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The Battle of Representation: Analyzing the Role of the Senate in the Late Republic of Rome and the United States

Gracie Munroe
Butler University

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**The Battle of Representation: Analyzing the Role of the Senate in the Late Republic
of Rome and the United States**

A Thesis

Presented to the Department of History

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of the Requirements for Graduation Honors

Gracie Munroe

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Abstract:

The Late Roman Republic was divided into two political factions, the Populares and the Optimates, who quarreled on whether the voice of the people through votes in popular assemblies should have greater weight in government than the opinions and wisdom of the Roman Senate who, being composed of elite Roman aristocrats, believed were more qualified than the average Roman citizens to govern. A parallel idea of representation exists in the United States, in which two schools of thought emerge, the Trustee Model of Representation versus the Delegate model. In this project, I analyzed the language and rhetoric utilized by ancient Roman authors and thinkers regarding these two political factions and compared those trends to political writings from 18th century America that were concerned about representation. Ultimately, I was able to find a strong connection between the ideologies of the Roman conflict between the Optimates and Populares and the American debate over whether a Trustee or Delegate model of representation is more effective. There has been significant research done on the Late Roman Republic and the conflicts that categorized America's founding, but my research was able to connect the two political contexts and hopefully, provide a foundation for future research on the links between the ancient world and the United States.

Introduction

Both the United States Senate and the Senate of the Roman Republic share similar schools of thought regarding the obligations of an elected senator, focusing mainly on whether these politicians represent the interests of the common people or if these politicians should make decisions on what they deem “for the good of the whole” nation (Rehfeld). While the Roman Senate differs from the United States Senate in that it is not a legislative body, the argument between the Populares and the Optimates is similar to the American conflict between a delegate model of representation, in which elected officials should directly represent and vote on the interests of their constituents, versus a trustee model of representation, where politicians are elected because they possess the “most wisdom to discern, and most virtue to pursue the common good of society” and therefore, are more qualified to make decisions on behalf of the American people (Madison). Extensive research exists on the history of the Populares and the Optimates and the influential leaders attributed to each party, and yet there seems to be a lack of research regarding how we can take that conflict and translate it to modern models of democracy and representation.

In the late Republic of Rome, the political life was categorized by two schools of thought, the Optimates, who believed that the advice and approval of Roman Senators should be a more important step for the creation of a law, and the Populares, who believed that the votes of the Roman populace as whole through assemblies should hold a greater weight in the creation of law. On a similar note, when the United States government was being constructed for a second time, after the failed Articles of Confederation, the two political factions, the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists, argued

over how American citizens should be represented in a legislative institution. The Federalists argued for a trustee model of representation which draws comparisons to the Roman Optimates in believing that American senators should make decisions based on their own wisdom and what they deem fit. On the other hand, the Anti-Federalists supported a delegate model of representation claiming that American senators should be defined by their constituents and make decisions based on the interests of those constituents (Ginsberg 53). I believe that this research will recognize the ways in which both of these approaches to representation have merit but will also highlight the pitfalls of entrusting a large amount of political power in the hands of one group of individuals, whether it be political elites or the common people.

For my research, I used primary and secondary analysis to gather information regarding these two political ideologies in the Roman and American contexts. I will focus on the writings, letters, and speeches of key Roman politicians such as the great Roman orator Cicero and Julius Caesar, along with works of other Roman historians and previous research focusing on the Roman Republic. Specifically, I used content analysis to code for specific words, phrases, or sentiments in their original Latin that were being utilized to describe the political factions, and then translated those ideas such as “liberty,” “interests of the commons,” or “virtue” (Cicero 225). On a similar note, I then coded for these words and concepts in the American context. Specifically, I looked at early documents such as the Constitution and the Federalist Papers, but also analyzed contemporary sources as well, such as public opinion polls and demographics of American legislators. Ultimately, I was able to find similar trends in language and rhetoric used by these two factions, the Optimates and the Populares, and those used in

18th century America regarding representation. This suggests a significant link between the political culture of the ancient Romans at the end of the Republic and the concerns of the framers of American democracy.

Historical Context

Most of the limited information we have about the beliefs, actions, and prominent figures of the Optimates and Populares comes from the written accounts of either the leaders who aligned themselves with a specific ideology or from historians who are documenting these political debates. Therefore, for my research, it seems most effective to analyze the rhetoric and arguments posed by these men and compare the consistency or distinctions between the ways in which they describe the values or logic of their own ideology or the competing ideology. I often found that these political actors often reference or try to emulate the actions of previous Roman politicians like the Gracchus brothers or Lucius Sulla. Therefore, this historical context is ultimately important to keep in mind in order to help inform the context in which Roman historians and politicians like Sallust and Cicero are writing about these two groups while also identifying the events that initiated the emergence of these political ideologies in the first place.

In this section, I am going to highlight the historical events that serve as the backdrop and reference points for the ancient primary sources that I coded for. In order to understand the ideological foundations of the groups of Optimates and the Populares that categorized the late Roman Republic, it is significant to acknowledge key moments in Rome's history that played a role in the conception of these two political factions, dating back all the way to Rome's founding in 754/753 BCE when 100 senators were chosen as

senators and ultimately, created the patrician class. The conflict between the Roman aristocracy, or patrician class, that served as the ruling body of Rome, and the common people, is one that had always been present since the birth of Rome, and subsequently, incited significant political conflicts between the two populations of people. Specifically, a period of conflict between the two classes called the Struggle of the Orders categorized Rome's early Republic which ultimately, led to the creation of the tribune of the plebs, a key political office that helped assure that the plebeians were protected from the political abuse of the patrician magistrates. Additionally, the prolonged conflict that later arose between political heads Sulla, who fought to preserve the aristocratic Senate and its superior judgement, and Marius, who headed the Populares factions, only heightened and exacerbated the argument over which body of people ought to have a greater influence in governance, the aristocratic senators or the plebeians. Years later, during the Civil War of 49 BCE, a war that ultimately led to the collapse of the Roman Republic, the two major political figures fighting against one another, Caesar and Pompey, were heavily influenced by the political opinions and values, specifically regarding the role of the Senate, of Sulla and Marius, therefore making it crucial to highlight their contributions to this debate. Ultimately, all of these key historical moments left a significant legacy, especially the division between the aristocratic and plebian classes, that remained well into the late Roman Republic. Overall, recognizing and analyzing these events helps inform how these two political ideologies were shaped and the framing of each side's arguments.

Moving past the first 200 years or so after Rome's founding in which seven kings ruled, the foundation of Rome's republic began to take shape as early as 504 BCE, with

figures like Cicero claiming that this expulsion of kings was “synonymous with liberty” (Le Glay et al. 32). It is during this time that conflicts between the aristocratic members of Roman society and the common people begin to arise and produce political unrest within the state. As previously mentioned, this aristocratic class was thought to be the descendants of forefathers or “*patres*” of Rome, and so therefore, like a vicious cycle, these individuals, who were from the wealthiest and most powerful families of Rome, were then systematically placed in positions of power in Rome like public and religious offices and the Senate. This gave way for the patrician class to abuse their power and neglect the interests of the plebeians.

Before jumping into the extensive history of this struggle, it is important to outline the unique functions of the Roman Senate since it differs significantly from the structure and expectations of the United States Senate. Specifically, during Rome’s period of monarchy, this Roman Senate served as an advising body to the kings. Once Rome expelled the kings and transitioned to a system of annually elected officials, the Senate then acted as an advising body to the elected magistrates. A distinction to make, which will inform the rest of my research, is that the Senate did not possess the ability to create laws, and instead, were only able to pass decrees regarding the Senate’s opinion on what the magistrates ought to do, which in itself held significant weight. In Rome, laws were voted on and enacted by the popular assemblies, but the opinion of the Senate was usually given before any piece of legislation became law. Therefore, the Senate still held a major influence over the creation of laws and the actions of the magistrates and could enact that influence in order to repress the common people especially since it had major influences over the State’s finances and helped determine the distribution of wealth from

the treasury. Ultimately, those, both poor and wealthy, who contested this political organization, that clearly favored the patricians, were labelled as “plebeians” even though this term was later understood to simply represent the “common people” (Le Glay et. al 43). Understandably, these plebeians, who represented the majority, grew angry at this arrangement, and in turn, engaged in political protest in order to effect change.

These conflicts, which began around 494, would come to be known as the Struggle of the Orders in which the plebeian class rebelled against the patrician’s monopoly on both political and religious power, and their greater access to resources. In the early formation of the state and in wake of the removal of the kings, the plebeians found themselves plagued with “bad harvests” and a “shortage of food” along with the burden of significant debt, which served as a stark contrast to those of the patrician class (Le Glay et al. 45). The plebeians began to push back against the aristocratic rule. On one specific occasion, the plebeians, in protest of their “lack of representation” in political processes and “heavy debts,” retreated to the Sacred Mount, depriving the patricians of their manual labor workers and threatening the formation of a new state. Therefore, this forced the patricians to create the position of Tribune of the plebs, which would become a significant political office for the common people to have their interests represented in the formation of Roman law (Le Glay et al. 43).

