



# HISTORY

---

in the Heartland

## EXPLORE HISTORY

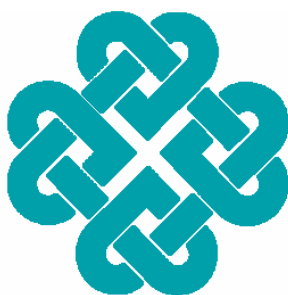
**Summary Evaluation Report  
November 1, 2008 Seminar**

***Presidents and Politics***

*Prepared by*

**Matthew Courser, Ph.D.**

**Carol Combs, B.S.**



**Pacific Institute**  
for Research and Evaluation  
Louisville Center

**November 2008**

## **1. Perceived Success of Seminar in Meeting Learning Objectives**

Participants were asked how successful the November seminar, “Presidents and Politics”, which included a presentation by Dr. David Steigerwald, Professor of History at The Ohio State University—Marion Campus, was in meeting the following five learning objectives:

- Learn what the innovations were that made the 1840 presidential campaign the model for all that followed.
- To understand how the Harding campaign adapted or modified the campaign methods pioneered in 1840 to 1920, especially in reference to technology.
- Be able to compare and contrast the 1840 and 1920 presidential campaigns.
- Be introduced to the idea of party systems as a way to organize and understand American electoral politics.
- Begin to gain increased skill in using primary sources, in this context by learning how to use primary sources from the 1840 and 1920 presidential campaigns to learn and teach about those campaigns.

The percentages of responses for each response category are provided in bullet format below each objective:

**How successful was the seminar in covering the innovations were that made the 1840 presidential campaign the model for all that followed?**

- 37% (14) said very successful
- 63% (24) said mostly successful

**How successful was the seminar in covering the Harding campaign adapted or modified the campaign methods pioneered in 1840 to 1920, especially in reference to technology?**

- 31% (12) said very successful
- 66% (25) said mostly successful
- 3% (1) said somewhat successful

**How successful was the seminar in comparing and contrasting the 1840 and 1920 presidential campaigns?**

- 55% (21) said very successful
- 45% (17) said mostly successful

**How successful was the seminar in covering the idea of party systems as a way to organize and understand American electoral politics?**

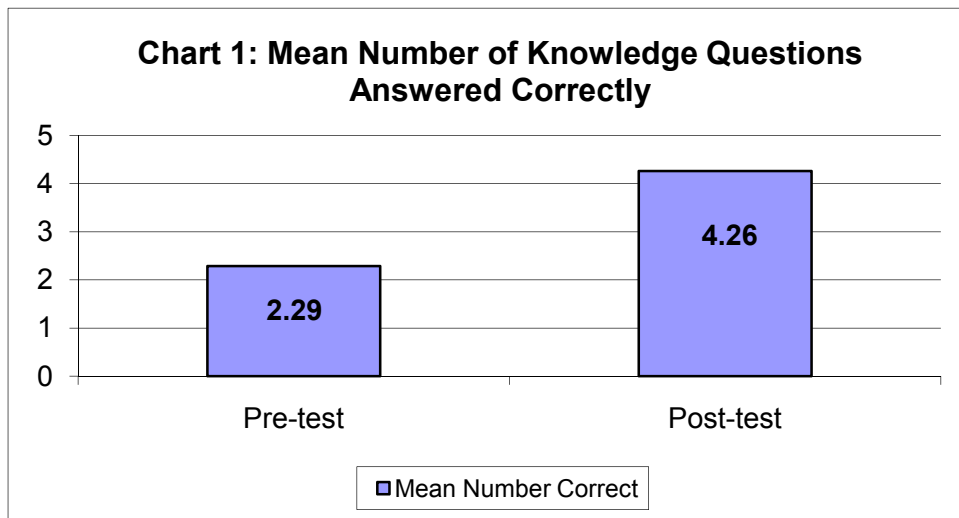
- 34% (13) said very successful
- 66% (25) said mostly successful

**How successful was the seminar in covering increased skill in using primary sources, in this context by learning how to use primary sources from the 1840 and 1920 presidential campaigns to learn and teach about those campaigns?**

