

American History I

American History I

LUMEN LEARNING



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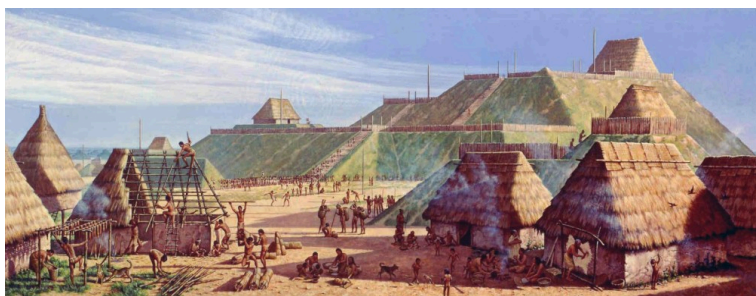
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PART I

MODULE I: NEW WORLD ENCOUNTERS

I. The First Americans

Europeans called the Americas “The New World.” But for the millions of Native Americans they encountered, it was anything but. Humans have lived here for over ten thousand years. Dynamic and diverse, they spoke hundreds of languages and created thousands of distinct cultures. Native Americans built settled communities and followed seasonal migration patterns, maintained peace through alliances and warred with their neighbors, and developed self-sufficient economies and maintained vast trade networks. Native Americans cultivated distinct art forms and spiritual values. Kinship ties knit their communities together. But the arrival of Europeans and the resulting global exchange of people, animals, plants, and microbes—what scholars benignly call the Columbian Exchange—bridged more than ten thousand years of geographic separation, inaugurated centuries of violence, unleashed the greatest biological terror the world had ever seen, and revolutionized the history of the world. It began one of the most consequential developments in all of human history and the first chapter in the long American yawp.



Cahokia, by Michael Hampshire. [Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site](http://www.cahokia.state.il.us/).

American history begins with the first Americans. But where do

their stories start? Native Americans passed stories down through the millennia that tell of their creation and reveal the contours of indigenous belief. The Salinan people of present-day California, for example, tell of a bald eagle that formed the first man out of clay and the first woman out of a feather. According to a Lenape tradition, the earth was made when Sky Woman fell into a watery world and, with the help of muskrat and beaver, landed safely on a turtle's back, thus creating Turtle Island, or North America. A Choctaw tradition locates southeastern peoples' beginnings inside the great Mother Mound earthwork, Nunih Waya, in the lower Mississippi Valley. Nahua people trace their beginnings to the place of the Seven Caves, from which their ancestors emerged before they migrated to what is now Central Mexico. America's indigenous peoples have passed down many accounts of their origins, written and oral, which share creation and migration histories.

Archaeologists and anthropologists, meanwhile, focus on migration histories. Studying artifacts, bones, and genetic signatures, these scholars have pieced together a narrative that claims that the Americas were once a "new world" for Native Americans as well.

The last global ice age trapped much of the world's water in enormous continental glaciers. Twenty thousand years ago, ice sheets, some a mile thick, extended across North America as far south as modern-day Illinois. With so much of the world's water captured in these massive ice sheets, global sea levels were much lower, and a land bridge connected Asia and North America across the Bering Strait. Between twelve and twenty thousand years ago, Native ancestors crossed the ice, waters, and exposed lands between the continents of Asia and America. These mobile hunter-gatherers traveled in small bands, exploiting vegetable, animal, and marine resources into the Beringian tundra at the northwestern edge of North America. DNA evidence suggests that these ancestors paused—for perhaps 15,000 years—in the expansive region between Asia and America. Other ancestors crossed the seas and voyaged along the Pacific coast, traveling along riverways and

settling where local ecosystems permitted. Glacial sheets receded around fourteen thousand years ago, opening a corridor to warmer climates and new resources. Some ancestral communities migrated south and eastward. Evidence found at Monte Verde, a site in modern-day Chile, suggests human activity began there at least 14,500 years ago. Similar evidence hints at human settlement in the Florida panhandle at the same time. On many points, archaeological and traditional knowledge sources converge: the dental, archaeological, linguistic, oral, ecological and genetic evidence illustrates a great deal of diversity, with numerous different groups settling and migrating over thousands of years, potentially from many different points of origin. Whether emerging from the earth, water, or sky, being made by a creator, or migrating to their homelands, modern Native American communities recount histories in America that date long before human memory.

In the Northwest, Native groups exploited the great salmon-filled rivers. On the plains and prairie lands, hunting communities followed bison herds and moved according to seasonal patterns. In mountains, prairies, deserts, and forests, the cultures and ways of life of paleo-era ancestors were as varied as the geography. These groups spoke hundreds of languages and adopted distinct cultural practices. Rich and diverse diets fueled massive population growth across the continent.

Agriculture arose sometime between nine- and five-thousand years ago, almost simultaneously in the Eastern and Western Hemispheres. Mesoamericans in modern-day Mexico and Central America relied upon domesticated maize (corn) to develop the hemisphere's first settled population around 1,200 BCE. Corn was high in caloric content, easily dried and stored, and, in Mesoamerica's warm and fertile Gulf Coast, could sometimes be harvested twice in a year. Corn—as well as other Mesoamerican crops—spread across North America and continues to hold an important spiritual and cultural place in many Native communities.



Prehistoric Settlement in Warren County, Mississippi, [Vicksburg Riverfront Murals](#).

Agriculture flourished in the fertile river valleys between the Mississippi River and Atlantic Ocean, an area known as the Eastern Woodlands. There, three crops in particular—corn, beans, and squash, known as the “Three Sisters”—provided nutritional needs necessary to sustain cities and civilizations. In Woodlands areas from the Great Lakes and Mississippi River to the Atlantic coast, Native communities managed their forest resources by burning underbrush to create vast park-like hunting grounds and to clear the ground for planting the “Three Sisters.” Many groups used shifting cultivation where farmers cut the forest, burned the undergrowth and then planted seeds in the nutrient rich ashes. When crop yields began to decline, farmers would move to another field and allow the land to recover and the forest to regrow before again cutting the forest, burning the undergrowth, and restarting the cycle.. This technique was particularly useful in areas with difficult soil. But in the fertile regions of the Eastern Woodlands,

Native American farmers engaged in permanent, intensive agriculture, using hand tools rather than European-style plows. The rich soil and use of hand-tools enabled effective and sustainable farming practices, producing high yields without overburdening the soil. Typically in Woodland communities, women practiced agriculture while men hunted and fished.

Agriculture allowed for dramatic social change, but for some, it also may have accompanied a decline in health. Analysis of remains reveals that societies transitioning to agriculture often experienced weaker bones and teeth. But despite these possible declines, agriculture brought important benefits. Farmers could produce more food than hunters, enabling some members of the community to pursue other skills. Religious leaders, skilled soldiers, and artists could devote their energy to activities other than food production.

North America's indigenous peoples shared some broad traits. Spiritual practices, understandings of property, and kinship networks differed markedly from European arrangements. Most Native Americans did not neatly distinguish between the natural and the supernatural. Spiritual power permeated their world and was both tangible and accessible. It could be appealed to and harnessed. Kinship bound most Native North American people together. Most peoples lived in small communities tied by kinship networks. Many Native cultures understood ancestry as matrilineal: family and clan identity proceeded along the female line, through mothers and daughters, rather than fathers and sons. Fathers, for instance, would often join mothers' extended families and sometimes even a mother's brothers would take a more direct role in child-raising than biological fathers. Mothers could therefore often wield enormous influence at local levels and men's identities and influence often depended on their relationships to women. Native American culture meanwhile generally afforded greater sexual and marital freedom than European cultures did. Women often chose their husbands, and divorce often was a relatively simple and straightforward process. Moreover, most Native peoples' notions of property rights differed markedly from

Europeans' notions of property. Native Americans generally felt a personal ownership of tools, weapons, or other items that were actively used, and this same rule applied to land and crops. Groups and individuals exploited particular pieces of land, and used violence or negotiation to exclude others. But the right to the use of land did not imply the right to its permanent possession.

Native Americans had many ways of communicating, including graphic ones, and some of these artistic and communicative technologies are still used today. For example, Algonkian-speaking Ojibwes, used birch-bark scrolls to record medical treatments, recipes, songs, stories, and more. Other Eastern Woodland peoples wove plant fibers, embroidered skins with porcupine quills, and modeled the earth to make sites of complex ceremonial meaning. On the Plains, artisans wove buffalo hair and painted on buffalo skins; in the Pacific Northwest weavers wove goat hair into soft textiles with particular patterns. Maya, Zapotec, and Nahua ancestors in Mesoamerica painted their histories on plant-derived textiles and carved them into stone. In the Andes, Inka recorders noted information in the form of knotted strings, or *Khipu*.



Andreas F. Borchert, "Mesa Verde National Park Cliff Palace" via Wikimedia. Native peoples in the Southwest began constructing these highly defensible cliff dwellings in 1190 CE and continued expanding and refurbishing them until 1260 CE before abandoning them around 1300 CE.

Two thousand years ago, some of the largest culture groups in North America were the Puebloan groups, centered in the current-

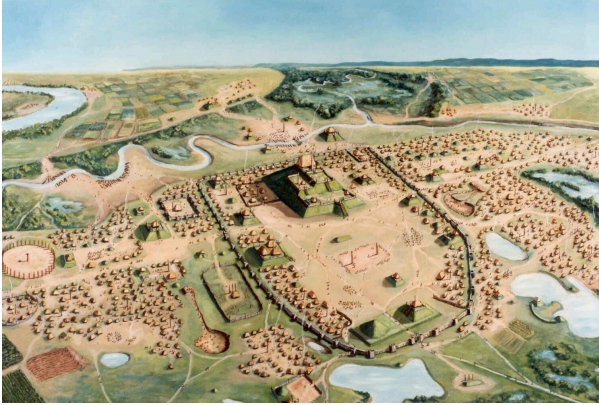
day Greater Southwest (the southwestern US and northwestern Mexico), the Mississippian groups located along the Great River and its Woodland tributaries, and the Mesoamerican groups of the areas now known as central Mexico and the Yucatan. Previous developments in agricultural technology enabled the explosive growth of the large early societies, such as that at Tenochtitlan in the Central Mexican Valley, Cahokia along the Mississippi River, and in the desert oasis areas of the Greater Southwest.

Chaco Canyon in northern New Mexico was home to ancestral Puebloan people between 900 and 1300 CE. As many as 15,000 people lived in the Chaco Canyon complex in present-day New Mexico. Sophisticated agricultural practices, extensive trading networks, and even the domestication of animals like turkeys allowed the population to swell. Massive residential structures, built from sandstone blocks and lumber carried across great distances, housed hundreds of Puebloan people. One single building, Pueblo Bonito, stretched over two acres and rose five stories. Its 600 rooms were decorated with copper bells, turquoise decorations, and bright macaws. Homes like those at Pueblo Bonito included a small, dugout room, called a *kiva*, which played an important role in a variety of ceremonies and served as an important center for Puebloan life and culture. Puebloan spirituality was tied both to the earth and to the heavens, as generations carefully charted the stars and designed homes in-line with the path of the sun and moon.

The Puebloan people of Chaco Canyon faced several ecological challenges, including deforestation and over-irrigation, which ultimately caused this community to collapse and its people to disperse to smaller settlements. An extreme fifty-year drought began in 1130; shortly thereafter, Chaco Canyon was deserted. New groups filled this land, including the Apache and Navajo, both of whom adopted several Puebloan customs. The same drought that plagued the Pueblo also likely effected the Mississippian peoples of the American Midwest and South. The Mississippians developed one of the largest civilizations north of modern-day Mexico. Roughly one-thousand years ago, the largest Mississippian settlement,

Cahokia, located just east of modern-day St. Louis, peaked at a population of between 10,000-30,000. It rivaled contemporary European cities in size. No American city, in fact, would match Cahokia's peak population levels until after the American Revolution. The city itself spanned 2,000 acres and centered around Monks Mound, a large earthen hill that rose ten-stories and was larger at its base than the great pyramids of Egypt. As with many of the peoples who lived in the Woodlands, life and death in Cahokia were linked to the movement of the stars, sun, and moon, and their ceremonial earthwork structures reflect these important structuring forces.

Cahokia was politically organized around chiefdoms, a hierarchical, clan-based system that endowed leaders with both secular and sacred authority. The size of the city and the extent of its influence suggests that the city relied on a number of lesser chiefdoms under the authority of a paramount leader. Social stratification was partly preserved through frequent warfare. War captives would be enslaved, and these captives formed an important part of the economy in the North American southeast. Native American slavery was not based not on holding people as property. Instead, Native Americans understood slaves as people who lacked kinship networks. Slavery, then, was not always a permanent condition. Adoption or marriage could enable a slave to become a member of the community and to enter a kinship network. Very often, a former slave could become a fully integrated member of the community. Slavery and captive trading became an important way that many Native communities regrew and gained or maintained power.



Cahokia, by
Bill
Iseninger.
[Cahokia
Mounds
State
Historic Site](#)

Around the year 1050, Cahokia experienced what one archeologist has called a “big bang,” which included “a virtually instantaneous and pervasive shift in all things political, social, and ideological.” The population grew almost 500 percent in only one generation, and new groups of peoples were absorbed into the city and its supporting communities. By 1300, the once powerful city had undergone a series of strains that led to collapse. Scholars previously pointed to ecological disaster or slow depopulation through emigration, but new research instead emphasizes mounting warfare, or internal political tensions. Environmental explanations suggest that population growth placed too great a burden on the arable land. Others suggest the demand for fuel and building materials led to deforestation, erosion, and or an extended drought. Recent evidence suggests that political turmoil among the ruling elite and threats from external enemies, as evidenced in the remains of defensive stockades, may explain the end of the once great civilization.

North American communities were connected through complex kin, political, and cultural relationships and sustained by long distance trading routes. The Mississippi River served as a particularly important artery, but all of the continent’s waterways

were vital to transportation and communication. From its position near the Mississippi, Illinois, and Missouri Rivers, which created networks that stretched from the Great Lakes to the American Southeast, Cahokia became a key trading center. Archaeologists can identify materials, like seashells, that traveled over a thousand miles to reach the center of this civilization. 3,500 years ago, the community at what is now Poverty Point, Louisiana, had access to copper from present-day Canada and flint from modern-day Indiana. Sheets of Mica found at the sacred Woodland Serpent Mound site near the Ohio River came from the Allegheny Mountains, and obsidian from nearby earthworks came from Mexico. Turquoise from the Greater Southwest was used at Teotihuacan 1200 years ago.

In the Eastern Woodlands, many Native American societies lived in smaller dispersed communities in order to take advantage of the rich soils and abundant rivers and streams. The Lenapes, also known as Delawares, farmed the bottom lands throughout the Hudson and Delaware River watersheds in New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware. Their hundreds of settlements, stretching from southern Massachusetts through Delaware, were loosely bound together by political, social, and spiritual connections.

Dispersed and relatively independent, Lenape communities were bound together by oral histories, ceremonial traditions, consensus-based political organization, kinship networks, and a shared clan system. Kinship tied the various Lenape communities and clans together and society was organized along matrilineal lines. Marriage occurred between clans, and a married man would join the clan of his wife. Lenape women extended authority over marriages, households, agricultural production, and even may have played a significant part in determining the selection of leaders, called sachems. Dispersed authority, small settlements, and kin-based organization contributed to the long-lasting stability and resilience of Lenape communities. One or more sachems governed Lenape communities by the consent of their people. Unlike the hierarchical organization of many Mississippian cultures, Lenape sachems

acquired their authority by demonstrating wisdom and experience. Dispersed communities and their leaders gathered together in times of council or for ceremonial purposes. Sachems spoke for their people in larger councils that included men, women, and elders. The Lenape experienced occasional tensions with other indigenous groups like the Iroquois to the north or Susquehannock to the south, but the lack of defensive fortifications near Lenape communities leads archeologists to believe that the Lenapes avoided large-scale warfare.

The continued longevity of Lenape societies, which began centuries before European contact, was also due to their skills as farmers and fishers. Along with the “Three Sisters,” Lenape women planted tobacco, sunflowers, and gourds. They harvested fruits and nuts from trees and also cultivated numerous medicinal plants which they used with great proficiency. The Lenapes organized their communities to take advantage of growing seasons and also the migration patterns of animals and fowl that were a part of their diet. During planting and harvesting seasons, Lenapes gathered together in larger groups to coordinate their labor and take advantage of local abundance. As proficient fishers, they organized seasonal fish camps to net shellfish and catch shad. Lenapes wove nets, baskets, mats, and a variety of household materials from the readily available rushes found along the streams, rivers, and coasts. They made their homes in some of the most fertile and abundant lands in the Eastern Woodlands and used their skills to create a stable and prosperous civilization. The first Dutch and Swedish settlers who encountered the Lenapes in the seventeenth century recognized Lenape prosperity and quickly sought their friendship. Their lives came to depend on it.

In the Pacific Northwest, the Kwakwaka'wakw, Tlingits, Haidas, and hundreds of other peoples, speaking dozens of languages, thrived due to the moderate climate, lush forests and many rivers. The peoples of this region depended upon salmon for survival and valued it accordingly. Images of salmon decorated totem poles, baskets, canoes, oars, and other tools. The fish was treated with

spiritual respect and its image represented prosperity, life, and renewal. Sustainable harvesting practices ensured the survival of salmon populations. The Coast Salish people and several others celebrated the First Salmon Ceremony when the first migrating salmon was spotted each season. Elders closely observed the size of the salmon run and would delay harvesting to ensure that a sufficient number survived to spawn and return in the future. Men commonly used nets, hooks, and other small tools to capture salmon as they migrated upriver to spawn. Massive cedar canoes, as long as 50 feet and carrying as many as 20 men, also enabled extensive fishing expeditions in the Pacific Ocean, where skilled fishermen caught halibut, sturgeon, and other fish, sometimes hauling thousands of pounds in a single canoe.

Food surpluses enabled significant population growth, and the Pacific Northwest became one of the most densely populated regions of North America. The combination of population density and food surplus created a unique social organization centered around elaborate feasts, called potlatches. These potlatches celebrated births and weddings as well as determined social status. A party would last for days and the host would demonstrate his wealth and power by feeding and entertaining guests with food, artwork, and performances. The more the host gave away, the more prestige and power they had within the group. Some men saved for decades to host an extravagant potlatch that would in turn give him greater respect and power within the community.



Intricately carved masks, like the Crooked Beak of Heaven Mask, used natural elements like animals to represent supernatural forces during ceremonial dances and festivals. 19th century crooked beak of heaven mask from the Kwakwaka'wakw (Pacific NW). [Wikimedia](#).

Many peoples of the Pacific Northwest built elaborate plank houses out of the region's abundant cedar trees. The 500-foot-long Suquamish Oleman House (or Old Man House), for instance, rested on the banks of Puget Sound. Giant cedar trees were also carved and painted in the shape of animals or other figures to tell stories and express identities. These totem poles became the most recognizable artistic form of the Pacific Northwest, but peoples also carved masks, and other wooden items, such as hand drums and rattles, out of the great trees of the region.

Despite commonalities, Native cultures varied greatly. The New World was marked by diversity and contrast. By the time Europeans were poised to cross the Atlantic, Native Americans spoke hundreds of languages and lived in keeping with the hemisphere's many

climates. Some lived in cities, others in small bands. Some migrated seasonally, others settled permanently. All Native peoples had long histories and well-formed, unique cultures that had developed over millennia. But the arrival of Europeans changed everything.

2. Spanish Exploration and Conquest

As news of the Spanish conquest spread, wealth-hungry Spaniards poured into the New World seeking land and gold and titles. A New World empire spread from Spain's Caribbean foothold. Motives were plain: said one soldier, "we came here to serve God and the king, and also to get rich." Mercenaries joined the conquest and raced to capture the human and material wealth of the New World.

The Spanish managed labor relations through a legal system known as the *encomienda*, an exploitive feudal arrangement in which Spain tied Indian laborers to vast estates. In the *encomienda*, the Spanish crown granted a person not only land but a specified number of natives as well. *Encomenderos* brutalized their laborers with punishing labor. After Bartolome de Las Casas published his incendiary account of Spanish abuses (*The Destruction of the Indies*), Spanish authorities abolished the *encomienda* in 1542 and replaced it with the *repartimiento*. Intended as a milder system, the *repartimiento* nevertheless replicated many of the abuses of the older system and the rapacious exploitation of the native population continued as Spain spread its empire over the Americas.



El Castillo (pyramid of Kukulcán) in Chichén Itzá, photograph by Daniel Schwen, via [Wikimedia Commons](#)

As Spain's New World empire expanded, Spanish conquerors met the massive empires of Central and South America, civilizations that dwarfed anything found in North America. In central America the Maya built massive temples, sustained large populations, and constructed a complex and long-lasting civilization with a written language, advanced mathematics, and stunningly accurate calendars. But Maya civilization, although it had not disappeared, nevertheless collapsed before European arrival, likely due to droughts and unsustainable agricultural practices. But the eclipse of the Maya only heralded the later rise of the most powerful native civilization ever seen in the Western Hemisphere: the Aztecs.

Militaristic migrants from northern Mexico, the Aztecs moved south into the Valley of Mexico, conquered their way to dominance, and built the largest empire in the New World. When the Spaniards arrived in Mexico they found a sprawling civilization centered around Tenochtitlan, an awe-inspiring city built on a series of natural and man-made islands in the middle of Lake Texcoco, located today within modern-day Mexico City. Tenochtitlan, founded in 1325, rivaled the world's largest cities in size and grandeur. Much of the city was built on large artificial islands

called *chinampas* which the Aztecs constructed by dredging mud and rich sediment from the bottom of the lake and depositing it over time to form new landscapes. A massive pyramid temple, the Templo Mayor, was located at the city center (its ruins can still be found in the center of Mexico City). When the Spaniards arrived they could scarcely believe what they saw: 70,000 buildings, housing perhaps 200,000-250,000 people, all built on a lake and connected by causeways and canals. Bernal Díaz del Castillo, one of Cortez's soldiers, later recalled, "When we saw so many cities and villages built in the water and other great towns on dry land, we were amazed and said that it was like the enchantments ... Some of our soldiers even asked whether the things that we saw were not a dream? ... I do not know how to describe it, seeing things as we did that had never been heard of or seen before, not even dreamed about."

From their island city the Aztecs dominated an enormous swath of central and southern Mesoamerica. They ruled their empire not through a decentralized network of subject peoples that paid regular tribute—including everything from the most basic items, such as corn, beans, and other foodstuffs, to luxury goods such as jade, cacao, and gold—and provided troops for the empire. But unrest festered beneath the Aztec's imperial power and European conquerors lusted after its vast wealth.



This sixteenth-century map of Tenochtitlan shows the aesthetic beauty and advanced infrastructure of this great Aztec city. Map, c. 1524, [Wikimedia](#).

Hernan Cortes, an ambitious, thirty-four year old Spaniard who had won riches in the conquest of Cuba, organized an invasion of Mexico in 1519. Sailing with 600 men, horses, and cannon, he landed on the coast of Mexico. Relying on a native translator, whom he called Doña Marina, and whom Mexican folklore denounces as *La Malinche*, Cortes gathered information and allies in preparation for conquest. Through intrigue, brutality, and the exploitation of endemic political divisions, he enlisted the aid of thousands of native allies, defeated Spanish rivals, and marched on Tenochtitlan.

Aztec dominance rested upon fragile foundations and many of the region's semi-independent city-states yearned to break from Aztec rule while nearby kingdoms, including Tarascans to the north, and the remains of Maya city-states on the Yucatán peninsula, chafed at Aztec power.

Through persuasion, and maybe because some Aztecs thought Cortes was the god Quetzalcoatl, the Spaniards entered Tenochtitlán peacefully. Cortes then captured the emperor Montezuma and used him to gain control of the Aztecs' gold and silver reserves and its network of mines. Eventually, the Aztecs revolted. Montezuma was branded a traitor and uprising ignited the city. Montezuma was killed along with a third of Cortes's men in *la noche triste*, the "night of sorrows." The Spanish fought through thousands of indigenous insurgents and across canals to flee the city, where they regrouped, enlisted more native allies, captured Spanish reinforcements, and, in 1521, besieged the island city. The Spaniard's eighty-five day siege cut off food and fresh water. Smallpox ravaged the city. One Spanish observer said it "spread over the people as great destruction. Some it covered on all parts—their faces, their heads, their breasts, and so on. There was great havoc. Very many died of it ... They could not move; they could not stir." Cortes, the Spaniards, and their native allies then sacked the city. 15,000 died. The temples were unmade. After two years of conflict, a million-person strong empire was toppled by disease, dissension, and a thousand European conquerors.



Emanuel Gottlieb Leutze, "Storming of the Teocalli by Cortez and His Troops," 1848. [Wikimedia](#).

Further south, along the Andes Mountains in South America, the Quechuas, or Incas, managed a vast mountain empire. From their capital of Cuzco in the Andean highlands, through conquest and negotiation, the Inca built an empire that stretched around the western half of the South American continent from present day Ecuador to central Chile and Argentina. They built steppes to farm fertile mountain soil and by the 1400s they managed a thousand miles of Andean roads that tied together perhaps twelve million people. But like the Aztecs, unrest between the Incas and conquered groups created tensions and left the empire vulnerable to foreigners. Smallpox spread in advance of Spanish conquerors and hit the Incan empire in 1525. Epidemics ravaged the population, cutting the empire's population in half, killing the Incan emperor Huayna Capac and many members of his family and sparking a bloody war of succession. Inspired by Cortes's conquest of Mexico, Francisco Pizarro moved South and arrived amid an empire torn by chaos. With 168 men, he deceived Incan rulers and took control of the empire and seized the capital city, Cuzco, in 1533. Disease, conquest, and slavery ravaged the remnants of the Incan empire.

After the conquests of Mexico and Peru, Spain settled into empire. A vast administrative hierarchy governed its new holdings: royal appointees oversaw an enormous territory of landed estates and Indian laborers and administrators regulated the extraction of gold and silver and oversaw their transport across the Atlantic in Spanish galleons. Meanwhile Spanish migrants poured into the New World. 225,000 migrated during the sixteenth century alone, and 750,000 came during the entire three centuries of Spanish colonial rule. Spaniards, often single, young, and male, emigrated for the various promises of land, wealth, and social advancement. Laborers, craftsmen, soldiers, clerks, and priests all crossed the Atlantic in large numbers. Indians, however, always outnumbered the Spanish and the Spaniards, by both necessity and design, incorporated native Americans—unequally—into colonial life.

An elaborate racial hierarchy marked Spanish life in the New World. Regularized in the mid-1600s but rooted in medieval practices, the *Sistema de Castas* organized individuals into various racial groups based upon their supposed “purity of blood.” Various classifications—often elaborately arrived at—became almost prerequisites for social and political advancement in Spanish colonial society. *Peninsulares*—Iberian-born Spaniards, or *Españoles*—occupied the highest levels of administration and acquired the greatest estates. Their descendants, New World-born Spaniards, or *criollos*, occupied the next rung and rivaled the *peninsulares* for wealth and opportunity. *Mestizos*—a term used to describe those of mixed Spanish and Indian heritage—followed.

Like the French later in North America, the Spanish tolerated and sometimes even supported interracial marriage. There were simply too few Spanish women in the New World to support the natural growth of a purely Spanish population. The Catholic Church endorsed interracial marriage as a moral bulwark against bastardy and rape. As early as 1533, King Carlos I declared that any child with Spanish blood “to the half” was entitled to certain Spanish rights. By 1600, *mestizos* made up a large portion of the colonial population. By the early 1700s, more than one-third of all marriages bridged the

Spanish-Indian divide. Largely separated by wealth and influence from the *peninsulares* and *criollos*, however, mestizos typically occupied a middling social position in Spanish New World society. They were not quite *Indios*, or Indians, but their lack of *limpieza de sangre*, or “pure blood,” removed them from the privileges of full-blooded Spaniards. Spanish fathers of sufficient wealth and influence might shield their mestizo children from racial prejudice, and a number of wealthy mestizos married *Españoles* to “whiten” their family lines, but more often mestizos were confined to a middle-station in the Spanish New World.

Slaves and Indians occupied the lowest rungs of the social ladder. After Bartolome de las Casas and other reformers shamed the Spanish for their harsh Indian policies in the 1530s, the Spanish outlawed Indian slavery. In the 1550s, the *encomienda* system of land-based forced-labor gave way to the *repartimiento*, an exploitative but slightly softer form of forced wage-labor. Slaves labored especially on Spain’s Caribbean plantation islands.

Many manipulated the Casta System to gain advantages for themselves and their children. Mestizo mothers, for instance, might insist that their mestizo daughters were actually *castizas*, or quarter-Indians, who, if they married a Spaniard, could, in the eyes of the law, produce “pure” *criollo* children entitled to the full rights and opportunities of Spanish citizens. But “passing” was an option for the few. Instead, the massive native populations within Spain’s New World Empire ensured a level of cultural and racial mixture—or *Mestizaje*—unparalleled in British North America. Spanish North America wrought a hybrid culture that was neither fully Spanish nor fully Indian. The Spanish not only built Mexico City atop Tenochtitlán, but food, language, and families spilled across racial barriers. In 1531, a poor Indian named Juan Diego reported that he was visited by the Virgin Mary, who came as a dark-skinned *Nahuatl*-speaking Indian. Reports of miracles spread across Mexico and the *Virgen de Guadalupe* became a national icon for a new mestizo society.



Our Lady of Guadalupe is perhaps the most culturally important and extensively reproduced Mexican-Catholic image. In the iconic depiction, Mary stands atop the tilma (peasant cloak) of Juan Diego, on which according to his story appeared the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe. Throughout Mexican history, the story and image of Our Lady of Guadalupe has been a unifying national symbol. Mexican retablo of “Our Lady of Guadalupe,” 19th century, in El Paso Museum of Art. [Wikimedia](#).

From Mexico, Spain expanded northward. Lured by the promises of gold and another Tenochtitlán, Spanish expeditions scoured North America for another wealthy Indian empire. Huge expeditions, resembling vast moving communities, composed of hundreds of soldiers, settlers, priests, and slaves, with enormous numbers of livestock, moved across the continent. Juan Ponce de Leon, the conqueror of Puerto Rico, landed in Florida in 1513 in search of wealth and slaves. Cabeza de Vaca joined the Narvaez expedition to Florida a decade later, was shipwrecked, and embarked upon a remarkable multi-year odyssey across the Gulf of Mexico and Texas into Mexico. Pedro Menéndez de Avilés founded St. Augustine, Florida, in 1565, and it remains the oldest, continuously occupied European settlement in the present-day United States.

But without the rich gold and silver mines of Mexico, the plantation-friendly climate of the Caribbean, or the exploitive potential of large Indian empires, North America offered little

incentive for Spanish officials. Still, Spanish expeditions combed North America. Francisco Vazquez de Coronado pillaged his way across the Southwest. Hernando De Soto tortured and raped and enslaved his way across the Southeast. Soon Spain had footholds—however tenuous—across much of the continent.

PART II

MODULE 2: NEW WORLD EXPERIMENTS

3. English Colonization



Nicholas Hilliard, *The Battle of Gravelines*, 1588, via [National Geographic España](#)

Spain had a one-hundred year head start on New World colonization and a jealous England eyed the enormous wealth that Spain gleaned from the new World. The Protestant Reformation had shaken England but Elizabeth I assumed the English crown in 1558 and oversaw the expansion of trade and exploration—and the literary achievements of Shakespeare and Marlowe—during England’s so-called “golden age.” English mercantilism, a state-assisted manufacturing and trading system, created and maintained markets, ensured a steady supply of consumers and laborers, stimulated economic expansion, and increased English wealth.

However, wrenching social and economic changes unsettled the English population. The island’s population increased from fewer than three million in 1500 to over five million by the middle of the seventeenth century. The skyrocketing cost of land coincided with plummeting farming income. Rents and prices rose but wages stagnated. Moreover, the so-called “enclosure” movement—sparked by the transition of English landholders from agriculture to livestock-raising—evicted tenants from the land and created hordes

of landless, jobless peasants that haunted the cities and countryside. One-quarter to one-half of the population lived in extreme poverty.

New World colonization won support in England amid a time of rising English fortunes among the wealthy, a tense Spanish rivalry, and mounting internal social unrest. But English colonization supporters always touted more than economic gains and mere national self-interest. They claimed to be doing God's work.

Many cited spiritual concerns and argued that colonization would glorify God, England, and Protestantism by Christianizing the New World's pagan peoples. Advocates such as Richard Hakluyt the Younger and John Dee, for instance, drew upon *The History of the Kings of Britain*, written by the twelfth century monk Geoffrey of Monmouth, and its mythical account of King Arthur's conquest and Christianization of pagan lands to justify American conquest. Moreover, promoters promised that the conversion of New World Indians would satisfy God and glorify England's "Virgin Queen," Elizabeth I, who was verging on a near-divine image among the English. The English—and other European Protestant colonizers—imagined themselves superior to the Spanish, who still bore the Black Legend of inhuman cruelty. English colonization, supporters argued, would prove that superiority.

In his 1584 "Discourse on Western Planting," Richard Hakluyt amassed the supposed religious, moral, and exceptional economic benefits of colonization. He repeated the "Black Legend" of Spanish New World terrorism and attacked the sins of Catholic Spain. He promised that English colonization could strike a blow against Spanish heresy and bring Protestant religion to the New World. English interference, Hakluyt suggested, may provide the only salvation from Catholic rule in the New World. The New World, too, he said, offered obvious economic advantages. Trade and resource extraction would enrich the English treasury. England, for instance, could find plentiful materials to outfit a world-class navy. Moreover, he said, the New World could provide an escape for England's vast armies of landless "vagabonds." Expanded trade, he argued, would not only bring profit, but also provide work for England's jobless

poor. A Christian enterprise, a blow against Spain, an economic stimulus, and a social safety valve all beckoned the English toward a commitment to colonization.

This noble rhetoric veiled the coarse economic motives that brought England to the New World. New economic structures and a new merchant class paved the way for colonization. England's merchants lacked estates but they had new plans to build wealth. By collaborating with new government-sponsored trading monopolies and employing financial innovations such as joint-stock companies, England's merchants sought to improve on the Dutch economic system. Spain was extracting enormous material wealth from the New World; why shouldn't England? Joint-stock companies, the ancestors of the modern corporations, became the initial instruments of colonization. With government monopolies, shared profits, and managed risks, these money-making ventures could attract and manage the vast capital needed for colonization. In 1606 James I approved the formation of the Virginia Company (named after Elizabeth, the "Virgin Queen").

Rather than formal colonization, however, the most successful early English ventures in the New World were a form of state-sponsored piracy known as privateering. Queen Elizabeth sponsored sailors, or "Sea Dogges," such as John Hawkins and Francis Drake, to plunder Spanish ships and towns in the Americas. Privateers earned a substantial profit both for themselves and for the English crown. England practiced piracy on a scale, one historian wrote, "that transforms crime into politics." Francis Drake harried Spanish ships throughout the Western Hemisphere and raided Spanish caravans as far away as the coast of Peru on the Pacific Ocean. In 1580 Elizabeth rewarded her skilled pirate with knighthood. But Elizabeth walked a fine line. Protestant-Catholic tensions already running high, English privateering provoked Spain. Tensions worsened after the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, a Catholic. In 1588, King Philip II of Spain unleashed the fabled Armada. With 130 Ships, 8,000 sailors, and 18,000 soldiers, Spain

launched the largest invasion in history to destroy the British navy and depose Elizabeth.

An island nation, England depended upon a robust navy for trade and territorial expansion. England had fewer ships than Spain but they were smaller and swifter. They successfully harassed the Armada, forcing it to retreat to the Netherlands for reinforcements. But then a fluke storm, celebrated in England as the “divine wind,” annihilated the remainder of the fleet. The destruction of the Armada changed the course of world history. It not only saved England and secured English Protestantism, but it also opened the seas to English expansion and paved the way for England’s colonial future. By 1600, England stood ready to embark upon its dominance over North America.

