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## Overview:

In "Backgrounds of American Presidents," Gerald Bazer uses qualitative descriptions of former presidents of the United States to create a general description of what the average American president looks like.

## Summary:

Dr. Gerald Bazer examines common traits shared by former presidents and identifies demographics that are not represented by the presidency. In "The Composite of America's Presidents," he also points out which traits accompany a good or poor president. Bazar analyzes the data to provide insights to common patterns presidents seem to follow.

**ODE 9-12 STANDARD: *Social Studies; Course, American Government; Topic, Structure and Functions of the Federal Government***

## Discussion Questions:

1. Bazer mentions qualities like gender, religious affiliation, wealth, and age being common among former presidents of the United States. Why have these shared characteristics been important to the election process?
2. What issues can arise for electoral candidates that don't fit these demographic qualities?
3. What are some traits that have not been exemplified by former presidents?

## Activity:

Have students compose a list of 3-5 presidential candidates that have not been elected. Identify some demographic traits in each candidate that do not match the presidential composite that Bazer presented.

## Resources:

The Religious Affiliations of U.S. Presidents: <http://www.pewforum.org/>  
Presidential Genealogy and Family History: <http://www.presidentsusa.net/>