- 55% (21) said very successful
- 45% (17) said mostly successful

## **2. Knowledge about the “Presidents and Politics”**

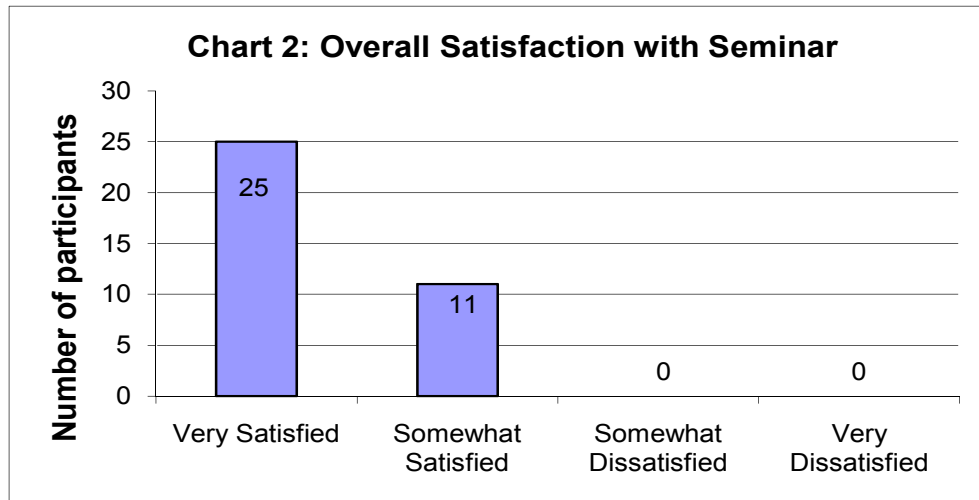
Participants were asked 8 questions at pre- and post-test that measured their knowledge about the *Presidents and Politics* material covered in the seminar. In some cases, these questions also required teachers to engage in rudimentary analysis of primary source materials in answering the questions. The questions were developed for the seminar content area by the Project Director, Dr. Stuart Hobbs, and the seminar presenter, Dr. David Steigerwald. These questions were designed to measure short-term changes in participants’ content knowledge due to the seminar presentation and readings.



At pre-test, participants in the November 1 Explore History Seminar answered an average of 2.9 of the 8 knowledge questions correctly. At post-test, this average increased to 4.3 knowledge questions answered correctly. A paired-sample t-test showed that this increase in content knowledge was statistically significant ( $t = -5.441$ ,  $sig = .000$  (two-tailed),  $df = 37$ ). From this, one can conclude, at least in the short term, the change in knowledge was likely not due to chance. The specific test items and the numbers of each item answered right, wrong, or missing at pre- and post-test are included on pages 10-11.