English colonization would look very different from Spanish or French colonization, as was indicated by early experiences with the Irish. England had long been trying to conquer Catholic Ireland. The English used a model of forcible segregation with the Irish that would mirror their future relationships with Native Americans. Rather than integrating with the Irish and trying to convert them to Protestantism, England more often simply seized land through violence and pushed out the former inhabitants, leaving them to move elsewhere or to die.

English colonization, however, began haltingly. Sir Humphrey Gilbert labored throughout the late-sixteenth century to establish a colony in New Foundland but failed. In 1587, with a predominantly male cohort of 150 English colonizers, John White reestablished an abandoned settlement on North Carolina’s Roanoke Island. Supply shortages prompted White to return to England for additional support but the Spanish Armada and the mobilization of British naval efforts stranded him in Britain for several years. When he finally returned to Roanoke, he found the colony abandoned. What befell the failed colony? White found the word “Croatan,” the name of a nearby island and Indian people, carved into a tree or a post in the abandoned colony. Historians presume the colonists, short of food, may have fled for the nearby island and its settled native

population. Others offer violence as an explanation. Regardless, the English colonists were never heard from again. When Queen Elizabeth died in 1603, no Englishmen had yet established a permanent North American colony.

After King James made peace with Spain in 1604, privateering no longer held out the promise of cheap wealth. Colonization assumed a new urgency. The Virginia Company, established in 1606, drew inspiration from Cortes and the Spanish conquests. It hoped to find gold and silver as well as other valuable trading commodities in the New World: glass, iron, furs, pitch, tar, and anything else the country could supply. The Company planned to identify a navigable river with a deep harbor, away from the eyes of the Spanish. There they would find an Indian trading network and extract a fortune from the New World.

4. Jamestown



“Incolarum Virginiae piscandi ratio (The Method of Fishing of the Inhabitants of Virginia),” c. 1590, via the [Encyclopedia Virginia](#).

In April 1607 Englishmen aboard three ships—the *Susan Constant*, *Godspeed*, and *Discovery*—sailed forty miles up the James River (named for the English king) in present-day Virginia (Named for Elizabeth I, the “Virgin Queen”) and settled upon just such a place. The uninhabited peninsula they selected was upriver and out of sight of Spanish patrols. It offered easy defense against ground assaults and was uninhabited but still located close enough to many Indian villages and their potentially lucrative trade networks. But the location was a disaster. Indians ignored the peninsula because of its terrible soil and its brackish tidal water that led to debilitating disease. Despite these setbacks, the English built Jamestown, the first permanent English colony in the present-day United States.

The English had not entered a wilderness but had arrived amid a people they called the Powhatan Confederacy. Powhatan, or Wahunsenacawh, as he called himself, led nearly 10,000 Algonquian-

speaking Indians in the Chesapeake. They burned vast acreage to clear brush and create sprawling artificial park-like grasslands so that they could easily hunt deer, elk, and bison. The Powhatan raised corn, beans, squash, and possibly sunflowers, rotating acreage throughout the Chesapeake. Without plows, manure, or draft animals, the Powhatan achieved a remarkable number of calories cheaply and efficiently.

Jamestown was a profit-seeking venture backed by investors. The colonists were mostly gentlemen and proved entirely unprepared for the challenges ahead. They hoped for easy riches but found none. The peninsula's location was poisonous and supplies from England were sporadic or spoiled. As John Smith later complained, they "Would rather starve than work." And so they did. Disease and starvation ravaged the colonists. Fewer than half of the original colonists survived the first nine months.

John Smith, a yeoman's son and capable leader, took command of the crippled colony and promised, "He that will not work shall not eat." He navigated Indian diplomacy, claiming that he was captured and sentenced to death but Powhatan's daughter, Pocahontas, intervened to save his life. She would later marry another colonist, John Rolfe, and die in England.

Powhatan kept the English alive that first winter. The Powhatan had welcomed the English and their manufactured goods. The Powhatan placed a high value on metal axe-heads, kettles, tools, and guns and eagerly traded furs and other abundant goods for them. With 10,000 confederated natives and with food in abundance, the Indians had little to fear and much to gain from the isolated outpost of sick and dying Englishmen.

Despite reinforcements, the English continued to die. Four hundred settlers arrived in 1609 and the overwhelmed colony entered a desperate "starving time" in the winter of 1609-1610. Supplies were lost at sea. Relations with the Indians deteriorated and the colonists fought a kind of slow-burning guerrilla war with the Powhatan. Disaster loomed for the colony. The settlers ate everything they could, roaming the woods for nuts and berries.

They boiled leather. They dug up graves to eat the corpses of their former neighbors. One man was executed for killing and eating his wife. Some years later, George Percy recalled the colonists' desperation during these years, when he served as the colony's president: "Having fed upon our horses and other beasts as long as they lasted, we were glad to make shift with vermin as dogs, cats, rats and mice ... as to eat boots shoes or any other leather ... And now famine beginning to look ghastly and pale in every face, that nothing was spared to maintain life and to doe those things which seem incredible, as to dig up dead corpses out of graves and to eat them." Archaeological excavations in 2012 exhumed the bones of a fourteen-year-old girl that exhibited the telltale signs of cannibalism. All but 60 settlers would die by the summer of 1610.

Little improved over the next several years. By 1616, 80 percent of all English immigrants that arrived in Jamestown had perished. England's first American colony was a catastrophe. The colony was reorganized and in 1614 the marriage of Pocahontas to John Rolfe eased relations with the Powhatan, though the colony still limped along as a starving, commercially disastrous tragedy. The colonists were unable to find any profitable commodities and they still depended upon the Indians and sporadic shipments from England for food. But then tobacco saved Jamestown.

By the time King James I described tobacco as a "noxious weed, ... loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain, and dangerous to the lungs," it had already taken Europe by storm. In 1616 John Rolfe crossed tobacco strains from Trinidad and Guiana and planted Virginia's first tobacco crop. In 1617 the colony sent its first cargo of tobacco back to England. The "noxious weed," a native of the New World, fetched a high price in Europe and the tobacco boom began in Virginia and then later spread to Maryland. "Tobacco created a gold rush society in Virginia," wrote one historian. Within fifteen years American colonists were exporting over 500,000 pounds of tobacco per year. Within forty, they were exporting fifteen million.

Tobacco changed everything. It saved Virginia from ruin,

incentivized further colonization, and laid the groundwork for what would become the United States. With a new market open, Virginia drew not only merchants and traders, but also settlers. Colonists came in droves. They were mostly young, mostly male, and mostly indentured servants. But even the rough terms of servitude were no match for the promise of land and potential profits that beckoned ambitious and dispossessed English farmers alike. But still there were not enough of them. Tobacco was a labor-intensive crop and ambitious planters, with seemingly limitless land before them, lacked only laborers to exponentially escalate their wealth and status. The colony's great labor vacuum inspired the creation of the "headright policy" in 1618: any person who migrated to Virginia would automatically receive 50 acres of land and any immigrant whose passage they paid would entitle them to 50 acres more.

In 1619 the Virginia Company established the House of Burgesses, a limited representative body composed of white landowners that first met in Jamestown. That same year, a Dutch slave ship sold 20 Africans to the Virginia colonists. Southern slavery was born.

Soon the tobacco-growing colonists expanded beyond the bounds of Jamestown's deadly peninsula. When it became clear that the English were not merely intent on maintaining a small trading post, but sought a permanent ever-expanding colony, conflict with the Powhatan Confederacy became almost inevitable. Powhatan died in 1622 and was succeeded by his brother, Opechancanough, who promised to drive the land-hungry colonists back into the sea. He launched a surprise attack and in a single day (March 22, 1622) killed 347 colonists, or one-fourth of all the colonists in Virginia. The colonists retaliated and revisited the massacres upon Indian settlements many times over. The massacre freed the colonists to drive the Indians off their land. The governor of Virginia declared it colonial policy to achieve the "expulsion of the savages to gain the free range of the country." War and disease destroyed the remnants of the Chesapeake Indians and tilted the balance of power decisively toward the English colonizers, whose foothold in the New World would cease to be as tenuous and challenged.

English colonists brought to the New World particular visions of racial, cultural, and religious supremacy. Despite starving in the shadow of the Powhatan Confederacy, English colonists nevertheless judged themselves physically, spiritually, and technologically superior to native peoples in North America. Christianity, metallurgy, intensive agriculture, trans-Atlantic navigation, and even wheat all magnified the English sense of superiority. This sense of superiority, when coupled with outbreaks of violence, left the English feeling entitled to indigenous lands and resources.

Spanish conquerors established the framework for the Atlantic slave trade over a century before the first chained Africans arrived at Jamestown. Even Bartolomé de las Casas, celebrated for his pleas to save Native Americans from colonial butchery, for a time recommended that indigenous labor be replaced by importing Africans. Early English settlers from the Caribbean and Atlantic coast of North America mostly imitated European ideas of African inferiority. “Race” followed the expansion of slavery across the Atlantic world. Skin-color and race suddenly seemed fixed. Englishmen equated Africans with categorical blackness and blackness with Sin, “the handmaid and symbol of baseness.” An English essayist in 1695 wrote that “A negro will always be a negro, carry him to Greenland, feed him chalk, feed and manage him never so many ways.” More and more Europeans embraced the notions that Europeans and Africans were of distinct races. Others now preached that the Old Testament God cursed Ham, the son of Noah, and doomed blacks to perpetual enslavement.

And yet in the early years of American slavery, ideas about race were not yet fixed and the practice of slavery was not yet codified. The first generations of Africans in English North America faced miserable conditions but, in contrast to later American history, their initial servitude was not necessarily permanent, heritable, or even particularly disgraceful. Africans were definitively set apart as fundamentally different from their white counterparts, and faced longer terms of service and harsher punishments, but, like the

indentured white servants whisked away from English slums, these first Africans in North America could also work for only a set number of years before becoming free landowners themselves. The Angolan Anthony Johnson, for instance, was sold into servitude but fulfilled his indenture and became a prosperous tobacco planter himself.

In 1622, at the dawn of the tobacco boom, Jamestown had still seemed a failure. But the rise of tobacco and the destruction of the Powhatan turned the tide. Colonists escaped the deadly peninsula and immigrants poured into the colony to grow tobacco. By 1650 over 15,000 colonists called Virginia home, and the colony began to turn a profit for the Crown.

5. New England



Seal of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, via [The History Project \(UC Davis\)](#).

The English colonies in New England established from 1620 onward were founded with loftier goals than those in Virginia. Although migrants to New England expected economic profit, religious motives directed the rhetoric and much of the reality of these colonies. Not every English person who moved to New England during the seventeenth century was a Puritan, but Puritans dominated the politics, religion, and culture of New England. Even after 1700, the region's Puritan inheritance shaped many aspects of its history.

The term Puritan began as an insult, and its recipients usually referred to each other as “the godly” if they used a specific term at all. Puritans believed that the Church of England did not distance itself far enough from Catholicism after Henry VIII broke with Rome in the 1530s. They largely agreed with European Calvinists—followers of theologian Jean Calvin—on matters of

religious doctrine. Calvinists (and Puritans) believed that mankind was redeemed by God's Grace alone, and that the fate of an individual's immortal soul was predestined. The happy minority God had already chosen to save were known among English Puritans as the Elect. Calvinists also argued that the decoration of churches, reliance on ornate ceremony, and (they argued) corrupt priesthood obscured God's message. They believed that reading the Bible promised the best way to understand God.

Puritans were stereotyped by their enemies as dour killjoys, and the exaggeration has endured. It is certainly true that the Puritans' disdain for excess and opposition to many holidays popular in Europe (including Christmas, which, as Puritans never tired of reminding everyone, the Bible never told anyone to celebrate) lent themselves to caricature. But Puritans understood themselves as advocating a reasonable middle path in a corrupt world. It would never occur to a Puritan, for example, to abstain from alcohol or sex.

During the first century after the English Reformation (c.1530-1630) Puritans sought to "purify" the Church of England of all practices that smacked of Catholicism, advocating a simpler worship service, the abolition of ornate churches, and other reforms. They had some success in pushing the Church of England in a more Calvinist direction, but with the coronation of King Charles I (r. 1625-1649), the Puritans gained an implacable foe that cast English Puritans as excessive and dangerous. Facing growing persecution, the Puritans began the Great Migration, during which about 20,000 people traveled to New England between 1630 and 1640. The Puritans (unlike the small band of separatist "Pilgrims" who founded Plymouth Colony in 1620) remained committed to reforming the Church of England, but temporarily decamped to North America to accomplish this task. Leaders like John Winthrop insisted they were not separating from, or abandoning, England, but were rather forming a godly community in America, that would be a "Shining City on a Hill" and an example for reformers back home. The Puritans did not seek to create a haven of religious

toleration, a notion that they—along with nearly all European Christians—regarded as ridiculous at best, and dangerous at worst.

While the Puritans did not succeed in building a godly utopia in New England, a combination of Puritan traits with several external factors created colonies wildly different from any other region settled by English people. Unlike those heading to Virginia, colonists in New England (Plymouth [1620], Massachusetts Bay [1630], Connecticut [1636], and Rhode Island [1636]) generally arrived in family groups. The majority of New England immigrants were small landholders in England, a class contemporary English called the “middling sort.” When they arrived in New England they tended to replicate their home environments, founding towns comprised of independent landholders. The New England climate and soil made large-scale plantation agriculture impractical, so the system of large landholders using masses of slaves or indentured servants to grow labor-intensive crops never took hold.

There is no evidence that the New England Puritans would have opposed such a system were it possible; other Puritans made their fortunes on the Caribbean sugar islands, and New England merchants profited as suppliers of provisions and slaves to those colonies. By accident of geography as much as by design, then, New England society was much less stratified than any of Britain’s other seventeenth-century colonies.

Although New England colonies could boast wealthy landholding elites, the disparity of wealth in the region remained narrow compared to the Chesapeake, Carolina, or the Caribbean. Instead, seventeenth-century New England was characterized by a broadly-shared modest prosperity based on a mixed economy dependent on small farms, shops, fishing, lumber, shipbuilding, and trade with the Atlantic World.

A combination of environmental factors and the Puritan social ethos produced a region of remarkable health and stability during the seventeenth century. New England immigrants avoided most of the deadly outbreaks of tropical disease that turned Chesapeake colonies into graveyards. Disease, in fact, only aided English

settlement and relations to Native Americans. In contrast to other English colonists who had to contend with powerful Native American neighbors, the Puritans confronted the stunned survivors of a biological catastrophe. A lethal pandemic of smallpox during the 1610s swept away as much as 90 percent of the region's Native American population. Many survivors welcomed the English as potential allies against rival tribes who had escaped the catastrophe. The relatively healthy environment coupled with political stability and the predominance of family groups among early immigrants allowed the New England population to grow to 91,000 people by 1700 from only 21,000 immigrants. In contrast, 120,000 English went to the Chesapeake, and only 85,000 white colonists remained in 1700.

The New England Puritans set out to build their utopia by creating communities of the godly. Groups of men, often from the same region of England, applied to the colony's General Court for land grants, which averaged 36 square miles. They generally divided part of the land for immediate use while keeping much of the rest as "commons" or undivided land for future generations. The town's inhabitants collectively decided the size of each settler's home lot based on their current wealth and status. Besides oversight of property, the town restricted membership, and new arrivals needed to apply for admission. Those who gained admittance could participate in town governments that, while not democratic by modern standards, nevertheless had broad popular involvement. All male property holders could vote in town meetings and choose the selectmen, assessors, constables, and other officials from among themselves to conduct the daily affairs of government. Upon their founding, towns wrote covenants, reflecting the Puritan belief in God's covenant with His people. Towns sought to arbitrate disputes and contain strife, as did the church. Wayward or divergent individuals were persuaded and corrected before coercion.

Popular conceptions of Puritans as hardened authoritarians are exaggerated, but if persuasion and arbitration failed, people who did not conform to community norms were punished or removed.

Massachusetts banished Anne Hutchinson, Roger Williams, and other religious dissenters like the Quakers.

Although by many measures colonization in New England succeeded, its Puritan leaders failed in their own mission to create a utopian community that would inspire their fellows back in England. They tended to focus their disappointment on the younger generation. “But alas!” Increase Mather lamented, “That so many of the younger Generation have so early corrupted their [the founders] doings!” The Jeremiad, a sermon lamenting the fallen state of New England due to its straying from its early virtuous path, became a staple of late seventeenth-century Puritan literature.

Yet the Jeremiads could not stop the effects of the prosperity that the early Puritans achieved. The population spread and grew more diverse as New England prospered. Many, if not most, New Englanders retained strong ties to their Calvinist roots into the eighteenth century, but the Puritans (who became Congregationalists) struggled against a rising tide of religious pluralism. On December 25, 1727, Judge Samuel Sewall noted in his diary that a new Anglican minister “keeps the day in his new Church at Braintree: people flock thither.” Previously forbidden holidays like Christmas were celebrated only in Church. Puritan divine Cotton Mather discovered on the Christmas of 1711, “a number of young people of both sexes, belonging, many of them, to my flock, had...a Frolick, a reveling Feast, and a Ball, which discovers their Corruption.”

Despite the lamentations of the Mathers and other Puritan leaders of their failure, they left an enduring mark on New England culture and society that endured long after the region’s residents ceased to be called “Puritan.”

PART III

MODULE 3: PUTTING DOWN ROOTS

6. Slavery Anti-Slavery and Atlantic Exchange

Slavery was a transatlantic institution. However, it developed distinct characteristics in British North America. By 1750, slavery was legal in every North American English colony, but local economic imperatives, demographic trends, and cultural practices all contributed to distinct colonial variants of slavery.

Virginia, the oldest of the English mainland colonies, imported its first slaves in 1619. Virginia planters built larger and larger estates and guaranteed that these estates would remain intact through the use of primogeniture (where a family's estate would descend to the eldest male heir) and the entail (a legal procedure that prevented the breakup and sale of estates). This distribution of property, which kept wealth and property consolidated, guaranteed that the great planters would dominate social and economic life in the Chesapeake. This system also fostered an economy dominated by tobacco. By 1750 there were approximately 100,000 African slaves in Virginia, at least 40% of the colony's total population. The majority of these slaves worked on large estates under the gang system of labor, working from dawn to dusk in groups with close supervision by a white overseer or enslaved "driver" who could use physical force to compel labor.

Virginians used the law to protect the interests of slaveholders. In 1705 the House of Burgesses passed its first comprehensive slave code. Earlier laws had already guaranteed that the children of enslaved women would be born slaves, conversion to Christianity would not lead to freedom, and owners could not free their slaves unless they transported them out of the colony. Slave owners could not be convicted of murder for killing a slave; conversely, any black Virginian who struck a white colonist would be severely whipped.

Virginia planters used the law to maximize the profitability of their slaves and closely regulate every aspect of their daily lives.

In South Carolina and Georgia, slavery was also central to colonial life but specific local conditions created a very different system of slavery. Georgia was founded by the philanthropist George Oglethorpe, who originally banned slavery from the colony. But by 1750 slavery was legal throughout the region. South Carolina had been a slave colony from its founding and, by 1750, was the only mainland colony with a majority enslaved African population. The Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina, co-authored by the philosopher John Locke in 1669, explicitly legalized slavery from the very beginning. Many early settlers in Carolina were slaveholders from British Caribbean sugar islands, and they brought their brutal slave codes with them. Defiant slaves could legally be beaten, branded, mutilated, even castrated. In 1740 a new law stated that killing a rebellious slave was not a crime and even the murder of a slave was treated as a minor misdemeanor. South Carolina also banned the freeing of slaves unless the freed slave left the colony.

Despite this brutal regime, a number of factors combined to give South Carolina slaves more independence in their daily lives. Rice, the staple crop underpinning the early Carolina economy, was widely cultivated in West Africa, and planters commonly requested that merchants sell them slaves skilled in the complex process of rice cultivation. Slaves from Senegambia were particularly prized. The expertise of these slaves contributed to one of the most lucrative economies in the colonies. Rice production soared from 20 million pounds in 1720 to nearly 80 million pounds by 1780. The swampy conditions of rice plantations, however, fostered dangerous diseases. Malaria and other tropical diseases spread, and caused many owners to live away from their plantations. These elites, who commonly owned a number of plantations, typically lived in Charleston townhouses to avoid the diseases of the rice fields. West Africans, however, were far more likely to have a level of immunity to malaria (due to a genetic trait that also contributes to higher

levels of sickle cell anemia), reinforcing planters' racial belief that Africans were particularly suited to labor in tropical environments.

With plantation owners often far from home, Carolina slaves had less direct oversight than those in the Chesapeake. Furthermore, many Carolina rice plantations used the task system to organize slave labor. Under this system, slaves were given a number of specific tasks to complete in day, but once those tasks were complete slaves often had time to grow some crops of their own on garden plots allotted by plantation owners. These slaves participated in a thriving underground market that allowed them a degree of economic autonomy. Carolina slaves also had an unparalleled degree of cultural autonomy. Carolina's black majority, most of whom were imported directly from West Africa and relative lack of direct oversight allowed for the retention of many African cultural and religious practices. Syncretic languages like Gullah and Geechee contained many borrowed African terms, and traditional African basket weaving (often combined with Native American techniques) survive in the region to this day.

This unique Low Country slave culture contributed to the Stono Rebellion in September 1739. On a Sunday morning while planters attended church, a group of about 80 slaves set out for Spanish Florida under a banner that read "Liberty!," burning plantations and killing at least 20 white settlers as they marched. They were headed for Fort Mose, a free black settlement on the Georgia-Florida border, emboldened by the Spanish Empire's offer of freedom to any English slaves. Though the Stono Rebellion was ultimately unsuccessful – the local militia defeated the rebels in battle, captured and executed many of the slaves, and sold others to the sugar plantations of the West Indies – it was a violent reminder to South Carolina planters that their slaves would fight for freedom.

Slavery was also an important institution in the mid-Atlantic colonies. While New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania never developed plantation economies, slaves were often employed on larger farms growing cereal grains. Enslaved Africans worked alongside European tenant farmers on New York's Hudson Valley

“patroonships,” huge tracts of land granted to a few early Dutch families. As previously mentioned, slaves were also a common sight in Philadelphia, New York City, and other ports where they worked in the maritime trades and domestic service. New York City’s economy was so reliant on slavery that over 40% of its population was enslaved by 1700, while 15-20% of Pennsylvania’s colonial population was enslaved by 1750. In New York, the high density of slaves and a particularly diverse European population increased the threat of rebellion. A 1712 slave rebellion in New York City resulted in the deaths of 9 white colonists. In retribution, 21 slaves were executed and 6 others committed suicide before they could be burned alive. In 1741, another planned rebellion by African slaves, free blacks, and poor whites was uncovered, unleashing a witch-hunt that only stopped after 32 slaves and free blacks and 5 poor whites were executed. Another 70 slaves were deported, likely to the sugar cane fields of the West Indies.

Increasingly uneasy about the growth of slavery in the region, Quakers were the first group to turn against slavery. Quaker beliefs in radical non-violence and the fundamental equality of all human souls made slavery hard to justify. Most commentators argued that slavery originated in war, where captives were enslaved rather than executed. To pacifist Quakers, then, the very foundation of slavery was illegitimate. Furthermore Quaker belief in the equality of souls challenged the racial basis of slavery. By 1758, Quakers in Pennsylvania disowned members who engaged in the slave trade, and by 1772 slave-owning Quakers could be expelled from their meetings. These local activities in Pennsylvania had broad implications as the decision to ban slavery and slave trading was debated in Quaker meetings throughout the English-speaking world. The free black population in Philadelphia and other northern cities also continually agitated against slavery.

Slavery as a system of labor never took off in Massachusetts, Connecticut, or New Hampshire, though it was legal throughout the region. The absence of cash crops like tobacco or rice minimized the economic use of slavery. In Massachusetts, only about 2% of

the population was enslaved as late as the 1760s. The few slaves in the colony were concentrated in Boston along with a sizeable free black community that made up about 10% of the city's population. While slavery itself never really took root in New England, the slave trade was a central element of the region's economy. Every major port in the region participated to some extent in the transatlantic trade – Newport, Rhode Island alone had at least 150 ships active in the trade by 1740 – and New England also provided foodstuffs and manufactured goods to West Indian plantations.

7. Slavery and the Making of Race

Arriving in Charles Town, Carolina in 1706, Reverend Francis Le Jau was horrified almost immediately. He met enslaved Africans ravaged by the Middle Passage, Indians traveling south to enslave enemy villages, and colonists terrified of invasions from French Louisiana and Spanish Florida. Slavery and death surrounded him.

Still, Le Jau's stiffest complaints were reserved for his own countrymen, the English. White servants lazed about, "good for nothing at all." Elites were no better, unwilling to concede "that Negroes and Indians are otherwise than Beasts." Although the minister thought otherwise and baptized several hundred slaves after teaching them to read, his angst was revealing.

The 1660s marked a turning point for black men and women in southern colonies like Virginia. New laws created the expectation that African-descended peoples would remain enslaved for life. The permanent deprivation of freedom facilitated the maintenance of strict racial barriers. Skin color became more than superficial difference; it became the marker of a transcendent, all-encompassing division between two distinct peoples, two races, white and black.

Racial prejudice against African-descended peoples co-evolved with Anglo-American slavery, but blacks were certainly not the only slaves, nor whites the only slaveholders. For most of the seventeenth century, as it had been for many thousands of years, Native Americans controlled almost the entire North American continent. Only after more than a century of Anglo-American contact and observations of so many Indians decimated by diseases did settlers come to see themselves as somehow more naturally "American" than the continent's first human occupiers.

All seventeenth-century racial thought did not point directly

toward modern classifications of racial hierarchy. Captain Thomas Phillips, master of a slave ship in 1694, did not justify his work with any such creed: "I can't think there is any intrinsic value in one color more than another, nor that white is better than black, only we think it so because we are so." For Phillips, the profitability of slavery was the only justification he needed.

British colonists in the Caribbean made extensive use of Indian slaves as well as imported Africans. Before the intrusion of colonists, warring indigenous societies might take prisoners of war from enemy tribes to be ceremonially killed, traded to allied Indian groups as gifts, or incorporated into the societies of their captors. Throughout the colonial period, Europeans exploited these systems of indigenous captivity in many parts of the Americas. Colonists purchased captives from Indian traders with guns, knives, alcohol, or other manufactured goods. Colonists turned the purchased Indian captives into slaves who served on plantations in diverse functions: as fishermen, hunters, field laborers, domestic workers, and concubines. As the Indian slave trade became more valuable, illegal raids, rather than purchases, became more common. Courts might also punish convicted Indians by selling them into slavery.

Wars offered the most common means for colonists to acquire Native American slaves. Seventeenth-century European legal thought held that enslaving prisoners of war was not only legal, but more merciful than killing the captives outright. After the Pequot War (1636-1637), Massachusetts Bay colonists sold hundreds of North American Indians to the West Indies. A few years later, Dutch colonists in New Netherland (New York and New Jersey) enslaved Algonquian Indians during both Governor Kiefts War (1641-1645) and the two Eposus Wars (1659-1664). The Dutch similarly sent these Indians to English-settled Bermuda as well as Curaçao, a Dutch plantation-colony in the southern Caribbean. An even larger number of Indian slaves were captured during King Phillip's War from 1675-1678, a pan-Indian rebellion against the encroachments of the New England colonies. Hundreds of defeated Indians were bound and shipped into slavery. The New England colonists also

tried to send Indian slaves to Barbados, but the Barbados Assembly refused to import the New England Indians for fear they would encourage rebellion.

In the eighteenth century, wars in Florida, South Carolina, and the Mississippi Valley produced even more Indian slaves. Some wars emerged from contests between Indians and colonists for land, while others were manufactured as pretenses for acquiring captives. Some were not wars at all, but merely illegal raids performed by slave traders. Historians estimate that between 24,000 and 51,000 Native Americans were enslaved throughout the South between 1670 and 1715. While some Indians stayed in the southern colonies, many were exported through Charlestown, South Carolina, to other ports in the British Atlantic, most likely to Barbados, Jamaica, and Bermuda. Slave raids and Indian slavery threatened the many settlers who wished to claim land in frontier territories. By the eighteenth century, colonial governments often discouraged the practice, although it never ceased entirely as long as slavery was, in general, a legal institution.

Native American slaves died quickly, mostly from disease, but others were murdered or died from starvation. The demands of colonial plantation economies required a more reliable labor force, and the transatlantic slave trade met the demand. European slavers transported millions of Africans across the ocean in a horrific journey known as the Middle Passage. Writing at the end of the eighteenth century, Olaudah Equiano recalled the fearsomeness of the crew, the filth and gloom of the hold, the inadequate provisions allotted for the captives, and the desperation that drove some slaves to suicide. Equiano claimed to have been born in Igboland (in modern-day Nigeria), but he may have been born in colonial South Carolina and collected memories of the Middle Passage from African-born slaves. In the same time period, Alexander Falconbridge, a slave ship surgeon, described the sufferings of slaves from shipboard infections and close quarters in the hold. Dysentery, known as “the bloody flux,” left captives lying in pools of excrement. Chained in small spaces in the hold, slaves could lose

so much skin and flesh from chafing against metal and timber that their bones protruded. Other sources detailed rapes, whippings, and diseases like smallpox and conjunctivitis aboard slave ships.

“Middle” had various meanings in the Atlantic slave trade. For the captains and crews of slave ships, the Middle Passage was one leg in the maritime trade in sugar and other semi-finished American goods, manufactured European goods, and African slaves. For the enslaved Africans, the Middle Passage was the middle leg of three distinct journeys from Africa to the Americas. First was an overland journey to a coastal slave-trading factory, often a trek of hundreds of miles. Second—and middle—was an oceanic trip lasting from one to six months in a slaver. Third was acculturation (known as “seasoning”) and transportation to the mine, plantation, or other location where new slaves were forced into labor.

Recent estimates count between 11 and 12 million Africans forced across the Atlantic, with about 2 million deaths at sea as well as an additional several million dying in the trade’s overland African leg or during seasoning. Conditions in all three legs of the slave trade were horrible, but the first abolitionists focused especially on the abuses of the Middle Passage.

Europeans made the first steps toward an Atlantic slave trade in the 1440s, when Portuguese sailors landed in West Africa in search of gold, spices, and allies against the Muslims who dominated Mediterranean trade. Beginning in the 1440s, ship captains carried African slaves to Portugal. These Africans were valued only as domestic servants given Western Europe’s surplus of peasant labor. European expansion into the Americas introduced both settlers and European authorities to a new situation—an abundance of land and a scarcity of labor. Portuguese, Dutch, and English ships became the conduits for Africans forced to America. The western coast of Africa, the Gulf of Guinea, and the west central coast were sources of African captives. Wars of expansion and raiding parties produced captives who could be sold in coastal factories. African slave traders bartered for European finished goods such as beads, cloth, rum, firearms, and metal wares.



The first trading post built on the Gulf of Guinea and the oldest European building southern of the Sahara, Elmina Castle was established as a trade settlement by the Portuguese in the 15th century. The fort became one of the largest and most important markets for African slaves along the Atlantic slave trade. "View of the castle of Elmina on the north-west side, seen from the river. Located on the gold coast in Guinea," in Atlas Blaeu van der Hem, c. 1665-1668. [Wikimedia](#).

Slavers often landed in the British West Indies, where slaves were seasoned in places like Barbados. Charleston, South Carolina, became the leading entry point for the slave trade on the mainland. Sugar and tobacco boomed in Europe in the early colonial period, but rice, indigo, and rum were also profitable plantation exports. In the middle of the eighteenth century, after trade wars with the Dutch, English slavers became the most active carriers of Africans across the Atlantic. Brazil was the most common destination for slaves—more than four million slaves ended up in Brazil. English slavers, however, brought approximately two million slaves to the British West Indies. About 450,000 Africans landed in British North America, seemingly a small portion of the 11 to 12 million victims of

the trade. Females were more likely to be found in North America than in other slave populations. These enslaved African women bore more children than their counterparts in the Caribbean or South America. A 1662 Virginia law stated that an enslaved woman's children inherited the "condition" of their mother. This meant that all children born to slave women would be slaves for life, whether the father was white or black, enslaved or free.

American culture contains many resonances of the Middle Passage and the Atlantic slave trade. Many foods associated with Africans, such as cassava, were imported to West Africa as part of the slave trade, then adopted by African cooks before being brought to the Americas, where they are still consumed. West African rhythms and melodies live in new forms today in music as varied as religious spirituals and synthesized drumbeats. African influences appear in the basket making and language of the Gullah people on the Carolina Coastal Islands.

Most fundamentally, the modern notion of race emerged as a result of the slave trade. Before the Atlantic slave trade, neither Europeans nor West Africans had a strong notion of race. Indeed, African slave traders lacked a firm category of race that might have led them to think that they were selling their own people. Similarly, most English citizens felt no racial identification with the Irish or the even the Welsh. Modern notions of race emerged only after Africans of different ethnic groups were mixed together in the slave trade and as Europeans began enslaving Africans and Native Americans exclusively.

In the early years of slavery, especially in the South, the distinction between indentured servants and slaves was, at first, unclear. In 1643, a law was passed in Virginia that made African women "tithable." This, in effect, associated African women's work with hard, agricultural labor. There was no similar tax levied on white women. This law was an attempt to disassociate white and African women. The English ideal was to have enough hired hands and servants working on a farm so that wives and daughters did not have to partake in manual labor. Instead, white women were

expected to labor in dairy sheds, small gardens, and kitchens. Of course, due to the labor shortage in early America, white women did participate in field labor. But this idealized gendered division of labor contributed to the English conceiving of themselves as better than other groups who did not divide labor in this fashion, including the West Africans arriving in slave ships to the colonies. For white colonists, the association of a gendered division of labor with Englishness was a key formulation in determining that Africans would be enslaved and subordinate to whites.

Ideas about the rule of the household were informed by legal understandings of marriage and the home in England. A man was expected to hold “paternal dominion” over his household, which included his wife, children, servants, and slaves. White men could expect to rule over their subordinates. In contrast, slaves were not legally seen as masters of a household, and were therefore subject to the authority of the white master. Slave marriages were not legally recognized. Some enslaved men and women married “abroad”; that is, they married individuals who were not owned by the same master and did not live on the same plantation. These husbands and wives had to travel miles at a time, typically only once a week on Sundays, to visit their spouses. Legal or religious authority did not protect these marriages, and masters could refuse to let their slaves visit a spouse, or even sell a slave to a new master hundreds of miles away from their spouse and children. In addition to distance that might have separated family members, the work of keeping children fed and clothed often fell to enslaved women. They performed essential work during the hours that they were not expected to work for the master. They produced clothing and food for their husbands and children and often provided religious and educational instruction.

8. Riot, Rebellion, and Revolt

The seventeenth century saw the establishment and solidification of the British North American colonies, but this process did not occur peacefully. Explosions of violence rocked nearly all of the English settlements on the continent.

In May 1637, an armed contingent of English Puritans from Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, and Connecticut colonies trekked into the New England wilderness. Referring to themselves as the “Sword of the Lord,” this military force intended to attack “that insolent and barbarous Nation, called the Pequots.” In the resulting violence, Puritans put the Mystic community to the torch, beginning with the north and south ends of the town. As Pequot men, women, and children tried to escape the blaze, other soldiers waited with swords and guns. One commander estimated that of the “four hundred souls in this Fort...not above five of them escaped out of our hands,” although another counted near “six or seven hundred” dead. In a span of less than two months, the English Puritans boasted that the Pequot “were drove out of their country, and slain by the sword, to the number of fifteen hundred.”

