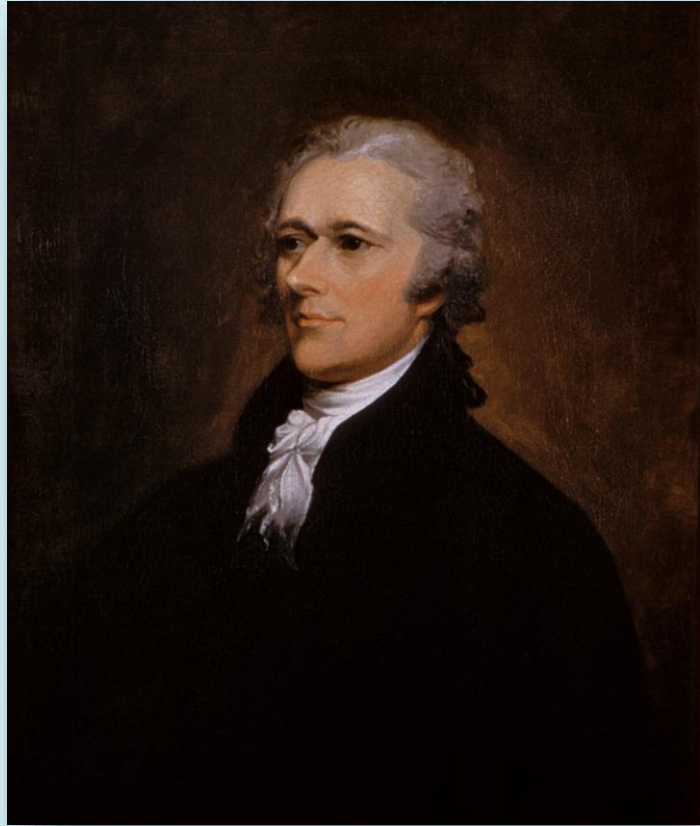
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# DEBATES OVER THE PRESIDENCY



Alexander Hamilton and John Dickinson favored a single, strong national executive.



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# DEBATES OVER THE PRESIDENCY



Roger Sherman viewed the executive as “nothing more than an institution for carrying the will of the Legislature into effect.”



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# DEBATES OVER THE PRESIDENCY

- How to elect the president.
- How long the president's term should be.
- Whether the president should be allowed to run for reelection.
- The question of impeachment and removal.



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# DEBATES OVER THE PRESIDENCY

## Options for Selecting the President

- Direct election by popular vote
- Selected by Members of Congress
- Electors selected by lottery
- An electoral college



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# DEBATES OVER THE PRESIDENCY