Overall though, the patricians persisted in their attempts to exclude the plebeians from political participation, and specifically the consulship, which is the elected head of state of the Republic which is voted on annually. For example, a specific patrician-born hero and general named Coriolanus who lived during the 5th century BCE was determined to maintain the patrician class’ rule over the plebeians. In 491 BCE, Rome,

who was experiencing a grain shortage, had just received an abundance of grain from Sicily and the Senate was deciding on what price it should be sold to the common people. Coriolanus argued that the plebeians should not receive any grain unless they “restore to the Senate its ancient rights” meaning abolish the offices of the tribunes (Livy 2.331). He despised the “plebeian magistrates” and clearly believed that the plebeians were not fit for governance (Livy 2.331). Understandably the plebeians were outraged by Coriolanus’ actions, but even the Senate found Coriolanus’ opinions and plans to be a bit too harsh, and ultimately, he was put on trial and convicted, although the Senate did try to argue for a lighter sentence. This is an example of the tumultuous relationship between the plebeians and the patricians. In 367 BCE, due to the Licinio-Sextian plebiscite, plebeians gained greater access and influence in political decisions by requiring that one of the two consuls be a plebeian. This was important considering that before this time the plebeians were excluded from these high offices, and it allowed for the interests of the common people to have better representation in governance. While plebeians were able to make significant strides in gaining entry to Roman governance, the divide between the elite patrician class and the common people still remained.

Moving forward in time to 133 BCE, two political figures, Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus, enter the political arena in hopes of alleviating the hardships placed on those lower-class Roman individuals who were, at this time, facing economic and social problems. Specifically, the plebeian class, who were mainly dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods, were being required to serve in Rome’s military service for a significant period of time, and in their absence, their land would either fall to shambles or be sold off to the wealthy. Furthermore, those who purchased this land would then profit even more

off of this transaction by working the land with slave labor. Once elected as Tribune of the Plebs, Tiberius Gracchus attempted to propose legislation that would solve these seemingly unjust actions that were being inflicted upon the lower classes. Believing that the Senate would reject his proposal due to the fact that many of the wealthy senators were profiting off the current arrangement, Tiberius took his proposed legislation straight to the popular assembly, completely bypassing the Senate's approval. This action highlights a key distinction that highlights the foundation of the Populares, which is whether the opinions of the people should have a larger weight in law-making than the authority of the Senate.

Ultimately, this action, along with his desire to run for Tribune a second time, caused the Senate to deem Tiberius as dangerous and possessing too much "ambition" and he subsequently was murdered. It also set a precedent in the early Roman Republic. The issue was not necessarily centered around his desire to pass legislation that would benefit the plebeians like the land reform bills, but instead, it was the manner in which he did it. He had chosen to break the traditional and understood procedure for how laws were created in Rome by going around the Senate's approval, which in fairness was completely legal. The Senate obviously saw him as a threat to their power and influence over governance and thought his actions would encourage others to follow suit. Therefore, Tiberius was seen as the making of a Tyrant, and his radical actions ultimately led to his murder at the hands of the Senate. This is also shows the means by which the Senate were willing to utilize in order to repress any opposition or threat to their power. In terms of the debate between the Populares and the Optimates, this struggle reveals just how much influence the Senate has in dominating any opposing force, and how they can

use their rhetoric and position to do so all in the name of what it best for Rome. It is clear though that Tiberius' legacy acted as a catalyst for future populist movements.

Following in his brother's footsteps, Gaius Gracchus, who was also elected tribune of the plebs in 123 BCE, focused on reinstating his brother's law regarding land rights, while also attempting to enact other laws to benefit the common people. He too, like Tiberius, chose to take these laws straight to the popular assemblies, completely bypassing the approval of the Senate. Similarly, ambitious like his brother, Gaius attempted to run for his third tribunate. However, after the Senate ordered an ultimate decree following the death of a servant to the consul, meaning the consuls were allowed to take any actions as long as it is the best interest of the state, Gaius feared for his safety and took refuge on Aventine hill where he and his supporters were killed (Le Glay et al. 113). The actions of the Gracchus brothers and their deaths are significant to the formation and foundation of the Optimates and Populares. These two brothers set the precedent that the implementation of laws was not contingent on the Senate's approval, and the interests of the common people would be better represented in governance if they were to evade the Senate's advising which had become an accepted and integral part of Roman governance. Their reason for doing this is twofold. While they truly did wish to pass legislation that ultimately aided to poorer Roman citizens, they ultimately thought the Roman Senate had excess power and that the authority of the Roman governance ought to be based in the votes of the people in assemblies.

After these events, two "fluid" groups "within the wealthy elite" emerged, with the major conflict being whether to take laws or other political decisions straight to public assemblies for public approval and by-passing the Senate, just like Tiberius Gracchus did,

or to present these ideas first to the Senate for approval. This is a key frame of reference for understanding the beliefs and motivations for the Optimates and the Populares. Ultimately, the legacy and conflicts left by the Gracchi brothers maintained into the late Roman Republic, and prominent political figures and orators, such as Cicero, often referred back to these incidents as either support for the importance of the general masses' influence in law-making or evidence of the dangerous and foolish events that happen when decisions are left in the hands of the people.

The Gracchus brothers highlighted a key debate within Roman governance regarding whether the Senate's approval was really necessary for the creation of laws and if assemblies could be used to circumvent this aristocratic institution. The conflict between political figures Marius and Sulla, that caused a war and a further divide among the people of Rome, seems to present both sides of this debate. Marius was a man who was not born into nobility or the patrician class but was instead sponsored and groomed by a wealthy patron family, the Metelli, to enter the political realm and rise to the senatorial class. Specifically, Marius' fame is mainly attributed to his incredible military successes during the war against Jugurtha and the German wars, which ultimately garnered him such popularity that he held six consulships between the years 108-100 BCE. However, his popularity began to decline near the end of his final consulship in 99 BCE in which he became entangled in a conflict between other Populares political figures, Lucius Saturninus and Gaius Glaucia, who were attempting to pass legislation in favor of "land allotment" to the veterans of the wars which Marius led (Le Glay et al. 127). Assuming that the senators would discredit the law, the men who created it included a requirement that the senators take an oath in order to obey the vote, or else

they would be banished from Rome. Ultimately, Marius took the oath, much to the dismay of other senators such as his former patron Quintus Metellus. Additionally, Marius was blamed for a handful of future riots and disturbances which contributed to his decline, as he was blamed for the disturbances caused by Saturninus who enlisted a gang to kill his political rival for the consulship in 99 BCE (Le Glay et al. 127). Overall though, it was clear, due to his humble upbringing and his position on legislation that benefitted the common people, that Marius supported and considered himself a member of the *Populares*. It is important to understand the trajectory of Marius' life in order to grasp how he was viewed by the Roman people and the Senate, and to provide context to his conflicts with Sulla.

Lucius Sulla, on the other hand, presents a stark contrast to Marius, and is described as the major leader and supporter of the *Optimates*. In contrast, he was born into an old aristocratic family, the *Cornelii*. Interestingly, Sulla actually served as *quaestor* under Marius' command during the war against Jugurtha, which is thought to be the origin of tension between the two political leaders. While Marius' political career began to deteriorate, Sulla's began to rise, and he quickly gained a reputation as being both a great military leader, being accredited for the victory of Jugurtha, much to Marius' dismay, and "a wise diplomat" (Le Glay et al. 130). Ultimately, their conflict comes to a head when Marius, with support of the *Populares* who favored him because of his support for pro-plebeian legislation and because he was not a born aristocrat, claimed the command of the military charge against the king of Pontus, Mithridates, whereas Sulla, as the current consul and with the support of the Senate, had the actual power to lead a

campaign. In result, Sulla marched legions onto Rome and successfully reclaimed the campaign on Mithridates while simultaneously banishing Marius from Rome.

Ultimately, Marius died soon after, which led to the height of Sulla's political impact. After defeating Cinna and Cinna's formed army who had attempted to exile him from Rome in 83 BCE, Sulla took control of the city and began to implement his "proscription list" which called for the confiscation of resources and or execution of any people who he deemed "enemies of the state" such as any magistrates who served under Marius (Le Glay et al. 134). Sulla's political actions after this time period seem to solidify his allegiance and belief in the Optimates. Notably when Sulla was granted the position of dictator for an undecided timeframe, which in a Roman context was a temporary post of usually about 6 months appointed by the Senate who maintained sole military power during a time of emergency, he attempted to restore more power into the institution of the Senate. He required that the Senate must approve any legislation *before* it was presented to the assembly of the people while also restricting the powers of the Tribunes of the plebs by taking away their ability to veto Senate decisions in order to restore the superiority of the Senate's decisions and to repress any opposition.

Overall, the conflict between Sulla and Marius proves that the divide between the elite and the common people in Rome still persisted nearly 600 years after Rome's founding, and affirms that there was still no unanimous opinion on the Republic's system of law-making. Additionally, the conflict between these two figures heavily influence and inform the civil war between Pompey and Caesar that I will touch on more later in my research, as both of these men had personal and political ties to Sulla and Marius. Ultimately, these key historical moments led to the creation of the Optimates and

Populares, where political life was categorized by those aristocratic men who believed that the advice and approval of Roman Senators, because of their greater wisdom and character, should be a more important step for the creation of a law, and those who believed that the votes of the plebs or the common people should hold a greater weight in the creation of law. In the same vein, the United States has experienced a similar debate in terms of representation and the roles and expectations of our elected officials.

Debate of Representation in the United States

More specifically, both the United States Senate and the Senate of the Roman Republic share similar schools of thought regarding the obligations of an elected senator. In the United States, the debate over the duties and expectations of representation truly arose around the 18th century around the time of the American Revolution even though early mentions of this conflict can be traced all the way back to the 13th century and the Magna Carta (Rehfeld 217). At the time of when the Magna Carta was written, representatives did not possess any authority really to create laws or act at all, and instead, they were there mostly to “assent to the King’s demands” on behalf of their town (Rehfeld 217). However, the actual terms “trustee” and “delegate” came about in the 18th century, with figures like Edmund Burke, who was a British statesman and political thinker, writing about their opinions on the matter. More specifically, Burke argues in favor of a more trustee model of representation, and states in his 1774 “Speech to the Electors at Bristol at the Conclusion of the Poll” that a representative owes its constituents their “judgment” and even further argues, that your representative “betrays you” if he sacrifices that judgement to “your opinion” (Burke). Burke saw representatives as having the superior qualifications to make decisions on behalf of the people, which

ultimately is foundational to the argument of the trustee model. Therefore, it is clear that a debate regarding the expectations of representation was beginning to take shape near the end of the 18th century, and the founders of the U.S. were taking ideas straight from Britain.

