1. The First Unelected President
   1. **Gerald Ford** became president without anyone ever voting for him, either for president or vice president.
   2. He was seen as a nice guy, more of an everyman, but a bit of an average-minded and clumsy fellow. None of the negatives were really fair, but that was much of the public view.
   3. Surprisingly, Ford pardoned Nixon for any illegal actions he might have done.
      1. This smelled stinky. The deal *appeared* to have been…Ford was chosen V.P. so that if Nixon ever got into trouble, Ford would cover his back. There is no way to *know* this, but that was the perception. This would hurt Ford in the 1976 election.
      2. Later, Ford's popularity went downhill when he gave amnesty to draft dodgers. He felt they'd *not* served out of heartfelt reasons, so they were welcome to return to the U.S.
   4. Ford's foreign relation activities centered on the **Helsinki accords** with the U.S.S.R. In these agreements, (1) the boundaries of eastern Europe were agreed upon, (2) agreements were made on traveling from the U.S. and U.S.S.R., and (3) guarantees were made of human rights.
      1. To many Americans, détente was benefiting Russia, but America was getting little in return.
2. Defeat in Vietnam
   1. America's goal in Vietnam was to contain communism. America left in 1973, *generally* having done that. In 1975, however, North Vietnam overran and took over South Vietnam.
      1. It was embarrassing that the last Americans were evacuated from the rooftop of the American embassy by helicopter.
   2. Technically, America didn't lose the war. America left when it was a tie, then the U.S.-supported South Vietnam lost. But, in reality and in perception, America lost.
3. Feminist Victories and Defeats
   1. The feminist movement of the 60s gained some steam entering the 70s.
   2. Congress passed "**Title IX**" (1972) which prohibited sex discrimination in any federally-funded educational program. This was best seen in the rise of girls' sports to equal boys'.
   3. The Supreme Court heard cases regarding women.
      1. *Reed v. Reed* and *Frontiero v. Richardson*, dealt with sex discrimination in laws and jobs.
      2. The *Roe v. Wade* (1973) case legalized abortion.
   4. The proposed "**Equal Rights Amendment**" (ERA) passed Congress in 1972. ERA sought to legislate equality by stating equal rights can't be denied due to gender.
      1. Next, 38 states needed to ratify ERA for passage as a Constitutional Amendment. 28 states ratified it quickly. Feminists were energized.
      2. At this point, opposition stalled ERA. Essentially, the opposition felt ERA would undercut and deteriorate the family.
         1. National child care was proposed. The thinking was that this would weaken family life.
         2. The feminist movement was seen as the cause of divorce. The divorce rate had tripled between 1960 and '76.
         3. Many despised abortion. Catholics and other Christians viewed pregnancy as a blessing and charged the feminists viewed it as an inconvenience.
         4. The leader against ERA was **Phyliss Schlafly**. She traveled the country advocating "STOP ERA" and advocating traditional roles for women.
         5. ERA was failed in 1982, 3 states short of the needed 38.
4. The Seventies in Black and White
   1. The race issue wouldn't go away. In ***Milliken v. Bradley***, the Supreme Court ruled that, while integrating schools, officials could not force students across district lines.
      1. The practicality of this was that integration took a hit. If students went to their *nearest* school, the schools would stay largely segregated.
      2. The "white flight" to the suburbs sped up. What was left behind to deal with the tensions of integration were the less-advantaged classes of society.
   2. "Affirmative action" (giving preference to minorities in selection) led to charges of "reverse discrimination."
      1. The idea was that affirmative action meant selection for colleges or jobs based on race, not on achievement.
      2. In the **Bakke case** (1978), the Supreme Court dealt with reverse discrimination.
         1. Bakke had sued saying he'd been turned down grad school due to policies that favored minorities. He won. The Court said admission preference could not be based on race.
         2. Paradoxically, the court also said race *can* be used in the *overall* admission policies to help balance out the student body's demographics.
         3. **Thurgood Marshall** was the only black justice. He voted against Bakke and said the decision might undo years of civil rights progress.
5. The Bicentennial Campaign and the Carter Victory
   1. 1976 was the nation's bicentennial celebration. After years of race problems, Vietnam, and Watergate. Despite all of the turmoil and ousting a president, America and the Constitution had survived. America needed a celebration.