The foundations of the war lay within the rivalry between the Pequot, the Narragansett and Mohegan, who battled for control of the fur and wampum trades. This rivalry eventually forced the English and Dutch to choose sides. The war remained a conflict of Native interests and initiative, especially as the Mohegan hedged their bets on the English and reaped the rewards that came with displacing the Pequot.

Victory over the Pequot not only provided security and stability for the English colonies, but also propelled the Mohegan to new heights of political and economic influence as the primary power in New England. Ironically, history seemingly repeated itself as the Mohegan, desperate for a remedy to their diminishing power, joined the Wampanoag war against the Puritans, which produced a more

violent conflict in 1675 known as King Philip's War, bringing a decisive end to "Indian Power" in New England.

In the winter of 1675, the body of John Sassamon, a Christian, Harvard-educated Wampanoag, was found under the ice of a nearby pond. A fellow Christian Indian informed English authorities that three warriors under the local sachem named Metacom, known to the English as King Philip, had killed Sassamon, who had previously accused Metacom of planning an insurrection against the English. The three alleged killers appeared before the Plymouth court in June 1675, were found guilty of murder, and executed. Several weeks later, a group of Wampanoags killed nine English colonists in the town of Swansea.

Metacom—like most other New England sachems—had entered into covenants of "submission" to various colonies, viewing the arrangements as relationships of protection and reciprocity rather than subjugation. Indians and English lived, traded, worshiped, and arbitrated disputes in close proximity before 1675, but the execution of three of Metacom's men at the hands of Plymouth Colony epitomized what many Indians viewed as a growing inequality of that relationship. The Wampanoags who attacked Swansea may have sought to restore balance, or to retaliate for the recent executions. Neither they nor anyone else sought to engulf all of New England in war, but that is precisely what happened. Authorities in Plymouth sprung into action, enlisting help from the neighboring colonies of Connecticut and Massachusetts.

Metacom and his followers eluded colonial forces in the summer of 1675, striking more Plymouth towns as they moved northwest. Some groups joined his forces, while others remained neutral or supported the English. The war badly divided some Indian communities. Metacom himself had little control over events, as panic and violence spread throughout New England in the autumn of 1675. English mistrust of neutral Indians, sometimes accompanied by demands they surrender their weapons, pushed many into open war. By the end of 1675, most of the Indians of western and central Massachusetts had entered the war, laying waste to nearby English

towns like Deerfield, Hadley, and Brookfield. Hapless colonial forces, spurning the military assistance of Indian allies such as the Mohegans, proved unable to locate more mobile native villages or intercept Indian attacks.

The English compounded their problems by attacking the powerful and neutral Narragansetts of Rhode Island in December 1675. In an action called the Great Swamp Fight, 1000 Englishmen put the main Narragansett village to the torch, gunning down as many as 1000 Narragansett men, women, and children as they fled the maelstrom. The surviving Narragansetts joined the Indians already in rebellion against the English. Between February and April 1676, rebel forces devastated a succession of English towns closer and closer to Boston.

In the spring of 1676, the tide turned. The New England colonies took the advice of men like Benjamin Church, who urged the greater use of Native allies to find and fight the mobile rebels. Unable to plant crops and forced to live off the land, the rebels' will to fight waned as companies of English and Native allies pursued them. Growing numbers of rebels fled the region, switched sides, or surrendered in the spring and summer. The English sold many of the latter group into slavery. Colonial forces finally caught up with Metacom in August 1676, and the sachem was slain by a Christian Indian fighting with the English.

The war permanently altered the political and demographic landscape of New England. Between 800 and 1000 English and at least 3000 Indians perished in the 14-month conflict. Thousands of other Indians fled the region or were sold into slavery. In 1670, Native Americans comprised roughly 25 percent of New England's population; a decade later, they made up perhaps 10 percent. The war's brutality also encouraged a growing hatred of all Indians among many New England colonists. Though the fighting ceased in 1676, the bitter legacy of King Philip's War lived on.

Native American communities in Virginia had already been decimated by wars in 1622 and 1644. But in the same year that New Englanders crushed Metacom's forces, a new clash arose in Virginia.

This conflict, known as Bacon's Rebellion, grew out of tensions between Native Americans and English settlers as well as tensions between wealthy English landowners and the poor settlers who continually pushed west into Indian territory.

Bacon's Rebellion began, appropriately enough, with an argument over a pig. In the summer of 1675, a group of Doeg Indians visited Thomas Mathew on his plantation in northern Virginia to collect a debt that he owed them. When Mathew refused to pay, they took some of his pigs to settle the debt. This "theft" sparked a series of raids and counter-raids. The Susquehannock Indians were caught in the crossfire when the militia mistook them for Doegs, leaving fourteen dead. A similar pattern of escalating violence then repeated: the Susquehannocks retaliated by killing colonists in Virginia and Maryland, and the English marshaled their forces and laid siege to the Susquehannocks. The conflict became uglier after the militia executed a delegation of Susquehannock ambassadors under a flag of truce. A few parties of warriors intent on revenge launched raids along the frontier and killed dozens of English colonists.

The sudden and unpredictable violence of the Susquehannock War triggered a political crisis in Virginia. Panicked colonists fled en masse from the vulnerable frontiers, flooding into coastal communities and begging the government for help. But the cautious governor, Sir William Berkeley, did not send an army after the Susquehannocks. He worried that a full-scale war would inevitably drag other Indians into the conflict, turning allies into deadly enemies. Berkeley therefore insisted on a defensive strategy centered around a string of new fortifications to protect the frontier and strict instructions not to antagonize friendly Indians. It was a sound military policy but a public relations disaster. Terrified colonists condemned Berkeley. Building contracts for the forts went to Berkeley's wealthy friends, who conveniently decided that their own plantations were the most strategically vital. Colonists also condemned the government as a corrupt band of oligarchs more interested in lining their pockets than protecting their people.

By the spring of 1676, a small group of frontier colonists took matters into their own hands. Naming the charismatic young Nathaniel Bacon as their leader, these self-styled “volunteers” proclaimed that they took up arms in defense of their homes and families. They took pains to assure Berkeley that they intended no disloyalty, but Berkeley feared a coup and branded the volunteers as traitors. Berkeley finally mobilized an army—not to pursue Susquehannocks, but to crush their rebellion. His drastic response catapulted a small band of anti-Indian vigilantes into full-fledged rebels whose survival necessitated bringing down the colonial government.

Bacon and the rebels stalked the Susquehannock as well as friendly Indians like the Pamunkeys and the Occaneechis. The rebels became convinced that there was a massive Indian conspiracy to destroy the English and viewed themselves as heroes to frightened Virginians. Berkeley’s stubborn persistence in defending friendly Indians and destroying the Indian-fighting rebels led Bacon to accuse the governor of conspiring with a “powerful cabal” of elite planters and with “the protected and darling Indians” to slaughter his English enemies.

In the early summer of 1676, Bacon’s neighbors elected him their burgess and sent him to Jamestown to confront Berkeley. The governor promptly arrested him and forced him into the humiliating position of publicly begging forgiveness for his treason. Bacon swallowed this indignity, but turned the tables by gathering an army of followers and surrounding the State House, demanding that Berkeley name him the General of Virginia and bless his universal war against Indians. Instead, the 70-year old governor stepped onto the field in front of the crowd of angry men, unafraid, and called Bacon a traitor to his face. Then he tore open his shirt and dared Bacon to shoot him in the heart, if he was so intent on overthrowing his government. “Here!” he shouted before the crowd, “Shoot me, before God, it is a fair mark. Shoot!” When Bacon hesitated, Berkeley drew his sword and challenged the young man to a duel, knowing that Bacon could neither back down from a challenge without

looking like a coward nor kill him without making himself into a villain. Instead, Bacon resorted to bluster and blasphemy. Threatening to slaughter the entire Assembly if necessary, he cursed, “God damn my blood, I came for a commission, and a commission I will have before I go.” Berkeley stood defiant, but the cowed burgesses finally prevailed upon him to grant Bacon’s request. Virginia had its general, and Bacon had his war.

After this dramatic showdown in Jamestown, Bacon’s Rebellion quickly spiraled out of control. Berkeley slowly rebuilt his loyalist army, forcing Bacon to divert his attention to the coasts and away from the Indians. But most rebels were more interested in defending their homes and families than in fighting other Englishmen, and deserted Bacon in droves at every rumor of Indian activity. In many places, the “rebellion” was less an organized military campaign than a collection of local grievances and personal rivalries. Both rebels and loyalists smelled the opportunities for plunder, seizing their rivals’ estates and confiscating their property.

For a small but vocal minority of rebels, however, the rebellion became an ideological revolution: Sarah Drummond, wife of rebel leader William Drummond, advocated independence from England and the formation of a Virginian Republic, declaring “I fear the power of England no more than a broken straw.” Others struggled for a different kind of independence: white servants and black slaves fought side by side in both armies after promises of freedom for military service. Everyone accused everyone else of treason, rebels and loyalists switched sides depending on which side was winning, and the whole Chesapeake disintegrated into a confused melee of secret plots and grandiose crusades, sordid vendettas and desperate gambits, with Indians and English alike struggling for supremacy and survival. One Virginian summed up the rebellion as “our time of anarchy.”

The rebels steadily lost ground and ultimately suffered a crushing defeat. Bacon died of typhus in the autumn of 1676, and his successors surrendered to Berkeley in January 1677. Berkeley summarily tried and executed the rebel leadership in a succession

of kangaroo courts-martial. Before long, however, the royal fleet arrived, bearing over 1000 red-coated troops and a royal commission of investigation charged with restoring order to the colony. The commissioners replaced the governor and dispatched Berkeley to London, where he died in disgrace.

But the conclusion of Bacon's Rebellion was uncertain, and the maintenance of order remained precarious for years afterward. The garrison of royal troops discouraged both incursion by hostile Indians and insurrection by discontented colonists, allowing the king to continue profiting from tobacco revenues. The end of armed resistance did not mean a resolution to the underlying tensions destabilizing colonial society. Indians inside Virginia remained an embattled minority and Indians outside Virginia remained a terrifying threat. Elite planters continued to grow rich by exploiting their indentured servants and marginalizing small farmers. The vast majority of Virginians continued to resent their exploitation with a simmering fury and meaningful reform was nowhere on the horizon. Bacon's Rebellion, in the words of one historian, was "a rebellion with abundant causes but without a cause," and its legacy was little more than a return to the status quo. However, the conflict between poor farmers and wealthy planters may have persuaded a few leaders to look for a less volatile labor force. Indentured servants eventually became free farmers, competing for land and power, while African slaves did not. For this reason Bacon's Rebellion further motivated the turn to slave labor in the Chesapeake.

Just a few years after Bacon's Rebellion, the Spanish experienced their own tumult in the area of contemporary New Mexico. The Spanish had been maintaining control partly by suppressing Native American beliefs. Friars aggressively enforced Catholic practice, burning native idols and masks and other sacred objects and banishing traditional spiritual practices. In 1680 the Pueblo religious leader Popé, who had been arrested and whipped for "sorcery" five years earlier, led various Puebloan groups in rebellion. Several thousand Pueblo warriors razed the Spanish countryside and besieged Santa Fe. They killed 400, including 21 Franciscan priests,

and allowed 2,000 other Spaniards and Christian Pueblos to flee. It was perhaps the greatest act of Indian resistance in North American history.



Built sometime between 1000 and 1450 AD, the Taos Pueblo located near modern-day Taos, New Mexico, functioned as a base for the leader Popé during the Pueblo Revolt. Luca Galuzzi (photographer), Taos Pueblo, 2007. [Wikimedia](#) and [Luca Galuzzi](#).

In New Mexico, the Pueblos eradicated all traces of Spanish rule. They destroyed churches and threw themselves into rivers to wash away their Christian baptisms. “The God of the Christians is dead,” they proclaimed, before reassuming traditional spiritual practices. The Spanish were exiled for twelve years. They returned in 1692, weakened, to reconquer New Mexico.

The late seventeenth century was a time of great violence and turmoil. Bacon’s Rebellion turned white Virginians against one another, King Philip’s War shattered Indian resistance in New England, and the Pueblo Revolt struck a major blow to Spanish power. It would take several more decades before similar patterns

erupted in Carolina and Pennsylvania, but the constant advance of European settlements provoked conflict in these areas as well.

In 1715, The Yamasees, Carolina's closest allies and most lucrative trading partners, turned against the colony and very nearly destroyed it all. Writing from Carolina to London, the settler George Rodd believed they wanted nothing less than "the whole continent and to kill us or chase us all out." Yamasees would eventually advance within miles of Charles Town.

The Yamasee War's first victims were traders. The governor had dispatched two of the colony's most prominent men to visit and pacify a Yamasee council following rumors of native unrest. Yamasees quickly proved the fears well founded by killing the emissaries and every English trader they could corral.

Yamasees, like many other Indians, had come to depend on English courts as much as the flintlock rifles and ammunition traders offered them for slaves and animal skins. Feuds between English agents in Indian country had crippled the court of trade and shut down all diplomacy, provoking the violent Yamasee reprisal. Most Indian villages in the southeast sent at least a few warriors to join what quickly became a pan-Indian cause against the colony.

Yet Charles Town ultimately survived the onslaught by preserving one crucial alliance with the Cherokees. By 1717, the conflict had largely dried up, and the only remaining menace was roaming Yamasee bands operating from Spanish Florida. Most Indian villages returned to terms with Carolina and resumed trading. The lucrative trade in Indian slaves, however, which had consumed 50,000 souls in five decades, largely dwindled after the war. The danger was too high for traders, and the colonies discovered even greater profits by importing Africans to work new rice plantations. Herein lies the birth of the "Old South," that hoard of plantations that created untold wealth and misery. Indians retained the strongest militaries in the region, but they never again threatened the survival of English colonies.

If there were a colony where peace with Indians might continue, it would be in Pennsylvania, where William Penn created a religious

imperative for the peaceful treatment of Indians. His successors, sons John, Thomas, and Richard, continued the practice but increased immigration, and booming land speculation increased the demand for land. The Walking Purchase of 1737, a deal made between Delaware Indians and the proprietary government in an effort to secure a large tract of land for the colony north of Philadelphia in the Delaware and Lehigh River valleys, became emblematic of both colonials' desire for cheap land and the changing relationship between Pennsylvanians and their Native neighbors.

Through treaty negotiation in 1737, native Delaware leaders agreed to sell Pennsylvania all of the land that a man could walk in a day and a half, a common measurement utilized by Delawares in evaluating distances. John and Thomas Penn, joined by the land speculator James Logan, hired a team of skilled runners to complete the "walk" on a prepared trail. The runners traveled from Wrightstown to present-day Jim Thorpe and proprietary officials then drew the new boundary line perpendicular to the runners' route, extending northeast to the Delaware River. The colonial government thus measured out a tract much larger than Delawares had originally intended to sell, roughly 1200 square miles. As a result, Delaware-proprietary relations suffered. Many Delawares left the lands in question and migrated westward to join Shawnees and other Delawares already living in the Ohio Valley. There, they established diplomatic and trade relationships with the French. Memories of the suspect purchase endured into the 1750s and became a chief point of contention between the Pennsylvanian government and Delawares during the upcoming Seven Years War.

9. Consumption and Trade in the British Atlantic

Britain's central role in transatlantic trade greatly enriched the mother country, but it also created high standards of living for many North American colonists. This two-way relationship reinforced the colonial American feeling of commonality with British culture. It was not until trade relations, disturbed by political changes and the strain of warfare, became strained in the 1760s that colonists began to question these ties.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth century, improvements in manufacturing, transportation, and the availability of credit increased the opportunity for colonists to purchase consumer goods. Instead of making their own tools, clothes, and utensils colonists increasingly purchased luxury items made by specialized artisans and manufacturers. As the incomes of Americans rose and the prices of these commodities fell, these items shifted from luxuries to common goods. The average person's ability to spend money on consumer goods became a sign of their respectability. Historians have called this process the "consumer revolution."



L. Truchy, engraver, "The Story of Pamela," plate 9, London, 1745. [Colonial Williamsburg Foundation](#).

Britain relied on the colonies as source of raw materials, such as lumber and tobacco. Americans engaged with new forms of trade and financing that increased their ability to buy British-made goods. But the ways in which colonists paid for these goods varied sharply from those in Britain. When settlers first arrived in North America, they typically carried very little "hard" or metallic British money with them. Discovering no precious metals (and lacking the crown's authority to mint coins), colonists relied on barter and non-traditional forms of exchange, including everything from nails to the wampum used by Native American groups in the Northeast. To deal with the lack of currency, many colonies resorted to "commodity money," which varied from place to place. In Virginia, for example, the colonial legislature stipulated a rate of exchange for tobacco, standardizing it as a form of "money" in the colony. Commodities could be cumbersome and difficult to transport, so a system of

notes developed, allowing individuals to deposit a certain amount of tobacco in a warehouse and receive a note bearing the value of the deposit that could be traded as money. In 1690, colonial Massachusetts became the first colony, as well as the first place in the Western world, to issue paper bills to be used as money. These notes, called bills of credit, were issued for finite periods of time on the colony's credit and varied in denomination from quite small to large enough to cover major transactions.

While these notes provided colonists with a much-needed medium for exchange, it was not without its problems. Currency that worked in Virginia might be worthless in Pennsylvania. Colonists and officials back in Britain debated whether or not it was right or desirable to use mere paper, as opposed to gold or silver, as a medium of exchange. Paper money tended to lose value quicker than coins and was often counterfeited. These problems, as well as British merchants' reluctance to accept depreciated paper notes, caused the Board of Trade to restrict the uses of paper money in the Currency Acts of 1751 and 1763. Paper money was not the only medium of exchange, however. Colonists also made use of metal coins. Barter and the extension of credit – which could take the form of bills of exchange, akin to modern-day personal checks – remained important forces throughout the colonial period. Trade between colonies was greatly hampered by the lack of standardized money. Currency that worked in Virginia might be worthless in Pennsylvania.

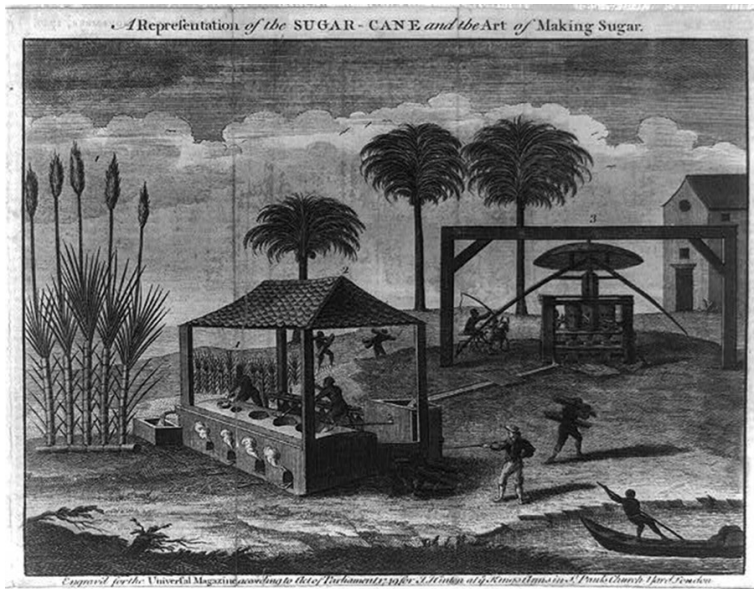
To encourage consumers, businesses on both sides of the Atlantic advertised the variety of goods, their quality, and the ease of obtaining credit. The consistent availability of credit allowed families of modest means to buy consumer items previously available only to elites. Cheap consumption allowed middle class Americans to match many of the trends in clothing, food, and household décor that traditionally marked the wealthiest, aristocratic classes. Provincial Americans, often seen by their London peers as less cultivated or “backwater,” could think of themselves as lords and ladies of their own communities through

their ability to purchase and display British-made goods. Visiting the home of a successful businessman in Boston, John Adams described “the Furniture, which alone cost a thousand Pounds sterling. A seat it is for a noble Man, a Prince. The Turkey Carpets, the painted Hangings, the Marble Table, the rich Beds with crimson Damask Curtains and Counterpins, the beautiful Chimney Clock, the Spacious Garden, are the most magnificent of any Think I have seen.” But many Americans worried about the consequences of rising consumerism. A writer for *The Boston Evening Post* remarked on this new practice purchasing status: “For ‘tis well known how Credit is a mighty inducement with many People to purchase this and the other Thing which they may well enough do without.” Americans became more likely to find themselves in debt, whether to their local shopkeeper or a prominent London merchant, creating new feelings of dependence.

Of course, the thirteen continental colonies were not the only British colonies in the Western hemisphere. In fact, they were considerably less important to the Crown than the sugar producing islands of the Caribbean, including Jamaica, Barbados, the Leeward Islands, Grenada, St. Vincent, and Dominica. Though separated from the continent by the Caribbean Sea, these British colonies were inextricably connected to the continental colonies through commerce. Caribbean plantations dedicated nearly all of their land to the wildly profitable crop of sugar cane, so North American colonies sold surplus food and raw materials to these wealthy island colonies. Lumber was in high demand, especially in Barbados where planters nearly deforested the island to make room for sugar plantations. To compensate for a lack of lumber, Barbadian colonists ordered house frames from New England. These prefabricated frames were sent via ships where planters transported them to their plantations. Caribbean colonists also relied on the continental colonies for livestock, purchasing cattle and horses.

Connections between the Caribbean and North America benefitted both sides. Those living on the continent relied on the Caribbean colonists to satisfy their craving for sugar and other

goods like mahogany. British colonists in the Caribbean began cultivating sugar in the 1640s, and sugar took the Atlantic World by storm. In fact, by 1680, sugar exports from the tiny island of Barbados valued more than the total exports of all the continental colonies. Jamaica, acquired by the Crown in 1655, surpassed Barbados in sugar production toward the end of the seventeenth century. North American colonists, like Britons around the world, craved sugar to sweeten their tea and food. Colonial elites also sought to decorate their parlors and dining rooms with the silky, polished surfaces of rare mahogany as opposed to local wood. To meet this newfound demand, furniture makers from North America traveled to the Caribbean to acquire mahogany that was then transformed into exquisite furniture.



John Hinton, "A representation of the sugar-cane and the art of making sugar," 1749. [Library of Congress](#).

These systems of trade all existed with the purpose of enriching

Great Britain. To ensure that profits ended up in Britain, Parliament issued taxes on trade called Navigation Acts. Through these taxes, consumption became intertwined with politics. Prior to 1763, Britain found that enforcing the regulatory laws they passed was difficult and often cost them more than the duty revenue they would bring in. As a result, colonists found it relatively easy to trade on their own terms, whether that was with foreign nations, pirates, or smugglers. Customs officials were easily bribed and it was not uncommon to see Dutch, French, or West Indies ships laden with prohibited goods in American ports. When smugglers were caught, their American peers often acquitted them. British officials estimated that nearly £700,000 of illicit goods was brought into the American colonies annually. Pirates, or what colonists considered privateers, also helped to perpetuate the illegal trading activities by providing a buffer between merchants and foreign ships.

Beginning with the Sugar Act in 1764, and continuing with the Stamp Act and the Townshend Duties, Parliament levied taxes on sugar, paper, lead, glass, and tea, all products that contributed to colonists' sense of gentility. In response, patriots organized non-importation agreements. They reverted to their domestic products, making items such as homespun cloth a political statement. A writer in *The Essex Gazette* in 1769 proclaimed, "I presume there never was a Time when, or a Place where, the Spinning Wheel could more influence the Affairs of Men, than at present."

The consumer revolution fueled the growth of colonial cities. Cities in colonial America were crossroads for the movement of people and goods. One in twenty colonists lived in cities by 1775. Some cities grew organically over time, while others were planned from the start. New York and Boston's seventeenth-century street plans reflected the haphazard arrangement of medieval cities in Europe. In other cities like Philadelphia and Charleston, civic leaders laid out urban plans according to calculated systems of regular blocks and squares. Planners in Annapolis and Williamsburg also imposed regularity and order over their city streets through the placement of government, civic, and educational buildings.

By 1775, Boston, Newport, New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston were the five largest cities in British North America. Philadelphia, New York, Boston, and Charleston had populations of approximately 40,000; 25,000; 16,000; and 12,000 people, respectively. Urban society was highly stratified. At the base of the social ladder were the laboring classes, which included both enslaved and free persons ranging from apprentices to master craftsmen. Next came the middling sort: shopkeepers, artisans, and skilled mariners. Above them stood the merchant elites who tended to be actively involved in the city's social and political affairs, as well as in the buying, selling, and trading of goods. Enslaved men and women had a visible presence in both northern and southern cities.

In port cities, slaves often worked in skilled trades, distilleries, shipyards, lumberyards, and ropewalks. Between 1725 and 1775, slavery became increasingly significant in the northern colonies as urban residents sought greater participation in the maritime economy. Massachusetts was the first slave-holding colony in New England. New York traced its connections to slavery and the slave trade back to the Dutch settlers of New Netherland in the seventeenth century. Philadelphia also became an active site of the Atlantic slave trade, and slaves accounted for nearly 8% of the city's population in 1770. In southern cities, including Charleston, urban slavery played an important role in the market economy. Slaves, both rural and urban, made up the majority of the laboring population on the eve of the American Revolution.

PART IV

MODULE 4: EXPERIENCE OF EMPIRE

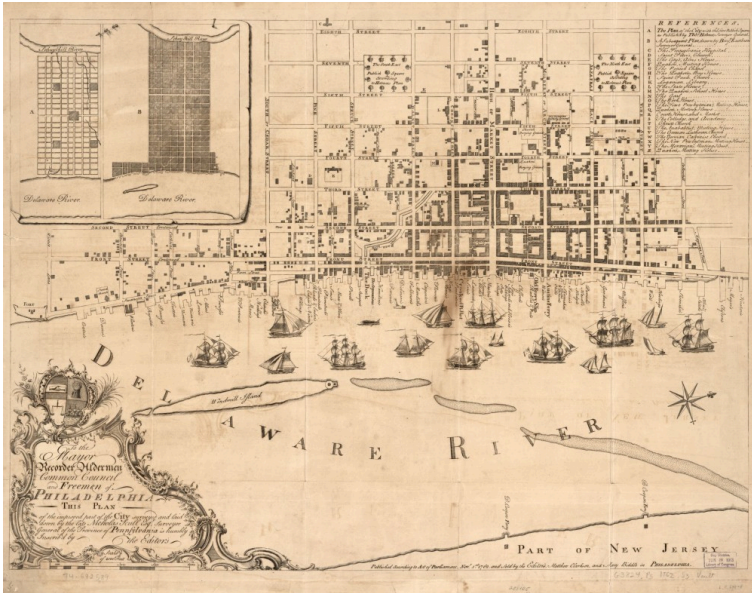
10. Pursuing Political, Religious, and Individual Freedom

Consumption, trade, and slavery drew the colonies closer to Great Britain, but politics and government split them further apart. Democracy in Europe more closely resembled oligarchies rather than republics, with only elite members of society eligible to serve in elected positions. Most European states did not hold regular elections, with Britain and the Dutch Republic being the two major exceptions. However, even in these countries, only approximately 1% of males could vote. In the North American colonies, by contrast, white male suffrage was nearly universal. In addition to having greater popular involvement, colonial government also had more power in a variety of areas. Assemblies and legislatures regulated businesses, imposed new taxes, cared for the poor in their communities, built roads and bridges, and made most decisions concerning education. Colonial Americans sued often, which in turn led to more power for local judges and more prestige in jury service. Thus, lawyers became extremely important in American society, and in turn, played a greater role in American politics.

American society was less tightly controlled than European society. This led to the rise of various interest groups, each at odds with the other. These various interest groups arose based on commonalities in various areas. Some commonalities arose over class-based distinctions, while others were due to ethnic or religious ties. One of the major differences between modern politics and colonial political culture was the lack of distinct, stable, political parties. The most common disagreement in colonial politics was between the elected assemblies and the royal governor. Generally, the various colonial legislatures were divided into factions who

either supported or opposed the current governor's political ideology.

As far as political structure, colonies fell under one of three main categories: provincial, proprietary, and charter. The provincial colonies included New Hampshire, New York, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. The proprietary colonies included Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, and Maryland. The charter colonies included Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. The provincial colonies were the most tightly controlled by the crown. The British king appointed all of the provincial governors. These crown governors could veto any decision made by the legislative assemblies in the provincial colonies. The proprietary colonies had a similar structure, with one important difference: governors were appointed by a lord proprietor, an individual who had purchased or received the rights to the colony from the crown. This generally led to proprietary colonies having more freedoms and liberties than other colonies in colonial America. The charter colonies had the most complex system of government, formed by political corporations or interest groups who drew up a charter that clearly delineated powers between executive, legislative, and judiciary branches of government. As opposed to having governors appointed, the charter colonies elected their own governors from among the property-owning men in the colony.



Nicholas Scull, “To the mayor, recorder, aldermen, common council, and freemen of Philadelphia this plan of the improved part of the city surveyed and laid down by the late Nicholas Scull,” Philadelphia, 1762. [Library of Congress](#).

After the governor, colonial government was broken down into two main divisions: the council and the assembly. The council was essentially the governor’s cabinet, often composed of prominent individuals within the colony, such as the head of the militia, or the attorney-general of the colony. The governor appointed these men, often subject to approval from Parliament. The assembly was composed of elected, property-owning men whose official goal was to ensure that colonial law conformed to English law. The colonial assemblies approved new taxes and the colonial budgets. However, many of these assemblies saw it as their duty to check the power of the governor and ensure that he did not take too much power within colonial government. Unlike Parliament, most of the men who were elected to an assembly came from local districts, with

their constituency able to hold their elected officials accountable to promises made.

An elected assembly was an offshoot of the idea of civic duty, the notion that men had a responsibility to support and uphold the government through voting, paying taxes, and service in the militia. Americans firmly accepted the idea of a social contract, the idea that government was put in place by the people. Philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes and John Locke pioneered this idea, and there is evidence to suggest that these writers influenced the colonists. While in practice elites controlled colonial politics, in theory many colonists believed in the notion of equality before the law and opposed special treatment for any members of colonial society.

Whether or not African Americans, Native Americans, and women would also be included in this notion of equality before the law was far less clear. In particular, women's role in the family became more complicated. Many historians view this period as a significant time of transition. Importantly, Anglo-American families during the colonial period differed from their European counterparts. Widely available land and plentiful natural resources allowed for greater fertility and thus encouraged more people to marry earlier in life. Yet while young marriages and large families were common throughout the colonial period, family sizes started to shrink by the end of the 1700s as wives asserted more control over their own bodies.

New ideas governing romantic love helped to change the nature of husband-wife relationships. Deriving from the sentimental literary movement, many Americans began to view marriage as an emotionally fulfilling relationship rather than a strictly economic partnership. Referring to one another as "Beloved of my Soul" or "My More than Friend," newspaper editor John Fenno and his wife Mary Curtis Fenno illustrate what some historians refer to as the "companionate ideal." While away from his wife, John felt a "vacuum in my existence," a sentiment returned by Mary's "Doting Heart." Indeed, after independence, wives began to not only provide

emotional sustenance to their husbands, but to inculcate the principles of republican citizenship as “republican wives.”

Marriage opened up new emotional realms for some but remained oppressive for others. For the millions of Americans bound in chattel slavery, marriage remained an informal arrangement rather than a codified legal relationship. For white women, the legal practice of coverture meant that women lost all of their political and economic rights to their husband. Divorce rates rose throughout the 1790s, as did less formal cases of abandonment. Newspapers published advertisements by deserted men and women denouncing their partners publically. Known as “elopement notices,” they catalogued the various sorts of misbehavior of deviant spouses, such as wives’ “indecent manner,” a way of implying sexual impropriety. As violence and inequality continued in many American marriages, wives in return highlighted their husbands’ “drunken fits” and violent rages. One woman noted how her partner “presented his gun at my breast... and swore he would kill me.”

That couples would turn to newspapers as a source of expression illustrates the importance of what historians call print culture. Print culture includes the wide range of factors contributing to how books and other printed objects are made, including the relationship between the author and the publisher, the technical constraints of the printer, and the tastes of readers. In colonial America, regional differences in daily life impacted the way colonists made and used printed matter. However, all the colonies dealt with threats of censorship and control from imperial supervision. In particular, political content stirred the most controversy.

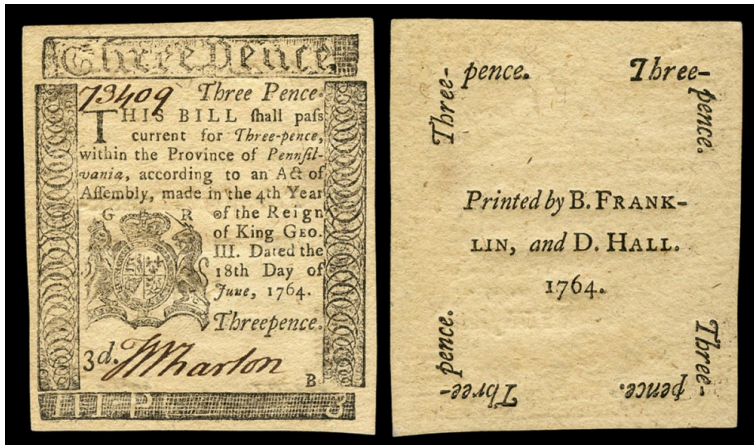
From the establishment of Virginia in 1607, printing was regarded either as unnecessary within such harsh living conditions or it was actively discouraged. The governor of Virginia, Sir William Berkeley, summed up the attitude of the ruling class in 1671: “I thank God there are no free schools nor printing...for learning has brought disobedience, and heresy...and printing has divulged them.” Ironically, the circulation of hand-written tracts contributed to

Berkeley's undoing. The popularity of Nathaniel Bacon's uprising was in part due to widely circulated tracts questioning Berkeley's competence. Berkeley's harsh repression of Bacon's Rebellion was equally well documented. It was only after Berkeley's death in 1677 that the idea of printing in the Southern colonies was revived. William Nuthead, an experienced English printer, set up shop in 1682, although the next governor of the colony, Thomas Culpeper forbade Nuthead from completing a single project. It wasn't until William Parks set up his printing shop in Annapolis in 1726 that the Chesapeake had a stable local trade in printing and books.

Print culture was very different in New England. Puritans had an established respect for print from the very beginning. Unfortunately, New England's authors were content to publish in London, making the foundations of Stephen Daye's first print shop in 1639 very shaky. Typically printers made their money from printing sheets, not books to be bound. The case was similar in Massachusetts, where the first printed work was a *Freeman's Oath*. The first book was not issued until 1640, the *Bay Psalm Book*, of which 11 known copies survive. His contemporaries recognized the significance of Daye's printing, and he was awarded 140 acres of land. The next large project, the first bible to be printed in America, was undertaken by Samuel Green and Marmaduke Johnson, published 1660. That same year, the Eliot Bible, named for its translator John Eliot, was printed in the Natick dialect of the local Algonquin tribes.

Massachusetts remained the center of colonial printing for a hundred years, until Philadelphia overtook Boston in 1770. Philadelphia's rise as the printing capital of the colonies began with two important features: first, the arrival of Benjamin Franklin in 1723, equal parts scholar and businessman, and second, waves of German immigrants created a demand for German-language press. From the mid 1730s, Christopher Sauer, and later his son, wholly met this demand with German-language newspapers and religious texts. Nevertheless Franklin was a one-man culture of print, revolutionizing the book trade in addition to creating public

learning initiatives such as the Library Company and the Academy of Philadelphia. His *Autobiography* offers one of the most detailed glimpses of life in a print shop available. Given the flurry of newspapers, pamphlets, and books for sale in Franklin's Philadelphia, it is little wonder that in 1775 Thomas Paine had his *Common Sense* printed in hundreds of thousands of copies with the Philadelphia printer Robert Bell.



Benjamin Franklin and David Hall, printers, Pennsylvania Currency, 1764.
[Wikimedia](#).