Early American politicians like James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and Thomas Jefferson debated whether elected officials ought to represent the interests of the common people or if these politicians should make decisions on what they deem “for the good of the whole” nation which seems similar to the debates between the Roman Optimates and Populares (Madison). Two political ideologies, the Trustee model of representation and the delegate model, emerge after the American Revolution regarding the responsibility and responsiveness of the newly created elected officials under the new Constitution. Furthermore, this ultimately contributed to the beginning of the United States’ first two political factions which was an act that Washington himself warned against.

Specifically, the Articles of Confederation was the founder’s first attempt at establishing a precedent for governance in America, favoring a structure that concentrated power in the hands of the states and limited the power and interference of federal government. This emphasis on a weak central government came from a place of fear, as the founders did not wish to allow an avenue for the rise of an ambitious tyrant who held an excess of power as was the case with Great Britain under the rule of the monarch. However, this complete shift, under the Articles of Confederation, to a governance that was composed solely of a legislative branch, lacking an executive and judicial, presented the fledgling country with a handful of complications that would

require a complete rewrite of the document and would ultimately alter the way in which representation was interpreted in the United States.

For example, the Articles made it difficult for the federal government to exercise any power over that of state government, especially since the states were responsible for the enforcement and implementation of the laws. Congress under the Articles of Confederation had no power to “levy taxes or regulate commerce” and they were unable to secure a national army because each state had their own militia (Ginsberg 38).

Additionally, all 13 states only had one singular vote in Congress, and it required the unanimous approval of each state to amend the Articles of Confederation which proved to be a roadblock. In terms of representation specifically, legislators from each state acted more as messengers of the decisions being made by their state’s legislators as opposed to actors who were independently thinking and creating legislation with the interests of the entire nation in mind. Because most power was found at the state level, these senators were both selected by state legislators and also susceptible to an “immediate recall” by state officials, along with being compensated directly from state treasuries (Ginsberg 37). Overall, under the Articles of Confederation, each state “retained its sovereignty, freedom, and independence” which in result made Congress ineffective and powerless in enforcing its will, especially with the absence of an executive or judicial authority to reinforce the legitimacy of its decisions (Articles of Confederation). Ultimately, this primary document created and perpetuated a non-unified nation where states were competing with one another and in their own personal interests. Therefore, it became apparent that a new document and form of government needed to be constructed.

During this process of creating, amending, and ratifying the U.S. Constitution, new avenues for representation were created which ultimately redefined and challenged the way in which senators and elected officials were expected to act and make decisions in governance. The most notable change is seen through the establishment of a bicameral legislature where the framers decided to compromise and adopt two proposed plans regarding how states would be represented in this new Congress, the Virginia Plan and the New Jersey Plan. Overall, this decision established that the Senate would consist of only two representatives from each state, and the House of Representatives would be composed of varying number of state legislators based on their specific population size. No longer were legislators bound to the wills of the State governments, but instead, the framers understood their role now to make independent decisions based on the best interests of their constituencies, whether that be the State or a specific district, and to the nation as a whole. The establishment of these two houses would allow for more unity between rural citizens who preferred a weaker federal government and those who fought for a more centralized government as it allowed for states to still retain influence in lawmaking, but also concentrated power more on the national level and in result, reinforcing the legitimacy of the institution.

As previously mentioned, under the Articles of Confederation, members of Congress were basically just conduits of the wills and decisions of the state legislators and were not acting or proposing legislation based on their own expertise or for the whole of the nation. However, with power now concentrated on the federal level under the Constitution through the newly constructed legislative branch, representatives were now responsible with making decisions for the unified nation and keeping checks on the other

branches along with still representing the interests of their own state. For example, the question arose whether these representatives should base their decisions on the opinions of their constituents or the opinions of state legislators or even their own personal opinions. This gave rise to two competing ideologies which resemble the conflict that categorized Roman politics regarding the most effective method of representation in governance regarding whether the Roman Senate possessed a greater wisdom than the common people to make decisions on behalf of the state.

Two early political factions, the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists, argued over how American citizens should best be represented in a legislative institution. The Federalists argued for a trustee model of representation, which draws comparisons to the Roman Optimates, by believing that American senators should make decisions based on their own wisdom and what they deem fit. Ultimately, the aims and responsibilities that frame the argument for a trustee model are that the primary goal of legislation should be “the good of all,” and that elected representatives ought not to be reliant on “external sanctities” or “the prejudices and acrimony of the party,” but instead utilize their own judgment and wisdom when making decisions and policy (Rehfeld 218). Basically, they argued that we elect and entrust these individuals to public offices on the basis that because they possess some greater expertise and “merit,” they are more equipped to make decisions for the nation as a whole and not solely based in the views of their constituents (Madison). This is significant in the sense that it draws strong connections to the ways in which the Roman Senate saw themselves as being morally superior and “the best men” which ultimately made them better suited for governance.

On the other hand, the Anti-Federalists supported a delegate model of representation claiming that American representatives should be defined by their constituents and make decisions based on the interests of those constituents, aligning themselves more with the ideology of the Populares (Madison). Furthermore, the argument in favor of the delegate model example serves as the antithesis to that of the trustee model in which the goals of the legislation should be for “a particular electoral constituency,” and that those constituents, and citizens as a whole, ought to be the ultimate judge on what is deemed good for the nation (Rehfeld 218). Similarly, the supporters of the delegate model believe that representatives should be responsive to the interests of their constituents and reflect those interests in legislation and governance. In terms of framing these ideas, pure delegates are not to express their own personal opinion in governance, but rather solely the opinion of their constituents (Cooper et al. 175). On the other hand, trustees are believed to possess some “objective criteria” and personal experience on which they base their decisions (Cooper et al 175). Therefore, although the terms “trustee” and “delegate” have their roots in more modern research regarding representation, the sentiments remain the same to the arguments that categorized America’s founding.

As seen in the context of the Roman Republic, significant issues arise with both of these schools of thought. For example, some scholars of political science would argue that it is difficult to judge the aptitude and success of elected officials who are not acting as a delegate, since it proves easier to measure the effectiveness of elected officials using the delegate model because one would simply have to compare their voting patterns to the opinions of the constituents (Rehfeld 218). Similarly, it could be argued that the

trustee model of representation promotes the election of elite, wealthy, and educated individuals who could potentially be blind to the needs and experiences of the lower-class citizens or the interests of the majority of citizens which was definitely a fear held by the Antifederalists (Brutus, Federal Farmer). On the other hand though, Andrew Rehfeld asks the question of whether citizens are either not educated enough about basic political processes or possess the necessary and informed worldview needed that will influence and ultimately enhance their decisions and lawmaking (Rehfeld 224). While both sides of the argument have valid concerns, it is clear that both sides have the same goal in mind which is to create a system that best represents the interests of the people and also maintains the values of the country.

Overall, in this last couple decades, state and national legislators in the United States are “more likely to characterize themselves as trustees,” which is how framers of the Constitution like Hamilton and Madison intended it to be, believing that we choose to elect representatives who ought to use their discretion and wisdom to make decisions for the good of the nation as a whole (Cooper et al. 175). However, it also seems that the fears originally held by the pro-agrarian Antifederalists, like the idea that these representatives will solely belong to an elite class have come into fruition especially since, as of 2014, the median net-worth of a member of Congress is over “one-million” dollars (Ballotpedia). I hope that my findings and comparisons of these two models in the United States context will ultimately support future research regarding the most efficient and ethical method of representation.

There are many factors that have been identified in recent research that attempt to explain why legislators choose to adopt either a more trustee or a more delegate model of

representation. For example, if a representative is being elected in a state or district that is more heterogeneous, that individual will be more likely to adopt a mindset of trustee representation since it would be virtually impossible to identify a “single district opinion” (Cooper et al 178). Other variables that may alter a legislator’s perspective on representation and their accountability to the interests of their constituents could be distance from the state capital, a salient minority identity such as gender or race, or the strength of one’s own ideology (Cooper et al. 178). Overall, it is clear that representation is still being debated in the United States today, and even more so in the wake of Donald Trump’s presidential campaign and subsequent election in which his campaign was based on appealing to the general masses and criticizing the political establishment and elites in D.C, and hopefully, my research will speak to future arguments regarding the effectiveness of representation in the U.S.

While the Roman Senate differs from the United States Senate in that it is not a legislative body, the argument between the Populares and the Optimates is similar to the American conflict between a delegate model of representation, in which elected officials should directly represent and vote on the interests of their constituents, versus a trustee model of representation, where politicians are elected not to mirror the opinions of their constituents, but because they possess the “most wisdom to discern, and most virtue to pursue, the common good of society”(Madison).

Differences in the Function of the Senate

While it may be tempting to conflate the Senate of the Roman Republic with the United States Senate, it is crucial to highlight that these two institutions actually operate quite differently in their respective nations and ultimately, enlist different procedures to

influence lawmaking. The main difference between these two governing bodies is that the Senate of the Roman Republic is not a legislative institution and does not have the direct power to create and establish laws. When analyzing the argument of which body of individuals, either the senators or the mass population that they are governing on behalf of, should carry more power in the creation of laws, it is beneficial to understand the specific government structure, such as the processes and political offices, utilized by the Romans in order to best understand the argument of the Optimates and the Populares. Where the Roman Senate serves mostly as an advising body who possesses no ability to pass or enact laws, the United States Senate is a full legislative institution. This distinction is important to make because it helps inform my research and understand where these two different debates between the Optimates and the Populares and the trustee and delegate model diverge whereas the Optimates are concerned with attaining more power in the creation of laws meanwhile in the U.S., the Senate is the sole institution making laws.