   2. It was also an election year. President Ford tried to get elected on his own, the Democrats chose **Jimmy Carter**.
      1. Carter capitalized on being a “Washington outsider,” and therefore untainted by the supposed corruption of D.C. (he’d previously been governor of Georgia).
      2. The election was very close, but the Republican "brand" had been too tarnished by Watergate nonsense. Carter won 297 to 240.
   3. Congress also went heavily Democrat. During his "honeymoon period", Carter got a new **Dept. of Energy** established. He also got a tax cut through.
      1. Carter's honeymoon was short though. Being a political outsider was good during the election, but not good inside Washington D.C. where "back-slapping" and "back-scratching" is how things get done.
6. Carter’s Humanitarian Diplomacy
   1. Jimmy Carter was a devout Christian and had a high concern for human rights. That would be his guiding principle when it came to foreign policy.
      1. For example, he expressed his concern and support for the oppressed people of Zimbabwe (called Rhodesia then).
   2. Carter's crowning foreign policy achievement was a Middle East peace settlement.
      1. Egyptian president **Anwar Sadat** and Israeli president **Menachem Begin** met Carter at Camp David in 1978.
      2. They shook hands and agreed that Israel would withdraw from lands gained in the Six-Day War (1967) and Israel's borders would be respected.
   3. Full diplomatic relations with China were reestablished.
   4. Another agreement planned to turn over the Panama Canal to Panama by the year 2000 (and did).
   5. To many, Carter's policies seemed nice, but soft and too willing to give.
      1. Plus, the Cold War kept on going. Thousands of Soviet backed Cuban troops showed up in various African countries to support communist forces there. Carter made no response.
7. Economic and Energy Woes
   1. Carter had worse problems than foreign affairs—the economy was tanking.
      1. Inflation was rising by 13% in 1979 (4% is normal). The cost of importing oil was skyrocketing.
      2. Carter proposed energy conservation laws, but they weren't well received.
      3. Interest rates were very high as well. This meant borrowing money (to buy a home for example) was too expensive.
   2. Along with oil, the Middle East gave Carter more headaches in 1979 when the shah of Iran was ousted by Islamic fundamentalists. The shah had been put into power with help from the CIA and was seen as a symbol of the West and the U.S.
      1. The new Muslim government took over the oil fields. Oil production went down and OPEC raised oil prices farther.
      2. Carter went to Camp David, talked with energy experts, then scolded America for its dependence on oil and materialism. This was probably true, but it was a scolding, not an energy solution.
         1. Within a few days he fired four cabinet members and reverted to his close-knit Georgia crew. Some wondered if Carter was losing touch with the people.
8. Foreign Affairs and the Iranian Imbroglio
   1. Another high-note for Carter came with the SALT II agreements. He met with Soviet leader **Leonid Brezhnev** and agreed to limit nuclear weapons.
      1. The high-note was short lived—the Senate was very reluctant to ratify the agreement.
   2. At the same time, militant Muslim radicals in Iran stormed the U.S. embassy in Teheran and took everyone hostage.
      1. The militants demanded that the U.S. hand over the shah who'd fled earlier. Worse, what would the U.S. do about the 52 Americans being held hostage?
      2. Another bad event at the same time mixed the Cold War, oil, and the Muslim World.
         1. The Soviet Union suddenly attacked and took over Afghanistan (Dec. 1979). This move threatened (1) to expand communism, (2) oil fields and production, and (3) next-door neighbor Iran.
   3. Carter reacted by placing an embargo on the U.S.S.R. and by boycotting the 1980 summer Olympics in Moscow.
      1. He proposed setting up a "Rapid Deployment Force" for trouble-spots and asked that young people, including women, be required to register for a possible military draft.
      2. Carter admitted he'd misjudged the Soviets at the SALT II talks. This is when SALT II died.
   4. The Iran hostage situation was still going—it would be the undoing of Carter.
      1. The U.S. tried economic sanctions, they failed.
      2. A secret rescue mission was planned and tried. It literally went down in flames in a sandstorm.
      3. Carter was unable to resolve the Iran hostage situation. Fair or not, the American hostages in Iran became a symbol of problems which Carter could not solve.