Debates on religious expression continued throughout the 18th century. In 1711 a group of New England ministers published a collection of sermons entitled *Early Piety*. The most famous of them, Increase Mather, wrote the preface. In it he asked the question “What did our forefathers come into this wilderness for?” His answer was simple: to test their faith against the challenges of America and win. The grandchildren of the first settlers had been born into the comfort of well-established colonies and worried that their faith had suffered. This sense of inferiority sent colonists looking for a reinvigorated religious experience. The result came to be known as the Great Awakening

Only with hindsight does the Great Awakening look like a unified movement. The first revivals began unexpectedly in the Congregational churches of New England in the 1730's and then spread through the 1740's and 1750's to Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists in the other Thirteen Colonies. Different places at different times experienced revivals of different intensities. Yet in all of these communities colonists discussed the same need to strip their lives of worldly concerns and return to a more pious lifestyle. The form it took was something of a contradiction. Preachers became key figures in encouraging individuals to find a personal relationship with God.

The first signs of religious revival appeared in Jonathan Edwards' congregation in Northampton, Massachusetts. Edwards was a theologian who shared the faith of the early Puritans settlers. In particular he believed in the idea called predestination that God had decided in advance who was damned and who was saved. However, he worried that his congregation had stopped searching their souls and were merely doing good works to prove they were saved. With a missionary zeal, Edwards preached against worldly sins and called for his congregation to look inwards for signs of God's saving grace. His most famous sermon was called "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." Suddenly in the winter of 1734 these sermons sent his congregation into violent convulsions. The spasms first appeared amongst known sinners in the community. Over the next 6 months the physical symptoms spread to half of the 600 person-congregation. Edwards shared the work of his revival in a widely circulated pamphlet.

Over the next decade itinerant preachers were more successfully in spreading the spirit of revival around America. These preachers had the same spiritual goal as Edwards, but brought with them a new religious experience. They abandoned traditional sermons in favor of outside meetings where they could whip up the congregation into an emotional frenzy that might reveal evidence of saving grace. Many religious leaders were suspicious of the

enthusiasm and message of these revivals, but colonists flocked to the spectacle.



C. Corbett, publisher, “Enthusiasm display’d: or, the Moor Fields congregation,” 1739. [Library of Congress](#).

The most famous itinerant preacher was George Whitefield. According to Whitefield the only type of faith that pleased God was heartfelt. The established churches only encouraged apathy. “The Christian World is dead asleep,” Whitefield explained, “Nothing but a loud voice can awaken them out of it.” He would be that voice. Whitefield was a former actor with a dramatic style of preaching and a simple message. Thundering against sin and for Jesus Christ, Whitefield invited everyone to be born again. It worked. Through the 1730’s he traveled from New York to South Carolina converting ordinary men, women and children. “I have seen upwards of a thousand people hang on his words with breathless silence,” wrote a socialite in Philadelphia, “broken only by an occasional half

suppressed sob.” A farmer recorded the powerful impact this rhetoric could have: “And my hearing him preach gave me a heart wound; by God’s blessing my old foundation was broken up, and I saw that my righteousness would not save me.” The number of people trying to hear Whitefield’s message were so large that he preached in the meadows at the edges of cities. Contemporaries regularly testified to crowds of thousands and in one case over 20,000 in Philadelphia. Whitefield and the other itinerant preachers had achieved what Edwards could not, making the revivals popular.

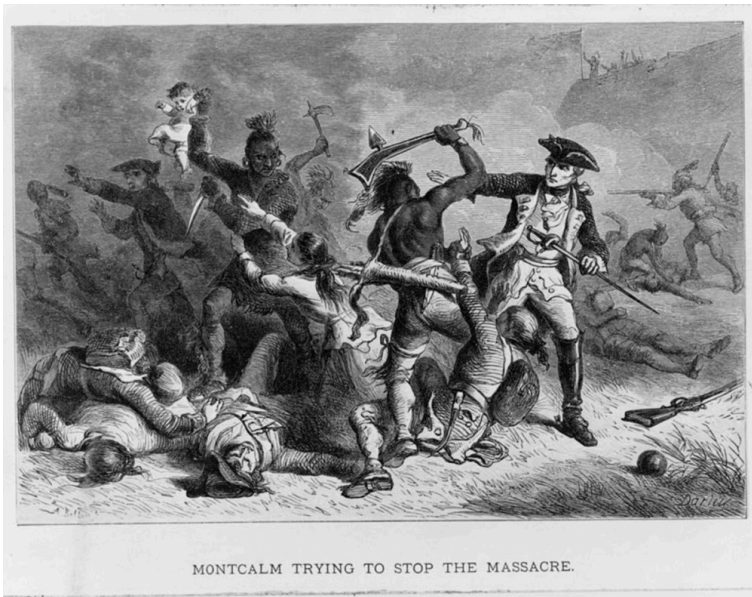
Ultimately the religious revivals became a victim of the preachers’ success. As itinerant preachers became more experimental they alienated as many people as they converted. In 1742 one preacher from Connecticut, James Davenport, persuaded his congregation that he had special knowledge from God. To be saved they had to dance naked in circles at night whilst screaming and laughing. Or, they could burn the books he disapproved of. Either way, this type of extremism demonstrated to many that revivalism had gone wrong. A divide appeared by the 1740s and 1750s between “New Lights”, who still believed in a revived faith, and “Old Lights”, who thought it was deluded nonsense.

By the 1760s, the religious revivals had petered out; however, they left a profound impact on America. Leaders like Edwards and Whitefield encouraged individuals to question the world around them. This idea reformed religion in America and created a language of individualism that promised to change everything else. If you challenged the church, what other authority figures might you question? The Great Awakening provided a language of individualism, reinforced in print culture, which reappeared in the call for independence. While pre-revolutionary America had profoundly oligarchical qualities, the groundwork was laid for a more republican society. However, society did not transform easily overnight. It would take intense, often physical, conflict to change colonial life.

II. Seven Years' War

Of the 87 years between the Glorious Revolution (1688) and the American Revolution (1775), Britain was at war with France and French-allied Native Americans for 37 of them. These were not wars in which European soldiers fought other European soldiers. American militiamen fought for the British against French Catholics and their Indian allies in all of these engagements. Warfare took a physical and spiritual toll on British colonists. British towns located on the border between New England and New France experienced intermittent raiding by French-allied Native Americans. Raiding parties would destroy houses and burn crops, but they would also take captives. They brought these captives to French Quebec, where some were ransomed back to their families in New England and others converted to Catholicism and remained in New France. In this sense, Catholicism threatened to literally capture Protestant lands and souls.

In 1754 a force of British colonists and Native American allies, led by young George Washington, attacked and killed a French diplomat. This incident led to a war, which would become known as the Seven Years' War or the French and Indian War. In North America, the French achieved victory in the early portion of this war. They attacked and burned multiple British outposts, such as Fort William Henry in 1757. In addition, the French seemed to easily defeat British attacks, such as General Braddock's attack on Fort Duquesne, and General Abercrombie's attack on Fort Carillon (Ticonderoga) in 1758. These victories were often the result of alliances with Native Americans.



Albert Bobbett, engraver, "Montcalm trying to stop the massacre," c. 1870-1880. [Library of Congress.](#)

In Europe, the war did not fully begin until 1756, when British-allied Frederick II of Prussia invaded the neutral state of Saxony. As a result of this invasion, a massive coalition of France, Austria, Russia, and Sweden attacked Prussia and the few German states allied with Prussia. The ruler of Austria, Maria Theresa, hoped to conquer the province of Silesia, which had been lost to Prussia in a previous war. In the European war, the British monetarily supported the Prussians, as well as the minor western German states of Hesse-Kassel and Braunschweig-Wolfbüttel. These subsidy payments enabled the smaller German states to fight France and allowed the excellent Prussian army to fight against the large enemy alliance.

However, as in North America, the early part of the war went against the British. The French defeated Britain's German allies and forced them to surrender after the Battle of Hastenbeck in 1757.

The Austrians defeated the Prussians in the Battle of Kolin, also in 1757. However, Frederick of Prussia defeated the French at the Battle of Rossbach in November of 1757. This battle allowed the British to rejoin the war in Europe. Just a month later, Frederick's army defeated the Austrians at the Battle of Leuthen, reclaiming the vital province of Silesia. In India and throughout the world's oceans, the British and their fleet consistently defeated the French. Robert Clive and his Indian allies defeated the French at the Battle of Plassey in 1757. With the sea firmly in their control, the British could send more troops to North America.

These newly arrived soldiers allowed the British to launch new offensives. The large French port and fortress of Louisbourg, in present day Nova Scotia, fell to the British in 1758. In 1759, British General James Wolfe defeated French General Montcalm in the Battle of the Plains of Abraham, outside of Quebec City. In Europe, 1759 saw the British defeat the French at the Battle of Minden, and destroy large portions of the French fleet. The British referred to 1759 as the “*annus mirabilis*” or the year of miracles. These victories brought about the fall of French Canada, and for all intents and purposes, the war in North America ended in 1760 with the British capture of Montreal. The British continued to fight against the Spanish, who entered the war in 1762. In this war, the Spanish successfully defended Nicaragua against British attacks but were unable to prevent the conquest of Cuba and the Philippines.

The Seven Years' War ended with the peace treaties of Paris in 1762 and Hubertusburg in 1763. The British received much of Canada and North America from the French, while the Prussians retained the important province of Silesia. This gave the British a larger empire than they could control, which contributed to tensions leading to revolution. In particular, it exposed divisions within the newly expanded empire, including language, national affiliation, and religious views. When the British captured Quebec in 1760, a newspaper distributed in the colonies to celebrate the event boasted: “The time will come, when Pope and Friar/Shall both be

roasted in the fire/When the proud Antichristian whore/will sink,
and never rise more.”

American colonists rejoiced over the defeat of Catholic France and felt secure that the Catholics in Quebec could no longer threaten them. Of course, the American colonies had been a haven for religious minorities since the seventeenth century. Early religious pluralism served as evidence of an “American melting pot” that included Catholic Maryland. But practical toleration of Catholics existed alongside virulent anti-Catholicism in public and political arenas. It was a powerful and enduring rhetorical tool borne out of warfare and competition between Britain and France.

In part because of constant conflict with Catholic France, Britons on either side of the Atlantic and of a variety of Protestant sects cohered around a pan-Protestant interest. British ministers in England called for a coalition to fight French and Catholic empires that imperiled Protestantism. Missionary organizations such as the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and the Society for Propagation of the Gospel were founded at the turn of the seventeenth century to evangelize Native Americans and limit Jesuits advances in converting them to Catholicism. The previously mentioned Protestant revivals of the so-called Great Awakening crisscrossed the Atlantic and founded a participatory religious movement during the 1730s and 1740s that united British Protestant churches. Preachers and merchants alike urged greater Atlantic trade to knit the Anglophone Protestant Atlantic together through commerce.

12. Video: The Seven Years' War and the Great Awakening

In this video, John Green teaches you about the beginnings of the American Revolution. John argues that the Seven Years' War, which is often called the French and Indian War in the United States, laid a lot of the groundwork for the Revolution. Why does this war have two names? Why were the French and Indians fighting each other? The Seven Years' War was actually a global war that went on for nine years. Confused yet? Anyway, the part of this global war that happened in North America was the French and Indian War. The French and Indian tribes were the force opposing the British, so that's the name that stuck.

Other stuff was going on in the colonies in the 18th century that primed the people for revolution. One was the Great Awakening. Religious revival was sweeping the country, introducing new ideas about religion and how it should be practiced. At the same time thinkers like John Locke were rethinking the relationship between rulers and the ruled. So in this highly charged atmosphere, you can just imagine what would happen if the crown started trying to exert more control over the colonies. We'll find out soon!



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://library.achievingthedream.org/forsythtechamericanhistory1/?p=41>

PART V

MODULE 5: THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

13. The Causes of the American Revolution

Most immediately, the American Revolution resulted directly from attempts to reform the British Empire after the Seven Years' War.

The Seven Years' War culminated nearly a half-century of war between Europe's imperial powers. It was truly a world war, fought between multiple empires on multiple continents. At its conclusion, the British Empire had never been larger. Britain now controlled the North American continent east of the Mississippi River, including French Canada. It had also consolidated its control over India. But, for the ministry, the jubilation was short-lived. The realities and responsibilities of the post-war empire were daunting. War (let alone victory) on such a scale was costly. Britain doubled the national debt to 13.5 times its annual revenue. In addition to the costs incurred in securing victory, Britain was also looking at significant new costs required to secure and defend its far-flung empire, especially western frontiers of the North American colonies. These factors led Britain in the 1760s to attempt to consolidate control over its North American colonies, which, in turn, led to resistance.

King George III took the crown in 1760 and brought Tories into his Ministry after three decades of Whig rule. They represented an authoritarian vision of empire where colonies would be subordinate. The Royal Proclamation of 1763 was Britain's first postwar imperial action. The King forbade settlement west of the Appalachian Mountains in attempt to limit costly wars with Native Americans. Colonists, however, protested and demanded access to the territory for which they had fought alongside the British.

In 1764, Parliament passed two more reforms. The Sugar Act sought to combat widespread smuggling of molasses in New England by cutting the duty in half but increasing enforcement.

Also, smugglers would be tried by vice-admiralty courts and not juries. Parliament also passed the Currency Act, which restricted colonies from producing paper money. Hard money, like gold and silver coins, was scarce in the colonies. The lack of currency impeded the colonies' increasingly sophisticated transatlantic economies, but it was especially damaging in 1764 because a postwar recession had already begun. Between the restrictions of the Proclamation of 1763, the Currency Act, and the Sugar Act's canceling of trials-by-jury for smugglers, some colonists began to see a pattern of restriction and taxation.

In March 1765, Parliament passed the Stamp Act. The Sugar Act was an attempt to get merchants to pay an already-existing duty, but the Stamp Act created a new, direct (or internal) tax. Parliament had never before directly taxed the colonists. Instead, colonies contributed to the empire through the payment of indirect, internal taxes, such as customs duties. In 1765, Daniel Dulany of Maryland wrote, "A right to impose an internal tax on the colonies, without their consent for the single purpose of revenue, is denied, a right to regulate their trade without their consent is, admitted."

Stamps were to be required on all printed documents, including newspapers, pamphlets, diplomas, legal documents, and even playing cards. Unlike the Sugar Act, which primarily affected merchants, the Stamp Act directly affected numerous groups including printers, lawyers, college graduates, and even sailors who played cards. This led, in part, to broader, more popular resistance.

Resistance took three forms, distinguished largely by class: legislative resistance by elites, economic resistance by merchants, and popular protest by common colonists. Colonial elites responded with legislative resistance initially by passing resolutions in their assemblies. The most famous of the anti-Stamp Act resolutions were the "Virginia Resolves" that declared that the colonists were entitled to "all the liberties, privileges, franchises, and immunities . . . possessed by the people of Great Britain." When the resolves were printed throughout the colonies, however, they often included three extra, far more radical resolves not passed by the Virginia

House of Burgesses, the last of which asserted that only “the general assembly of this colony have any right or power to impose or lay any taxation” and that anyone who argued differently “shall be deemed an enemy to this his majesty’s colony.” The spread of these extra resolves throughout the colonies helped radicalize the subsequent responses of other colonial assemblies and eventually led to the calling of the Stamp Act Congress in New York City in October 1765. Nine colonies sent delegates, including Benjamin Franklin, John Dickinson, Thomas Hutchinson, Philip Livingston, and James Otis.



Men and women politicized the domestic sphere by buying and displaying items that conspicuously revealed their position for or against Parliamentary actions. This witty teapot, which celebrates the end of taxation on goods like tea itself, makes clear the owner's perspective on the egregious taxation. "Teapot, Stamp Act Repeal'd," 1786, in Peabody Essex Museum. [Salem State University](#).

The Stamp Act Congress issued a "Declaration of Rights and Grievances," which, like the Virginia Resolves, declared allegiance to the King and "all due subordination" to Parliament, but also reasserted the idea that colonists were entitled to the same rights as native Britons. Those rights included trial by jury, which had been abridged by the Sugar Act, and the right to only be taxed by

their own elected representatives. As Daniel Dulany wrote in 1765, "It is an essential principle of the English constitution, that the subject shall not be taxed without his consent." Benjamin Franklin called it the "prime Maxim of all free Government." Because the colonies did not elect members to Parliament, they believed that they were not represented and could not be taxed by that body. In response, Parliament and the Ministry argued that the colonists were "virtually represented," just like the residents of those boroughs or counties in England that did not elect members to Parliament. However, the colonists rejected the notion of virtual representation, with one pamphleteer calling it a "monstrous idea."

The second type of resistance to the Stamp Act was economic. While the Stamp Act Congress deliberated, merchants in major port cities were preparing non-importation agreements, hoping that their refusal to import British goods would lead British merchants to lobby for the repeal of the Stamp Act. The plan worked. As British exports to the colony dropped considerably, merchants did pressure Parliament to repeal.

The third, and perhaps, most crucial type of resistance was popular protest. Violent riots broke out in Boston, during which crowds, led by the local Sons of Liberty, burned the appointed stamp collector for Massachusetts, Peter Oliver, in effigy and pulled a building he owned "down to the Ground in five minutes." Oliver resigned the position of stamp collector the next day. A few days later a crowd also set upon the home of his brother-in-law, Lt. Gov. Thomas Hutchinson, who had publicly argued for submission to the stamp tax. Before the evening was over, much of Hutchinson's home and belongings had been destroyed.

Popular violence and intimidation spread quickly throughout the colonies. In New York City, posted notices read: "PRO PATRIA, The first Man that either distributes or makes use of stampt paper, let him take care of his house, person, and effects. Vox Populi. We dare." By November 16, all of the original twelve stamp collectors had resigned, and by 1766, Sons of Liberty groups formed in most of the colonies to direct and organize further popular resistance.

These tactics had the dual effect of sending a message to Parliament and discouraging colonists from accepting appointments as stamp collectors. With no one to distribute the stamps, the Act became unenforceable.



Violent protest by groups like the Sons of Liberty created quite a stir both in the colonies and in England itself. While extreme acts like the tarring and feathering of Boston's Commissioner of Customs in 1774 propagated more protest against symbols of Parliament's tyranny throughout the colonies, violent demonstrations were regarded as acts of terrorism by British officials. This print of the 1774 event was from the British perspective, picturing the Sons as brutal instigators with almost demonic smiles on their faces as they enacted this excruciating punishment on the Custom Commissioner. Philip Dawe (attributed), "The Bostonians Paying the Excise-man, or Tarring and Feathering," [Wikimedia](#).

Pressure on Parliament grew until, in March of 1766, they repealed the Stamp Act. But to save face and to try to avoid this kind of problem in the future, Parliament also passed the Declaratory Act, asserting that Parliament had the “full power and authority to make laws . . . to bind the colonies and people of America . . . in all cases whatsoever.” However, colonists were too busy celebrating the repeal of the Stamp Act to take much notice of the Declaratory Act. In New York City, the inhabitants raised a huge lead statue of King George III in honor of the Stamp Act’s repeal. It could be argued that there was no moment at which colonists felt more proud to be members of the free British Empire than 1766. But Britain still needed revenue from the colonies.

The colonies had resisted the implementation of direct taxes, but the Declaratory Act reserved Parliament’s right to impose them. And, in the colonists’ dispatches to Parliament and in numerous pamphlets, they had explicitly acknowledged the right of Parliament to regulate colonial trade. So Britain’s next attempt to draw revenues from the colonies, the Townshend Acts, were passed in June 1767, creating new customs duties on common items, like lead, glass, paint, and tea, instead of direct taxes. The Acts also created and strengthened formal mechanisms to enforce compliance, including a new American Board of Customs Commissioners and more vice-admiralty courts to try smugglers. Revenues from customs seizures would be used to pay customs officers and other royal officials, including the governors, thereby incentivizing them to convict offenders. These acts increased the presence of the British government in the colonies and circumscribed the authority of the colonial assemblies, since paying the governor’s salary gave the assemblies significant power over them. Unsurprisingly, colonists, once again, resisted.

Even though these were duties, many colonial resistance authors still referred to them as “taxes,” because they were designed primarily to extract revenues from the colonies not to regulate trade. John Dickinson, in his “Letters from a Pennsylvania Farmer,” wrote, “That we may legally be bound to pay any general duties on

these commodities, relative to the regulation of trade, is granted; but we being obliged by her laws to take them from Great Britain, any special duties imposed on their exportation to us only, with intention to raise a revenue from us only, are as much taxes upon us, as those imposed by the Stamp Act.” Hence, many authors asked: once the colonists assented to a tax in *any form*, what would stop the British from imposing ever more and greater taxes on the colonists?

New forms of resistance emerged in which elite, middling, and working class colonists participated together. Merchants re-instituted non-importation agreements, and common colonists agreed not to consume these same products. Lists were circulated with signatories promising not to buy any British goods. These lists were often published in newspapers, bestowing recognition on those who had signed and led to pressure on those who had not.

Women, too, became involved to an unprecedented degree in resistance to the Townshend Acts. They circulated subscription lists and gathered signatures. The first political newspaper essays written by women appeared. Also, without new imports of British clothes, colonists took to wearing simple, homespun clothing. Spinning clubs were formed, in which local women would gather at one their homes and spin cloth for homespun clothing for their families and even for the community.

Homespun clothing quickly became a marker of one’s virtue and patriotism, and women were an important part of this cultural shift. At the same time, British goods and luxuries previously desired now became symbols of tyranny. Non-importation, and especially, non-consumption agreements changed colonists’ cultural relationship with the mother country. Committees of inspection that monitored merchants and residents to make sure that no one broke the agreements. Offenders could expect to have their names and offenses shamed in the newspaper and in broadsides.

Non-importation and non-consumption helped forge colonial unity. Colonies formed Committees of Correspondence to update the progress of resistance in each colony. Newspapers reprinted

exploits of resistance, giving colonists a sense that they were part of a broader political community. The best example of this new “continental conversation” came in the wake of the “Boston Massacre.” Britain sent regiments to Boston in 1768 to help enforce the new acts and quell the resistance. On the evening of March 5, 1770, a crowd gathered outside the Custom House and began hurling insults, snowballs, and perhaps more at the young sentry. When a small number of soldiers came to the sentry’s aid, the crowd grew increasingly hostile until the soldiers fired. After the smoke cleared, five Bostonians were dead, including Crispus Attucks, a former slave turned free dockworker. The soldiers were tried in Boston and won acquittal, thanks, in part, to their defense attorney, John Adams. News of the “Boston Massacre” spread quickly through the new resistance communication networks, aided by a famous engraving attributed to Paul Revere, which depicted bloodthirsty British soldiers with grins on their faces firing into a peaceful crowd. The engraving was quickly circulated and reprinted throughout the colonies, generating sympathy for Boston and anger with Britain.



This iconic image of the Boston Massacre by Paul Revere sparked fury in both Americans and the British by portraying the redcoats as brutal slaughterers and the onlookers as helpless victims. The events of March 5, 1770 did not actually play out as Revere pictured them, yet his intention was not simply to recount the affair. Revere created an effective propaganda piece that lent credence to those demanding that the British authoritarian rule be stopped. Paul Revere (engraver), "The bloody massacre perpetrated in King Street Boston on March 5th 1770 by a party of the 29th Regt.," 1770. [Library of Congress](#).

Resistance again led to repeal. In March of 1770, Parliament repealed all of the new duties except the one on tea, which, like the

Declaratory Act, was left to save face and assert that Parliament still retained the right to tax the colonies. The character of colonial resistance had changed between 1765 and 1770. During the Stamp Act resistance, elites wrote resolves and held congresses while violent, popular mobs burned effigies and tore down houses, with minimal coordination between colonies. But methods of resistance against the Townshend Acts became more inclusive and more coordinated. Colonists previously excluded from meaningful political participation now gathered signatures, and colonists of all ranks participated in the resistance by not buying British goods.

Britain's failed attempts at imperial reform in the 1760s created an increasingly vigilant and resistant colonial population and, most importantly, an enlarged political sphere—both on the colonial and continental levels—far beyond anything anyone could have imagined a few years earlier. A new sense of shared grievances began to join the colonists in a shared American political identity.

14. The War for Independence

The war began at Lexington and Concord, more than a year before Congress declared independence. In 1775, the British believed that the mere threat of war and a few minor incursions to seize supplies would be enough to cow the colonial rebellion. Those minor incursions, however, turned into a full-out military conflict. Despite an early American victory in Boston, the new nation faced the daunting task of taking on the world's largest military.

In the summer of 1776, the forces that had been at Boston arrived at New York. The largest expeditionary force in British history, including tens of thousands of German mercenaries known as “Hessians” followed soon after. New York was the perfect location to launch expeditions aimed at seizing control of the Hudson River and isolate New England from the rest of the continent. Also, New York contained many loyalists, particularly among the merchant and Anglican communities. In October, the British finally launched an attack on Brooklyn and Manhattan. The Continental Army took severe losses before retreating through New Jersey. With the onset of winter, Washington needed something to lift morale and encourage reenlistment. Therefore, he launched a successful surprise attack on the Hessian camp at Trenton on Christmas Day, by ferrying the few thousand men he had left across the Delaware River under the cover of night. The victory won the Continental Army much needed supplies and a morale boost following the disaster at New York.

An even greater success followed in upstate New York. In 1777, in an effort to secure the Hudson River, British General John Burgoyne led an army from Canada through upstate New York. There, he was to meet up with a detachment of General Howe's forces marching north from Manhattan. However, Howe abandoned the plan without telling Burgoyne and instead sailed to Philadelphia to capture the new nation's capital. The Continental Army defeated Burgoyne's

men at Saratoga, New York. This victory proved a major turning point in the war. Benjamin Franklin had been in Paris trying to secure a treaty of alliance with the French. However, the French were reluctant to back what seemed like an unlikely cause. News of the victory at Saratoga convinced the French that the cause might not have been as unlikely as they had thought. A “Treaty of Amity and Commerce” was signed on February 6, 1778. The treaty effectively turned a colonial rebellion into a global war as fighting between the British and French soon broke out in Europe and India.

Howe had taken Philadelphia in 1777 but returned to New York once winter ended. He slowly realized that European military tactics would not work in North America. In Europe, armies fought head-on battles in attempt to seize major cities. However, in 1777, the British had held Philadelphia and New York and yet still weakened their position. Meanwhile, Washington realized after New York that the largely untrained Continental Army could not match up in head-on battles with the professional British army. So he developed his own logic of warfare, which involved smaller, more frequent skirmishes and avoided any major engagements that would risk his entire army. As long as he kept the army intact, the war would continue, no matter how many cities the British captured.

In 1778, the British shifted their attentions to the South, where they believed they enjoyed more popular support. Campaigns from Virginia to Georgia captured major cities but the British simply did not have the manpower to retain military control. And, upon their departures, severe fighting ensued between local patriots and loyalists, often pitting family members against one another. The War in the South was truly a civil war.

By 1781, the British were also fighting France, Spain, and Holland. The British public’s support for the costly war in North America was quickly waning. The Americans took advantage of the British southern strategy with significant aid from the French army and navy. In October, Washington marched his troops from New York to Virginia in an effort to trap the British southern army under the command of Gen. Charles Cornwallis. Cornwallis had dug his men in

at Yorktown awaiting supplies and reinforcements from New York. However, the Continental and French armies arrived first, quickly followed by a French navy contingent, encircling Cornwallis's forces and, after laying siege to the city, forcing his surrender. The capture of another army left the British without a new strategy and without public support to continue the war. Peace negotiations took place in France and the war came to an official end on September 3, 1783.



Lord Cornwallis's surrender signalled the victory of the American revolutionaries over what they considered to be the despotic rule of Britain. This moment would live on in American memory as a pivotal one in the nation's origin story, prompting the United States government to commission artist John Trumbull to create this painting of the event in 1817. John Trumbull, *Surrender of Lord Cornwallis*, 1820. [Wikimedia](#).

Americans celebrated their victory, but it came at great cost. Soldiers suffered through brutal winters with inadequate resources. During the single winter at Valley Forge, over 2,500 Americans died from disease and exposure. Life was not easy on the home front either. Women on both sides of the conflict were frequently left alone to care for their households. In addition to their existing duties, women took on roles usually assigned to men on farms

and in shops and taverns. Abigail Adams addressed the difficulties she encountered while “minding family affairs” on their farm in Braintree, Massachusetts. Abigail managed the planting and harvesting of crops, in the midst of severe labor shortages and inflation, while dealing with several tenants on the Adams’ property, raising her children, and making clothing and other household goods. In order to support the family economically during John’s frequent absences and the uncertainties of war, Abigail also invested in several speculative schemes and sold imported goods.

While Abigail remained safely out of the fray, other women were not so fortunate. The Revolution was, in essence, a civil war; fought on women’s very doorsteps, in the fields next to their homes. There was no way for women to avoid the conflict, or the disruptions and devastations it caused. As the leader of the state militia during the Revolution, Mary Silliman’s husband, Gold, was absent from their home for much of the conflict. On the morning of July 7, 1779, when a British fleet [attacked nearby Fairfield](#), Connecticut, it was Mary who calmly evacuated her household, including her children and servants, to North Stratford. When Gold was captured by loyalists and held prisoner, Mary, six months pregnant with their second child, wrote letters to try and secure his release. When such appeals were ineffectual, Mary spearheaded an effort to capture a prominent Tory leader to exchange for her husband’s freedom.

Men and women together struggled through years of war and hardship. But even victory brought uncertainty. The Revolution created as many opportunities as it did corpses, and it was left to the survivors to determine the future of the new nation.



Another John Trumbull piece commissioned for the Capitol in 1817, this painting depicts what would be remembered as the moment the new United States became a republic. On December 23, 1783, George Washington, widely considered the hero of the Revolution, resigned his position as the most powerful man in the former thirteen colonies. Giving up his role as Commander-in-Chief of the Army insured that civilian rule would define the new nation, and that a republic would be set in place rather than a dictatorship. John Trumbull, *General George Washington Resigning His Commission*, c. 1817-1824. [Wikimedia](#).

PART VI

MODULE 6: THE REPUBLICAN EXPERIMENT

15. The Consequences of the American Revolution

Like the earlier distinction between “origins” and “causes,” the Revolution also had short- and long-term consequences. Perhaps the most important immediate consequence of declaring independence was the creation of state constitutions in 1776 and 1777. The Revolution also unleashed powerful political, social, and economic forces that would transform the post-Revolution politics and society, including increased participation in politics and governance, the legal institutionalization of religious toleration, and the growth and diffusion of the population. The Revolution also had significant short-term effects on the lives of women in the new United States of America. In the long-term, the Revolution would also have significant effects on the lives of slaves and free blacks as well as the institution of slavery itself. It also affected Native Americans by opening up western settlement and creating governments hostile to their territorial claims. Even more broadly, the Revolution ended the mercantilist economy, opening new opportunities in trade and manufacturing.

The new states drafted written constitutions, which, at the time, was an important innovation from the traditionally unwritten British Constitution. Most created weak governors and strong legislatures with regular elections and moderately increased the size of the electorate. A number of states followed the example of Virginia, which included a declaration or “bill” of rights in their constitution designed to protect the rights of individuals and circumscribe the prerogative of the government. Pennsylvania’s first state constitution was the most radical and democratic. They created a unicameral legislature and an Executive Council but no genuine executive. All free men could vote, including those who did not own property. Massachusetts’ constitution, passed in 1780, was less

democratic but underwent a more popular process of ratification. In the fall of 1779, each town sent delegates--312 in all--to a constitutional convention in Cambridge. Town meetings debated the constitution draft and offered suggestions. Anticipating the later federal constitution, Massachusetts established a three-branch government based on checks and balances between the branches. Unlike some other states, it also offered the executive veto power over legislation. 1776 was the year of independence, but it was also the beginning of an unprecedented period of constitution-making and state building.

The Continental Congress ratified the Articles of Confederation in 1781. The Articles allowed each state one vote in the Continental Congress. But the Articles are perhaps most notable for what they did not allow. Congress was given no power to levy or collect taxes, regulate foreign or interstate commerce, or establish a federal judiciary. These shortcomings rendered the post-war Congress rather impotent.

Political and social life changed drastically after independence. Political participation grew as more people gained the right to vote. In addition, more common citizens (or “new men”) played increasingly important roles in local and state governance. Hierarchy within the states underwent significant changes. Locke’s ideas of “natural law” had been central to the Declaration of Independence and the state constitutions. Society became less deferential and more egalitarian, less aristocratic and more meritocratic.

The Revolution’s most important long-term economic consequence was the end of mercantilism. The British Empire had imposed various restrictions on the colonial economies including limiting trade, settlement, and manufacturing. The Revolution opened new markets and new trade relationships. The Americans’ victory also opened the western territories for invasion and settlement, which created new domestic markets. Americans began to create their own manufacturers, no longer content to reply on those in Britain.

Despite these important changes, the American Revolution had its limits. Following their unprecedented expansion into political affairs during the imperial resistance, women also served the patriot cause during the war. However, the Revolution did not result in civic equality for women. Instead, during the immediate post-war period, women became incorporated into the polity to some degree as “republican mothers.” These new republican societies required virtuous citizens and it became mothers’ responsibility to raise and educate future citizens. This opened opportunity for women regarding education, but they still remained largely on the peripheries of the new American polity.

Slaves and free blacks also impacted (and were impacted by) the Revolution. The British were the first to recruit black (or “Ethiopian”) regiments, as early as Dunmore’s Proclamation of 1775 in Virginia, which promised freedom to any slaves who would escape their masters and join the British cause. At first, Washington, a slaveholder himself, resisted allowing free blacks and former slaves to join the Continental Army, but he eventually relented. In 1775, Peter Salem’s master freed him to fight with the militia. Salem faced British Regulars in the battles at Lexington and Bunker Hill, where he fought valiantly with



While in the 13 colonies boycotting women were seen as patriots, they were mocked in British prints like this one as immoral harlots sticking their noses in the business of men. Philip Dawe, “A Society of Patriotic Ladies at Edenton in North Carolina, March 1775. [Metropolitan Museum of Art](#).

around three-dozen other black Americans. Salem not only contributed to the cause, but he earned the ability to determine his own life after his enlistment ended. Salem was not alone, but many

more slaves seized upon the tumult of war to run away and secure their own freedom directly.

Between 30,000 and 100,000 slaves deserted their masters during the war. In 1783, thousands of Loyalist former slaves fled with the British army. They hoped that the British government would uphold the promise of freedom and help them establish new homes elsewhere in the Empire. The Treaty of Paris, which ended the war, demanded that British troops leave runaway slaves behind, but the British military commanders upheld earlier promises and evacuated thousands of freedmen, transporting them to Canada, the Caribbean, or Great Britain. But black loyalists continued to face social and economic marginalization, including restrictions on land ownership. In 1792, Black loyalist and Baptist preacher David George resisted discrimination, joining a colonization project that led nearly 1,200 former black Americans from Nova Scotia to Sierra Leone, in Africa.

The fight for liberty led some Americans to manumit their slaves, and most of the new northern states soon passed gradual emancipation laws. Manumission also occurred in the Upper South, but in the Lower South, some masters revoked their offers of freedom for service, and other freedmen were forced back into bondage. The Revolution's rhetoric of equality created a "revolutionary generation" of slaves and free blacks that would eventually encourage the antislavery movement. Slave revolts began to incorporate claims for freedom based on revolutionary ideals. In the long-term, the Revolution failed to reconcile slavery with these new egalitarian republican societies, a tension that eventually boiled over in the 1830s and 1840s and effectively tore the nation in two in the 1850s and 1860s.