In the United States, the Senate, along with the House of Representatives, serves as a legislative body in which senators and elected officials, representing different constituencies across all 50 states, are tasked to create and pass federal laws. In order for a law to be enacted, the proposed bill must be argued and approved in both legislative houses. The Senate specifically was allotted the power to ratify treaties and approve presidential appointments while the House had the ability to originate revenue bills (Ginsberg 45). Additionally, senators were elected for six-year terms, as opposed to only two-year terms for those in the House and were required to be thirty years of age, likely to ensure that elected officials are qualified and have the experience to adequately serve a

longer term in the Senate which seems to support the Trustee model. The United States' legislative branch was designed not only to hold the most power in governance so as to avoid the concentration of power in the executive and provide an avenue for a tyrant, but it also was meant to appease both the Federalists and Antifederalists, who were arguing over the expectations of representation in their newly independent country.

On the one hand, the House of Representatives was meant to speak to and calm the fears of the Antifederalists who were worried that the interests of the common people would be undermined by the interests of elites. Since the House is composed of representatives whose quantity are dependent on the population size of a specific state and who represent specific districts within that state, it is meant to be more "directly responsible" to the people and in turn, better represents the direct opinions of the people themselves (Ginsberg 45). However, on the other hand, the Senate was originally created with the goals of framers like Alexander Hamilton and James Madison in mind so as to ensure that qualified individuals were put in these positions and were not subject to the pressure of the masses and factions. It was composed of elected officials who are elected for longer and staggered terms in which only a certain number of new legislators are chosen each year as so as to avoid mob rule within the Senate. This system ultimately serves to ensure that the institution is not falling to the whims of the people since the composition of the Senate changes partially each election year. Additionally, senators were originally appointed by state legislators in order to again deter against the will of people whose ever-changing opinions were thought to be a threat to the stability and legitimacy in government. The 17th Amendment altered this practice though, and instead ensured that from that point on senators would be elected by a popular vote, creating the

system that is utilized today. Ultimately though, the current United States Senate, unlike the Senate of the Roman Republic, is an institution meant solely for legislative purposes.

In terms of the Roman Republic, the structure of governance acts as a stark contrast to that of the United States, especially within the institution of the Senate. However, the Romans created a system that depended on the election of officials, and utilized aspects of our modern concept of democracy, such as the fact that each citizen received one vote. In an attempt to replace the king in the 6th century BCE, the founders of the Roman Republic established the positions of two consuls, who would possess the highest executive authority in the state. The consuls had the power of *imperium* or the control of the military, and also were positioned as the head of the Senate and had the ability to propose legislation. The terms of the consul lasted only one year, but they were eligible for re-election in later and eventually non-consecutive years, and they were elected by the popular assemblies. Finally, up until a piece of legislation passed in 342 BCE requiring that one of the consuls be a plebian, only members of the patrician class were permitted to serve as consul. The position of the consul worked closely with the Roman Senate and played a major role in politics and the future conflicts between the Optimates and Populares.

Through this legislation, Roman governance was mandating a form of descriptive representation, which means that a representative expresses the same characteristics or in this case socioeconomic status as the people they are serving. This differs from the United States where there is no requirement that representatives must be descriptive of their constituents, and this brings up a significant facet of the debate regarding the Optimates and the Populares and the Trustee model and the Delegate model. While it

seems that the Populares and the Antifederalists argue that the will of the people ought to be directly represented in governance, neither one of these ideologies seem to necessitate that an elected official “look like” their constituents in order to represent them.

Additional officials called magistrates were elected in order to handle the administrative and financial aspects of Rome. These positions include aediles, quaestors, and praetors, and these positions were elected by large assemblies of the people such as the *comitia centuriata* and the *comitia populi tributa*. These assemblies, which each enlisted their own unique voting system, each elected different political offices which provides insight into which assembly and which elected officials are thinking more about the interests of the Roman people at whole. For example, the *comitia centuriata* elected the most senior magistrates such as the consuls and the praetors and voting in this assembly was dominated by Rome’s wealthiest men who held more voting power. On the other hand, the *comitia populi tributa* elected minor magistrates like the aediles, tribunes, and quaestors, and in this assembly, which represented the “populus divided into tribes,” voting power was equal and not based on wealth (Le Glay et al. 59). Therefore, it seems likely that in assemblies like the former, the interests of the people were better represented, and minor magistrates might be more responsive to the will of the people. Additionally, it is significant to acknowledge the in assemblies like the *comitia centuriata* where the wealthiest citizens had greater influence, the interests of the aristocrats were being reflected in these magistrates. However, maybe this was acting in a similar fashion to the United States Senate when the State legislators would appoint the Senators so as to ensure that the elected offices are not falling to the wills of the people. Overall though, Roman assemblies were the places in which citizens could cast their ballot, especially

since Rome functioned as a direct democracy in the sense that citizens themselves casted their vote to ratify the proposals coming out the Senate and make them laws. However, citizens themselves could not create laws. It was in these assemblies where legislation would be proposed and then subsequently voted on and enacted.

Resulting from the Conflict of the Order between the patricians and the plebeians, a plebeian assembly was created called the *concilium plebis* and from this came the creation of a new political office called the tribune of the plebs. Two tribunes would be elected for one-year terms in which their sole purpose was to protect the interests of the plebeians and guard them from the abuse of the aristocratic class. Along with the ability to propose legislation and the law ensuring the protection of the tribunes, the most notable power of the tribunes was their ability to veto the actions and acts of the magistrates, including the consul, and the Senate. The establishment of the tribune of the plebs marked a major event for the Populares, and this political office plays a significant role in ensuring that the voice of both the people and the Populares is represented in governance.

Finally, the Senate occupied a significant space in Roman government even though it did not technically possess the ability to pass and enact laws. As opposed to the function of the United States' Senate as a legislative body, the Roman Senate acted more as an advisory body in which the senators would offer their opinion through decrees called *senatus consulta* to the magistrates. While these decrees did not hold any legal power whatsoever, the opinion of the Senate held a large weight and influence in Roman governance, and most of the time their opinions were enforced. The Senate had a large control on the actions of the magistrates, especially considering that many senators were

appointed to the Senate after serving as a magistrate of some kind and played a large hand in advising military and financial matters. However since laws were voted on in popular assemblies, it was not theoretically necessary to consult the Senate in order to vote or pass a law, which was shown in the case of Tiberius Gracchus who, as tribune of the plebs, took his legislation straight to the plebeian assembly knowing they would supported his cause, and completely side stepped the approval of the Roman Senate. Additionally, the Roman Senate was mainly composed of members of aristocratic Rome, even though in later years plebeians were permitted to be appointed to the Senate.

Overall, the Roman Senate and their opinion held a large weight in Rome and their guidance was usually obeyed and subsequently translated into law. However, it is crucial for this research to understand that the United States Senate is not synonymous to the Roman Senate, and in fact, they both function differently. In the same vein though, it is clear that the same questions could be proposed in both contexts regarding whether one group of people is more equipped than another group to make decisions on behalf of a nation. In the case of the United States, whether representatives should be making decisions based on their own beliefs or the beliefs of the people while in the case of Rome, the conflict surrounds whether the decree of the Senators ought to be more influential in lawmaking. Ultimately, my research attempts to draw similarities between these political debates in both contexts in order to better understand which form of representation is most effective.

The Framing of the Optimates and Populares

As previously outlined, the majority of evidence regarding the existence of the Populares and the Optimates and their specific ideologies comes from the written

accounts of prominent, and generally elite, politicians and historians. Individuals like Caesar and Cicero, who were figureheads for the Populares and Optimates respectively, were writing first-hand accounts of the political happenings and opinions of the time. Meanwhile, historians like Livy and Sallust were reflecting back and documenting their take on key moments in Rome's history which inadvertently includes commentary on the nature of the competing political factions of the time. Therefore, it is from these writings that I determine the key values and issues that defined these two schools of thought in the Late Roman Republic and how the arguments for each group were constructed and defended. Ultimately, I identified trends in the language utilized by these ancient authors and orators that outlined the strengths and weaknesses of Roman governance, and then compared these findings to the language used to talk about representation in the American context.

For my research, I focused on the primary analysis of letters, speeches, and historical accounts written in the first century BCE from four previously mentioned sources: Marcus Tullius Cicero, Julius Caesar, Livy, and Sallust. Coding for specific words, language, or ideas in these authors in their original Latin, I was able to trace key trends that help us categorize the beliefs and values of the Optimates or Populares, along with sentiments regarding the way in which Roman government ought to be structured and the values on which Rome was founded. In particular, I analyzed six different sources: Cicero's *Pro Sestio* and *Epistulae ad Atticum (Letters to Atticus)*, Julius Caesar's *Bellum Civile*, Sallust's *De Coniuratione Catilinae (Conspiracy of Cataline)* and *Bellum Jugurthinum (Jugurthine War)*, and Livy's *History of Rome* in order to determine how these authors thought about Roman government ought to be structured. I ultimately

identified five categories and those include 1) any language explicitly referring to or describing the Optimates, 2) language explicitly referring to or describing the Populares, 3) language describing the ideals of the Republic or facets of the Republic, 4) language outlining good citizens, and 5) language outlining bad citizens. Ultimately, these five subjects allowed me to not only define the main arguments that framed the ideologies of these two political factions, but also key perspectives on the expectations of the Roman government and the Roman citizens which will inform my discussion on American governance and representation.