### 3. Participant Satisfaction Ratings

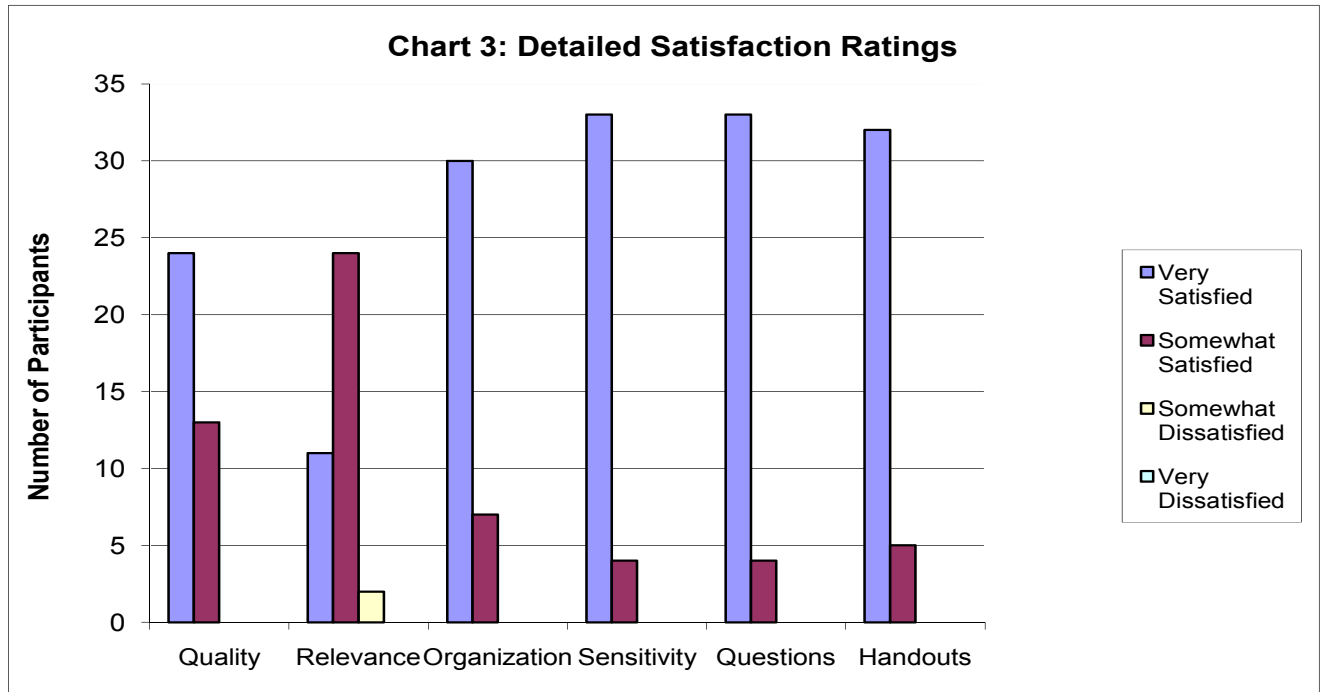
Participants were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the seminar. Of the 36 participants who responded on this item, 25 (or 66%) indicated that they were “very satisfied” with the seminar, while 11 (29%) indicated that they were “somewhat satisfied”. Chart 2 (below) presents this data in graphical format.



The 38 seminar participants also were asked to provide detailed satisfaction ratings for the following aspects of the seminar:

- a. Quality of information
- b. Relevance of information to participants' work
- c. Organization of seminar
- d. Sensitivity of presenters to participants
- e. Opportunity for questions
- f. Handouts and seminar materials

Chart 3 (next page) presents participants' ratings for each of these aspects of the seminar.



- Quality of information:** 63% of participants reported that they were “very satisfied” with the quality of the information presented in the seminar. 34% of participants reported that they were “somewhat satisfied” with the quality of information presented in the seminar. One participant did not answer this question. One participant said, “Good use of primary sources and analyzing them and tying them in with the discussion.”
- Relevance of information to participants’ work:** 29% of participants reported that they were “very satisfied” with the relevance of the information to their work, and 63% percent reported that they were “somewhat satisfied” with the relevance of the information to their work. 5% (representing two participants) reported being “somewhat dissatisfied” with the relevance of the seminar information to their work. One participant did not answer this question. One participant said, “Ohio history is my social studies focus.”
- Organization of the seminar:** 79% of participants reported that they were “very satisfied” with the organization of the seminar, and 18% reported that they were “somewhat satisfied” with the organization of the seminar. One participant did not answer this question.
- Sensitivity of instructor and project archivist to participants:** 87% of participants reported that they were “very satisfied” with the sensitivity of the instructor and project archivist to them and their needs, and 11% reported being “somewhat satisfied” in this area. One participant did not answer this question. One participant said, “The presenter asked questions and made us feel comfortable.” Another participant said, “He was to the point and did not ramble.”
- Opportunity to ask questions:** 87% of participants reported that they were “very satisfied” with the opportunity they had to ask questions, and 11% of participants reported that they were “somewhat satisfied” in this area. One participant did not answer this question. One participant said, “Always allowed participation from class.”

- **Seminar materials:** 84% of participants reported that they were “very satisfied” with the materials they received and 13% of participants reported that they were “somewhat satisfied” with the seminar materials. One participant did not answer this question.