Native Americans, too, participated in and were affected by the Revolution. Many Native American tribes and confederacies, such as the Shawnee, Creek, Cherokee, and Iroquois, sided with the British. They had hoped for a British victory that would continue to restrain the land-hungry colonial settlers from moving west beyond the Appalachian Mountains. Unfortunately, the Americans' victory and

Native Americans' support for the British created a pretense for justifying the rapid, and often brutal expansion into the western territories. Native American tribes would continue to be displaced and pushed further west throughout the nineteenth century. Ultimately, American independence marked the beginning of the end of what had remained of Native American independence.

16. Rights and Compromises

Although debates continued, Washington's election as president, and the first eight years of functioning government during his administration, cemented the Constitution's authority. By 1793, the term "Anti-Federalist" would be essentially meaningless. Yet the debates produced a piece of the Constitution that seems irreplaceable today. Ten amendments to the Constitution were added in 1791. Together, they constitute the Bill of Rights. James Madison, against his original wishes, supported these amendments as an act of political compromise and necessity. He had won election to the House of Representatives only by promising his Virginia constituents such a list of rights.

There was much the Bill of Rights did not cover. Women found here no special protections or guarantee of a voice in government. Many states would continue to restrict voting only to men who owned significant amounts of property. And slavery not only continued to exist; it was condoned and protected by the Constitution.

Of all the compromises that formed the Constitution, perhaps none would be more important than the compromise over the slave trade. Americans generally perceived the Atlantic slave trade (the process of shipping enslaved Africans to the Western Hemisphere) as more violent and immoral than slavery itself. Many Northerners opposed it on moral grounds. But they also understood that letting Southern states import more Africans would increase their political power. The Constitution counted each black individual as three-fifths of a person for purposes of representation, so in districts with many slaves, the white voters had extra influence. On the other hand, the states of the Upper South also welcomed a ban on the Atlantic trade because they already had a surplus of slaves. Banning importation meant slaveowners in Virginia and Maryland could get higher prices when they sold slaves in America. States like South

Carolina and Georgia, however, were dependent upon a continued slave trade.

New England and the Deep South agreed to what was called a “dirty compromise” at the Constitutional Convention in 1787. New Englanders agreed to include a constitutional provision that protected the foreign slave trade for twenty years; in exchange, South Carolina and Georgia delegates had agreed to support a constitutional clause that made it harder for Congress to pass commercial legislation. As a result, the Atlantic slave trade resumed until 1808 when it was outlawed for three reasons. First, Britain was also in the process of outlawing the slave trade in 1807, and the United States did not want to concede any moral high ground to its rival. Second, the Haitian Revolution (1791–1804), a successful slave revolt against French colonial rule in the West Indies, had changed the stakes in the debate. The image of thousands of armed black revolutionaries terrified white Americans. Third, the Haitian Revolution had ended France’s plans to expand its presence in the Americas, so in 1803, the United States had purchased the Louisiana Territory from the French at a fire-sale price. This massive new territory, which had doubled the size of the United States, had put the question of slavery’s expansion at the top of the national agenda. Many white Americans, including President Thomas Jefferson, thought that ending the external slave trade and dispersing the domestic slave population would keep the United States a white man’s republic and perhaps even lead to the disappearance of slavery.

The ban on the slave trade, however, lacked effective enforcement measures and funding. Moreover, instead of freeing illegally imported Africans, the act left their fate to the individual states, and many of those states simply sold intercepted slaves at auction. Thus, the ban preserved the logic of property ownership in human beings. The new federal government protected slavery as much as it expanded democratic rights and privileges for white men.

17. Ratifying the Constitution



Delegates to the Constitutional Convention assembled, argued, and finally agreed in this room, styled in the same manner it was during the Convention. Photograph of the Assembly Room, Independence Hall, Philadelphia, PA.
[Wikimedia](#).

The convention voted to send its proposed Constitution to Congress, which was then sitting in New York, with a cover letter from George Washington. The plan for adopting the new Constitution, however, required approval from special state ratification conventions, not just Congress. During the ratification process, critics of the Constitution organized to persuade voters in the different states to oppose it.

Importantly, the Constitutional Convention had voted down a proposal from Virginia's George Mason, the author of Virginia's state Declaration of Rights, for a national bill of rights. This omission became a rallying point for opponents of the document. Many of these "Anti-Federalists" argued that without such a guarantee of

specific rights, American citizens risked losing their personal liberty to the powerful federal government. The pro-ratification “Federalists,” on the other hand, argued that including a bill of rights was not only redundant but dangerous; it could limit future citizens from adding new rights.

Over the next months, citizens debated the merits of the Constitution in newspaper articles, letters, sermons, and coffeehouse quarrels across America. The first crucial vote came at the beginning of 1788 in Massachusetts. At first, the Anti-Federalists at the Massachusetts ratifying convention probably had the upper hand, but after weeks of debate, enough delegates changed their votes to approve the Constitution narrowly. But they also approved a number of proposed amendments, which were to be submitted to the first Congress. This pattern—ratifying the Constitution but attaching proposed amendments—was followed by other state conventions.

The most high-profile convention was held in Richmond, Virginia, in June 1788, when Federalists like James Madison, Edmund Randolph, and John Marshall squared off against equally influential Anti-Federalists like Patrick Henry and George Mason. Virginia was America’s most populous state, it had produced some of the country’s highest-profile leaders, and the success of the new government rested upon its cooperation. After nearly a month of debate, Virginia voted 89 to 79 in favor of ratification.

On July 2, 1788, Congress announced that a majority of states had ratified the Constitution and that the document was now in effect. Yet this did not mean the debates were over. North Carolina, New York, and Rhode Island had not completed their ratification conventions, and Anti-Federalists still argued that the Constitution would lead to tyranny. The New York convention would ratify the Constitution by just three votes, and finally Rhode Island would ratify it by two votes—a full year after George Washington was inaugurated as president.

PART VII

MODULE 7: DEMOCRACY & DISSENT

18. Jeffersonian Republicanism and the Democratization of America

Free and enslaved black Americans were not the only ones pushing against political hierarchies. Jefferson's election to the presidency in 1800 represented a victory for ordinary white Americans in their bid to assume more direct control over the government. Elites had made no secret of their hostility toward pure democracy, that is the direct control of government by the people. In both private correspondence and published works, many of the nation's founders argued that pure democracy would lead to anarchy. "The power of the people, if uncontroverted, is licentious and mobbish," Massachusetts Federalist Fisher Ames maintained in language echoed by many of his colleagues. Ames believed that the writers of the Constitution intended for the government to be a republic, rather than a democracy, since the latter depended upon public opinion, which he argued "shifts with every current of caprice." Jefferson's election, for Federalists like Ames, heralded a slide "down into the mire of a democracy."

Indeed, many political leaders and non-elite citizens believed Jefferson embraced the politics of the masses. "[I]n a government like ours it is the duty of the Chief-magistrate... to unite in himself the confidence of the whole people," Jefferson wrote in 1810. Nine years later, looking back on his monumental election, Jefferson again linked his triumph to the political engagement of ordinary citizens: "The revolution of 1800...was as real a revolution in the principles of our government as that of 76 was in it's form," he wrote, "not effected indeed by the sword...but by the rational and peaceable instrument of reform, the suffrage [voting] of the people." Jefferson desired to convince Americans—and the world—that a

government that answered directly to the people would lead to lasting national union, not anarchic division, proving that free people could govern themselves democratically.

Jefferson set out to differentiate his administration from the Federalists. He defined American union by the voluntary bonds of fellow citizens toward one another and toward the government. In contrast, the Federalists supposedly imaged a union defined by expansive state power and public submission to the rule of aristocratic elites. For Jefferson, the American nation drew its “energy” and its strength from the “confidence” of a “reasonable” and “rational” people.

Republican celebrations often credited Jefferson with saving the nation’s republican principles. In a move that enraged Federalists, they used the image of George Washington, who had passed away in 1799, linking the republican virtue Washington epitomized to the democratic liberty Jefferson championed. A contributor to the *Alexandria Expositor* argued that the Federalists had abused their power in the administration by raising “a large army” and naval force, which exemplified the ways they had appeared to be “hastily swallowing up all that remained of our liberties.” Leaving behind the military pomp of power-obsessed Federalists, Republicans had peacefully elected the scribe of national independence, the philosopher-patriot who had battled tyranny with his pen, not with a sword or a gun.

The celebrations of Jefferson’s presidency and the defeat of the Federalists expressed many citizens’ willingness to assert greater direct control over the government as citizens. The definition of citizenship was changing. Early American national identity was coded masculine, just as it was coded white and wealthy; yet, since the Revolution, women had repeatedly called for a place in the conversation. Mercy Otis Warren was one of the most noteworthy female contributors to the public ratification debate over the Constitution of 1787 and 1788, but women all over the country were urged to participate in the discussion over the Constitution. “It is the duty of the American ladies, in a particular manner, to interest

themselves in the success of the measures that are now pursuing by the Federal Convention for the happiness of America,” a Philadelphia essayist announced. “They can retain their rank as rational beings only in a free government. In a monarchy...they will be considered as valuable members of a society, only in proportion as they are capable of being mothers for soldiers, who are the pillars of crowned heads.” American women were more than mothers to soldiers; they were mothers to liberty.

Historians have used the term Republican Motherhood to describe the early American belief that women were essential in nurturing the principles of liberty in the citizenry. Women would pass along important values of independence and virtue to their children, ensuring that each generation cherished the same values of the American Revolution. Because of these ideas, women’s actions became politicized. Republican partisans even described women’s choice of sexual partner as crucial to the health and well-being of both the party and the nation. “The fair Daughters of America” should “never disgrace themselves by giving their hands in marriage to any but real republicans,” a group of New Jersey Republicans asserted. A Philadelphia paper toasted “The fair Daughters of Columbia. May their smiles be the reward of Republicans only.” Though unmistakably steeped in the gendered assumptions about female sexuality and domesticity that denied women an equal share of the political rights men enjoyed, these statements also conceded the pivotal role women played as active participants in partisan politics.

19. Video: Thomas Jefferson & His Democracy

In this video, John Green teaches you about founding father and third president of the United States, Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson is a somewhat controversial figure in American history, largely because he, like pretty much all humans, was a big bundle of contradictions. Jefferson was a slave-owner who couldn't decide if he liked slavery. He advocated for small government, but expanded federal power more than either of his presidential predecessor. He also idealized the independent farmer and demonized manufacturing, but put policies in place that would expand industrial production in the United States. Controversy may ensue as we try to deviate a bit from the standard hagiography/slander story that usually told about old TJ. John explores Jefferson's election, his policies, and some of the new nation's (literally and figuratively) formative events that took place during Jefferson's presidency. In addition to all this, Napoleon drops in to sell Louisiana, John Marshall sets the course of the Supreme Court, and John Adams gets called a tiny tyrant.



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<https://library.achievingthedream.org/forsythtechamericanhistory1/?p=51>

20. Lin-Manuel Miranda Performs at the White House Poetry Jam



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[https://library.achievingthedream.org/
forsythtechamericanhistory1/?p=52](https://library.achievingthedream.org/forsythtechamericanhistory1/?p=52)

2I. Hamilton's Financial System



Alexander Hamilton saw America's future as a metropolitan, commercial, industrial society, in contrast to Thomas Jefferson's nation of small farmers. While both men had the ear of President Washington, Hamilton's vision proved most appealing and enduring. John Trumbull, Portrait of Alexander Hamilton, 1806. [Wikimedia](#).

Meanwhile, during George Washington's presidency, political trouble was already brewing. Washington's cabinet choices reflected continuing tension between politicians who wanted and who feared a powerful national government. The vice president was John Adams, and Washington chose Alexander Hamilton to be his secretary of the treasury. Both men wanted an active government that would promote prosperity by supporting American industry. However, Washington chose Thomas Jefferson to be his secretary of state, and Jefferson was committed to restricting federal power and preserving an economy based on agriculture. From almost the beginning, Washington struggled to reconcile the "Federalist" and

“Republican” (or Democratic-Republican) factions within his own administration.

Alexander Hamilton believed that self-interest was the “most powerful incentive of human actions.” Self-interest drove humans to accumulate property, and that effort created commerce and industry. According to Hamilton, government had important roles to play in this process. First, the state should protect private property from theft. Second, according to Hamilton, the state should use human “passions” and “make them subservient to the public good.” In other words, a wise government would harness its citizens’ desire for property so that both private individuals and the state would benefit.

Hamilton, like many of his contemporary statesmen, did not believe the state should ensure an equal distribution of property. Inequality was “the great & fundamental distinction in Society,” and Hamilton saw no reason to change this reality. Instead, Hamilton wanted to tie the economic interests of wealthy Americans, or “monied men,” to the federal government’s financial health. If the rich needed the government, then they would direct their energies to making sure it remained solvent.

Hamilton, therefore, believed that the federal government must be “a Repository of the Rights of the wealthy.” As the nation’s first secretary of the treasury, he proposed an ambitious financial plan to achieve that.

The first part of Hamilton’s plan involved federal “assumption” of state debts, which were mostly left over from the Revolutionary War. The federal government would assume responsibility for the states’ unpaid debts, which totaled about \$25 million. Second, Hamilton wanted Congress to create a bank—a Bank of the United States.

The goal of these proposals was to link federal power and the country’s economic vitality. Under the assumption proposal, the states’ creditors (people who owned state bonds or promissory notes) would turn their old notes in to the Treasury and receive new federal notes of the same face value. Hamilton foresaw that these

bonds would circulate like money, acting as “an engine of business, and instrument of industry and commerce.” This part of his plan, however, was controversial for two reasons.

First, many taxpayers objected to paying the full face value on old notes, which had fallen in market value. Often the current holders had purchased them from the original creditors for pennies on the dollar. To pay them at full face value, therefore, would mean rewarding speculators at taxpayer expense. Hamilton countered that government debts must be honored in full, or else citizens would lose all trust in the government. Second, many southerners objected that they had already paid their outstanding state debts, so federal assumption would mean forcing them to pay again for the debts of New Englanders. Nevertheless, President Washington and Congress both accepted Hamilton’s argument. By the end of 1794, 98 percent of the country’s domestic debt had been converted into new federal bonds.

Hamilton’s plan for a Bank of the United States, similarly, won congressional approval despite strong opposition. Thomas Jefferson and other Republicans argued that the plan was unconstitutional; the Constitution did not authorize Congress to create a bank. Hamilton, however, argued that the bank was not only constitutional but also important for the country’s prosperity. The Bank of the United States would fulfill several needs. It would act as a convenient depository for federal funds. It would print paper banknotes backed by specie (gold or silver). Its agents would also help control inflation by periodically taking state bank notes to their banks of origin and demanding specie in exchange, limiting the amount of notes the state banks printed. Furthermore, it would give wealthy people a vested interest in the federal government’s finances. The government would control just twenty percent of the bank’s stock; the other eighty percent would be owned by private investors. Thus, an “intimate connexion” between the government and wealthy men would benefit both, and this connection would promote American commerce.

In 1791, therefore, Congress approved a twenty-year charter for

the Bank of the United States. The bank's stocks, together with federal bonds, created over \$70 million in new financial instruments. These spurred the formation of securities markets, which allowed the federal government to borrow more money and underwrote the rapid spread of state-chartered banks and other private business corporations in the 1790s. For Federalists, this was one of the major purposes of the federal government. For opponents who wanted a more limited role for industry, however, or who lived on the frontier and lacked access to capital, Hamilton's system seemed to reinforce class boundaries and give the rich inordinate power over the federal government.

Hamilton's plan, furthermore, had another highly controversial element. In order to pay what it owed on the new bonds, the federal government needed reliable sources of tax revenue. In 1791, Hamilton proposed a federal excise tax on the production, sale, and consumption of a number of goods, including whiskey.

22. The French Revolution and the Limits of Liberty



The mounting body count of the French Revolution included that of the Queen and King, who were beheaded in a public ceremony in early 1793, as depicted in the engraving. While Americans disdained the concept of monarchy, the execution of King Louis XVI was regarded by many Americans as an abomination, an indication of the chaos and savagery reigning in France at the time. Charles Monnet (artist), Antoine-Jean Duclos and Isidore-Stanislas Helman (engravers), "Day of 21 January 1793 the death of Louis Capet on the Place de la Révolution," 1794. [Wikimedia](#).

In part, the Federalists were turning toward Britain because they feared the most radical forms of democratic thought. In the wake of Shays' Rebellion, the Whiskey Rebellion, and other internal protests, Federalists sought to preserve social stability. And the course of the French Revolution seemed to justify their concerns.

In 1789, news had arrived in America that the French had revolted against their king. Most Americans had imagined that the idea of liberty was spreading from America to Europe, carried there by

the returning French heroes who had taken part in the American Revolution. “The light of freedom which America hath struck out,” a Philadelphia newspaper had declared, “has reflected to France, and kindled a blaze which lays despotism in ashes, and is illuminating the world.”

Initially, nearly all Americans had sung the French Revolution’s praises. Towns all over the country had hosted speeches and parades on July 14 to commemorate the day it began. Women had worn neoclassical dress in honor of its republican principles, and men had pinned revolutionary cockades to their hats. John Randolph, a Virginia planter, named two of his favorite horses “Jacobin” and “Sans-Culotte” after French revolutionary factions.

In April 1793, a new French ambassador, “Citizen” Edmond-Charles Genêt, had arrived in the United States. During his tour of several cities, Americans had greeted him with wild enthusiasm. Citizen Genêt had encouraged Americans to act against Spain, a British ally, by attacking its colonies of Florida and Louisiana. When President Washington had refused, Genêt had threatened to appeal to the American people directly. In response, Washington had demanded that France recall its diplomat. In the meantime, however, Genêt’s faction had fallen from power in France. Knowing that a return home might cost him his head, he decided to remain in America.

Genêt’s intuition was correct. A radical coalition of revolutionaries had seized power in France. They had initiated a bloody purge of their enemies, the “Reign of Terror.” As Americans learned not only about Genêt’s impropriety but also the mounting body count in France, many of them began to have second thoughts about the French Revolution.

Americans who feared that the French Revolution was spiraling out of control tended to become Federalists. Those who remained hopeful about the revolution tended to become Republicans. Not deterred by the violence, Thomas Jefferson declared that he would rather see “half the earth desolated” than see the French Revolution fail. “Were there but an Adam and an Eve left in every country, and

left free,” he wrote, “it would be better than as it now is.” Meanwhile, the Federalists sought closer ties with Britain.

Despite the political rancor, in late 1796 there came one sign of hope: the United States peacefully elected a new president. For now, as Washington stepped down and executive power changed hands, the country did not descend into the anarchy that many leaders feared.

The new president was John Adams, Washington’s vice president. Adams was less beloved than the old general, and he governed a nation that was deeply divided. The foreign crisis also presented him with a major test.

In response to Jay’s Treaty, the French government authorized its vessels to attack American shipping. To resolve this, President Adams sent envoys to France in 1797. The French insulted these diplomats. Some officials, whom the Americans code-named “X,” “Y,” and “Z” in their correspondence, hinted that negotiations could begin only after the Americans offered a bribe. When the story became public, this “X.Y.Z. Affair” infuriated American citizens. Dozens of towns wrote addresses to President Adams, pledging him their support against France. Many people seemed eager for war. “Millions for defense,” toasted South Carolina representative Robert Goodloe Harper, “but not one cent for tribute.”

By 1798, the people of Charleston watched the ocean’s horizon apprehensively because they feared the arrival of the French navy at any moment. Many people now worried that the same ships that had aided Americans during the Revolutionary War might discharge an invasion force on their shores. Some southerners were sure that this force would consist of black troops from France’s Caribbean colonies, who would attack the southern states and cause their slaves to revolt. Many Americans also worried that France had covert agents in the country. In the streets of Charleston, armed bands of young men searched for French disorganizers. Even the little children prepared for the looming conflict by fighting with sticks.

Meanwhile, during the crisis, New Englanders were some of the

most outspoken opponents of France. In 1798, they found a new reason for Francophobia. An influential Massachusetts minister, Jedidiah Morse, announced to his congregation that the French Revolution had been hatched in a conspiracy led by a mysterious anti-Christian organization called the Illuminati. The story was a hoax, but rumors of Illuminati infiltration spread throughout New England like wildfire, adding a new dimension to the foreign threat.

Against this backdrop of fear, the French “Quasi-War,” as it would come to be known, was fought on the Atlantic, mostly between French naval vessels and American merchant ships. During this crisis, however, anxiety about foreign agents ran high, and members of Congress took action to prevent internal subversion. The most controversial of these steps were the Alien and Sedition Acts. These two laws, passed in 1798, were intended to prevent French agents and sympathizers from compromising America’s resistance, but they also attacked Americans who criticized the President and the Federalist Party.

The Alien Act allowed the federal government to deport foreign nationals, or “aliens,” who seemed to pose a national security threat. Even more dramatically, the Sedition Act allowed the government to prosecute anyone found to be speaking or publishing “false, scandalous, and malicious writing” against the government.

These laws were not simply brought on by war hysteria. They reflected common assumptions about the nature of the American Revolution and the limits of liberty. In fact, most of the advocates for the Constitution and First Amendment accepted that free speech simply meant a lack of prior censorship or restraint—not a guarantee against punishment. According to this logic, “licentious” or unruly speech made society less free, not more. James Wilson, one of the principal architects of the Constitution, argued that “every author is responsible when he attacks the security or welfare of the government.”

In 1798, most Federalists were inclined to agree. Under the terms of the Sedition Act, they indicted and prosecuted several Republican printers—and even a Republican congressman who had criticized

President Adams. Meanwhile, although the Adams administration never enforced the Alien Act, its passage was enough to convince some foreign nationals to leave the country. For the president and most other Federalists, the Alien and Sedition Acts represented a continuation of a conservative rather than radical American Revolution.

However, the Alien and Sedition Acts caused a backlash, in two ways. First, shocked opponents articulated a new and expansive vision for liberty. The New York lawyer Tunis Wortman, for example, demanded an “absolute independence” of the press. Likewise, the Virginia judge George Hay called for “any publication whatever criminal” to be exempt from legal punishment. Many Americans began to argue that free speech meant the ability to say virtually anything without fear of prosecution.

Second, James Madison and Thomas Jefferson helped organize opposition from state governments. Ironically, both of them had expressed support for the principle behind the Sedition Act in previous years. Jefferson, for example, had written to Madison in 1789 that the nation should punish citizens for speaking “false facts” that injured the country. Nevertheless, both men now opposed the Alien and Sedition Acts on constitutional grounds. In 1798, Jefferson made this point in a resolution that the Kentucky state legislature adopted. A short time later, the Virginia legislature adopted a similar document that Madison wrote.

The Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions argued that the national government’s authority was limited to the powers expressly granted by the U.S. Constitution. More importantly, they asserted that the states could declare federal laws unconstitutional. For the time being, these resolutions were simply gestures of defiance. Their bold claim, however, would have important effects in later decades.

In just a few years, many Americans’ feelings towards France had changed dramatically. Far from rejoicing in the “light of freedom,” many Americans now feared the “contagion” of French-style liberty. Debates over the French Revolution in the 1790s gave Americans some of their earliest opportunities to articulate what it meant to

be American. Did American national character rest on a radical and universal vision of human liberty? Or was America supposed to be essentially pious and traditional, an outgrowth of Great Britain? They couldn't agree. It was upon this cracked foundation that many of conflicts of the nineteenth century would rest.

PART VIII

MODULE 8: REPUBLICAN ASCENDANCY

23. Jefferson as President



Thomas Jefferson's victory over John Adams in the election of 1800 was celebrated through everyday Americans' material culture, including this victory banner. [Smithsonian Institute, National Museum of American History](#).

Buttressed by robust public support, Jefferson sought to implement policies that reflected this rhetoric and political activity. He worked to reduce taxes and cut the government's budget believing that this would cause the economy to expand and prosper. His cuts included national defense and Jefferson restricted the regular army to three thousand men. England may have needed taxes and debt to support its military empire, but Jefferson was determined to live in peace—and that belief led him to successfully reduce America's national debt while getting rid of all internal taxes during his first term. In a move that became the crowning achievement of his

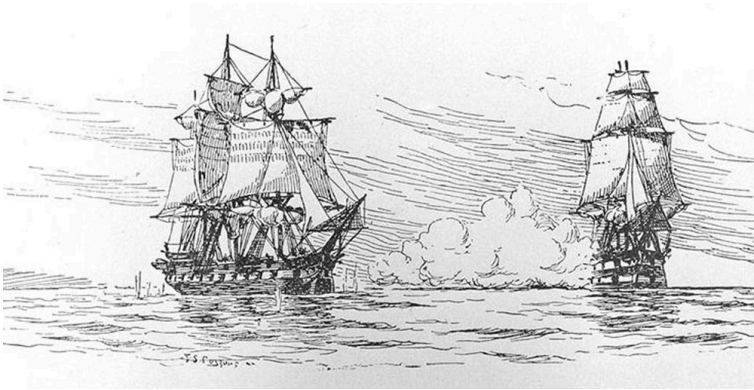
presidency, Jefferson authorized the acquisition of Louisiana from France in 1803 in what is considered the largest real estate deal in American history. During the massive reorganization of North American property following the Seven Years' War, France ceded Louisiana to Spain in exchange for West Florida. Jefferson was concerned about the American use of Spanish-held New Orleans, which served as an important port for western farmers. His worries multiplied when the French secretly reacquired Louisiana in 1800. Spain remained in Louisiana for two more years while U.S. Minister to France, Robert R. Livingston, tried to strike a compromise. Fortunately for the U.S., the pressures of war in Europe and the slave insurrection in Haiti forced Napoleon to rethink his vast North American holdings. Rebellious slaves coupled with a yellow fever outbreak in Haiti defeated French forces, stripping Napoleon of his ability to control Haiti (the home of his profitable sugar plantations). Deciding to cut his losses, Napoleon offered to sell the entire Louisiana Territory for \$15 million—roughly equivalent to \$250 million today. Negotiations between Livingston and Napoleon's foreign minister, Talleyrand, succeeded more spectacularly than either Jefferson or Livingston could have imagined.

Jefferson made an inquiry to his cabinet regarding the constitutionality of the Louisiana Purchase, but he believed he was obliged to operate outside the strict limitations of the Constitution if the good of the nation was at stake as his ultimate responsibility was to the American people. Jefferson felt he should be able to “throw himself on the justice of his country” when he facilitated the interests of the very people he served. He believed that a strong executive was essential to a lasting republican nation.

Jefferson's foreign policy, especially the Embargo of 1807, elicited the most outrage from his Federalist critics. As Napoleon Bonaparte's armies moved across Europe, Jefferson wrote to a European friend that he was glad that God had “divided the dry lands of your hemisphere from the dry lands of ours, and said ‘here, at least, be there peace.’” Unfortunately, the Atlantic Ocean soon became the site of Jefferson's greatest foreign policy test,

as England, France, and Spain refused to respect American ships' neutrality. The greatest offenses came from the British, who resumed the policy of impressment, seizing thousands of American sailors and forcing them to fight for the British navy.

Many Americans called for war when the British attacked the USS *Chesapeake* in 1807. The president, however, decided on a policy of "peaceable coercion" and Congress agreed. Under the Embargo Act of 1807, American ports were closed to all foreign trade in hopes of avoiding war. Jefferson hoped that an embargo would force European nations to respect American neutrality. Historians disagree over the wisdom of peaceable coercion. At first, withholding commerce rather than declaring war appeared to be the ultimate means of nonviolent conflict resolution. In practice, the Embargo hurt America's economy and Jefferson's personal finances even suffered. When Americans resorted to smuggling their goods out of the country, Jefferson expanded governmental powers to try to enforce their compliance, leading some to label him a "Tyrant."



The attack of the Chesapeake caused such furor in the hearts of Americans that even 80 years after the incident, an artist sketched this drawing of the event. Fred S. Cozzens, "The incident between HMS 'Leopard; and USS 'Chesapeake' that sparked the Chesapeake-Leopard Affair," 1897. <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Leopardchesapeake.jpg>.

Criticism of Jefferson's policies began to use the same rhetoric that

his supporters trumpeted. Federalists attacked the American Philosophical Society and the study of natural history, believing both to be too saturated with Democratic Republicans. Some Federalists lamented the alleged decline of educational standards for children. Moreover, James Callender published accusations (confirmed much later by DNA evidence) that Jefferson was involved in a sexual relationship with Sally Hemings, one of his slaves. Callender referred to Jefferson as “our little mulatto president,” suggesting that sex with a slave had somehow compromised Jefferson’s racial integrity. Callender’s accusation joined previous Federalist attacks on Jefferson’s racial politics, including a scathing pamphlet written by South Carolinian William Loughton Smith in 1796 that described the principles of Jeffersonian democracy as the beginning of a slippery slope to dangerous racial equality.

Arguments lamenting the democratization of America were far less effective than those that borrowed from democratic language and demonstrated how Jefferson’s actions were, in fact, undermining the sovereignty of the people. Historian David Hackett Fischer has written that the Federalists set out to “defeat Jefferson with his own weapons.” As Alexander Hamilton argued in 1802: “[W]e must consider whether it be possible for us to succeed without in some degree employing the weapons which have been employed against us.” Indeed, when Federalists attacked Jefferson, they often accused him of acting against the interests of the very public he claimed to serve. In response to the Embargo, a citizen going by the pseudonym “A True Republican” wrote to the president: “You are a friend to the disturber of the peace & greatest enemy of the whole world.”

The Federalists’ appropriation of this language to critique Jefferson’s administration represented a pivotal development. As the Federalists scrambled to stay politically relevant, it became apparent that their ideology—rooted in eighteenth century notions of virtue, paternalistic rule by wealthy elite, and the deference of ordinary citizens to an aristocracy of merit—was no longer tenable. The Federalists’ adoption of republican political rhetoric signaled

a new political landscape where both parties embraced the direct involvement of the citizenry. The Republican Party rose to power on the promise to expand voting and promote a more direct link between political leaders and the electorate. The American populace continued to demand more direct access to political power. Jefferson, James Madison, and James Monroe sought to expand voting through policies that made it easier for Americans to purchase land. Under their leadership, seven new states entered the Union. By 1824, only three states still had rules about how much property someone had to own before he could vote. Never again would the Federalists regain dominance over either the Congress or the presidency; the last Federalist to run for president, Rufus King, lost to Monroe in 1816.

24. The War of 1812

Soon after Jefferson retired from the presidency in 1808, Congress ended the Embargo, as the British relaxed their policies toward American ships. Although it was unpopular, Jefferson still believed that more time would have proven that peaceable coercion truly was an effective weapon of international diplomacy. Yet war with Britain loomed—a war that would galvanize the young American nation and convince many citizens that the many voices now inhabiting the national political arena all spoke with one voice.

The War of 1812 stemmed from the United States' entanglement in two distinct sets of international issues. The first had to do with the nation's desire to maintain its position as a neutral trading nation during the series of Anglo-French wars, which began in the aftermath of the French Revolution in 1793. The second had older roots in the colonial and Revolutionary era. In both cases, American interests and goals conflicted with those of the British Empire. And each time, British leaders showed little interest in accommodating the Americans.

Impressments, that is the practice of forcing American sailors to join the British Navy was among the most important sources of conflict between the two nations. Driven in part by trade with Europe, the American economy grew quickly during the first decade of the nineteenth century, creating a labor shortage in the American shipping industry. In response, pay rates for sailors increased and American captains recruited heavily from the ranks of British sailors. As a result, around 30 percent of sailors employed on American merchant ships were British. As a republic, the Americans advanced the notion that people could become citizens by renouncing their allegiance to their home nation. To the British, a person born in the British Empire was a subject of that empire for life, a status they could not change. The British Navy was embroiled in a difficult war and was unwilling to lose any of its labor force. In order to regain

lost crewmen, the British often boarded American ships to reclaim their sailors. Of course, many American sailors found themselves caught up in these sweeps and “impressed” into the service of the British Navy. Between 1803 and 1812, some 6,000 Americans suffered this fate. The British would release Americans who could prove their identity but this process could take years while the sailor endured harsh conditions and the dangers of the Royal Navy.

In 1806, responding to a French declaration of a complete naval blockade of Great Britain, the British demanded that neutral ships first carried their goods to Britain to pay a transit duty before they could proceed to France. Despite loopholes in these policies between 1807 and 1812, Britain, France, and their allies seized about 900 American ships, prompting a swift and angry American response. Jefferson’s Embargo sent the nation into a deep depression and drove exports down from \$108 million in 1807 to \$22 million in 1808, all while having little effect on Europeans. Within fifteen months Congress repealed the Embargo, replacing it with smaller restrictions on trade with Britain and France. Although, the Republican efforts to stand against Great Britain had failed, resentment of British trade policy remained widespread in American society.

Far from the Atlantic Ocean on the American frontier, Americans were also at odds with the British Empire. From their position in Canada, the British maintained relations with Native Americans in the Old Northwest, supplying them with goods and weapons in attempts to maintain ties in case of another war with the United States. The threat of a Native uprising increased after 1805 when Tenskwatawa began to preach a new religious doctrine that rejected the Europeans and their way of life. By 1809, Tecumseh, had turned the movement into a military and political alliance when he attempted to unite the tribes against the encroaching Americans. The territorial governor of Illinois, William Henry Harrison eventually convinced the Madison administration to allow for military action against the Native Americans in the Ohio Valley. The resulting Battle of Tippecanoe drove the followers of the Prophet

from their gathering place, but did little to change the dynamics of the region. British efforts to arm and supply Native Americans, however, angered Americans and strengthened anti-British sentiments.

Republicans began to talk of war as a solution to these problems, arguing that it was necessary to complete the War for Independence by preventing British efforts to keep America subjugated at sea and on land. The war would also represent another battle against the Loyalists, some 38,000 of whom had populated Upper Canada after the Revolution and sought to establish a counter to the radical experiment of the United States.

In 1812, the Republicans held 75 percent of the seats in the House and 82 percent of the Senate, giving them a free hand to set national policy. Among them were the “War Hawks,” who one historian has described as “too young to remember the horrors of the last British war and thus willing to run the risks of another to vindicate the nation’s rights.” This group included men who would remain influential long after the War of 1812, such as Henry Clay of Kentucky and John C. Calhoun of South Carolina.

Convinced by the War Hawks in his party, Madison drafted a statement of the nation’s disputes with the British and asked Congress for a war declaration on June 1, 1812. The Republicans hoped that an invasion of Canada might remove the British from their backyard and force the Empire to change their naval policies. After much negotiation in Congress over the details of the bill, Madison signed a declaration of war on June 18, 1812. For the second time, the United States was at war with Great Britain.

While the War of 1812 contained two key players—the United States and Great Britain—it also drew in other groups, such as Tecumseh and the Indian Confederacy. The war can be organized into three stages or theaters. The first, the Atlantic Theater lasted until the spring of 1813. During this time, Great Britain was chiefly occupied in Europe against Napoleon, and the United States invaded Canada and sent their fledgling navy against British ships. During the second stage, from early 1813 to 1814, the U.S. launched their

second offensive against Canada and the Great Lakes. In this period, the Americans, having gained some experience in 1812 and early 1813, won its first successes. The third stage, the Southern Theater, concluded with Andrew Jackson's January 1815 victory at Chalmette outside of New Orleans, Louisiana.

During the war, the Americans were greatly interested in Canada and the Great Lakes borderlands. In July 1812, the U.S. launched their first offensive against Canada. By August, however, the British and their allies defeated the Americans in Canada, costing the U.S. control over Detroit and parts of the Michigan Territory. By the close of 1813, the Americans recaptured Detroit, shattered the



As pictured in this 1812 political cartoon published in Philadelphia, Americans lambasted the British and their native allies for what they considered "savage" offenses during war, though Americans too were engaging in such heinous acts. William Charles, "A scene on the frontiers as practiced by the "humane" British and their 'worthy' allies," Philadelphia: 1812. [Library of Congress](#).

Indian Confederacy, killed Tecumseh, and eliminated the British threat in that theater. Despite these accomplishments, the American land forces proved outmatched by their adversaries.