I will begin by reporting my findings regarding the way in which these ancient authors spoke about the Optimates and Populares directly. The majority of my findings on this topic came from the two primary sources of Cicero's *Pro Sestio* and Caesar's *Bellum Civile*. These two sources provide interesting distinctions because, as previously alluded to in my chapter outlining the historical background of these groups, Cicero represents a figurehead for the Optimates while Caesar aligns himself with the Populares so therefore these two writings presented two competing depictions of the Roman Senate and those who believed it ought to hold the most power. Cicero provides a quite glowing description of the role of the Roman Senate and the men who serve in this institution while still acknowledging that those acting as Senators are of a different class and do not descriptively represent the people who they are governing.

On a basic level, Cicero directly uses the term *optimates* multiple times throughout the course of his legal speech *Pro Sestio*, which actually translates to "aristocrats" or "the best ones" to reference the group of individuals who make up the Roman Senate. Similarly, he makes mention of the *optimates* explicitly as a group almost

ten times in his *Letters to Atticus*. Therefore, he does not shy away from conceding that the Senate maintains the legacy of the patrician class and is mainly exclusive to elites. Interestingly though, Cicero argues against the idea that the Senate are a *natio* or a “breed,” (217) which he states is a term coined by his opponents, and instead he refers to these men as *delectis precieuses* or “picked and chief men,” arguing that there is no reason that the people should disagree with the views of these aristocrats (177). The historian Sallust acknowledges the legacy of the patrician class referencing how they were forced to appeal to the common people in Rome’s early history and how that early class division has led to current state of political affairs between the Senate and the Roman citizens. Ultimately, the distinction between the aristocratic Senate and plebeians is made clear here, and their arguments are further driven home in these authors descriptions of the institution of the Senate itself.

Cicero and Caesar engage quite different language when describing the Optimates, the actions of the Senate, and the role the Senate plays in Roman governance. As one could predict, Cicero views the Roman Senate as an indispensable institution that employs only the best men to ensure the safety and integrity of Rome. To that point, he refers to the men who take part in political affairs, meaning the Senators and magistrates, as the *boni homines* or the “good people”, and he uses this term which seems to be used synonymously with the Optimates roughly seven times throughout the course of his speech. This comparison of the Roman senators as “good people” seems to argue that this group of individuals are morally superior to the rest of the Roman population. The implications of this language is to separate the two populations, the Senate and the People, and to also promote the argument, whether true or not, that the Senate is not a

corrupt institution. He goes on to detail how he views the role of the Senate in which he likens them to “defenders of the State” or *propugnatores* (173) along with fulfilling the roles of *custodem* and *praesidium* meaning the guardian and the president (225). Through these descriptions, it is clear that Cicero perceives the Senate to be the most suitable and qualified body of citizens to manage and protect the Roman State and uphold its values and foundations. Furthermore, Cicero even goes as far to assert that the optimates or aristocrats are the *auctores et conservatores civitatis* or the “counsellors and saviors the State” which seems to be fit in nicely with the narrative of the Optimates in which they believe that the Senate possess greater wisdom than the general public that ought to hold greater weight in making decisions and creating laws (225). These terms are significant to our understanding of the ideology of the Optimates as they seek to argue the moral and ethical nature of the Roman Senate and its senators that makes it more suitable for governance than the Roman people.

Caesar paints a different picture of the Optimates and the Senate, highlighting his perspective on the institution’s shortcomings and the frequency of immoral behavior among these elite individuals who made up the Roman Senate. For context, Caesar is writing in the midst of his public conflict with Pompey which eventually turns into a Civil War between the two parties. Caesar had spent an unprecedented ten years, following his consulship in 59 BCE, as governor of Transalpine Gaul in which he was engaging in successful military campaigns into what they called Northern Gaul (Le Glay et al. 148). While Caesar and Pompey had formerly been allies with one another in a three-way coalition with Marcus Crassus known as the First Triumvirate, their relationship soon began to deteriorate for numerous reasons as Caesar began gaining

military fame for his work in Gaul while Pompey chose to remarry, only after the death of his previous wife Julia who was Caesar's only daughter, to a woman from the Metelli family who were political opponents of Caesar and prominent members of the Optimates. By the year 52 BCE, due to a new abundance of violence and unrest, Pompey is appointed sole consul and ultimately, aligns himself with the Optimates in the Roman Senate. With Caesar's governorship expiring, the Senate saw this as an opportunity to neutralize him and demanded that he lay down his command and release his legions to which Caesar himself refused and ultimately requested to run for consul *in absentia*, so as to avoid the legal prosecution he would face if he returned home to Rome. Ultimately, while Pompey declared that he would lay down his command if Caesar did, Caesar ended up crossing the border and marching his troops across the Rubicon River, establishing a civil war.

Ultimately, Caesar's *Bellum Civile* details his perspective of the Roman Senate and Pompey regarding their efforts to eliminate him from Roman Politics, along with attempting to justify how the actions he took against the Optimates were necessary and on behalf of the people. It is clear throughout this commentary that Caesar felt as though the Roman people wanted him in office and that the Senate was abusing their specified role in governance in order to attain more power. For example, Caesar, interrupting Lentulus Spinther who was begging for his life, proclaimed that he did not leave his province with the intentions of harm, but instead wished to "restore the tribunes" and "to liberate [himself] and the Roman people from the oppression by a small faction" (35). This passage alone cements Caesar's perspective of the Roman Senate, and highlights that he feels as though he is responsible to fight on behalf of the people.

Therefore, it is understandable that he mainly highlights the Senate's abuse of power in his writings in hopes of exposing their corrupt behavior that contradicts Cicero's moral and superior depiction of the Optimates. Specifically, he outlines individual motives for prominent Senators like Lucius Lenutlus whose motives Caesar claims for persecuting him were based on personal motives such as becoming a second Sulla and gaining *summa imperi* or "supreme power" (7). He goes after Scipio and argues that he only backed Pompey because of his desire to attain "provinciarum atque exercitum" or provinces and armies. Along that same vein, Caesar claims that the Senators prefer to maintain their *imperium exercitusque* or "power and armies" even it means utter confusion and turmoil for the State (7). In terms of the character of the Senate, he believes them to be *tenuis atque infirmi haec animi* or "petty and weak of mind," along with mentioning their harshness, which ultimately presents a stark contrast to Cicero's evaluation (51). This difference in opinions regarding the actions and moral composition of these two political factions continues throughout both of these texts in their evaluations of the Populares.

It seems also important to mention as well that Sallust subtly alludes to the Optimates at least three times in his text detailing the Conspiracy of Catiline, arguing that governance in Rome began to be shift to *paucorum potentia* meaning the "power of a few" which echoes Caesar's language regarding "the power of a few" and a "small faction" (85). This idea is a critique of the way in which the Senate only are composed of a small class of citizens who are the elites, and this group ultimately ends up having a larger influence in governance and lawmaking than the common people of Rome who are the majority. This concept is important to keep in mind as it will be referenced again in

the American context and utilized as an argument against the Federalists and their preference of a more elite model of representation.

Cicero employs quite scathing language when speaking explicitly about both the character of the Populares, but also of the actions they commit that ultimately makes them ill fit to govern the State properly. He refers to them explicitly as the *Populares*, which could be translated either “Friends of the People” or “The People’s Party,” which seems to be presented with a negative connotation. This is important distinction to keep in mind as a similar dialogue is employed by the Federalists to describe the Antifederalists, along with negative comparisons to Caesar himself. Additionally, I would like to point out that this language seems to separate the leaders of the Populares from the people themselves which again feeds into the argument of descriptive representation. Even though Caesar was a prominent leader for the Populares faction, he too was part of the aristocratic class and did not descriptively look like the people of Rome whom he was trying to defend. I think it could be argued that this language seems to say that members of the Populares are not necessarily the common Roman people, but instead, are individuals who are friends to these people and uses their interests to gain power. He utilizes this term at least twelve times throughout the excerpt of this legal speech in which he engages the ongoing conflict between the two factions.

After he outlines the glowing characteristics held by the Optimates or the aristocrats, Cicero compares those who are seeking to go against these aristocrats, or the Senate are *audaces homines et perditii* or “reckless and abandoned men” who are going against the State (171). Additionally, he scolded those actively working against the Optimates for their *cunctatione ac tarditate* or “hesitance and indolence” (173). From

this understanding, he seems to be arguing that those who choose to defy the will of the Senate are ultimately hurting the State of Rome, clearly emphasizing the Senate's important and incomparable role in governance. We saw how this played out for the Gracchus brothers who chose to go against the Senate, and ultimately, I believe Cicero is arguing that these types of individuals threaten to cause revolutions and danger to the state of Rome. Additionally, he is clearly identifying the qualities and characteristics that make these individuals unfit for advising and influencing lawmaking.

Cicero continues on by stating that the ways in which leaders of the Populares mobilize the people and gain support is only through *pretio* and *mercede* or “corruption and bribery” (179). This speech argues that the Optimates viewed the leaders of the Populares as inciting the masses against the Senate and playing on the fears and grievances of the people in order to gain power in governance and eliminate the Optimates from governance. From these words, it does not seem like Cicero believes that the Populares are even representing the true beliefs of the people, but instead, are buying their support in order to undermine the power of the aristocratic Senate. For example, it is notable to say that many of the leaders of the Populares faction, like Caesar, had aristocratic backgrounds and do not represent the socioeconomic status of the general Roman person. Cicero then chooses to drive his point home by calling out by name specific Populares leaders who are, in his opinion, immoral such as L. Gellius or L. Saturninus. He refers to them as ringleaders and “demagogues” or *plebicola* in the original Latin, along with mad men who flourish in popular esteem and persuasion (187). Similarly, he also references key players in the creation of the Populares faction such as Gaius Gracchus, along with Marcus Varius, whom Cicero refers to as *seditionis* or

“revolutionaries” (173). As previously mentioned, Cicero is using these examples to warn against the dangers that occur when the will of the Senate is not followed.