#### 4a. What were the *most* helpful features of the seminar?

The seminar participants were asked in an open-ended question on the post-test instrument to rate the most helpful features of the November 1 Seminar. Table 1 (below) summarizes participants’ comments for this question. The actual comments of participants are listed under each of the categories below. It should be noted that many of the comments by participants included more than one key idea. Some comments were repeated more than once; those comments are listed once in the Table below with the number of occurrences in parentheses following the comment.

**Table 1: Most Helpful Features of “Presidents and Politics” Seminar**

<p><b><i>Materials/Handouts (12)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Materials distributed to use in the classroom are very helpful</li> <li>• Materials provided to read about the 1840 and 1920 elections</li> <li>• Lesson plans that can be implemented in the classroom</li> <li>• Will use the handouts the most</li> <li>• Architecture book was very interesting</li> <li>• Materials we can take back and use with colleagues</li> <li>• I liked the handouts, books, and CD’s the we can keep</li> <li>• CD and tactics worksheet</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Discussion (11)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting together with our Master Teacher, so we could discuss the next assignment (3)</li> <li>• Discussion of working with propaganda posters (2)</li> <li>• Working in groups – this is the best way to get new ideas</li> <li>• Discussions of elections of 1840 and 1920</li> <li>• Grade level collaboration was great</li> <li>• Final small group discussion with leader</li> <li>• Meeting in small groups at the end for Q&amp;A</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Lectures/Presentation (11)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation on propaganda will be very useful in my classroom (4)</li> <li>• Power points (2)</li> <li>• Dr. Steigerwald was a great presenter. He informed us through a very ‘storytelling’ conversation-like style (2)</li> <li>• How to use propaganda</li> <li>• History presentation</li> <li>• Speakers</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Primary sources (4)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hands on activities (2)</li> <li>• Examples of analyzing political posters and primary source propaganda activities</li> </ul>
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

#### 4b. What were the *least* helpful features of the seminar?

Seminar participants next were asked in an open-ended question on the post-test instrument to rate the least helpful features of the November 1 Seminar. Table 2 (below) summarizes participants' comments for this question.

**Table 2: Least Helpful Features of “Presidents and Politics” Seminar**

<p><b><i>Miscellaneous (4)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lunch too long (2)</li><li>• Some ideas are more complex than what I would use in my classroom</li><li>• Only one other 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher in my application group, so I do not get as many ideas as I would like</li></ul> <p><b><i>Presentation (3)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lecture on 1840 and 1920 was too in depth for use in my classroom</li><li>• Guest presenter was informative, but the reading covered everything he did</li><li>• Would be nice to have the power point notes while listening to presentation</li></ul> <p><b><i>Discussions (3)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Small group discussion for elementary teachers</li><li>• Discussion on Jackson</li><li>• Round table discussions</li></ul>
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

#### 5. How could this seminar be improved?

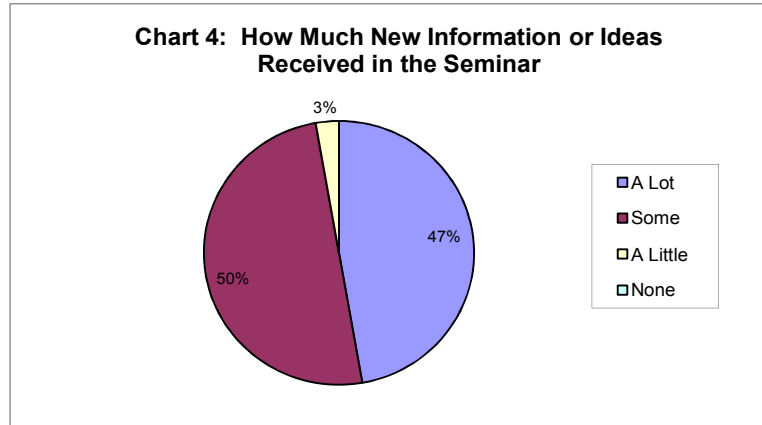
Seminar participants were asked in an open-ended question on the post-test instrument to identify ways that the seminar could be improved. Table 3 (below) summarizes participants' comments for this question. It is important to note that one teacher specifically noted that he or she had no complaints and enjoyed “all of the activities.”