After the land campaign of 1812 failed to secure America's war aims, Americans turned to the infant navy in 1813. Privateers and the U.S. Navy rallied behind the slogan "Free Trade and Sailors Rights!" Although the British possessed the most powerful navy in the world, surprisingly the young American navy extracted early victories with larger, more heavily armed ships. By 1814, however, the major naval battles had been fought with little effect on the war's outcome.

With Britain's main naval fleet fighting in the Napoleonic Wars, smaller ships and armaments stationed in North America were generally no match for their American counterparts. Early on, Americans humiliated the British in single ship battles. In retaliation, Captain Phillip Broke, of the *HMS Shannon* attacked the *USS Chesapeake* captained by James Lawrence on June 1, 1813. Within six minutes, the *Chesapeake* was destroyed and Lawrence mortally wounded. Yet, the Americans did not give up as Lawrence commanded them "Tell the men to fire faster! Don't give up the ship!" Lawrence died of his wounds three days later and although the *Shannon* defeated the *Chesapeake*, Lawrence's words became a rallying cry for the Americans.

Two and a half months later the *USS Constitution* squared off with the *HMS Guerriere*. As the *Guerriere* tried to outmaneuver the Americans, the *Constitution* pulled along broadside and began hammering the British frigate. The *Guerriere* returned fire, but as one sailor observed the cannonballs simply bounced off the *Constitution's* thick hull. "Huzza! Her sides are made of iron!" shouted the sailor and henceforth, the *Constitution* became known as "Old Ironsides." In less than thirty-five minutes, the *Guerriere* was so badly destroyed it was set aflame rather than taken as a prize.

In 1814, Americans gained naval victories on Lake Champlain near Plattsburgh, preventing a British land invasion of the United States and on the Chesapeake at Fort McHenry in Baltimore. Fort McHenry repelled the nineteen-ship British fleet enduring twenty-seven hours of bombardment virtually unscathed. Watching from aboard a British ship, American poet Francis Scott Key penned the verses

of what would become the national anthem, “The Star Spangled Banner.”

Impressive though these accomplishments were, they belied what was actually a poorly executed military campaign against the British. The U.S. Navy won their most significant victories in the Atlantic Ocean in 1813. Napoleon’s defeat in early 1814, however, allowed the British to focus on North America and their blockade of the East coast. Thanks to the blockade, the British were able to burn Washington D.C. on August 24, 1814 and open a new theater of operations in the South. The British sailed for New Orleans where they achieved a naval victory at Lake Borgne before losing the land invasion to Major General Andrew Jackson’s troops in January 1815. This American victory actually came after the United States and the United Kingdom signed the Treaty of Ghent on December 24, 1814, but the Battle of New Orleans proved to be a psychological victory that boosted American morale and affected how the war has been remembered.



The artist shows Washington D.C. engulfed in flames as the British troops set fire to the city in 1813. “Capture of the City of Washington,” August 1814.

[Wikimedia](#).

But not all Americans supported the war. In 1814, New England Federalists met in Hartford, Connecticut, to try to end the war and curb the power of the Republican Party. They produced a document that proposed abolishing the three-fifths rule that afforded Southern slaveholders disproportionate representation in Congress, limiting the president to a single term in office, and most importantly, demanding a two-thirds congressional majority, rather than a simple majority, for legislation that declared war, admitted new states into the Union, or regulated commerce. With the two-thirds majority, New England's Federalist politicians believed they could limit the power of their political foes.



Contemplating the possibility of secession over the War of 1812 (fueled in large part by economic interests of New England merchants), the Hartford Convention posed the possibility of disaster for the still young United States. England, represented by the figure John Bull on the right side, is shown in this political cartoon with arms open to accept New England back into its empire. William Charles, Jr., "The Hartford Convention or Leap No Leap." [Wikimedia](#).

These proposals were sent to Washington, but unfortunately for the Federalists, the victory at New Orleans buoyed popular support

for the Madison administration. With little evidence, newspapers accused the Hartford Convention's delegates of plotting secession. The episode demonstrated the waning power of Federalism, and the need for the region's politicians to shed their aristocratic and Anglophile image. The next New England politician to assume the presidency, John Quincy Adams in 1824, would emerge not from within the Federalist fold, but after serving as Secretary of State under President James Monroe, the last leader of the Virginia Republicans.

The Treaty of Ghent essentially returned relations between the U.S. and Britain to their pre-war status. The war, however, mattered politically and strengthened American nationalism. During the war, Americans read patriotic newspaper stories, sang patriotic songs, and bought consumer goods decorated with national emblems. They also heard stories about how the British and their Native allies threatened to bring violence into American homes. For examples, rumors spread that British officers promised rewards of "beauty and booty" for their soldiers when they attacked New Orleans. In the Great Lakes borderlands, wartime propaganda fueled Americans fear of Britain's Native American allies, who they believed would slaughter men, women, and children indiscriminately. Terror and love worked together to make American citizens feel a stronger bond with their country. Because the war mostly cut off America's trade with Europe, it also encouraged Americans to see themselves as different and separate; it fostered a sense that the country had been reborn.

Former treasury secretary Albert Gallatin claimed that the War of 1812 revived "national feelings" that had dwindled after the Revolution. "The people," he wrote, were now "more American; they feel and act more like a nation." Politicians proposed measures to reinforce the fragile Union through capitalism and built on these sentiments of nationalism. The United States continued to expand into Indian territories with westward settlement in far-flung new states like Tennessee, Ohio, Mississippi, and Illinois. Between 1810 and 1830, the country added more than 6,000 new post offices.

In 1817, South Carolina congressman John C. Calhoun called for building projects to “bind the republic together with a perfect system of roads and canals.” He joined with other politicians, such as Kentucky’s powerful Henry Clay, to promote what came to be called an “American System.” They aimed to make America economically independent and encouraged commerce between the states over trade with Europe and the West Indies. The American System would include a new Bank of the United States to provide capital; a high protective tariff, which would raise the prices of imported goods and help American-made products compete; and a network of “internal improvements,” roads and canals to let people take American goods to market.

These projects were controversial. Many people believed they were unconstitutional or that they would increase the federal government’s power at the expense of the states. Even Calhoun later changed his mind and joined the opposition. The War of 1812, however, had reinforced Americans’ sense of the nation’s importance in their political and economic life. Even when the federal government did not act, states created banks, roads, and canals of their own.

What may have been the boldest declaration of America’s postwar pride came in 1823. President James Monroe issued an ultimatum to the empires of Europe in order to support several wars of independence in Latin America. The “Monroe Doctrine” declared that the United States considered its entire hemisphere, both North and South America, off-limits to new European colonization. Although Monroe was a Jeffersonian, some of his principles echoed Federalist policies. Whereas Jefferson cut the size of the military and ended all internal taxes in his first term, Monroe advocated the need for a strong military and an aggressive foreign policy. Since Americans were spreading out over the continent, Monroe authorized the federal government to invest in canals and roads, which he said would “shorten distances, and, by making each part more accessible to and dependent on the other...shall bind the Union more closely together.” As Federalists had attempted two

decades earlier, Republican leaders after the War of 1812 advocated strengthening the state in order to strengthen the nation.

25. Primary Source Reading: The Star-Spangled Banner

“The Star-Spangled Banner” is the national anthem of the United States of America. The lyrics come from “Defence of Fort M’Henry”, a poem written in 1814 by the 35-year-old lawyer and amateur poet Francis Scott Key after witnessing the bombardment of Fort McHenry by British ships of the Royal Navy in the Chesapeake Bay during the Battle of Fort McHenry in the War of 1812.

The poem was set to the tune of a popular British song written by John Stafford Smith for the Anacreontic Society, a men’s social club in London. “To Anacreon in Heaven” (or “The Anacreontic Song”), with various lyrics, was already popular in the United States. Set to Key’s poem and renamed “The Star-Spangled Banner”, it would soon become a well-known American patriotic song. With a range of one octave and one fifth (a semitone more than an octave and a half), it is known for being difficult to sing. Although the poem has four stanzas, only the first is commonly sung today.

“The Star-Spangled Banner” was recognized for official use by the U.S. Navy in 1889, and by U.S. President Woodrow Wilson in

DEFENCE OF FORT M’HENRY.

The annexed song was composed under the following circumstances.—A gentleman had left Baltimore, in a flag of truce for the purpose of getting released from the British fleet, a friend of his who had been captured at Marlborough.—He went as far as the mouth of the Patuxent, and was not permitted to return lest the intended attack on Baltimore should be disclosed.—He was therefore brought up the Bay to the mouth of the Patuxent, where the flag vessel was kept under the guns of a frigate, and he was compelled to witness the bombardment of Fort M’Henry, which the Admiral had boasted that he would carry in a few hours, and that the city must fall. He watched the flag at the Fort through the whole day with an anxiety that can be better felt than described, until the night prevented him from seeing it. In the night he watched the Bomb Shells, and at early dawn his eye was again greeted by the proudly waving flag of his country.

TUNE—ANACREON IN HEAVEN.

O! say can you see by the dawn’s early light,
What so proudly we hail’d at the twilight’s last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars thro’ the perilous fight,
O’er the ramparts we watch’d, were so gallantly streaming?
And the Rocket’s red glare, the Bomb bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our Flag was still there;
O! say does that star-spangled Banner yet wave,
O’er the Land of the free, and the home of the brave?

On the shore dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe’s haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o’er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning’s first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines in the stream,
Tis the star-spangled banner, O! long may it wave,
O’er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore,
That the havoc of war and the battle’s confusion,
A home and a country, shall leave us no more?
Their blood has wash’d out their foul footsteps’ pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave,
From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave,
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave,
O’er the Land of the Free, and the Home of the Brave.

O! thus be it ever when freemen shall stand,
Between their lov’d home, and the war’s desolation,
Blest with vict’ry and peace, may the heav’n rescued land,
Praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a nation!
Then conquer we must, when our cause is just,
And this be our motto—“In God is our Trust.”
And the star-spangled Banner in triumph shall wave,
O’er the Land of the Free, and the Home of the Brave.

One of two surviving copies of the 1812 broadside printing of the [Defense of Fort McHenry](#), a poem that later became the national anthem of the United States.

1916, and was made the national anthem by a congressional resolution on March 3, 1931 (46 Stat. 1508, codified at 36 U.S.C. § 301), which was signed by President Herbert Hoover.

Before 1931, other songs served as the hymns of American officialdom. “Hail, Columbia” served this purpose at official functions for most of the 19th century. “My Country, ‘Tis of Thee”, whose melody is identical to “God Save the Queen”, the British national anthem,[2] also served as a de facto anthem.[3] Following the War of 1812 and subsequent American wars, other songs emerged to compete for popularity at public events, among them “The Star-Spangled Banner”.

Text of the Star-Spangled Banner

O! say can you see by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming?
And the Rockets' red glare, the Bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our Flag was still there;
O! say does that star-spangled Banner yet wave,
O'er the Land of the free and the home of the brave?
On the shore dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines on the stream,
'Tis the star-spangled banner, O! long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.
And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion,
A home and a country should leave us no more?
Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps' pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave,
From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave,
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave,

O'er the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave.
O! thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand,
Between their lov'd home and the war's desolation,
Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the Heav'n rescued land,
Praise the Power that hath made and preserv'd us a nation!
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
And this be our motto—"In God is our Trust;"
And the star-spangled Banner in triumph shall wave,
O'er the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave.

[illegible]

This [1814 copy of “The Star-Spangled Banner”](#) was the first printed edition to combine the words and sheet music.

PART IX

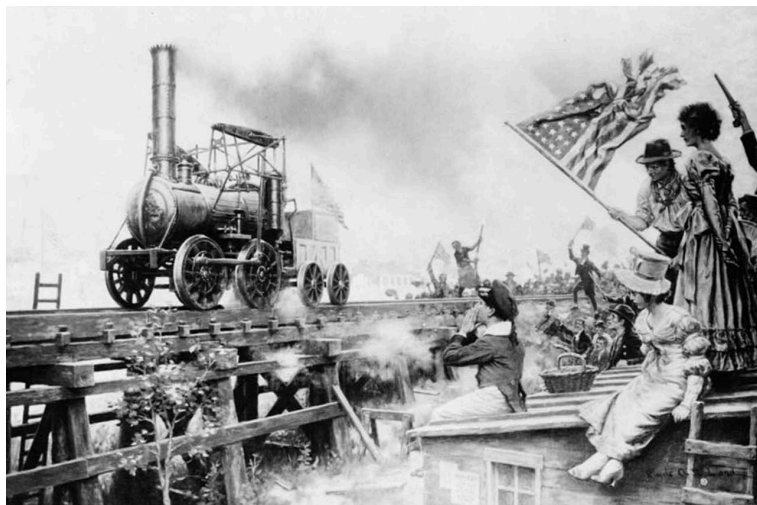
MODULE 9: NATION BUILDING & NATIONALISM

26. Early Republic Economic Development

The growth of the American economy reshaped American life in the decades before the Civil War. Americans increasingly produced goods for sale, not for consumption. With a larger exchange network connected by improved transportations, the introduction of labor-saving technology, and the separation of the public and domestic spheres, the market revolution fulfilled the revolutionary generation's expectations of progress but introduced troubling new trends. Class conflict, child labor, accelerated immigration, and the expansion of slavery followed. These strains required new family arrangements and forged new urban cultures.

American commerce had proceeded haltingly during the eighteenth century. American farmers increasingly exported foodstuffs to Europe as the French Revolutionary Wars devastated the continent between 1793 and 1815. America's exports rose in value from \$20.2 million in 1790 to \$108.3 million by 1807. But while exports rose, exorbitant internal transportation costs hindered substantial economic development within the United States. In 1816, for instance, \$9 could move one ton of goods across the Atlantic Ocean, but only 30 miles across land. An 1816 Senate Committee Report lamented that "the price of land carriage is too great" to allow the profitable production of American manufactures. But in the wake of the War of 1812, Americans rushed to build a new national infrastructure, new networks of roads, canals, and railroads. In his 1815 annual message to Congress, President James Madison stressed "the great importance of establishing throughout our country the roads and canals which can best be executed under national authority." State governments continued to sponsor the greatest improvements in American transportation, but the federal government's annual expenditures on internal improvements

climbed to a yearly average of \$1,323,000 by Andrew Jackson's presidency.



Clyde Osmer DeLand, "The First Locomotive. Aug. 8th, 1829. Trial Trip of the "Stourbridge Lion," 1916, via [Library of Congress](#).

State legislatures meanwhile pumped capital into the economy by chartering banks and the number of state-chartered banks skyrocketed from 1 in 1783, 266 in 1820, 702 in 1840, to 1,371 in 1860. European capital also helped to build American infrastructure. By 1844, one British traveler declared that "the prosperity of America, her railroads, canals, steam navigation, and banks, are the fruit of English capital."

Economic growth, however, proceeded unevenly. Depressions devastated the economy in 1819, 1837, and 1857. Each followed rampant speculation—bubbles—in various commodities: land in 1819, land and slaves in 1837, and railroad bonds in 1857. But Americans refused to blame the logic of their new commercial system for these depressions. Instead, they kept pushing "to get forward."

The so-called "Transportation Revolution" opened for Americans the vast lands west of the Appalachian Mountains. In 1810, for

instance, before the rapid explosion of American infrastructure, Margaret Dwight left New Haven, Connecticut, in a wagon headed for Ohio Territory. Her trip was less than 500 miles but took six full weeks to complete. The journey was a terrible ordeal, she said. The roads were “so rocky & so gullied as to be almost impassable.” Ten days into the journey, at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, Dwight said “it appeared to me that we had come to the end of the habitable part of the globe.” She finally concluded that “the reason so few are willing to return from the Western country, is not that the country is so good, but because the journey is so bad.” Nineteen years later, in 1829, English traveler Frances Trollope made the reverse journey across the Allegheny Mountains from Cincinnati to the east coast. At Wheeling, Virginia, her coach encountered the National Road, the first federally funded interstate infrastructure project. The road was smooth and her journey across the Alleghenies was a scenic delight. “I really can hardly conceive a higher enjoyment than a botanical tour among the Alleghany Mountains,” she declared. The ninety miles of National Road was to her “a garden.”



Engraving based on W.H. Bartlett, “Lockport, Erie Canal,” 1839, via [Wikimedia](#).

If the two decades between Margaret Dwight's and Frances Trollope's journeys transformed the young nation, the pace of change only accelerated in the following years. If a transportation revolution began with improved road networks, it soon incorporated even greater improvements in the ways people and goods moved across the landscape.

New York State completed the Erie Canal in 1825. The 350 mile-long manmade waterway linked the Great Lakes with the Hudson River—and thereby to the Atlantic ocean. Soon crops grown in the Great Lakes region were carried by water to eastern cities, and goods from emerging eastern factories made the reverse journey to midwestern farmers. The success of New York's "artificial river" launched a canal-building boom. By 1840 Ohio created two navigable, all-water links from Lake Erie to the Ohio River.

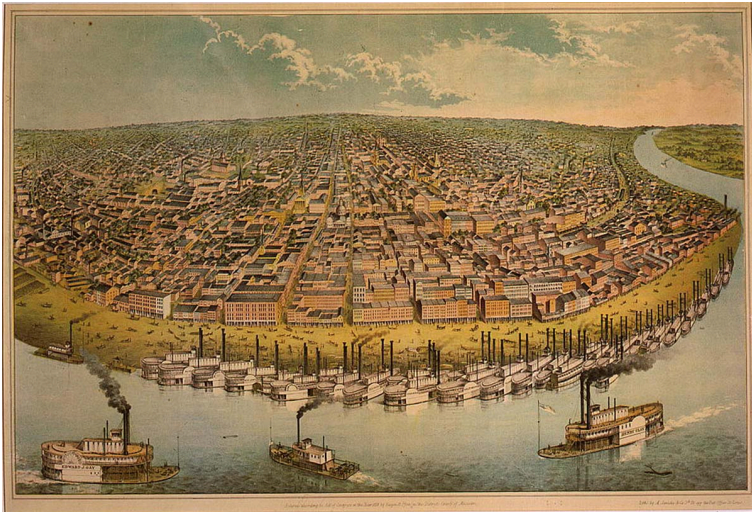
Robert Fulton established the first commercial steam boat service up and down the Hudson River in New York in 1807. Soon thereafter steamboats filled the waters of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers. Downstream-only routes became watery two-way highways. By 1830, more than 200 steamboats moved up and down western rivers.

The United States' first long-distance rail line launched from Maryland in 1827. Baltimore's city government and the state government of Maryland provided half the start-up funds for the new Baltimore & Ohio (B&O) Rail Road Company. The B&O's founders imagined the line as a means to funnel the agricultural products of the trans-Appalachian West to an outlet on the Chesapeake Bay. Similar motivations led citizens in Philadelphia, Boston, New York City, and Charleston, South Carolina to launch their own rail lines. State and local governments provided the means for the bulk of this initial wave of railroad construction, but economic collapse following the Panic of 1837 made governments wary of such investments. Government supports continued throughout the century, but decades later the public origins of railroads were all but forgotten and the railroad corporation became the most visible embodiment of corporate capitalism.

By 1860 Americans laid more than 30,000 miles of railroads. The ensuing web of rail, roads, and canals meant that few farmers in the Northeast or Midwest had trouble getting goods to urban markets. Railroad development was slower in the South, but there a combination of rail lines and navigable rivers meant that few cotton planters struggled to transport their products to textile mills in the Northeast and in England.

Such internal improvements not only spread goods, they spread information. The “transportation revolution” was followed by a “communications revolution.” The telegraph redefined the limits of human communication. By 1843 Samuel Morse persuaded Congress to fund a forty-mile telegraph line stretching from Washington, D.C. to Baltimore. Within a few short years, during the Mexican-American War, telegraph lines carried news of battlefield events to eastern newspapers within days, in stark contrast to the War of 1812, when the Battle of New Orleans took place nearly two full weeks after Britain and the United States had signed a peace treaty.

The consequences of the transportation and communication revolutions reshaped the lives of Americans. Farmers who previously produced crops mostly for their own family now turned to the market. They earned cash for what they had previously consumed; they purchased the goods they had previously made or went without. Market-based farmers soon accessed credit through eastern banks, which provided them with both the opportunity to expand their enterprise but left them prone before the risk of catastrophic failure wrought by distant and impersonal market forces. In the Northeast and Midwest, where farm labor was ever in short supply, ambitious farmers invested in new technologies that promised to increase the productivity of the limited labor supply. The years between 1815 and 1850 witnessed an explosion of patents on agricultural technologies. The most famous of these, perhaps, was Cyrus McCormick’s horse-drawn mechanical reaper, which partially mechanized wheat harvesting, and John Deere’s steel-bladed plough, which more easily allowed for the conversion of unbroken ground into fertile farmland.



A. Janicke & Co., "Our City, (St. Louis, Mo.)," 1859, via [Library of Congress](#).

Most visibly, the market revolution encouraged the growth of cities reshaped the lives of urban workers. In 1820, only two cities in the United States—New York and Philadelphia—had over 100,000 inhabitants. By 1850, six American cities met that threshold, including Chicago, which had been founded fewer than two decades earlier. New technology and infrastructure paved the way for such growth. The Erie Canal captured the bulk of the trade emerging from the Great Lakes region, securing New York City's position as the nation's largest and most economically important city. The steamboat turned St. Louis and Cincinnati into centers of trade, and Chicago rose as it became the railroad hub of the western Great Lakes and Great Plains regions. The geographic center of the nation shifted westward. The development of stream power and the exploitation of Pennsylvania coalfields shifted the locus of American manufacturing. By the 1830s, for instance, New England was losing its competitive advantage as new sources and locations of power opened up in other regions.

Meanwhile, the cash economy eclipsed the old, local, informal systems of barter and trade. Income became the measure of economic worth. Productivity and efficiencies paled before the measure of income. Cash facilitated new impersonal economic relationships and formalized new means of production. Young workers might simply earn wages, for instance, rather than receiving room and board and training as part of apprenticeships. Moreover, a new form of economic organization appeared: the business corporation.

To protect the fortunes and liabilities of entrepreneurs who invested in early industrial endeavors, states offered the privileges of incorporation. A corporate charter allowed investors and directors to avoid personal liability for company debts. The legal status of incorporation had been designed to confer privileges to organizations embarking upon expensive projects explicitly designed for the public good, such as universities, municipalities, and major public works projects. The business corporation was something new. Many Americans distrusted these new, impersonal business organizations whose officers lacked personal responsibility while nevertheless carrying legal rights. Many wanted limits. Thomas Jefferson himself wrote in 1816 that “I hope we shall crush in its birth the aristocracy of our monied corporations which dare already to challenge our government to a trial of strength, and bid defiance to the laws of our country.” But in *Dartmouth v. Woodward* (1819) the Supreme Court upheld the rights of private corporations when it denied the government of New Hampshire’s attempt to reorganize Dartmouth College on behalf of the common good. Still, suspicions remained. A group of journeymen cordwainers in New Jersey publically declared in 1835 that they “entirely disapprov[ed] of the incorporation of Companies, for carrying on manual mechanical business, inasmuch as we believe their tendency is to eventuate and produce monopolies, thereby crippling the energies of individual enterprise.”

27. The Missouri Crisis

A more troubling pattern was also emerging in national politics and culture. During the first decades of the nineteenth century, American politics was shifting toward “sectional” conflict among the states of the North, South, and West.

Since the ratification of the Constitution in 1789, the state of Virginia had wielded more influence on the federal government than any other state. Five of the first six presidents, for example, were from Virginia. Immigration caused by the market revolution, however, caused the country’s population to grow fastest in northern states like New York. Northern political leaders were becoming wary of what they perceived to be a disproportionate influence in federal politics by Virginia and other southern states.

Furthermore, many northerners feared that the southern states’ common interest in protecting slavery was creating a congressional voting bloc that would be difficult for “free states” to overcome. The North and South began to clash over federal policy as northern states gradually ended slavery but southern states came to depend even more on slave labor.

The most important instance of these rising tensions erupted in the Missouri Crisis. When white settlers in Missouri, a new territory carved out of the Louisiana Purchase, applied for statehood in 1819, the balance of political power between northern and southern states became the focus of public debate. Missouri already had more than 10,000 slaves and was poised to join the southern slave states in Congress.

Accordingly, Congressman James Tallmadge of New York proposed an amendment to Missouri’s application for statehood. Tallmadge claimed that the institution of slavery mocked the Declaration of Independence and the liberty it promised to “all men.” He proposed that Congress should admit Missouri as a state only if

bringing more slaves to Missouri were prohibited and children born to the slaves there were freed at age twenty-five.

Congressmen like Tallmadge opposed slavery for moral reasons, but they also wanted to maintain a sectional balance of power. Unsurprisingly, the Tallmadge Amendment met with firm resistance from southern politicians. It passed in the House of Representatives due to the support of nearly all the northern congressmen, who had a majority there, but it was quickly defeated in the Senate.

When Congress reconvened in 1820, a senator from Illinois, another new western state, proposed a compromise. Jesse Thomas hoped his offer would not only end the Missouri Crisis but also prevent any future sectional disputes over slavery and statehood. Senator Henry Clay of Kentucky joined in promoting the deal, earning himself the nickname “the Great Compromiser.”

Their bargain, the Missouri Compromise of 1820, contained three parts. First, Congress would admit Missouri as a slave state. Second, Congress would admit Maine (which until now had been a territory of Massachusetts) as a free state, maintaining the balance between the number of free and slave states. Third, the rest of the Louisiana Purchase territory would be divided along the 36°30’ line of latitude—or in other words, along the southern border of Missouri. Slavery would be prohibited in other new states north of this line, but it would be permitted in new states to the south. The compromise passed both houses of Congress, and the Missouri Crisis ended peacefully.

Not everyone, however, felt relieved. The Missouri Crisis made the sectional nature of American politics impossible to ignore. Until now, although the Republicans had been strongest in southern states, there had been many northern Republicans as well. The Missouri Crisis split them almost entirely along sectional lines, suggesting trouble to come.

Worse, the Missouri Crisis demonstrated the volatility of the slavery debate. Many Americans, including seventy-seven-year-old Thomas Jefferson, were alarmed at how readily some Americans spoke of disunion and even civil war over the issue. “This

momentous question, like a fire bell in the night, awakened and filled me with terror,” Jefferson wrote. “I considered it at once as the [death] knell of the Union.”

For now, the Missouri Crisis did not result in disunion and civil war as Jefferson and others feared. But it also failed to settle the issue of slavery’s expansion into new western territories, an issue that would cause worse trouble in years ahead.

28. The Monroe Doctrine and Manifest Destiny

Expansion of influence and territory off the continent became an important corollary to westward expansion. One of the main goals of the U.S. government was the prevention of outside involvement of European countries in the affairs of the western hemisphere. American policymakers sought an outlet for the domestic assertions of manifest destiny in the nation's early foreign policy decisions of the antebellum period.

As Secretary of State for President James Monroe, John Quincy Adams held the responsibility for the satisfactory resolution of ongoing border disputes in different areas of North America between the United States, England, Spain, and Russia. Adams was a proponent of both the concept of continentalism and an American influence in hemispheric events. Adams' comprehensive view of American policy aims was put into clearest practice in the Monroe Doctrine, which he had great influence in crafting.

Increasingly aggressive incursions from the Russians in the Northwest, ongoing border disputes with the British in Canada, the remote possibility of Spanish reconquest of South America, and British abolitionism in their Caribbean colonies all forced a U.S. response to the threats encircling the country. However, despite the philosophical confidence present in the Monroe administration's decree, the reality of limited military power kept the Monroe Doctrine as an aspirational assertion that many in the administration and the country believed the United States would grow into as it matured. Secretary of State Adams acknowledged the American need for a robust foreign policy that simultaneously protected and encouraged the growing and increasingly dynamic capitalist orientation of the country in a speech before the U.S. House of Representatives on July 4th, 1821.

America...in the lapse of nearly half a century, without a single exception, respected the independence of other nations while asserting and maintaining her own...She is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all. She is the champion and vindicator only of her own. She will commend the general cause by the countenance of her voice, and the benignant sympathy of her example. She well knows that by once enlisting under other banners than her own, were they even the banners of foreign independence, she would involve herself beyond the power of extrication, in all the wars of interest and intrigue, of individual avarice, envy, and ambition, which assume the colors and usurp the standard of freedom. The fundamental maxims of her policy would insensibly change from liberty to force. The frontlet on her brows would no longer beam with the ineffable splendor of freedom and independence; but in its stead would soon be substituted an imperial diadem, flashing in false and tarnished lustre the murky radiance of dominion and power. She might become the dictatress of the world; she would be no longer the ruler of her own spirit. . . . Her glory is not dominion, but liberty. Her march is the march of the mind. She has a spear and a shield: but the motto upon her shield is, Freedom, Independence, Peace. This has been her Declaration: this has been, as far as her necessary intercourse with the rest of mankind would permit, her practice.

—John Quincy Adams

However, Adams' great fear was not territorial loss. He had no doubt that Russian and British interests in North America could be arrested. Adams held no reason to antagonize the Russians with grand pronouncements nor was he generally called upon to do so. He enjoyed a good relationship with the Russian Ambassador and stewarded through Congress most-favored trade status for the Russians in 1824. Rather, Adams worried gravely about the ability of

the United States to compete commercially with the British in Latin America and the Caribbean. This concern deepened with the valid concern that America's chief Latin American trading partner, Cuba, dangled perilously close to outstretched British claws. The Cabinet debates surrounding establishment of the Monroe Doctrine, the international diplomacy undertaken by Adams and his underlings, and geopolitical events in the Caribbean focused attention on that part of the world as key to the future defense of U.S. military and commercial interests with the main threat to those interests being the British. Expansion of economic opportunity and protection of American society and markets from foreign pressures became the overriding goals of U.S. foreign policy.

Bitter disagreements over the expansion of slavery into what became the Mexican Cession territory began even before the Mexican war ended. Many Northern business and Southern slaveowners supported the idea of expansion of American power and slavery into the Caribbean as a useful alternative to continental expansion since slavery already existed in these areas. While some were critical of these attempts, seeing them as evidence of a growing slave-power conspiracy, many supported these extra-legal attempts at expansion. Filibustering, as it was called, was privately financed schemes of varying degrees of operational reality directed at capturing and occupying foreign territory without the approval of the U.S. government.

Filibustering adventures took greatest hold in the imagination of Americans as they looked toward Cuba with particular interest. Fears of racialized revolution in Cuba (as in Haiti before it) as well as the presence of an aggressive British abolitionary influence in the Caribbean energized the movement to annex Cuba and encouraged filibustering activities as expedient alternatives to lethargic official negotiations. Despite filibustering's seemingly chaotic planning and destabilizing repercussions, those intellectually and economically guiding the effort saw in their efforts a willing and receptive Cuban population and an agreeable American business class. In Cuba, manifest destiny for the first time sought territory off the continent

and hoped to put a unique spin on the story of success in Mexico. Yet, the annexation of Cuba, despite great popularity and some military attempts led by Narciso Lopez (pictured), a Cuban dissident, never succeeded.

Regardless of that disappointment planning and action against other areas took place. Most notable among these efforts was William Walker's momentarily successful filibustering against Nicaragua. Walker, who was a long-time filibusterer, launched several expeditions in Mexico and Central America and achieved success in establishing his rule and slavery on the Nicaraguan coast before eventually being executed, with British encouragement, in Honduras. Although these mission enjoyed neither the support of the law or the U.S. government, wealthy Americans financed various filibusters and less-wealthy adventurers were all too happy to sign up. Filibustering enjoyed its brief popularity into the late 1850s, at which point slavery and concerns over secession came to the fore. By the opening of the Civil War most saw these attempts as simply territorial theft and muscular articulations of individual desires toward profit and dominance. Caribbean expansion, now predicated on the reinvigoration of slavery through filibustering, seemed anathema to the American democratic disposition.

One of the last pieces of manifest destiny's collapse was the economic fracturing of the regions of the United States. The national economic market steadily weakened as a unifying entity after 1857 when the South finally received some tangible demonstration of the superiority of their economic project. They emerged from the Panic of 1857 with the sense that the North needed Southern commerce more than the South needed Northern industry. The South embraced this evidence and the resultant increase in its confidence as they suffered under the presumption that Northern dominance might never relent. The confidence gained through lucrative business relations with world markets, the diversification of the Southern manufacturing base, the relatively light toll taken by the Panic of 1857, the possibility of Cuban annexation, the dominance of presidential elections in the 1850s,

and the political capitulation of Northern interests in the tariff debate of 1858 all led the South toward a belief in the political possibility of secession and the likelihood of success

Throughout the antebellum period slavery continuously expanded onto new ground, embracing new crops, and new machinery. The planter class throughout the United States, the Caribbean, and South America exerted a political and economic dominance in rising world markets and their national political cultures that made the continued existence of slavery the foundation of their power. Yet, profits gained in the sugar, coffee, and cotton areas also depended on a complex economic and industrial partnership between non-slave owning business/production entities and slaveholding agriculturalists. The entire undertaking of the Atlantic economy fueled American growth and drove the confidence and economic funding required for the completion of manifest destiny's expansion. Workers and financiers, slaves and settlers, planters and industrialists all produced, willingly or forced, the economic juggernaut that, while encouraging American expansion, also became a part of its undoing.

PART X

MODULE 10: THE AGE OF
"JACKSONIAN
DEMOCRACY"

29. The Rise of Andrew Jackson

The career of Andrew Jackson (1767-1845), the survivor of that backcountry Kentucky duel in 1806, exemplified both the opportunities and the dangers of political life in the early republic. A lawyer, slaveholder, and general—and eventually the seventh president of the United States—he rose from humble frontier beginnings to become one of the most powerful Americans of the nineteenth century.

A child of Irish immigrants, Andrew Jackson was born on March 17, 1767, on the border between North and South Carolina. He grew up during dangerous times. At age thirteen, he joined an American militia unit in the Revolutionary War, but was soon captured, and a British officer slashed at his head with a sword after he refused to shine the officer's shoes. Disease during the war had claimed the lives of his two brothers and his mother, leaving him an orphan. Their deaths and his wounds had left Jackson with a deep and abiding hatred of Great Britain.

After the war, Jackson moved west to frontier Tennessee, where despite his poor education, he prospered, working as a lawyer and acquiring land and slaves. (He would eventually come to keep 150 slaves at the Hermitage, his plantation near Nashville.) In 1796, Jackson was elected as a U.S. representative, and a year later he won a seat in the Senate, although he resigned within a year, citing financial difficulties.

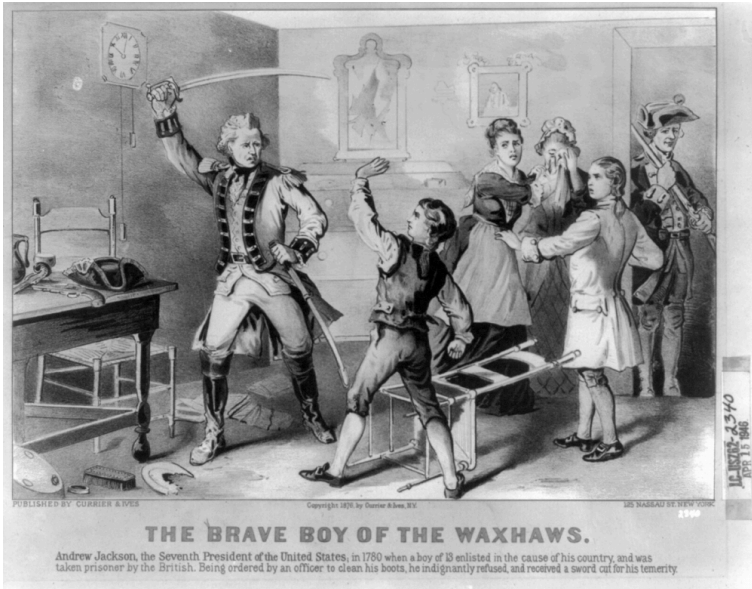
Thanks to his political connections, Jackson obtained a general's commission at the outbreak of the War of 1812. Despite having no combat experience, General Jackson quickly impressed his troops, who nicknamed him "Old Hickory" after a particularly tough kind of tree.