Providing another and perhaps more objective perspective, the historian Livy also mentions Gaius Gracchus, along with his brother Tiberius, in his documentation of Roman history, and seems to present a different perspective regarding these early politicians. He argues that the Gracchus brothers put the *rem publicam* or the “public good over their own personal interests or “private animosity” (Livy bk.38, 53). Clearly, Cicero and Livy had two different opinions regarding who has the best interests of Rome in mind with Cicero siding with the Senate. Overall though, Cicero drives his point home by highlighting the *mentes imperatorum* or the “minds of the inexperienced” or ignorant who have been corrupted by bribery meaning the common people of Rome (227).

Therefore, I argue that this sums up the overarching belief of the Populares from the Optimates point of view, believing that the people are not wise or experienced enough to make decisions on what is best for Rome, and they utilize immoral behaviors to attain power.

On the other hand, Caesar does not seem to engage as much with a description of the Populares except when he is describing himself, a member of the Populares faction, and justifying his own actions. Basically, he lauds his *exsitimationem dignitatumque* or “dignity and reputation” especially in his role as commander of his army for the past nine years, and even states that he had only reckoned with “dignity of the republic of first importance and preferable to life” (Caesar 15). Caesar seems to be distinguishing himself as a man who has the interests of the Republic at heart, as opposed to the self-interest Senate that he previously called out, and he also is fighting back against the corrupt

description that Cicero provides of Populares leaders such as his desire to restore the fundamental rights of the tribunes of the plebs (35). Finally, Caesar states that the way in which he is going to outdo the decisions of the Senate that is actively working against him is with *iustitia et aequitate* or “justice and equity” (51). He seems to be once again attempting to affirm that he is only making these military moves against the Senate and Pompey specifically because he believes that it is in the best interest of the people of Rome. Overall though, Caesar does not explicitly mention anything regarding the beliefs of the Populares, but instead chooses to speak about his commendable character which serves as a contrast to Cicero’s portrayal of Populares politicians. However, both Caesar and Cicero, along with Sallust, go into great detail about what constitutes a good citizen and bad citizen, which one can only infer is meant to subtly describe the members of their opposing political ideology.

Interestingly, Cicero and Caesar both present similar language regarding the characteristics of an ideal citizen even though they both seemed to be referencing different groups of people who exemplify these traits. For Cicero, these qualities were exemplified by the Roman Senate, and were the traits that made them better equipped to make decisions for the state. He emphasizes that this aristocratic class is *integrii* or “virtuous” and *sapientibus* or “wise” (223). Similarly, he advises that men ought to imitate these qualities of the Roman Senate, or as he calls them “the leading men of the State,” such as their *dignitatem, laudem, and gloriam* meaning “dignity, praise, and glory” (157). Cicero argues that because the Senate possess these qualities, they do indeed defend the interests of the people. Similarly, in order to accommodate and advocate for the various interests and needs of the people, one must have *magni animi*,

magni ingenii, magnae constantiae meaning an “exalted spirit, great ability, and great resolution,” which is what these aristocratic men have according to Cicero (171). This again serves to elevate the Roman senators and their character above that of the Roman people in hopes of proving that they are more qualified to create laws.

Similarly, Caesar also agrees that *dignitatem* is a quality of the ideal citizen and unsurprisingly, something that he himself strives for, claiming it is “dearer than life itself” (Cicero 17). That is the extent of how these two politicians view an ideal citizen and those fit for governance. However, Sallust seems to provide a broader view of the qualities that describe a good citizen, and values that men should strive to attain. Like Cicero and Caesar, Sallust talk about *dignitas* or “dignity,” specifically in terms of the Senators, in his work on the war against Catiline (111). Additionally, he mentions *pudore* and *virtutue* meaning “modesty and virtue” as morals that were found in politics and governance when he first joined in this field as a young man (25). He argues that the government authority, most likely including the Roman Senate, formerly was the *optumo* and *iutissimo* or the “best and most just” (37). More generally, in his work *The War Against Jugurtha*, Sallust identifies honesty, diligence, and virtue again as good qualities of moral men that one ought to strive for. Overall though, Sallust frames these traits as things of the past and begins to outline the values that categorize the Roman governance at the time of his writing.

In a similar fashion, Cicero outlines negative qualities that represent a bad citizen which he attributes to those who support the Populares ideology or the general public. Specifically, he points out the *temeritatem* of the people or the “rashness and thoughtlessness,” saying that the Senate dreaded the “impetuosity of the masses” (Cicero

177). This supports the line of thought adopted by the Optimates who believe that the Senate possesses the correct temperament and values that are ideal for governance, and therefore, they should have a larger influence in lawmaking. Meanwhile, they also believed that the general masses were not suitable for governance and did not have the right nature to make the best decisions for Rome. Additionally, Cicero touches upon the *cupiditas* or the “desires” of the people, and how those desires do not agree with the opinions of the leading men. Again, I believe Cicero is attempting to argue that the common people allow their own personal desires supersede the interests of the State and therefore, make them unfit for lawmaking.

Finally, Cicero addresses the threat of *conversiones* and *seditiones* meaning “revolution and riots,” arguing that in contrast to the leading men with great and sound minds, talking about the Senate, there are some men who wish to incite revolution and change the government (185). He goes on to explain how these men who wish to overthrow the government either are involved in criminal behavior, financial embarrassment, or have an inborn revolutionary madness (Cicero, 104). He says this in contrast to the “great” and “exalted” that the Roman senators possess, therefore providing a clear moral distinction between the two groups of people. It is clear that Cicero is depicting the men who are attacking the Roman Senate as amoral and less equipped to make laws.

Caesar speaks only briefly about his perspective on the less desirable traits of the aristocrats who he deems as bad citizens. Specifically, he employs the same language Cicero did previously to describe the masses and accuses the Senate of possessing an *acerbitatem* or “harshness” that has been unfairly inflicted upon him and the people (51).

Additionally and more broadly, he accuses the Senate of having *tenuis atque infirmi haec animi* or “petty and feeble character” more specifically in the context of their willingness to align with Pompey’s wishes (51). However, it is interesting that Caesar seems to employ similar rhetoric to describe the Optimates and the ways in which they fall short as Roman citizens, clearly attempting to expose their corrupt nature.

Sallust also supports this line of thought in “The Conspiracy of Cataline,” and argues that the politics of the Late Roman Republic have been contaminated with corruption and immoral men. He speaks of *largitio* and *avaritia* meaning “bribery and greed,” and how he found these values in politics when he joined as a young man (25). Similarly, he also speaks about how *luxuria* or “extravagance” is what spurred Cataline on in his actions against Roman governance (29). Referring specifically to the Roman government which most likely includes the Roman Senate, Sallust states that he has seen cruel and intolerable men. Finally, he also asserts that ignoble men will use *dolis atque fallaciis* meaning “craft and deception” in order to gain power and political office, seemingly arguing that these men are in existence in the Roman Republic (37). These are Sallust’s perceptions regarding the decline of morality in politics since the expulsion of the kings to the Late Roman Republic in which he is writing, so it seems relevant to include these evaluations in our discussion.

Lastly, these authors briefly also touch upon the values and ideals that Rome itself was built upon which serve to remind the author not only the important facets of government, but also how these different political groups are attempting to preserve these ideas. For Cicero, he highlights the protection of *libertatem* or “liberty,” and how the Senators are always attempting to ensure the liberty and the wishes of the people of

Rome (225). Additionally, Cicero does argue that the Senate is upholding the “judgment of the Roman people” or the *iudicium populi* which legitimizes the Roman government and claims that the Populares are not actually friends of the people after all (189). This seems to be a fair analysis considering that many of the Populares leaders also come from privileged backgrounds, and in actions such as Caesar’s, it seems that the support of the people is used as a way in which an individual can gain more personal power and detract power from the Senate.

Caesar also touches upon ideals and guarantees of the Roman Republic. More specifically, he shifts his focus onto how government ought to be making decisions *rei publicae causa* and *rei publicae commode* meaning for the “sake of the commonwealth” and to the “Republic’s advantage” which he actually claims that this is what Pompey thought he was doing when he was going against Caesar (17). Additionally though, Caesar adds that it was not only in the interest of the Republic, but also the *communis salutis* or “general welfare” that him and Pompey have a face to face interaction and restore order (39). Speaking more generally, Sallust affirms these ideas that the *iussi populi* or “order of the people” is a key facet of the Republic and gives the Senate and magistrates their power (67).

Overall, these five categories outline the language that was utilized by politicians and historians of the Late Roman Republic to understand and critique both the Optimates and Populares schools of thought, along with the health of Roman governance in general. I argue that this analysis has allowed for a more in depth understanding of how people thought about these two political factions, and how members from these ideologies argued in favor of themselves and their perspective on the representation and lawmaking.

Ultimately, these identified words and phrases will serve useful in identifying similarities among the perspectives and implementation of representation in the American context, and how that comparison can inform our modern view on the effectiveness and role of the United States Senate.

Comparison to the 18th Century United States

Switching gears, I wanted to compare my findings from the Late Roman Republic, and the arguments presented by the Optimates and the Populares, to my findings from the American context and the differing perspectives regarding representation in the United States. Specifically, I chose to draw my focus to written texts from the early years after America's founding that not only established the expectations and role of elected representatives, but also revealed conflicting opinions regarding how institutions like the Senate should be set up. I looked at key documents such as the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution in order to understand the explicit language regarding this political debate. Additionally, I utilized two texts from Hamilton, Madison, and Jay's collection of essays defending the Constitution known as the Federalist Papers, along with two anonymous essays by authors with pseudonyms, known by the names "Federal Farmer" and "Brutus," who present the Antifederalist's perspective and concerns with this new governing document.