**Table 3: Participant Suggestions to Improve Future Explore History Seminars**

<p><b><i>Information (4)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More information to be used in the classroom</li><li>• Examples of lessons taught at our grade level</li><li>• Reading assignment was almost too much</li><li>• More visuals, I'm a visual learner</li></ul> <p><b><i>Miscellaneous (4)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shorten lunch (2)</li><li>• More breaks for shorter periods of time</li><li>• Mileage reimbursement? It's not a big deal, but wouldn't turn down a little extra cash</li></ul> <p><b><i>Speaker/Presentation (2)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Give speaker task of providing more of an outline for our discussion and how it can relate to teaching in a K-12 classroom</li><li>• Interactive morning presentation</li></ul> <p><b><i>Activity (3)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More student interaction</li><li>• More hands on activities with discussions</li><li>• More getting up and moving around</li></ul>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

## 6. How much new information or ideas did you receive in the workshop?

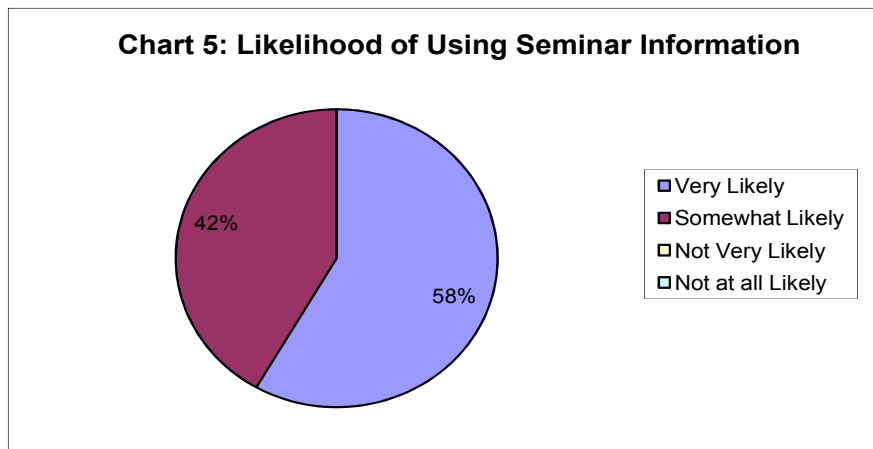
Participants were asked on the post-test instrument to rate the amount of new information or ideas that they received in the seminar. Chart 4 (below) presents this information in graphical format.



- 17 of 36 who responded to this item, concluded that “a lot of new information/ideas” were received in the seminar, while 18 of 36) said “some new information/ideas” were received. One respondent said “a little new information/ideas” was received. No respondents said that “no new information/ideas” were received.

## 7. How likely are you to use the information or ideas that you received in the workshop?

Seminar participants also were asked on the post-test instrument to rate the likelihood that they would use the information or ideas that they received in the seminar. Chart 5 (below) presents this information in graphical format.



- 21 of 36 who answered this question (or 58%), concluded that they would be “very likely” to use the information that they received in the seminar.

- 15 of 36 (or 42%) concluded that they would be “somewhat likely” to use the information that they received in the seminar.

## 8. Additional Comments and Suggestions

Finally, participants were asked to list any additional comments or suggestions they had related to the “Presidents and Politics” seminar. Nine of the 38 participants provided general comments and those comments follow below.

**Table 4: Participant Comments and Suggestions**

<p><b><i>Accolades (6)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Glad to be a part of Explore, thank you</li><li>• Great job</li><li>• Keep up the good work</li><li>• Excellent presentation and activities</li><li>• Thanks for being flexible about our schedule today</li><li>• Lunch was awesome</li></ul> <p><b><i>Miscellaneous (4)</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Break-out into grade level groups was much more organized and meaningful</li><li>• I’m enjoying all the information I am learning. It’s nice to have different speakers</li><li>• I really enjoyed the readings</li><li>• Too much reading assignment</li></ul>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