Jackson led his militiamen into battle in the Southeast, first during

the Creek War, a side conflict that started between different factions of Muskogee (Creek) Indians in present-day Alabama. In that war, he won a decisive victory over hostile fighters at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend in 1814. A year later, he also won a spectacular victory over a British invasion force at the Battle of New Orleans. There, Jackson's troops—including backwoods militiamen, free African Americans, Indians, and a company of slave-trading pirates—successfully defended the city and inflicted more than 2,000 casualties against the British, sustaining barely 300 casualties of their own. The Battle of New Orleans was a thrilling victory for the United States, but it actually happened several days after a peace treaty was signed in Europe to end the war. News of the treaty had not yet reached New Orleans.

The end of the War of 1812 did not end Jackson's military career. In 1818, as commander of the U.S. southern military district, Jackson also launched an invasion of Spanish-owned Florida. He was acting on vague orders from the War Department to break the resistance of the region's Seminole Indians, who protected runaway slaves and attacked American settlers across the border. On Jackson's orders in 1816, U.S. soldiers and their Creek allies had already destroyed the "Negro Fort," a British-built fortress on Spanish soil, killing 270 former slaves and executing some survivors. In 1818, Jackson's troops crossed the border again. They occupied Pensacola, the main Spanish town in the region, and arrested two British subjects, whom Jackson executed for helping the Seminoles. The execution of these two Britons created an international diplomatic crisis.

Most officials in President James Monroe's administration called for Jackson's censure. But Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, the son of former President John Adams, found Jackson's behavior useful. He defended the impulsive general, arguing that he had had been forced to act. Adams used Jackson's military successes in this First Seminole War to persuade Spain to accept the Adams-Onís Treaty of 1819, which gave Florida to the United States.



Images like this one—showing Jackson refusing to bow to the whims of a British officer and defending his family—helped establish the memory of Jackson as the keeper of the Revolution and a leader of the common man. Currier & Ives, “The Brave Boy of the Waxhaws,” 1876. [Wikimedia](#).

Any friendliness between John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson, however, did not survive long. In 1824, four nominees competed for the presidency in one of the closest elections in American history. Each came from different parts of the country—Adams from Massachusetts, Jackson from Tennessee, William H. Crawford from Georgia, and Henry Clay from Kentucky. Jackson won more popular votes than anyone else. But with no majority winner in the Electoral College, the election was thrown into the House of Representatives. There, Adams used his political clout to claim the presidency, persuading Clay to support him. Jackson would never forgive Adams, whom he accused of engineering a “corrupt bargain” with Clay to circumvent the popular will.

Four years later, in 1828, Adams and Jackson squared off in one

of the dirtiest presidential elections to date. Pro-Jackson partisans accused Adams of elitism and claimed that while serving in Russia as a diplomat he had offered the Russian emperor an American prostitute. Adams's supporters, on the other hand, accused Jackson of murder and attacked the morality of his marriage, pointing out that Jackson had unwittingly married his wife Rachel before the divorce on her prior marriage was complete. This time, Andrew Jackson won the election easily, but Rachel Jackson died suddenly before his inauguration. Jackson would never forgive the people who attacked his wife's character during the campaign.

In 1828, Jackson's broad appeal as a military hero won him the presidency. He was "Old Hickory," the "Hero of New Orleans," a leader of plain frontier folk. His wartime accomplishments appealed to many voters' pride. In office over the next eight years, he would claim to represent the interests of ordinary white Americans, especially from the South and West, against the country's wealthy and powerful elite. This attitude would lead him and his allies into a series of bitter political struggles.

30. Video: The Age of Jackson

In this video, John Green teaches you about the presidency of Andrew Jackson. So how did a president with astoundingly bad fiscal policies end up on the \$20 bill? That's a question we can't answer, but we can tell you how Jackson got to be president, and how he changed the country when he got the job. Jackson's election was more democratic than any previous presidential election. More people were able to vote, and they picked a doozie.

Jackson was a well-known war hero, and he was elected over his longtime political enemy, John Quincy Adams. Once Jackson was in office, he did more to expand executive power than any of the previous occupants of the White House. He used armed troops to collect taxes, refused to enforce legislation and supreme court legislation, and hired and fired his staff based on support in elections. He was also the first president to regularly wield the presidential veto as a political tool. Was he a good president? Watch this video and draw your own conclusions.



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://library.achievingthedream.org/forsythtechamericanhistory1/?p=65>

31. The Nullification Crisis

Nearly every American had an opinion about President Jackson. To some, he epitomized democratic government and popular rule. To others, he represented the worst in a powerful and unaccountable executive, acting as president with the same arrogance he had shown as a general in Florida. One of the key issues dividing Americans during his presidency was a sectional dispute over national tax policy that would come to define Jackson's no-holds-barred approach to government.

Once Andrew Jackson moved into the White House, most southerners expected him to do away with the hated Tariff of 1828, the so-called Tariff of Abominations. This import tax provided protection for northern manufacturing interests by raising the prices of European products in America. Southerners, however, blamed the tariff for a massive transfer of wealth. It forced them to purchase goods from the North's manufacturers at higher prices, and it provoked European countries to retaliate with high tariffs of their own, reducing foreign purchases of the South's raw materials.

Only in South Carolina, though, did the discomfort turn into organized action. The state was still trying to shrug off the economic problems of the Panic of 1819, but it had also recently endured the Denmark Vesey slave conspiracy, which convinced white South Carolinians that antislavery ideas put them in danger of a massive slave uprising.

Elite South Carolinians were especially worried that the tariff was merely an entering wedge for federal legislation that would limit slavery. Andrew Jackson's own vice president, John C. Calhoun, who was from South Carolina, asserted that the tariff was "the occasion, rather than the real cause of the present unhappy state of things." The real fear was that the federal government might attack "the peculiar domestick institutions of the Southern States"—meaning

slavery. When Jackson failed to act against the tariff, Vice President Calhoun was caught in a tight position.

In 1828, Calhoun secretly drafted the *South Carolina Exposition and Protest*, a pamphlet that laid out the doctrine of “nullification.” Drawing from the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions of 1798 and 1799, Calhoun argued that the United States was a compact among the states rather than among the whole American people. Since the states had created the Union, he had reasoned, they were still sovereign, so a state could nullify a federal statute it considered unconstitutional. Other states would then have to concede the right of nullification or agree to amend the Constitution. If necessary, a nullifying state could leave the Union.

When Calhoun’s authorship of the pamphlet became public, Jackson was furious, interpreting it both as a personal betrayal and as a challenge to his authority as president. His most dramatic confrontation with Calhoun came in 1832 during a commemoration for Thomas Jefferson. At dinner, the president rose and toasted, “Our federal union—it must be preserved.” Calhoun responded with a toast of his own: “The Union—next to liberty, most dear.” Their divorce was not pretty. Martin Van Buren, a New York political leader whose skill in making deals had earned him the nickname “the Little Magician,” replaced Calhoun as vice president when Jackson ran for reelection in 1832.

Calhoun returned to South Carolina, where a special state convention nullified the federal tariffs of 1828 and 1832. It declared them unconstitutional and therefore “null, void, and no law” within South Carolina. The convention ordered South Carolina customs officers not to collect tariff revenue and declared that any federal attempt to enforce the tariffs would cause the state to secede from the Union.

President Jackson responded dramatically. He denounced the ordinance of nullification and declared that “disunion, by armed force, is TREASON,” vowing to hang Calhoun and any other nullifier who defied federal power. He persuaded Congress to pass a Force Bill that authorized him to send the military to enforce the tariffs.

Faced with such threats, other southern states declined to join South Carolina. Privately, however, Jackson supported the idea of compromise and allowed his political enemy Henry Clay to broker a solution with Calhoun. Congress passed a compromise bill that slowly lowered federal tariff rates. South Carolina rescinded nullification for the tariffs but nullified the Force Bill.

The legacy of the Nullification Crisis is difficult to sort out. Jackson's decisive action seemed to have forced South Carolina to back down. But the crisis also united the ideas of secession and states' rights, two concepts that had not necessarily been linked before. Perhaps most clearly, nullification showed that the immense political power of slaveholders was matched only by their immense anxiety about the future of slavery. During later debates in the 1840s and 1850s, they would raise the ideas of the Nullification Crisis again.

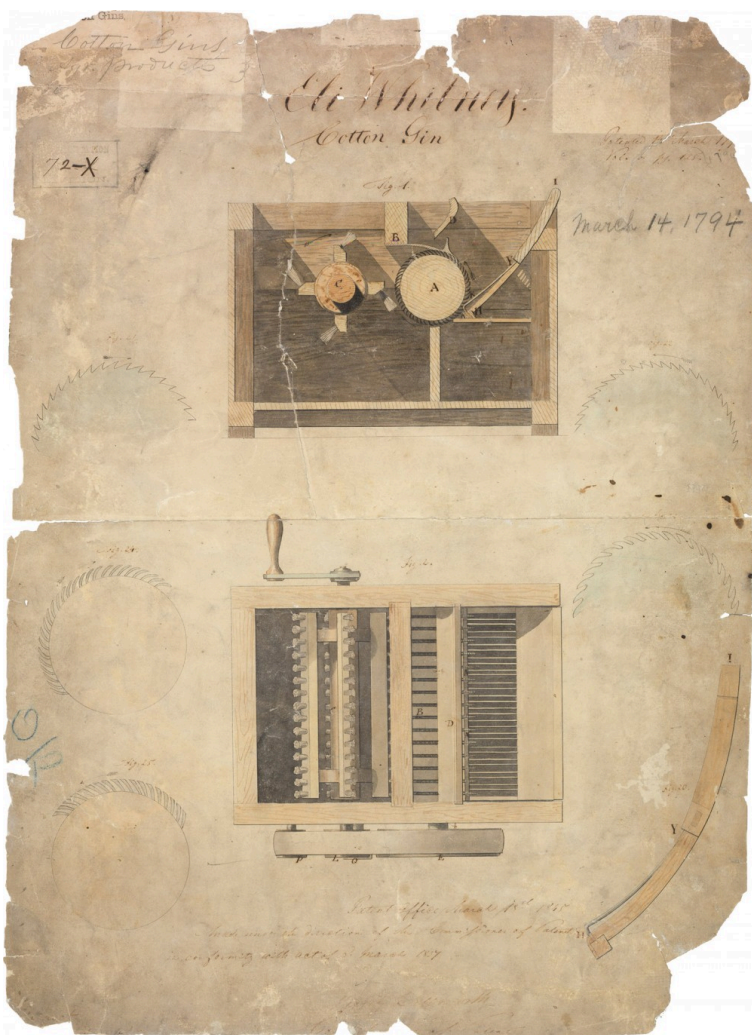
PART XI

MODULE II: SOUTHERN
SOCIETY BEFORE THE
CIVIL WAR

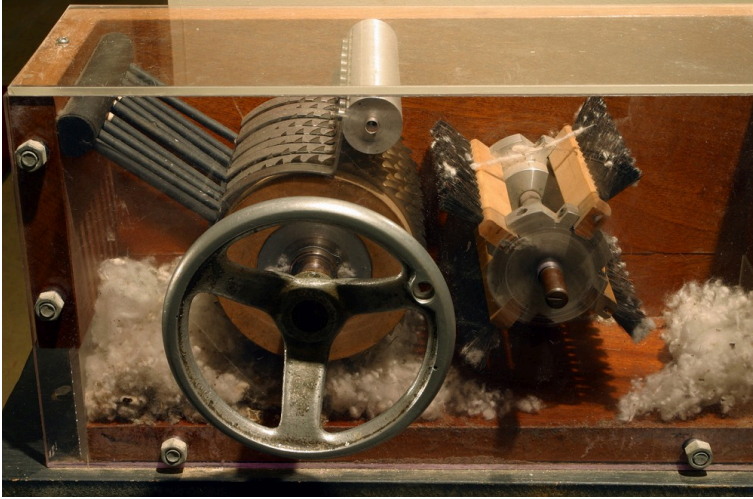
32. Plantation Economy and Politics

In 1827, a visitor to Charleston, South Carolina, took notice of “mountains of Cotton” piled on the wharf as he stepped off his boat. As he ambled around the city, it seemed that everyone spoke only of “Cotton! Cotton!! Cotton!!!” His trip through Georgia, Alabama and Louisiana revealed numerous cotton fields and slave owners forcing large gangs of slaves to walk towards potential cotton plantations along the Mississippi River. Upon his arrival in Nashville, he encountered yet more cotton piled high on wagons, steamboats, flatboats, and schooners awaiting transportation to New Orleans. At the conclusion of his trip, the traveler joked that he had been “seeing, hearing, and dreaming of nothing but cotton.”

While the traveler’s observations reflected the importance of the fleecy staple to the South’s economy and society in 1827, the United States produced relatively little of the staple crop in the nation’s early years. In 1793, southerners produced only about 10,000 bales of cotton. A combination of factors, including an improved cotton gin, better machinery to spin the fiber into thread, and the ability of steamboats to haul thousands of cotton bales (each of which was about the size and weight of a modern refrigerator), unleashed the crop’s potential. By the time Abraham Lincoln was elected president, southerners had sold nearly 4.5 million bales and cotton made up 60 percent of all American exports.



Eli Whitney's mechanical cotton gin revolutionized cotton production and expanded and strengthened slavery throughout the South. Eli Whitney's Patent for the Cotton gin, March 14, 1794; Records of the Patent and Trademark Office; Record Group 241. [Wikimedia](#).

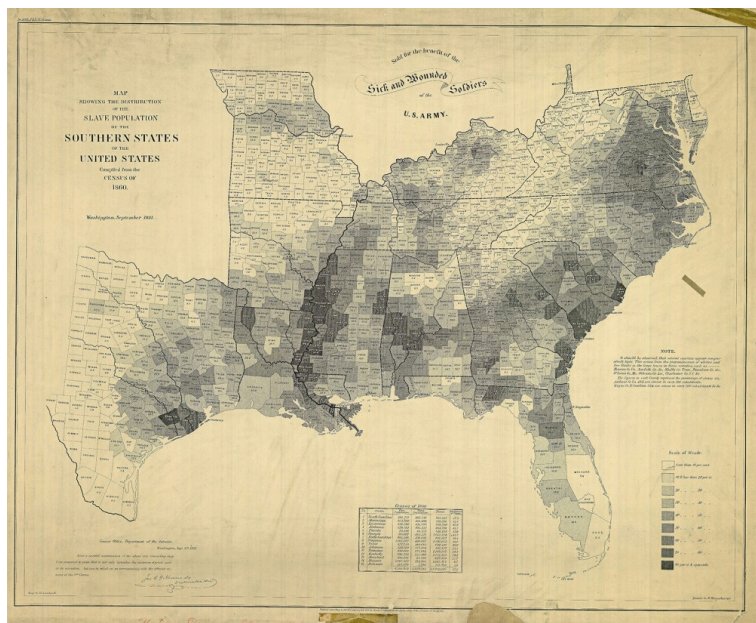


A 19th-century cotton gin on display at the Eli Whitney Museum. [Wikimedia](#).

As cotton production soared, it fueled demand for the fertile lands stretching from northern Georgia westward to the Mississippi River termed the “black belt.” The “black belt” described both the color of the rich soil and the physical appearance of the slaves who worked the land. Cotton helped ignite industrial revolutions in England and the United States, provided profits to northern banks and insurance companies, nourished international trade networks, and brought affluence to southern planters. Like oil today, cotton was the world’s most valuable commodity.

Efforts to spread cotton culture to Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida wreaked untold havoc on Native Americans landholders. Whites pressured the federal government to drive out the Native Americans. The United States army forcibly removed and exiled over 60,000 Choctaws, Creeks, Chickasaws, Seminoles, and Cherokees to “Indian Territory” in Oklahoma. The spread of the cotton kingdom also fueled expansionist desires. White southerners settled lands in Mexico, which would later become Texas, hoping to spread cotton cultivation as far as present-day Arizona and New

Mexico. Southerners also pressured the federal government to acquire land in the Caribbean so that slavery and cotton production could flourish there as well.



This map, published by the US Coast Guard, shows the percentage of slaves in the population in each county of the slave-holding states in 1860. The highest percentages lie along the Mississippi River, in the “Black Belt” of Alabama, and coastal South Carolina, all of which were centers of agricultural production (cotton and rice) in the United States. E. Hergesheimer (cartographer), Th. Leonhardt (engraver), *Map Showing the Distribution of the Slave Population of the Southern States of the United States Compiled from the Census of 1860*, c. 1861. [Wikimedia](#).

As the cotton industry continued to develop, the need for laborers increased. This demand was met with a forced migration of slaves, one of the largest in American history. In this “second middle passage,” occurring between 1790 and 1860, planters and slave traders forced over one million African Americans to travel from the Chesapeake region to the emerging Southwest. These slaves

labored under grueling conditions, clearing the land for plantations and later laboring to produce cotton.

Enslaved men and women who worked on cotton plantations faced constant and often arduous labor. A bell or horn roused them at dawn. After eating breakfast, they assembled in work gangs of about twenty people. They planted in the spring, hoed weeds in the summer, and harvested in the fall. One free man of color who was captured and sold into slavery depicted a life that was frequently filled with fear. The expected day's work during harvest was 200 pounds. Slaves walked down the long rows of cotton and plucked the ripe bolls, putting them in large sacks. Those who broke branches or stalks or who accidentally smeared their blood on the cotton were often whipped. At the end of the day, the slaves brought their cotton to the gin house in a basket. If the person did not pick enough cotton "he knows that he must suffer." If the person picked more cotton than the quota, he or should would be expected to match that mark the next day. "So, whether he has too little or too much, his approach to the gin-house is always with fear and trembling."



Though taken after the end of slavery, these stereographs show various stages of cotton production. The fluffy white staple fiber is first extracted from the boll (a prickly, sharp protective capsule), after which the seed is separated in the ginning and taken to a storehouse. Unknown, Picking cotton in a great plantation in North Carolina, U.S.A., c. 1865-1903. [Wikimedia](#).

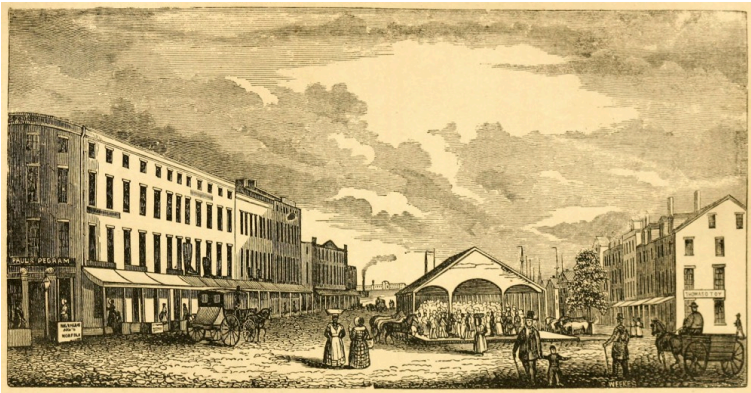
Although many slaves perished under the regime, cotton plantations represented extraordinarily profitable enterprises. By 1860, about 70 percent of southern slaves worked on cotton plantations. The ever-escalating demand for cotton drove the price of slaves upward. In 1830, a young male field hand cost about \$1,250 in New Orleans (about \$30,000 in today's dollars), but by 1860, the same slave cost an estimated \$2,000 (about \$42,000 today). The planters primarily responsible for this increased demand were usually self-made men who used business acumen, agricultural sense, and a bit of luck to succeed. Owning twenty or more slaves typically signified entry into the planter class, but one bad decision could force a planter to sell his or her assets, including slaves. These sales often disregarded marriages and separated children from their parents. Southern court records from across the black belt reflect the separation of slave families through public auctions.



The slave markets of the South varied in size and style, but the St. Louis Exchange in New Orleans was so frequently described it became a kind of representation for all southern slave markets. Indeed, the St. Louis Hotel rotunda was cemented in the literary imagination of nineteenth-century Americans after Harriet Beecher Stowe chose it as the site for the sale of Uncle Tom in her 1852 novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. After the ruin of the St. Clare plantation, Tom and his fellow slaves were suddenly property that had to be liquidated. Brought to New Orleans to be sold to the highest bidder, Tom found himself “[b]eneath a splendid dome” where “men of all nations” scurried about. J. M. Starling (engraver), “Sale of estates, pictures and slaves in the rotunda, New Orleans,” 1842. [Wikimedia](#).

With the westward expansion of cotton culture in the lower South, the number of slaves required to labor on plantations in the region increased dramatically. Simultaneously, slaveholders in the upper South—which included Virginia and Maryland—were increasingly willing to supply slaves to meet the lower South’s new labor requirements as tobacco production slowed and the Nat Turner Rebellion left slaveholders fearful of large slave populations. The simplest definition for the interstate slave trade was the buying and selling of human beings. However, as the trade grew and became

more sophisticated following the War of 1812, the emerging marketplace and growing infrastructure began to create a larger web of businesses. Slave markets constituted one of the key features of the trade. Cities like Washington D.C., Charleston, Richmond, and New Orleans each featured large, formal markets, although rural markets and estate and foreclosure sales also fueled the trade. Even as the traders packaged their slaves, as one historian describes, by “feeding them up, oiling their bodies, and dressing them in new clothes, they were forced to rely on the slaves to sell themselves, to act as they had been advertised to be.” In addition to procuring slaves, traders also acted as brokers and auctioneers. Slaves communicated with one another in the markets, passing information concerning upcoming sells, runaway attempts, and knowledge about different buyers.



In southern cities like Norfolk, VA, markets sold not only vegetables, fruits, meats, and sundries, but also slaves. Enslaved men and women, like the two walking in the direct center, lived and labored next to free people, black and white. S. Weeks, “Market Square, Norfolk,” from Henry Howe’s Historical Collections of Virginia, 1845. [Wikimedia](#).

1840

VALUABLE GANG OF YOUNG NEGROES

By JOS. A. BEARD.

Will be sold at Auction,
ON WEDNESDAY, 25TH INST.

At 12 o'clock, at Banks' Arcade,
**17 Valuable Young Negroes,
Men and Women, Field Hands.
Sold for no fault; with the best
city guarantees.**

**Sale Positive
and without reserve!**

TERMS CASH.

New Orleans, March 24, 1840.

The slave trade sold bondspeople—men, women, and children—like mere pieces of property, as seen in the advertisements produced during the era. 1840 poster advertising slaves for sale in New Orleans. [Wikimedia](#).

Abolitionists and even some southerners believed the domestic slave trade represented the most immoral qualities of the institution of slavery because it encouraged the destruction of the slave family. Itinerant, faceless slave traders represented the villains responsible for the trade and its evils, but the profitability of the trade provided a sufficient incentive for slaveholders to participate. Between 1820

and 1860, the trade facilitated \$10.8 billion in annual sales. By the 1830s, pro-slavery advocates attempted to morally justify the trade by claiming that buyers protected the social order by purchasing slaves, who otherwise would not be able to take care of themselves. By the 1850s and 60s, however, southerners were plagued by numerous attacks from abolitionists and the publication of stories of slaves, like Anna in Richmond who chose to jump from the roof instead of being sold back into slavery, thus making it increasingly difficult to defend the slave trade.

Slavery in the Old South was not simply a matter of white masters and black slaves. Despite attempts by white settlers to ignore or exile indigenous peoples in the region, Native Americans remained an important component of southern society, and several Native American societies also included forms of slavery. Captivity served as a wartime tradition that facilitated trade for many southern Indians. By the antebellum period, however, members of the so-called Five Civilized Tribes (Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole) selectively blended certain aspects of Euro-American racial slavery and transitioned from slave trading to slaveholding. For example, Robert M. Jones, a Choctaw man, owned at least six plantations covering thousands of acres, 300–500 slaves, twenty-eight stores, a fleet of steamships, and elaborate mansions. Most of his wealth stemmed from both the buying and selling of black slaves and the use of their labor on his plantations.

Forced Indian Removal in the 1830s accelerated slaveholding in Indian Nations. Choctaw Indians Mushulatubbee and Peter Pitchlynn, for instance, invested heavily in slaves immediately before removal because they knew slaves would be useful in rebuilding homes and farms in Indian Territory. These slaves made the journey on the “Trail of Tears” the same way other slaves traveled the “Second Middle Passage.” The treatment of slaves varied greatly both within and between tribes. Some slaves lived as free as their masters, but others lived and labored under the same brutal conditions found on many American plantations. Slaves belonging to the Five Tribes shared many of the cultural values of African

American slaves. For instance, two Choctaw slaves named Wallace Willis and Aunt Minerva are credited with writing the famous slave songs, “Swing Lo, Sweet Chariot” and “Steal Away to Jesus.” Songs like these demonstrate the beauty and power of cultures forged in the trauma of slavery.

33. Culture in the Old South

Southern culture was strongly shaped by religion. Before the American Revolution, the Anglican Church served as the established church throughout the southern colonies. The rise of Protestant evangelicalism in the 1740s posited a fledgling alternative to the Anglican establishment. For evangelicals, the conversion experience was upheld as a universally attainable route to spiritual salvation. It employed highly emotional sermons and liturgies—many of them at large, interdenominational, outdoor camp meetings—to facilitate this conversion experience among believers.

British defeat in the American Revolution further transformed religion in the South as many rejected the Anglican Church as an institution of the British Crown. When the United States of America rejected any religious establishment, the Anglican Church, now renamed the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, suffered. Many former Anglicans became Episcopalians, but others drifted off to other denominations, including the Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians.

Influential Jewish and Catholic minorities also emerged in some of the South's urban areas, notably New Orleans, Savannah, and Charleston. By 1800, Charleston had the largest Jewish population in the United States, a distinction it retained until around 1830 when it was surpassed by New York City. Jewish settlers began arriving in South Carolina as early as the late seventeenth century as they fled from persecution under the Spanish Inquisition. Reform Judaism had its roots in the antebellum South as the members of Congregation Beth Elohim in Charleston began to modernize the faith. From these roots in Charleston, Reform Judaism took its formal shape in Ohio under the leadership of Isaac Mayer Wise and blossomed into the largest Jewish denomination in the United States.

Catholics had established permanent settlements in Spanish

Florida prior to the creation of Jamestown. Rivalries between Catholic Spain and later Catholic France inhibited the growth of Catholicism in British North America. Catholicism became the largest denomination in the United States by 1850, but most of this growth owed to immigrants in the northern states. Southern Catholicism nonetheless represented an important minority in the South, and in some cities, particularly New Orleans, Catholicism dominated the social life of many southerners.

While the South contained important pockets of religious diversity, the evangelicalism of the Second Great Awakening established the region's prevailing religious culture. Led by Methodists, Baptists, and to a lesser degree, Presbyterians, this intense period of religious revivals swept the along southern backcountry. By the outbreak of the Civil War, the vast majority of southerners who affiliated with a religious denomination belonged to either the Baptist or Methodist faith. Both churches in the South eventually became some of the most vocal defenders of slavery.

Southern ministers contended that God himself had selected Africans for bondage but also considered the evangelization of slaves to be one of their greatest callings. Missionary efforts among southern slaves increased Protestantism among African Americans, leading to a proliferation of biracial congregations and prominent independent black churches. Some black and white southerners forged positive and rewarding biracial connections; however, more often black and white southerners described strained or superficial religious relationships.

As the institution of slavery hardened racism in the South, relationships between missionaries and Native Americans transformed as well. Missionaries of all denominations were among the first to represent themselves as “pillars of white authority.” After the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, plantation culture expanded into the Deep South, and mission work became a crucial element of Christian expansion. Frontier mission schools carried a continual flow of Christian influence into indigenous communities. Some missionaries learned indigenous languages, but many more worked

to prevent indigenous children from speaking their native tongues, insisting upon English for Christian understanding. By the Indian removals of 1835 and the Trail of Tears in 1838, missionaries in the South preached a pro-slavery theology that emphasized obedience to masters, the biblical basis of racial slavery via the curse of Ham, and the “civilizing” paternalism of slave-owners.

Slaves most commonly received Christian instruction from white preachers or masters, whose religious message typically stressed slave subservience. Anti-literacy laws ensured that most slaves would be unable to read the Bible in its entirety and thus could not acquaint themselves with such inspirational stories as Moses delivering the Israelites out of slavery. Contradictions between God’s Word and master and mistress cruelty and inhumanity did not pass unnoticed by many enslaved African Americans. As former slave William Wells Brown declared, “slaveholders hide themselves behind the Church,” adding that “a more praying, preaching, psalm-singing people cannot be found than the slaveholders of the South.”

Many slaves chose to create and practice their own versions of Christianity, one that typically incorporated aspects of traditional African religions with limited input from the white community. Nat Turner, for example, found inspiration from religion early in life. Adopting an austere Christian lifestyle during his adolescence, Turner claimed to have been visited by “spirits” during his twenties, and considered himself something of a prophet. He claimed to have had visions, in which he was called upon to do the work of God, leading some contemporaries (as well as historians) to question his sanity. Coupled with the “Baptist War” in Jamaica later that year—in which Baptist missionaries were alleged to have encouraged enslaved people to revolt—Nat Turner’s rebellion caused some whites to limit independent black churches. These independent religious communities served as one of the key sources of slave resistance. But despite the importance of independent black churches, the story of religion in the South is ultimately a story of biracial congregations.

When antislavery and abolitionist critiques began to usher forth

from northern pulpits in the 1820s and 1830s, socially prominent Protestant Evangelicals developed staunch proslavery positions, using religious faith to justify slavery. Debates over slavery led to a split between northern and southern congregations, beginning with the Presbyterian schism of 1837, followed by the Methodists in 1844 and the Baptists in 1845.

Evangelical religion reinforced other elements of southern culture, including an obsession with masculine honor. Honor prioritized the public recognition of white masculine claims to reputation and authority. It also encouraged men to privately reflect on their behavior and reputation.

Southern men developed a code to ritualize their interactions with each other and to perform their expectations of honor. This code structured language and behavior and was designed to minimize conflict. But when conflict did arise, the code also provided rituals that would reduce the resulting violence.

The formal duel exemplified the code in action. If two men could not settle a dispute through the arbitration of their friends, they would exchange pistol shots to prove their equal honor status. Duelists arranged a secluded meeting, chose from a set of deadly weapons and risked their lives as they clashed with swords or fired pistols at one another. Some of the most illustrious men in American history participated in a duel at some point during their lives, including President Andrew Jackson, Vice-President Aaron Burr, United States Senators Henry Clay, and Thomas Hart Benton. In all but Burr's case, dueling assisted in elevating these men to prominence. For Burr, however, killing Alexander Hamilton in a duel, a much beloved Founding Father, began the downward spiral of his political career.

During the 1830s, religious piety became integrated into the honor creed, creating an ethic of "righteous honor." It emphasized restraint as the surest path to moral righteousness, but allowed for the justification of violence when threatened with moral corruption. Righteous honor governed male interactions and extended by proxy over their households and dependents—male and female, white and

black—over whom they exercised authority. Domestic disorder threatened personal honor, which threatened public disgrace.

Dueling contrasted deeply with other forms of violence more common among those in lower social positions. Canings, whippings, and clubbings were also used to preserve ones reputation, but such acts were typically applied to men deemed socially unequal and, unlike dueling, the violent act intended to demonstrate that the man assaulted was no better than a slave. The most prevalent form of violence in the South was directed at those men and women in bondage. Violence manifested itself in the form of whippings, beatings, and even sexual assaults, including rape.

Violence amongst the lower classes, especially those in the backcountry, involved fistfights and shootouts. Tactics included the sharpening of fingernails and filing of teeth into razor sharp points, which would be used to gouge eyes and bite off ears and noses. In a duel, a gentleman achieved recognition by risking his life rather than killing his opponent, whereas those involved in rough-and-tumble fighting achieved victory through maiming their opponent.

The legal system was partially to blame for the prevalence of violence in the Old South. Although states and territories had laws against murder, rape, and various other forms of violence, including specific laws against dueling, upper-class southerners were rarely prosecuted and juries often acquitted the accused. Despite the fact that hundreds of duelists fought and killed one another, there is little evidence that many duelists faced prosecution, and only one, Timothy Bennett (Belleville, Illinois), was ever executed. By contrast, prosecutors routinely sought cases against lower-class southerners, who were found guilty in greater numbers than their wealthier counterparts.

The southern emphasis on honor affected women as well. While southern men worked to maintain their sense of masculinity, so too southern women cultivated a sense of femininity. Femininity in the South was intimately tied to the domestic sphere, even more so than for women in the North. The cult of domesticity strictly limited the ability of wealthy southern women to engage in public

life. While northern women began to organize reform societies, southern women remained bound to the home where they were instructed to cultivate their families' religious sensibility and manage their household. Managing the household was not easy work, however. For women on large plantations, managing the household would include directing a large bureaucracy of potentially rebellious slaves. For the vast majority of southern women who did not live on plantations, managing the household would include nearly constant work in keeping families clean, fed, and well-behaved. On top of these duties, many southern women would be required to assist with agricultural tasks.

Scarlett O'Hara's fictional life was filled with leisure. The reality for southern women was far less glamorous. Maintaining order in a society rooted in slavery required a constant presence of violence, and this violence hung over the Old South, haunting men and women; white, black, and Native American. Despite the brutality of slavery and the dominance of cotton, the Old South was a place of diversity and cultural innovation. So much of what would later become mainstream American culture had its origins in the Old South.

34. Migration and Geographies

Urban growth remained tempered in the American South throughout the colonial period, but several key cities did emerge in correlation with the expansion of staple, or cash crop, agriculture. Towns provided central points for new capital investment and places where the English government could exert its control. The early establishment of towns remained tied to the needs of growing plantation economies. Towns were predominantly located along rivers or seaports.

Tobacco production in the Chesapeake region failed to justify urban sites to facilitate export in the seventeenth century. The development of the wheat trade, however, required centralized marketing and storage, which eventually resulted in the development of Baltimore, Richmond, and Fredericksburg. During the colonial period, Charleston also emerged as an important trade capital as thousands of slaves demanded by the growing plantation economy of the lower South entered the port and a variety of goods required by the planters of the West Indies were sent southward. However, urban growth accelerated greatly with the rise in rice cultivation, which required similar marketing, processing, and storage as wheat. By 1775, Charleston represented the largest city in the South and the fourth largest city in British North America, behind Philadelphia, New York, and Boston. In addition to their key role in trade, the older seaport cities of the South like Charleston and Savannah played an important roles as points of escape for wealthier members of the planter class. During the hotter months, cities posed a welcome sanctuary from the ravages of common diseases, including yellow fever and malaria, but during the winter and early spring, a different sort of “season,” emerged; the city

became the cornerstone of social and intellectual life in the South as a variety of balls and events annually entertained city residents.

New Orleans rose to prominence as the cotton trade developed, surpassing Charleston by 1830 to become the definitive urban capital of the South. The Crescent City became home to the nation's largest slave market and exported more cotton than any other American port, which for several decades before the Civil War allowed it to rival New York for the most important export port in the United States. By 1860, New Orleans was the sixth largest city in the country and boasted a population of 169,000 souls, while Charleston claimed a population one quarter of that size, placing it outside of the twenty largest cities. Eventually, Mobile, Memphis, and smaller towns like Natchez would also dot the cotton belt, fueling the plantation economy through the trade of slaves, manufactured goods, and cotton.