Specifically, I am looking to highlight the language and arguments employed by these early politicians and political factions that explained their views on the most effective structure of representation and their opinions on the Trustee versus Delegate model of Representation in order to compare trends in logic and rhetoric between that of the Optimates and Populares. I utilized roughly the same five coding categories that I

used in the Roman context to analyze these primary sources, amending them a bit to better capture the subject matter and institutions that these authors are writing about. Therefore, the categories I chose included 1) the language used to describe qualities that representatives ought to have, 2) qualities of the common people, 3) the ideals or facets of democracy that the country was built on, and 4) explicit references or arguments for or against both Trustee and Delegate models of representation. Overall, I was able to find many instances of overlap between the language and ideology of the political debate laid out in the Roman Republic and that which categorized the years following America's founding. This comparison seeks to show a clear line of thought between the competing political ideologies that categorized the Roman republic and the United States, and highlights the significance in drawing connections to these ancient cultures.

Similar to the Roman authors and politicians, these documents expend a considerable amount of time outlining the specific values and tenets of democracy that are crucial to the success and health of the United States which should not come as a surprise since this is the time period when American governance was being constructed and amended. Many of these ideas share the same sentiments and ideals of those outlined in the Late Roman Republic with even some authors like Hamilton and Madison explicitly stating their inspiration from Ancient Greece and Rome. For example, Hamilton consumed a significant amount of the writings of philosophers in his time, one of whom being Cicero (Chernow 110). The Declaration of Independence mainly serves as a compelling source for these ideas, outlining values like "safety" along with "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" as important foundations for their new government, similar to how Cicero speaks about the importance of *libertatem* or "liberty" in the *Pro*

Sestio. Significantly, the document twice highlights the “right(s) of the people,” for the purpose of calling out the British government’s previous abuse of these rights and emphasizing the people’s rights to alter or abolish this new government as Thomas Paine spelled out in his pamphlet “Common Sense” (Declaration). I argue this is similar in nature to Cicero’s mention to the “judgement of the people” in which both arguments are clearly acknowledging the importance of the people’s voice in governance (Cicero 189).

Federalist Paper 57 also reaffirms this belief by speaking about the “responsibility to the people” that representatives have in their role which again endorses the idea that the opinions of the people are embedded into governance in both Rome and the United States. This document also speaks that the men serving in American governance must have the virtue and character to pursue “the common good of society” which draws comparisons back to Cicero’s argument in favor of the Optimates, claiming that these aristocratic men or Senators are ultimately making decisions on what is best for the State. Cicero creates a list of the characteristics and morals that the Roman Senate possess that make them more qualified for governance, and Madison seems to be partially buying into that argument in the sense that representatives must have merit and virtue in order to serve.

The Constitution of the United States also offers important ideas and values that the founders were hoping to establish in this new government such as providing for the “common defense” and “promot[ing] the general welfare” along with reiterating again the protection of “liberty” (Constitution). This is practically plucked from the pages of Caesar’s *Bellum Civile* where he speaks about the “interest of the people and the general welfare” of the State (39). Like Cicero, the founders of American democracy thought that

government ought to both preserve the values that the country was built on and acknowledged the significance of the judgement of the people in governance.

Moving on, I shifted my focus to coding not only the specific expectations of representatives clearly delineated in the Constitution, but also the differing perspectives regarding the ideal character of representatives. Thinking more specifically in terms of explicit responsibilities and requirements of representatives, the Constitution spells out the age requirements of 25 and 30 that one must be in order to be elected to the House of Representatives and the Senate, respectively, along with duties that are exclusive to either chamber such as the House's authority to "originate revenue bills" or the Senate's "sole power to try all impeachments" (Constitution). Additionally in section 8, the Constitution also grants the United States Congress what is known as implied powers by stating that these two institutions have the power to make all laws which they deem "necessary and proper" (Constitution). This has been a source for major debate where Alexander Hamilton argued for an expansive understanding of this clause in order to "free government from unforeseen emergencies" (Chernow 355). On the other hand, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, who helped author the Constitution and the clause itself, argued for a more restrictive interpretation of the law and thought that all policies must pass a "strict test of being absolutely necessary" so as to avoid the legislative branch from acquiring too much power (Chernow 355). Hamilton argued against that notion, citing the difficulty in objectively determining if something is necessary which seems like a fair critique. From this language alone that is employed in the Constitution, it seems that the Constitution is promoting a more Trustee model of representation by including this rather vague clause which seems to allow representatives to use their own discretion when

creating laws. Additionally, there seems to be no explicit mention of a representative's responsibility to act solely or at all on their constituent's interests.

Federalist Paper 57 and Federalist Paper 10 both provide the Federalists' argument in favor of the way representation was structured in the Constitution while also attempting to dispel the criticism regarding their preference for a Trustee model. In Federalist 10, Madison spends some time outlining the qualities of men who are to be chosen as representatives such as "patriotism" and a "love of justice" (Madison). More significantly though, he argues that this chosen group of individuals must have "wisdom" so that they are able to "discern the true interest" of the country which gets right to the argument of the Trustee model and also presents similar logic to the Optimates school of thought. They are arguing that these representatives or those in governance, in the case of Rome, are more equipped and knowledgeable than the common people to make decisions in the best interest of their countries and therefore, ought to use that wisdom to have a greater influence in lawmaking. Similarly, this document also claims that rulers must possess the "most virtue" in order to pursue "the common good of the society" which goes hand in hand with the argument used by Cicero to support the Roman Senate and the Optimates. Similar to Madison, Cicero also mentioned the Senate's *integri* or "virtue, upright" nature, and both men clearly found this quality to be a cornerstone to the best means of governance.

Federalist Paper 57 seems to present a defense against the claim that the Trustee model of representation will breed only an aristocratic class in governance and that the interests of the rural citizens will not be represented. While it focuses on the House of Representatives as opposed to the Senate, he states that the Constitution promotes the

“rights and pretensions” of all, even every “class and description of citizens” (Madison). Madison goes on to argue that the people are the ones who will be electing these representatives, and therefore, they have direct influence in what type of individual is elected, arguing that neither the “rich, more than the poor” or the “learned, more than ignorant” are electing these people (Madison). This seems like an important distinction to make in terms of the Federalists’ position and the argument for a Trustee model since it clearly delineates how the body of citizens exercise their “judgement,” as previously mentioned, or their voice to influence legislation by choosing to vote for candidates who are more aligned with their beliefs or who present a certain identity. This deviates from what we saw in the context of Rome in which clearly the Roman Senate was primarily composed of elite politicians who were born into their station in life, and the Roman people did not have the power to vote out these aristocratic Senators out since their appointment was for life. Therefore, it is interesting to see how Cicero and the Optimates choose to just accept and embrace the title of aristocrats, while Madison in the Federalist Papers is attempting to counteract that attack since American revolutionaries were focused on rebelling against the tyranny and abuses of aristocratic Britain.

However, on the flip side, the anonymous Antifederalist author Brutus, likely Robert Yates, in his 1787 essay “To the People of the State of New-York” offered a somewhat different perspective on the expectation of a representative in the United States per the Constitution. Countering the idea of representatives possessing some innate wisdom to make decisions, Brutus argues that those in power ought to hold the “same feelings” and “aim at the same objects as the people do,” adding that it is those people who “transfer” them their authority (Brutus). This stance is clearly advocating for

representation that aligns more with the Delegate model in which representatives should be directly relying on the interests of the people to make decisions and policy. I especially think it is significant to highlight Brutus' argument that the people "transfer" authority to these representatives, in which clearly he believes that the people are the ones giving the officials their power and therefore, these officials are responsible to honor that symbiotic relationship. This line of thought seems to closely resemble the beliefs of the Populares who claim that the opinions of the people should ultimately have the greatest say in governance, and it is the people, or as Sallust puts it in *The Conspiracy of Cataline*, the *populi iussi* or "order to the people," who gives the consul and the magistrates power (67).

Moving forward, in support of their argument for the Trustee model, Federalist Paper 10 also seems to briefly touch upon the perceived characteristics, actions, and capabilities of the common people and the masses that make them ill equipped to recognize what is in the best interest of the State and to ultimately, influence governance. Specifically, Madison highlights the danger in the formation of factions among the people, and that the "violence of factions" can only be repressed by a "well-constructed union" (Madison). Adding to his argument, he goes on to present the fear of an "interested and overbearing majority" who will overtake the rights or interests of a minor party or even worse, completely neglect the public good (Madison). Clearly, Madison is conveying his perspective on the dangers that might occur if the people yield too much power in governance, and their interests are directly translated into laws. Instead, he seems to be laying the foundation of the necessity for representatives who possess those previously mentioned qualities to make decisions that are in the best interest of the

country and do not give in to the interest of conflicting factions. This refers back to Rehfeld's assertion that a key component of the Trustee model of representation is that representatives should not be reliant on "external sanctities" or parties which is exactly what Madison is arguing here (Rehfeld 218). I also think this is a fear that was shared by the Roman Optimates, believing that the general public did not have the qualifications to best make decisions or laws on behalf of the State and that the multitude of differing interests would cause chaos to governance such as when Cicero speaks to the threat of *conversiones* and *sedition* or "revolutions" and "riots" (Pro Sestio 185).