## Appendix A: Pre and Post Test Knowledge Questions, Right, Wrong, and Change

**Table 5. Pre- and Post-test Knowledge**

<i>Questions</i>	% Right at Pre Test	% Right at Post Test	% of Change
1) The most likely reason for his fence-straddling was?	47%	63%	+16%
2) This observer was most likely?	39%	32%	-7%
3) The Fourth Party System (1896-1928) was characterized by?	29%	47%	+18%
4) The advent of radio resulted in a major change in Election Day behavior. Which of the statements below best describe this change?	56%	76%	+20%
5) The 1840 presidential campaign and election was the culmination of changes in the process that had taken place over previous years. All of the follow are examples of these changes except for which one?	27%	45%	+18%
6) The Democratic Party in the 1840s and 1850s ran different style campaigns from the Whigs, as revealed by smaller amounts of campaign buttons, bandanas, and banners produced for Democrats. One reason scholars think this was so was because?	43%	40%	-3%
7) The importance of Ohio in American politics from 1865 to 1920 is no better illustrated than by the fact that?	31%	34%	+3%
8) The Harding slogan, "America First" referred to which key issue of the campaign?	17%	90%	+73%

## Pre/Post Test Items

**1. During the presidential campaign of 1840, William Henry Harrison took ambiguous stands on slavery, affirming the right of Americans to petition Congress to abolish slavery but discouraging them from doing so. The most likely reason for his fence-straddling was?**

- Harrison was, as contemporaries said, an “imbecile” who did not understand the complex issues of the day.
- Harrison was trying to get Democrats to vote for him so he tried to please their pro-slavery views.
- The Whig party was a coalition of wildly disparate groups, and Harrison did not want to alienate any of these constituencies.
- Harrison hoped to be able to bring slaves to Ohio to work on his farm.

**2. An observer of the 1840 presidential election wrote the following:**

*“Scenes of violence, disorder, and riot have taught us in this city that universal suffrage will not do for larger communities”*

**This observer was most likely:**

- A Democrat.
- An immigrant.
- A journeyman carpenter.
- A Whig.

**3. The Fourth Party System (1896-1928) was characterized by:**

- Balanced two party competition, with Democrats the dominant party.
- Mostly Republican domination with strong sectionalism.
- Generally balanced two-party competition with strong sectionalism.
- General dominance by the Democratic party.

**4. The advent of radio resulted in a major change in Election Day behavior. Which of the statements below best describe this change:**

- People began marching through the streets with banners and bands celebrating their candidates.
- Voters partook more freely than ever before of liquor supplied by the political parties at the polls.
- Big city political machines were undermined by reform-minded broadcasts.
- Fewer people went downtown in the evening to await the election results.

*Please continue to the next page...*

- 5. The 1840 presidential campaign and election was the culmination of changes in the process that had taken place over previous years. All of the follow are examples of these changes except for which one?**
- Presidential electors were popularly elected in most states.
  - Party conventions replaced congressional caucuses in choosing candidates.
  - The candidates traveled extensively across the country giving speeches and marching in parades.
  - Two unified parties contested for the office.
- 6. The Democratic Party in the 1840s and 1850s ran different style campaigns from the Whigs, as revealed by smaller amounts of campaign buttons, bandanas, and banners produced for Democrats. One reason scholars think this was so was because:**
- The bric-a-brac makers were mostly Whigs who would not make Democratic Party items.
  - The antebellum Democratic Party tended to choose candidates with well-defined records that did not work well for image-focused, bric-a-brac based campaigns.
  - Most Democratic Party loyalists could not afford to buy campaign bandanas, pitchers, and canes.
  - The Democratic Party campaign material was badly designed and poorly made.
- 7. The importance of Ohio in American politics from 1865 to 1920 is no better illustrated than by the fact that:**
- The Republican presidential and vice-presidential candidates both were from Ohio.
  - Both the Republican and Democratic presidential nominees were from Ohio.
  - Warren Harding was the seventh Ohioan to have been nominated for president by the Republican party.
  - Both parties held their 1920 nominating conventions in Ohio cities.
- 8. The Harding slogan, “America First” referred to which key issue of the campaign:**
- America taking a leadership role in world affairs after World War I.
  - Basing the currency on American-mined silver rather than foreign-mined gold.
  - Concerns about declining immigration since World War I.
  - American participation in the League of Nations.