## The Electoral College



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# DEBATES OVER SLAVERY

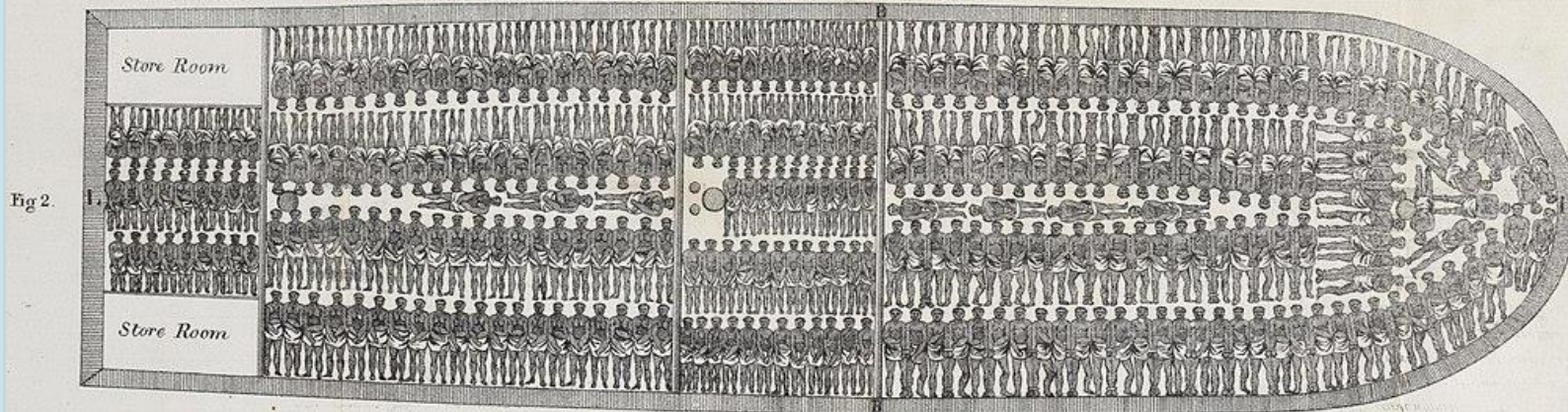


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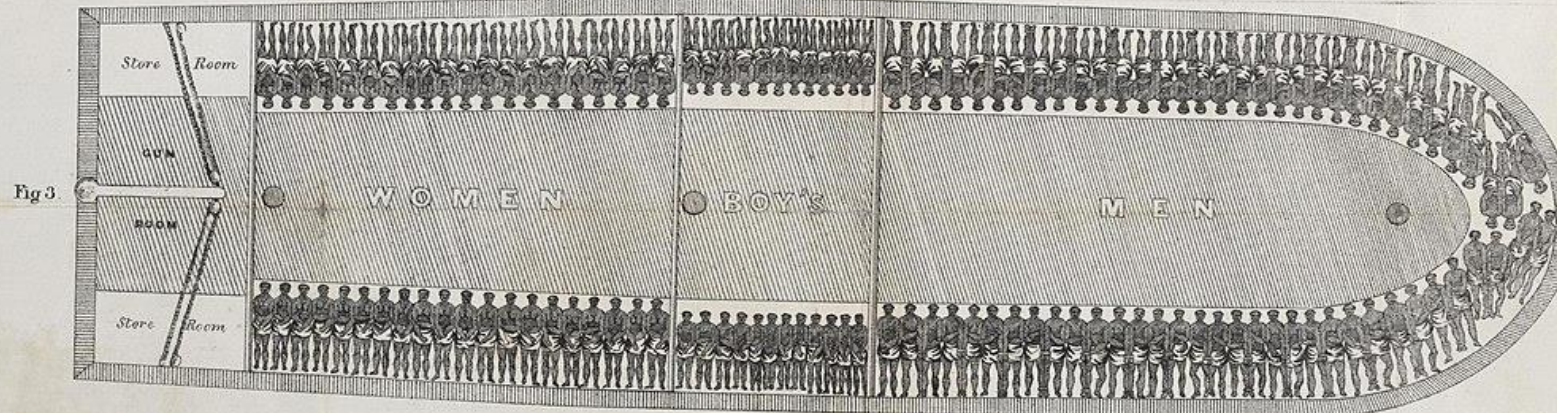
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PLAN OF LOWER DECK WITH THE STOWAGE OF 292 SLAVES

130 OF THESE BEING STOWED UNDER THE SHELVES AS SHEWN IN FIGURE B & FIGURE 3.



PLAN SHEWING THE STOWAGE OF 130 ADDITIONAL SLAVES ROUND THE WINGS OR SIDES OF THE LOWER DECK BY MEANS OF PLATFORMS OR SHELVES (IN THE MANNER OF GALLERIES IN A CHURCH) THE SLAVES STOWED ON THE SHELVES AND BELOW THEM HAVE ONLY A HEIGHT OF 2 FEET 7 INCHES BETWEEN THE BEAMS: AND FAR LESS UNDER THE BEAMS. See Fig 1.



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# DEBATES OVER SLAVERY

## The Three-Fifths Clause

### Article I, Sect. II, Cl. 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.



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# DEBATES OVER SLAVERY

## The Slave Trade Clause

### Article 1, Section 9, Clause 1:

Congress is limited, expressly, from banning the “Importation” of slaves, before 1808: “The Migration or Importation of such Persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the Year one thousand eight hundred and eight, but a Tax or duty may be imposed on such Importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each Person.



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