Additionally, Madison claims that "instability, injustice, and confusion" are often "introduced in public councils," which he believes are the "mortal disease" of government (Madison). This is an interesting point to make and directly refers to a similar sentiment posed by Cicero that I had not mentioned in my previous discussion of the Roman text. Cicero in his *Pro Sestio* legal speech touches upon the *contiones* or "informal meetings" held by the plebeians in Rome which he claims are one of three places in which the opinions of the people can be heard (179). These informal assemblies have not been as heavily researched as the formal voting assemblies like the curiate, tribal, and centuriate, but it is clear that they took up a significant space in the Roman political process (Morstein-Marx 35). Along with serving as the "chief conduit of authoritative information" to the common citizens, these meetings and the opinions that came out of these meetings ultimately would make their way back to the Senate and Magistrates and could have a large hand in deciding the fate of bills (Morstein-Marx 35). Therefore, similar to Madison's point, Cicero claimed that the leaders of the Populares would use these meetings to incite the people and cause riots, ultimately fearing that they

would undermine the authority and wisdom of the Senate in exchange for their own selfish interests (Pro Sestio 179).

These evaluations of the character of the general public both in the Roman context and the American context seems to argue that these politicians did not think the majority of people were fit or possessed the right temperament to govern effectively and they should then subsequently place their trust in the hands of those, like the Senators, who are equipped. Hamilton seemed to support this idea as well, and even likened Jefferson to the character and actions of Caesar. Ron Chernow states that on numerous occasions Hamilton referred to Jefferson as Caesar, believing him to be a “populist demagogue”(398) and “the worst sort of tyrant” (407). This is an interesting distinction to point out for two reasons. First off, it is clear that Hamilton and most likely the other founding fathers were both well-read and influenced by the actions of the ancient Romans and Greeks, which is clear the similar language and government structures that have previously been identified in my research along with the Roman and Greek pseudonyms that were often employed in their writings. Secondly, and more importantly, Hamilton seems to be pointing out that Jefferson does not actually represent the people and instead, is capitalizing on his popular support. Again, this brings up whether descriptive representation is a key facet of the delegate model of representation and the Federalists and the Optimates seem to be pointing out this hypocrisy.

Finally, both the Federalist Papers and the two essays penned by Antifederalist authors present specific critiques to both the concepts of a Trustee model of representation and a Delegate model, and dive deeper into the ideological differences between the two schools of thought. Similarly, all these texts attempt to combat the

concerns and arguments of their conflicting viewpoint. The Antifederalist writers Brutus and the Federal Farmer seem to focus their essays mostly on attacking the Federalist perspective on representation, as opposed to spending too much time defending and supporting representation that is more closely aligned with the Delegate model. Both writers touch upon and argue this idea that a “few men of wealth” (Federal Farmer) or the “will of a few”(Brutus) are having too great an influence in the government under the new Constitution. Brutus argues that the number of representatives that were determined by this new governing document is “so small a number” that it “could not resemble the people” and their interests (Brutus).

The Federal Farmer author also brings up the differing interests and specific identities of Southern, Eastern, and Middle states, and argues that there are such differences in opinion and customs that will most likely be neglected by such few representatives who cannot possibly represent the all of their views. Additionally, the Federal Farmer actually goes so far to call these few men the “natural aristocracy of the country” which I argue draws striking similarities to the perspectives that the Roman Populares had regarding the Optimates who they deemed an aristocratic breed (Federal Farmer). These two writings are confirming the fear that representatives will favor the interests of the wealthy and not the diverse interests of the rest of the county. Ultimately, both essays seem to be attempting to make the same argument that the middle and lower classes will be excluded from this new method of representation.

Additionally, these texts also argue that this form of representation will breed corruption and immorality within governance. Because of the discretion and responsibilities allocated to representatives under the Constitution, Brutus claims that

there will be representatives who will “pursue private ends” and will in result “sacrifice the public good” (Brutus). The Federal Farmer supports this claim and argues that it provides “an open door to improper regulations” (Federal Farmer). On that point, the Federal Farmer author is referring to the fact that Congress has the power to regulate elections and claims that people in the cities will therefore control the representatives who are chosen, further excluding those poor citizens living in rural communities. That is a significant point to address, and it contributes to the debate and concerns regarding the stark class divisions between constituents and their elected officials, which clearly was felt in the Late Roman Republic as well. These two authors do not provide a solution to these issues or an alternative method of representation, but I argue their critiques are significant and offers similar sentiments to the Roman Populares.

The Federalist Papers 10 and 57 both attempt to counter these claims against them, and also provide support for the Trustee Model. In Federalist 57, Madison claims that “merit” should be the key determinant to be a representative and that officials should be elected on this basis. Additionally Madison supports this claim in Federalist 10, stating that representatives must have “diffusive and established characters” which I argue feeds into that merit which Madison mentions (Madison). This is an important tenet of the argument for the Trustee model in which these representatives are only qualified to employ their own personal discretion and experiences in governance because of their objective merit and that is what keeps them from abusing their power and harming the State. A representative’s aptitude and virtue in lawmaking is key to ensuring those values of liberty and prosperity that the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence so clearly laid out as the foundations of American government. Additionally, Madison

brings up a fair argument in Federalist Paper 10 in which he states that men are not fit “to be a judge in [their] own case” because if that were the case, there would certainly be personal bias which would “corrupt his integrity” (Madison). Therefore, Madison argues that the “enlightened statesmen” as he calls them must rectify this issue by not yielding solely to the interests of the majority (Madison). While differing in the sense that Roman Senators were not elected by the people, this perspective on the “merit” of government officials draws comparisons to the Roman Optimates who clearly viewed themselves as more “enlightened” than the plebeians and therefore, ought to have more influence in lawmaking.

Finally, the Federalist Papers do seem to push back against the accusation that this method of representation and America’s new governance as a whole created an oligarchy or a government run by only a small group of elite individuals. Madison asserts that this idea of an oligarchy is the “most extraordinary” and refutes this claim by asserting that the people themselves hold the power to elect their rulers and that their aim should be electing those with virtue. Similarly, he asks how the House of Representatives “favors the elevation of the few,” and counters this claim by asserting that men from all backgrounds, including socio-economic, are included in the United States electorate and participate in choosing their own representatives. In Federalist 10, Madison actually argues that a “small number of citizens elected by the rest” is one of the greatest facets of a Republic. He argues that this is the best mode of representation in terms of ensuring the “true interest of the country” while also taking into account the “public views” since the interests of the general public can be tainted by their self-interest (Madison). This idea of the “power of a few” was also a critique of the Roman Optimates as the Populares leaders

and the Roman people believed that it was primarily only those born into the aristocratic class who were able to gain entrance into significant political offices. It is a significant connection because it further aligns the political ideologies of the Populares with those who supported a delegate model of representation.

Overall, I argue that the debate regarding representation in the United States has strong comparisons to the political differences of the Roman Populares and Optimates. Not only do both contexts utilize similar ideals and values with which their government was founded on, but it seems that similar issues regarding socioeconomic class divisions and expectations of those who are governing are present in both time periods. Although the political institutions and structure of governance are significantly different in Late Roman Republic and the United States, the debates between who ought to have a greater influence in lawmaking seems to transcend those differences. Ultimately, my research has highlighted the trend in political thought and debate between the Roman Republic and the United States, and hopefully, will encourage further scholarship on the significance of drawing links to these ancient cultures.

Discussion and Conclusion

Overall, my research has identified key rhetoric and logic that connects the conflict between the Roman Populares and Optimates to the ongoing debate in American politics regarding the trustee model and the delegate model of representation. In summary, the basis of the arguments employed by the Roman Optimates centered around the idea that the Senators, mostly composed of elite aristocrats, possessed greater wisdom and virtue than the mass of Roman citizens. Therefore, they argued that their approval ought to be a more essential part of the lawmaking process. Similarly, early American

political thinkers like James Madison argued for a similar stance in terms of how representation should be constructed in the United States, favoring the Trustee model which claimed that representative ought to possess some greater wisdom and worldview that makes them better equipped to make decisions on behalf of the State. On the flip side, the Roman Populares clearly felt like the Roman Senate was a breeding ground for corruption and ultimately, failed to represent the interests of all citizens which I argue is consistent with the critiques of those like the American Antifederalists who favored representation that more closely aligns with the delegate model. This comparison between the conflict of the Optimates and Populares and the debate between the trustee and delegate model or representation is one that has not been highlighted in previous research, and it was beneficial to look at these ideological similarities between these political factions in order to better understand the most effective modes of representation. However, even more important, I believe this research has a modern application, especially when looking at the concerns that were presented by both ideological stances, arguing that these are concerns that are still being debated in United States governance.

As previously highlighted throughout the course of my research, it seems that none of these political schools of thought seem to fall short of providing descriptive representation. Instead, the debate centers around whether the interests of the people ought to be represented or whether it ought to be left in the hands of those who are more experienced to govern but does not seem to require that a representative descriptively look like their constituents. Ultimately, this opens up room for further research on whether the lack of descriptive representation undermines the arguments of the Populares and the Antifederalists, or if the United States ought to require this type of representation

more explicitly like other countries have done through vehicles like quota laws or other systems.

The key takeaway of my research is identifying the link between these two political debates which will hopefully open up the door to future research. My findings are simply compiling the extent and essence of the debates that categorized the Roman Republic and the United States but does not seek to make an evaluation on which ideology seems to be more effective and ethical in terms of governance. Hopefully, future research can utilize my findings in order to predict future implications or consequences by referencing the political outcomes of the Romans that the United States could face, since it is clear that similar rhetoric and debates are still present in today's modern political climate. Finally, I hope that this research highlights the importance and relevance of looking back and analyzing ancient cultures and encourages others to do the same.

Overall, my research was successful in identifying key similarities between the political conflict of the Roman Optimates and Populares and the conflict regarding representation that categorized both America's founding years and our modern political debates. I was able to analyze similar language and rhetoric employed from both contexts, and present a thorough understanding of the ideologies that were being argued along with the benefits and downfalls of both methods of governance. I hope that my research can be used to help identify ways in which we can refine the roles and expectations of representation in the United States, so that the interests of the country are being represented in governance over the personal interests of elected officials.

Additionally, my findings can speak to future research regarding the quality of representation in the United States.

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