

HOW DID WE GET OUR CONSTITUTION?

Delegates to the Philadelphia Convention

- 55 delegates from 12 states attended between May and September in 1787
- Purpose: to revise the Articles of Confederation
- Within 5 days they decided to establish a new government with Legislative, Executive, and Judicial branches

Independence Hall Assembly Room



Framers

- ◎ Young:
 - Average age: 42
 - James Madison, 36
 - Gouverneur Morris, 35
 - Edmund Randolph, 34
 - Alexander Hamilton, 32
- ◎ Well-educated
- ◎ Experienced: George Washington presided over the Convention
- ◎ Many lawyers

Virginia Plan

- ⦿ Proposed by the delegates from Virginia
- ⦿ Written by James Madison “Father of the Constitution”
- ⦿ Provisions
 - Congress could veto state law
 - Congress would choose the Executive and Judiciary
 - Representation in Congress based on state’s population

New Jersey Plan

- Unicameral Congress
- Each state equally represented in Congress (NOT based on population)
- No President—instead the executive would be a committee

CONFLICT

- Small states wanted equal representation for all states
- Large states wanted representation based on population

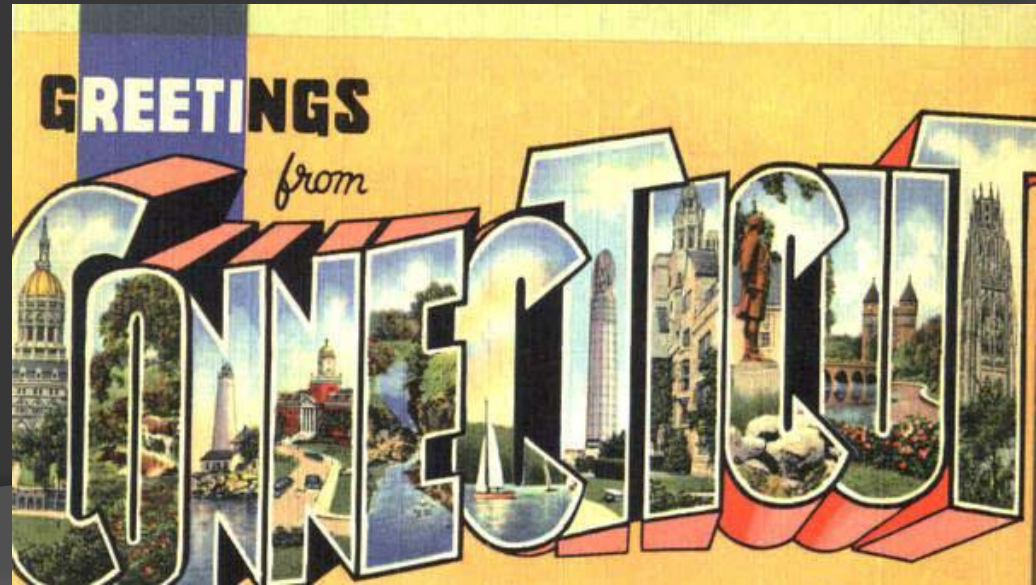


VS.



Connecticut Compromise

- Suggested by Connecticut
- Congress would have two houses:
 - **Senate** with equal representation
 - **House** with representation based on population

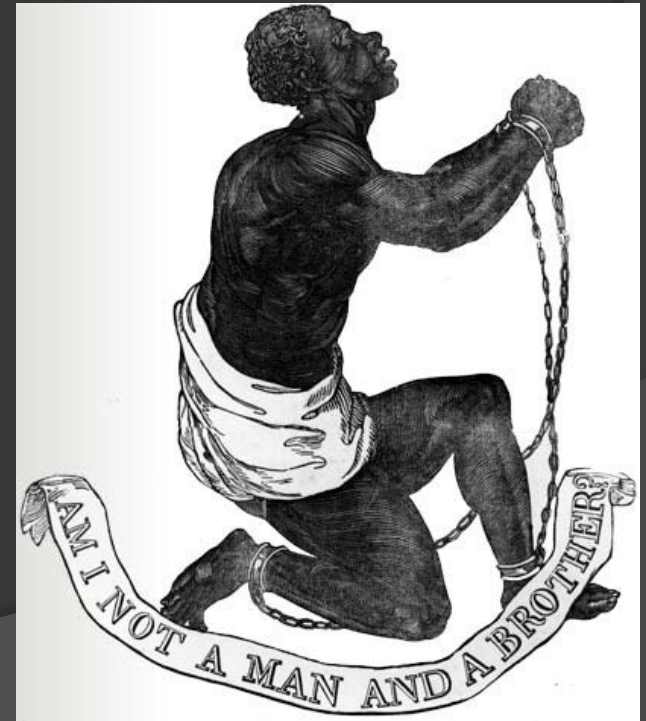


Three-Fifths Compromise

- ⦿ Use of population raised question?
- ⦿ WHAT ABOUT THE SLAVES?
 - Do they count as people?
- ⦿ Answer: Kind of
 - “Free persons” counted as well as “three-fifths of all other persons”
 - The word “Slaves” is not in the Constitution

Slave Trade Compromise

- Congress could not act on the slave trade until 1808
- Congress did ban the importation of slaves in 1808



Ratification

- 9 of 13 States required to ratify the Constitution
- Debate moved to the States

Federalists v. Anti-Federalists

⦿ FEDERALISTS

- Favored approval of the Constitution
- Wanted a strong national government
- Examples:
 - Alexander Hamilton
 - James Madison
- Wrote “The Federalist Papers” which were published in newspapers

Anti-Federalists

- ⦿ Did not like the Constitution:
- ⦿ Why?
 - Too much power in central government
 - No “Bill of Rights” that specifically limited government power