Southern cities differed from northern cities in several important ways. A significant number of slaves could be found in every southern city. By 1860, slaves comprised more than 20 percent of the urban population of the South's major cities, and in certain cities, the proportion could be much higher. When Fredrika Bremer visited Charleston in 1850, she could clearly see that blacks outnumbered the city's white inhabitants: "Negroes swarm the streets. Two-thirds of the people one sees in town are negroes." Free African Americans also gravitated towards cities in great numbers because they were afforded greater economic opportunities and ultimately were able to develop their own rich, independent religious communities and social organizations. Free people of color in New Orleans—or *gens du couleur* as they were called in French—accumulated significant property and wealth, and benefited from associations with whites fostered by the French and Spanish influences unique to Louisiana.



Free people of color were present throughout the American South, particularly in urban areas like Charleston and New Orleans. Some were relatively well off, like this *femme de couleur libre* posed with her mixed race child in front of her New Orleans home, maintaining a middling position between free whites and slaves. As the nineteenth century progressed, however, free people of color lost their status and any rights they had as slavery expanded and strengthened. Free woman of color with quadroon daughter; late 18th century collage painting, New Orleans. [Wikimedia](#).

Enslaved and free African Americans performed a myriad of skilled and unskilled jobs vital to the economy of the city. Women served

primarily as domestics, and men worked in a variety of trades relating to local and export commerce, construction, and industry. Day laborers transported goods to ships for export, whereas a variety of slave mechanics or artisans constructed ships or buildings as carpenters, or worked as wheelwrights, cabinetmakers, or in a variety of other fields. The great demand for short-term labor in cities gave rise to the practice of slave hiring. Masters would arrange either for their slaves to work for an employer, creating a contract for predetermined wages that would typically last between one month and one year, or would allow the slave to find employment with the understanding that he or she would pay a pre-arranged sum on a weekly or monthly basis for the privilege of “hiring out.” In some cities, like Charleston, Savannah, and New Orleans, city governments required these slaves who were hired out by the day to wear badges and regulated the wages they would be compensated for specific jobs.

During the nineteenth century, urban growth accelerated in the South, although most cities retained a lighter population density than their northern counterparts primarily due to the continued preeminence of the rural economy. Although most Southern cities resisted the forces of industrialization during the antebellum period, in a handful of cities—including Richmond, Baltimore, New Orleans, and Mobile—small-scale industry did dominate the economy. Industries in these cities that centered on shipbuilding and the manufacturing of iron, chemicals, textiles, and other goods employed whites as well as free and enslaved blacks. The growth of these urban industries also further diversified the population of Southern cities as they attracted significant populations of British, Irish and German immigrants who otherwise settled outside of the South.

As far back as the Colonial period, Irish immigrants had found the South to be a hospitable place of settlement. In 1765, Ulster-born immigrant and Native American trader John Rea wrote home to Belfast, in the hopes of recruiting Irish settlers to populate his new Queensborough township in Georgia. He promised immigrants

100 acres of land per family, domestic animals and farming supplies. Above all, he guaranteed that their lives the South would be better than in Europe. Rea boasted to his Belfast readers, “I keep as plentiful a table as most gentlemen in Ireland, with good punch, wine, and beer.”

The social and cultural lives of Irish men and women varied based on the region in North America in which they settled. Many migrants moved to and lived in northern cities, particularly after the famines of the 1840s, but the American South also attracted sizable populations of Irish settlers starting in the colonial period. Indentured servants signed contracts for seven years’ labor as payment for travel costs, and often served as initial laborers on cotton plantations prior to the height of the slave trade.. Irish traders, like George Galphin, exchanged goods and created families with regional Native Americans well into the 1700s. Immigrants became planters, slaveholders, merchants and businessmen in bustling southern seaports like Charleston, New Orleans and Savannah.

Early settlers came from all regions in Ireland, and they represented both Catholic and Protestant denominations. Some large communities, like the Scots Irish, settled in family groups in the western Carolinas, Kentucky and Tennessee before 1800. Many migrated as entrepreneurs, and they often socialized with their non-Irish neighbors professionally and personally.

The ready availability of slaves in the South presented immigrants with strong labor competition. In the decades after the 1845 Potato Famine in particular, those seeking opportunities in the United States were poor Irish migrants—especially Catholics—who sought skilled and unskilled employment that placed them in direct competition with slaves. As a result, fewer immigrants moved to the South. By 1860, in fact, only 11 percent (or 200,000 persons) of the 1.6 million Irish persons living in the United States resided in the southern states.

A majority of these immigrants settled in regional urban centers, like Charleston, Mobile, Natchez, New Orleans and Savannah. There,

they made a major impact on developing infrastructure, especially by laboring on canals and railroads meant to improve trade efficiency. This work was unpleasant and arduous, and the fact that southerners used Irish settlers for dangerous labor they would not even have slaves do earned them nicknames like “black” and “smoked.” New immigrants were aware that such work fostered an association with slaves, and many tried to distinguish themselves publically from African-Americans. Consequently, Irishmen and women often supported the racial distinctions undergirding slave society in the Old South, even as men like Daniel O’Connell linked support for abolitionism to Irish nationalism during the 1830s. Later Irish settlers in the Old South later became more socially and culturally “Irish” than their southern predecessors as they settled increasingly in ethnocentric neighborhoods and churches.

Caribbean influences joined with European traditions in crafting the unique culture of the Old South. This connection is particularly clear in the development of southern food. For instance, New Orleans’ Creole cuisine, was heavily influenced by Caribbean, West African, European, and American Indian culinary traditions. New Orleans and colonial Haiti, in particular, had an intimately connected history. Following the Haitian Revolution, an estimated 10,000 free and enslaved Haitians came to New Orleans, nearly doubling city’s population. The strong cultural continuities between the two cultures reinforced the preexisting creolized cultures of Louisiana that arose from French and Spanish influences.

The South drew fewer immigrants than did the North, but antebellum southern culture nonetheless reflected the diverse people who came to understand the region as their home.

Just as new southerners were arriving, others were leaving. Escaped slaves sought refuge in the northern states, and then later in Canada, while other African Americans looked across the ocean for a place to start a new life. The South was intimately connected to the wider world through migrations, both free and forced, as well as economic relationships, and cultural ties.



Eastman Johnson's *A Ride for Liberty—The Fugitive Slaves* portrays the fearless quest for freedom by a family of slaves, an arduous journey that so many slaves attempted. While it is impossible to know the number of enslaved men, women, and children who used their own feet to find liberty, historians concur that it was a common occurrence throughout American history. Eastman Johnson, *A Ride for Liberty—The Fugitive Slaves*, 1862. [Wikimedia](#).

The American Colonization Society (ACS) was founded in 1816 with the purpose of raising money to send manumitted slaves to West Africa. The idea of sending African Americans to Africa had been pioneered decades earlier by the British who established a colony in Sierra Leone. Some members of the ACS, like the Reverend Robert Finely, opposed slavery for religious reasons and also believed that Liberia could serve as an outpost for spreading Christianity to indigenous peoples. The ACS also received support from white politicians, like Senator Henry Clay, who believed that colonization could atone for the evils of slavery. Many slaveholders believed that freed slaves endangered the institution of slavery, and therefore

removing former slaves from the states, allowed slaveholders to manumit their slaves without such danger.

In 1819, the small island called “Providence Island” was purchased for the use of the African American colonists. The settlement was later named “Monrovia” in honor of American president and ACS supporter James Monroe (1817-1825). The first colonists arrived one year later, and over the course of the nineteenth century, more than 19,000 African Americans settled in Liberia. Many colonists died from disease—particularly malaria—and famine. Indigenous Africans, including Dey and Grebo peoples, viewed colonists as intruders and occupiers. Wars between the colonists and native peoples continued throughout the nineteenth century. Many African Americans were suspicious of the ACS’ intentions in sending them to a far-off land, and reports of the colony’s troubles increased that doubt. David Walker’s echoed the sentiments of many other free African Americans in his famous *Appeal* when he asked, “[w]hy should they send us into a far country to die?”

Liberia did offer formerly enslaved African Americans opportunities for success. Lott Cary, who was born a slave in Virginia, eventually purchased his freedom and migrated to Liberia as one of the first American missionaries to be sent abroad. He established the colony’s first church, Providence Baptist. African American newspaperman, John Brown Russwurm, operated the colony’s first printing press, publishing the monthly *Liberia Herald*. Other colonists, like Matilda Lomax, used freedom to educate their children, something they would not have been legally allowed to do in the South.



The issue of emigration elicited disparate reactions from African Americans. Tens of thousands left the United States for Liberia, a map of which is shown here, to pursue greater freedoms and prosperity. Most emigrants did not experience such success, but Liberia continued to attract black settlers for decades. J. Ashmun, *Map of the West Coast of Africa from Sierra Leone to Cape Palmas, including the colony of Liberia...*, 1830. [Library of Congress](#).

The ACS maintained control of Liberia and appointed the colony's political officials until 1847. White supporters of the ACS and other societies continued to provide the money and goods necessary for the passage to Liberia. White men and women aided with establishing schools, missionary outposts, and trading entrepôts in Liberia.

Freed African Americans exhibited mixed feelings concerning emigration. In 1787, Prince Hall petitioned the Massachusetts General Court to provide support for the repatriation of African Americans to Africa but was ultimately rebuffed. Hall later worked to organize emigration to Haiti. Paul Cuffee, a black sailor and successful merchant organized the earliest successful effort to resettle in Africa. In 1815 he brought thirty-four settlers to Sierra

Leone on one of his own ships. Although Cuffe understood emigration as a way to leave behind American racism, his significant personal and financial investment in emigration was rooted in his desire to establish a global trade route.

Most African Americans opposed colonization, preferring to remain in the United States, in part because emigration would mean abandoning enslaved family members. Opposition to the ACS among African Americans became more pronounced in the 1830s, guided by fears that the ACS would eventually support forced colonization. But emigration was still an attractive option for many, so several thousand African Americans organized alternate missions and settled in Haiti and Canada. Those projects stalled by the end of the 1830s, but during the 1820s, 1830s and 1850s, the Haitian government actively recruited African Americans, offering plots of land and funds for resettlement.

The passage of the Fugitive Slave Law (1850) and the Supreme Court's Dred Scott decision (1857) revived interest in emigration and colonization. In 1858, the Philadelphia minister Henry Highland Garnet formed the African Civilization Society, which emphasized black self-determination and the conversion of Africans to Christianity while repudiating American racism. Martin Delany later joined forces with Garnet, although both men had vigorously opposed colonization only a few years earlier. Hostility towards colonization remained strong in the African American community until the end of slavery. At its heart, the debate over emigration raised questions about whether Africa ought to be lauded as the homeland of blacks in the United States or whether claims to freedom and equality in the United States that remained unmet were enough to claim an American identity.

PART XII

MODULE 12: NORTHERN
SOCIETY BEFORE THE
CIVIL WAR

35. The Benevolent Empire

After religious disestablishment, citizens of the United States faced a dilemma: how to cultivate a moral and virtuous public without aid from state-sponsored religion. Most Americans agreed that a good and moral citizenry was essential for the national project to succeed, but many shared the perception that society's moral foundation was weakening. Narratives of moral and social decline, known as jeremiads, had long been embedded in Protestant storytelling traditions, but jeremiads took on new urgency in the antebellum period. In the years immediately following disestablishment, "traditional" Protestant Christianity was at low tide, while the Industrial Revolution and the spread of capitalism had led to a host of social problems associated cities and commerce. The Second Great Awakening was in part a spiritual response to such changes, revitalizing Christian spirits through the promise of salvation. The revivals also provided an institutional antidote to the insecurities of a rapidly changing world by inspiring an immense and widespread movement for social reform. Growly directly out of nineteenth-century revivalism, networks of reform societies proliferated throughout the United States between 1815 and 1861, melding religion and reform into a powerful force in American culture. This force is known as the "benevolent empire."

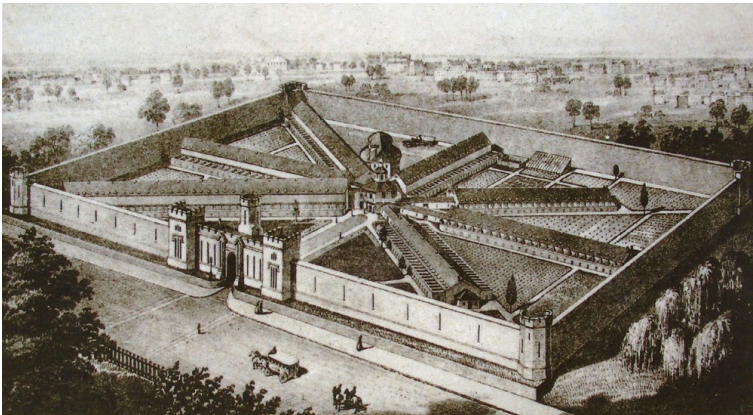
The benevolent empire departed from revivalism's early populism, as middle class ministers dominated the leadership of antebellum reform societies. As the Second Great Awakening gained momentum in the early nineteenth century, worshippers from the more "respectable" middle class began to eclipse the numbers of lower-class evangelicals. And, due to the economic forces of the market revolution, it was the middle-class evangelicals who had the time and resources to devote to reforming efforts. As labor shifted out of the household and into the factory, middle-class women, in particular, were freed from household labor and able to play

a leading role in reform activity. They became increasingly responsible for the moral maintenance of their homes and communities, and their leadership signaled a dramatic departure from previous generations when such prominent roles for ordinary women would have been unthinkable.

Different forces within evangelical Protestantism combined to encourage reform. One of the great lights of benevolent reform was Charles Grandison Finney, the radical revivalist, who promoted a movement known as “perfectionism.” Premised on the belief that truly redeemed Christians would be motivated to live free of sin and reflect the perfection of God himself, his wildly popular revivals encouraged his converted followers to join reform movements. The idea of “disinterested benevolence” also turned many evangelicals toward reform. Preachers championing disinterested benevolence argued that true Christianity requires that a person give up self-love in favor of loving others. Though perfectionism and disinterested benevolence were the most prominent forces encouraging benevolent societies, some preachers achieved the same end in their advocacy of postmillennialism. In this worldview, Christ’s return was foretold to occur after humanity had enjoyed one thousand years’ peace, and it was the duty of converted Christians to improve the world around them in order to pave the way for Christ’s redeeming return. Though ideological and theological issues like these divided Protestants into more and more sects, church leaders often worked on an interdenominational basis to establish benevolent societies and draw their followers into the work of social reform.

Under the leadership of preachers and ministers, moral reform societies attacked many social problems. Two significant reform movements, which will be discussed in detail in subsequent sections, were the antislavery movement and the crusade for women’s rights. Pervasive immoral behavior was also a major target, with societies tackling activities like gambling and dueling. Sabbatarians fought tirelessly to end non-religious activity on the Sabbath. Prostitution, in particular, became a major focus of reform

in the 1830s as reformers in cities like New York attempted to stem the tide of urban sex work by establishing asylums for the redemption of “abandoned women.” Over the course of the antebellum period, voluntary associations and benevolent activists also worked to reform bankruptcy laws, prison systems, insane asylums, labor laws, and education. They built orphanages and free medical dispensaries, and developed programs to provide professional services like social work, job placement, and day camps for children in the slums. The evangelical effort to cure social problems through the foundation and reform of such wide-ranging establishments is often referred to as institutional salvation.



Eastern State Penitentiary changed the principles of behind imprisonment, focusing on reform rather than punishment. The structure itself used panopticon surveillance system, and was widely copied by prison systems around the world. P.S: Duval and Co., The State Penitentiary for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, 1855. [Wikimedia](#).

Among all the social reform movements associated with the benevolent empire, the temperance crusade was the most successful. Championed by prominent preachers like Lyman Beecher, the movement’s effort to curb the consumption of alcohol galvanized widespread support among the middle class. Alcohol consumption became a significant social issue after the American

Revolution. Commercial distilleries produced readily available, cheap whiskey that was frequently more affordable than milk or beer and safer than water, and hard liquor became a staple beverage in many lower- and middle-class households. Consumption among adults skyrocketed in the early nineteenth century, and alcoholism had become an endemic problem across the United States by the 1820s. As alcoholism became an increasingly visible issue in towns and cities, most reformers escalated their efforts from advocating moderation in liquor consumption to full abstinence from all alcohol.

Many reformers saw intemperance as the biggest impediment to maintaining order and morality in the young republic. Temperance reformers saw a direct correlation between alcohol and other forms of vice targeted by voluntary societies, and, most importantly, felt that it endangered family life. So, in 1826, evangelical ministers organized the American Temperance Society (ATS) to help spread the crusade more effectively on a national level. The ATS supported lecture campaigns, produced temperance literature, and organized revivals specifically aimed at encouraging worshippers to give up the drink. It was so successful that, within a decade, it established five thousand branches and grew to over a million members. Temperance reformers pledged not to touch the bottle, and canvassed their neighborhoods and towns to encourage others to join their “Cold Water Army.” They also targeted the law, successfully influencing lawmakers in several states to prohibit the sale of liquor.



Nathaniel Currier, "The Drunkard's Progress." Lithograph. circa 1846. [The Library of Congress](#).

In response to the perception that heavy drinking was associated with men who abused, abandoned, or neglected their family obligations, women formed a significant presence in societies dedicated to eradicating liquor. Temperance became a hallmark of middle-class respectability among both men and women and developed into a crusade with a visible class character. As with many of the reform efforts championed by the middle class, temperance threatened to intrude on the private family life of lower-class workers, many of whom were Irish Catholics. Such intrusions by the Protestant middle-class exacerbated class and religious tensions. Still, while the temperance movement made less substantial inroads into lower-class workers' heavy-drinking social culture, the movement was still a great success for the reformers. In the 1830s, Americans drank half of what they had in the 1820s, and per capita consumption continued to decline over the next two decades.

Though middle-class reformers worked tirelessly to cure all manner of social problems through institutional salvation and

voluntary benevolent work, they regularly participated in religious organizations founded explicitly to address the spiritual mission at the core of evangelical Protestantism. In fact, for many reformers, it was actually the experience of evangelizing among the poor and seeing firsthand the rampant social issues plaguing life in the slums that first inspired them to get involved in benevolent reform projects. Modeling themselves on the British and Foreign Bible Society, formed in 1804 to spread Christian doctrine to the British working class, urban missionaries emphasized the importance of winning the world for Christ, one soul at a time. For example, the American Bible Society and the American Tract Society used the efficient new steam-powered printing press to distribute bibles and evangelizing religious tracts throughout the United States. Historian Steven Mintz has suggested that the New York Religious Tract Society alone managed to distribute religious tracts to all but 388 of New York City's 28,383 families. In places like Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, middle-class women also established groups specifically to canvass neighborhoods and bring the gospel to lower-class "wards."

Such evangelical missions extended well beyond the urban landscape, however. Stirred by nationalism and moral purpose, evangelicals labored to make sure the word of God reached far-flung settlers on the new American frontier. The American Bible Society distributed thousands of Bibles to frontier areas where churches and clergy were scarce, while the American Home Missionary Society provided substantial financial assistance to frontier congregations struggling to achieve self-sufficiency. Missionaries even worked to translate the Bible into Iroquois in order to more effectively evangelize Native American populations. As efficient printing technology and faster transportation facilitated new transatlantic and global connections, religious Americans also began to flex their missionary zeal on a global stage. In 1810, for example, Presbyterian and Congregationalist leaders established the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to evangelize in India, Africa, East Asia, and the Pacific.

The potent combination of social reform and evangelical mission at the heart of the nineteenth century's benevolent empire produced reform agendas and institutional changes that have reverberated through the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. By devoting their time to the moral uplift of their communities and the world at large, middle-class reformers created many of the largest and most influential organizations in the nation's history. For the optimistic, religiously motivated American, no problem seemed too great to solve. Although one issue proved more explosively divisive than all the rest. That problem, of course, was slavery.

36. Revival and Religious Change

In the early nineteenth century, a succession of religious revivals collectively known as the Second Great Awakening remade the nation's religious landscape. Revivalist preachers traveled on horseback, sharing the message of spiritual and moral renewal to as many as possible. Residents of urban centers, rural farmlands, and frontier territories alike flocked to religious revivals and camp meetings, where intense physical and emotional enthusiasm accompanied evangelical conversion.

The Second Great Awakening emerged in response to powerful intellectual and social currents. Camp meetings captured the democratizing spirit of the American Revolution, but revivals also provided a unifying moral order and new sense of spiritual community for Americans struggling with the great changes of the day. The market revolution, western expansion, and European immigration all challenged traditional bonds of authority, and evangelicalism promised equal measures of excitement and order. Revivals spread like wildfire throughout the United States, swelling church membership, spawning new Christian denominations, and inspiring social reform.

One of the earliest and largest revivals of the Second Great Awakening occurred in Cane Ridge, Kentucky over a one-week period in August 1801. The Cane Ridge Revival drew thousands of people, and possibly as many as one of every ten residents of Kentucky. Though large crowds gathered annually in rural areas each late summer or fall to receive Communion, this assembly was very different. Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian preachers all delivered passionate sermons, exhorting the crowds to strive for their own salvation. They preached from inside buildings, evangelized outdoors under the open sky, and even used tree

stumps as makeshift pulpits, all to reach their enthusiastic audiences in any way possible. Attendees, moved by the preachers' fervor, responded by crying, jumping, speaking in tongues, or even fainting.

Historians have accounted for this enthusiastic embrace of revivalist religiosity in part by stressing the heritage of the American Revolution. Building on the ideals of the Revolution, the Bill of Rights codified the protection of religious freedom by forbidding the federal government to establish an official state church or to impede on the free exercise of religion. The so-called "Establishment Clause" and "Free Exercise Clause" of the First Amendment meant that citizens no longer needed to pay taxes to the Church of England and could worship in any tradition of their choosing. This federal protection of religious freedom paved the way for a proliferation of Protestant religious sects, each vying to meet the nation's spiritual needs.

Events like the Cane Ridge Revival did spark significant changes in Americans' religious affiliations. Many revivalists abandoned the comparatively formal style of worship observed in the well-established Congregationalist and Episcopalian churches, and instead embraced more impassioned forms of worship that included the spontaneous jumping, shouting, and gesturing found in new and alternative denominations. The ranks of Christian denominations such as the Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians swelled precipitously, and entirely new religions such as the Mormon Church and the Seventh-Day Adventist Church also drew sizeable numbers during the Second Great Awakening. The evangelical fire reached such heights, in fact, that one swath of western and central New York state came to be known as the "Burned-Over District." Charles Grandison Finney, the influential revivalist preacher who first coined the term, explained that the residents of this area had experienced so many revivals by different religious groups that that there were no more souls to awaken to the fire of spiritual conversion.

Within the "spiritual marketplace" created by religious

disestablishment, Methodism achieved the most remarkable success. Methodism experienced the most significant denominational increase in American history and was by far the most popular American denomination by 1850. The Methodist denomination grew from fewer than one thousand members at the end of the eighteenth century to constitute thirty-four percent of all American church membership by the mid-nineteenth century. After its leaders broke with the Church of England to form a new, American denomination in 1784, the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC) achieved its growth through innovation. Methodists used itinerant preachers, known as circuit riders. These men won converts by pushing west with the expanding United States over the Alleghenies and into the Ohio River Valley, bringing religion to new settlers hungry to have their spiritual needs attended. Circuit riding took preachers into homes, meetinghouses, and churches, all mapped out at regular intervals that collectively took about two weeks to complete.

Revolutionary ideals also informed a substantial theological critique of orthodox Calvinism that had far-reaching consequences for religious individuals and for society as a whole. Calvinism suddenly seemed too pessimistic for Americans. Worshippers increasingly began to take responsibility for their own spiritual fates by embracing theologies that emphasized human action in effecting salvation, and revivalist preachers were quick to recognize the importance of these cultural shifts. Some spiritual leaders, such as Lyman Beecher of the Congregational church, appealed to younger generations of Americans by adopting a less orthodox approach to Calvinist doctrine. More radical revivalist preachers, such as Charles Grandison Finney, put theological issues aside and evangelized by appealing to worshippers' hearts and emotions. Though these men did not see eye to eye, they both contributed to the emerging consensus that all souls are equal in salvation and that all people can be saved by surrendering to God. This idea of spiritual egalitarianism was one of the most important transformations to emerge out of the Second Great Awakening.

Spiritual egalitarianism dovetailed neatly with an increasingly democratic United States. In the process of winning independence from Britain, the Revolution weakened the power of long-standing social hierarchies and the codes of conduct that went along with them. From the institutional side, its democratizing ethos opened the door for a more egalitarian approach to spiritual leadership. Whereas preachers of longstanding denominations like the Congregationalists were required to have a divinity degree and at least some theological training in order to become spiritual leaders, many alternative denominations only required a conversion experience a supernatural “call to preach.” This meant, for example, that a twenty-year-old man could go from working in a mill to being a full-time circuit-riding preacher for the Methodists practically overnight. Indeed, it was their emphasis on spiritual egalitarianism over formal training that enabled Methodists to outpace spiritual competition during this period. Methodists attracted more new preachers to send into the field, and the lack of formal training meant that individual preachers could be paid significantly less than a Congregationalist preacher with a divinity degree.

For individual worshippers, spiritual egalitarianism in revivals and camp meetings could break down traditional social conventions. For example, revivals generally admitted both men and women. Furthermore, in an era when many American Protestants discouraged or outright forbade women from speaking in church meetings, some preachers provided women with new opportunities to openly express themselves and participate in spiritual communities. Some preachers also promoted racial integration in religious gatherings, expressing equal concern for white and black people’s spiritual salvation and encouraging both slaveholders and the enslaved to attend the same meetings. Historians have even suggested that the extreme physical and vocal manifestations of conversion seen at impassioned revivals and camp meetings offered the ranks of worshippers a way to enact a sort of social leveling by flouting the codes of self-restraint prescribed by upper-class elites. Although the revivals did not always live up to such progressive

ideals in practice, particularly in the more conservative regions of the slaveholding South, the concept of spiritual egalitarianism nonetheless challenged and changed the ways that Protestant Americans thought about themselves, their God, and one another.

As the borders of the United States expanded during the nineteenth century and as new demographic changes altered urban landscapes, revivalism also offered worshippers a source of social and religious structure to help cope with change. Revival meetings held by itinerant preachers offered community and collective spiritual purpose to migrant families and communities isolated from established social and religious institutions. In urban centers, where industrialization and European famines brought growing numbers of domestic and foreign migrants, evangelical preachers provided moral order and spiritual solace to an increasingly anonymous population. Additionally, and quite significantly, the Second Great Awakening armed evangelical Christians with a moral purpose to address and eradicate the many social problems arising from these dramatic demographic shifts.

During the antebellum period, converts of northern revivalism responded to the moral anxiety of industrialization and urbanization by joining voluntary associations and organizing to address specific social needs. Social problems such as intemperance, vice, and crime assumed a new and distressing scale that older solutions, such as almshouses, were not equipped to handle. Moralists grew concerned about the growing mass of urban residents who did not attend church, and who, thanks to poverty or illiteracy, did not even have access to Scripture. Voluntary benevolent societies exploded in number to tackle these issues. Led by ministers and dominated by middle-class women, voluntary societies' printed and distributed Protestant tracts, taught Sunday school, distributed outdoor relief, and evangelized in both frontier towns and urban slums. These associations and their evangelical members also lent moral backing and manpower to large-scale social reform projects, including the temperance movement designed to curb Americans' consumption of alcohol, the

abolitionist campaign to eradicate slavery in the United States, and women's rights agitation to improve women's political and economic rights. As such wide-ranging reform projects combined with missionary zeal, evangelical Christians formed a "benevolent empire" that swiftly became a cornerstone of the antebellum period.

37. Antislavery and Abolitionism

The revivalist doctrines of salvation, perfectionism, and disinterested benevolence led many evangelical reformers to believe that slavery was the most God-defying of all sins and the most terrible blight on the moral virtue of the United States. While white interest in and commitment to abolition had existed for several decades, organized antislavery advocacy had been largely restricted to models of gradual emancipation (seen in several northern states following the American Revolution) and conditional emancipation (seen in colonization efforts to remove black Americans to settlements in Africa). By the 1830s, however, a rising tide of anti-colonization sentiment among northern free blacks and middle-class evangelicals' flourishing commitment to social reform radicalized the movement. Baptists such as William Lloyd Garrison, Congregational revivalists like Arthur and Lewis Tappan and Theodore Dwight Weld, and radical Quakers including Lucretia Mott and John Greenleaf Whittier helped push the idea of immediate emancipation onto the center stage of northern reform agendas. Inspired by a strategy known as "moral suasion," these young abolitionists believed they could convince slaveholders to voluntarily release their slaves by appealing to their sense of Christian conscience. The result would be national redemption and moral harmony.

William Lloyd Garrison's early life and career famously illustrated this transition toward immediatism among radical Christian reformers. As a young man immersed in the reform culture of antebellum Massachusetts, Garrison had fought slavery in the 1820s by advocating for both black colonization and gradual abolition. Fiery tracts penned by black northerners David Walker and James Forten, however, convinced Garrison that African Americans

possessed a hard-won right to the fruits of American liberty. So, in 1831, he established a newspaper called *The Liberator*, through which he organized and spearheaded an unprecedented interracial crusade dedicated to promoting immediate emancipation and black citizenship. Then, in 1833, Garrison presided as reformers from ten states came together to create the American Antislavery Society. They rested their mission for immediate emancipation “upon the Declaration of our Independence, and upon the truths of Divine Revelation,” binding their cause to both national and Christian redemption. Abolitionists fought to save slaves and their nation’s soul.

In order to accomplish their goals, abolitionists employed every method of outreach and agitation used in the social reform projects of the benevolent empire. At home in the North, abolitionists established hundreds of antislavery societies and worked with long-standing associations of black activists to establish schools, churches, and voluntary associations. Women and men of all colors were encouraged to associate together in these spaces to combat what they termed “color phobia.” Harnessing the potential of steam-powered printing and mass communication, abolitionists also blanketed the free states with pamphlets and antislavery newspapers. They blared their arguments from lyceum podiums and broadsides. Prominent individuals such as Wendell Phillips and Angelina Grimké saturated northern media with shame-inducing exposés of northern complicity in the return of fugitive slaves, and white reformers sentimentalized slave narratives that tugged at middle-class heartstrings. Abolitionists used the United States Postal Service in 1835 to inundate southern slaveholders’ with calls to emancipate their slaves in order to save their souls, and, in 1836, they prepared thousands of petitions for Congress as part of the “Great Petition Campaign.” In the six years from 1831 to 1837, abolitionist activities reached dizzying heights.

However, such efforts encountered fierce opposition, as most Americans did not share abolitionists’ particular brand of nationalism. In fact, abolitionists remained a small, marginalized

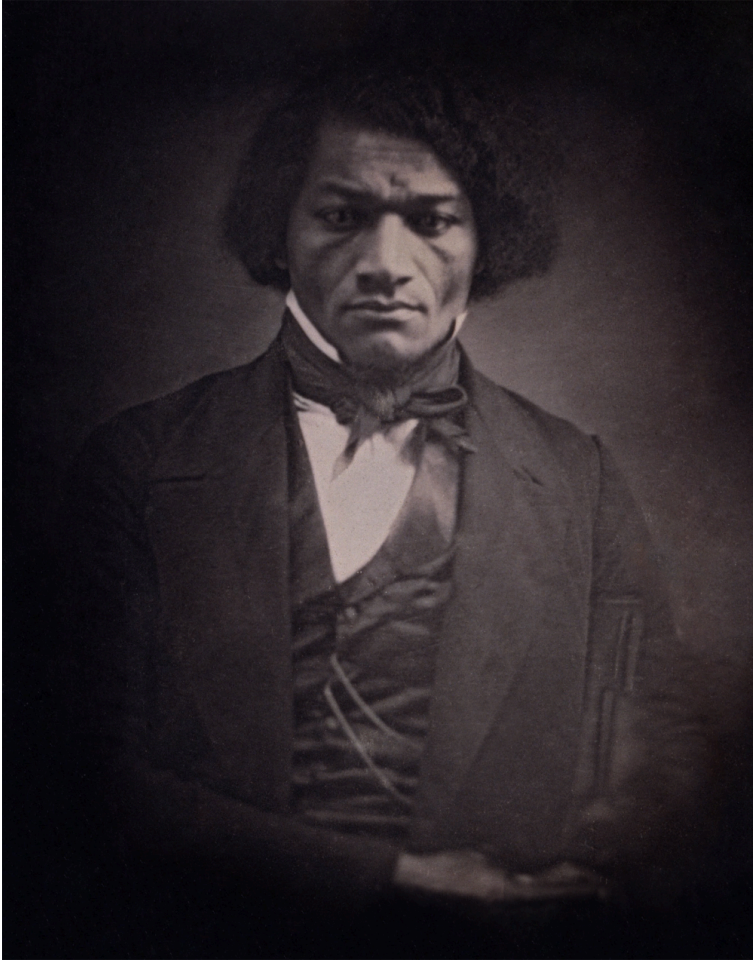
group detested by most white Americans in both the North and the South. Immediatists were attacked as the harbingers of disunion, rabble-rousers who would stir up sectional tensions and thereby imperil the American experiment of self-government. Fearful of disunion and outraged by the interracial nature of abolitionism, northern mobs smashed abolitionist printing presses and even killed a prominent antislavery newspaper editor named Elijah Lovejoy. White southerners, believing that abolitionists had incited Nat Turner's rebellion in 1831, aggressively purged antislavery dissent from the region. On the ground, abolitionists' personal safety was threatened by violent harassment. In the halls of congress, Whigs and Democrats joined forces in 1836 to pass an unprecedented restriction on freedom of political expression known as the "gag rule," which prohibited all discussion of abolitionist petitions in the House of Representatives.

In the face of such substantial external opposition, the abolitionist movement began to splinter. In 1839, an ideological schism shook the foundations of organized antislavery. Moral suasionists, led most prominently by William Lloyd Garrison, felt that the United States Constitution was a fundamentally pro-slavery document, and that the present political system was irredeemable. They dedicated their efforts exclusively towards persuading the public to redeem the nation by re-establishing it on antislavery grounds. However, many abolitionists, reeling from the level of entrenched opposition met in the 1830s, began to feel that moral suasion was no longer realistic. Instead, they believed, abolition would have to be effected through existing political processes. So, in 1839, political abolitionists split from Garrison's American Antislavery, forming the Liberty Party under the leadership of James G. Birney. This new abolitionist society was predicated on the belief that the U.S. Constitution was actually an antislavery document that could be used to abolish the stain of slavery through the national political system.

Significantly, abolitionist factions also disagreed on the issue of women's rights. Many abolitionists who believed full-heartedly in

moral suasion nonetheless felt compelled to leave the American Antislavery Association because, in part, it elevated women to leadership positions and endorsed women's suffrage. The more conservative members saw this as evidence that, in an effort to achieve general perfectionism, the American Antislavery Society had lost sight of its most important goal. Under the leadership of Arthur Tappan, they left to form the American and Foreign Antislavery Society. Though these disputes were ultimately mere road bumps on the long path to abolition, they did become so bitter and acrimonious that former friends cut social ties and traded public insults.

Another significant shift stemmed from the disappointments of the 1830s. Abolitionists in the 1840s increasingly moved from agendas based on reform to agendas based on resistance. While moral suasionists continued to appeal to hearts and minds, and political abolitionists launched sustained campaigns to bring abolitionist agendas to the ballot box, the entrenched and violent opposition of slaveholders and the northern public to their reform efforts encouraged abolitionists to focus on other avenues of fighting the slave power. Increasingly, for example, abolitionists focused on helping and protecting runaway slaves, and on establishing international antislavery support networks to help put pressure on the United States to abolish the institution. Frederick Douglass is one prominent example of how these two trends came together. After escaping from slavery, Douglass came to the fore of the abolitionist movement as a naturally gifted orator and a powerful narrator of his experiences in slavery. His first autobiography, published in 1845, was so widely read that it was reprinted in nine editions and translated into several languages. Douglass traveled to Great Britain in 1845, and met with famous British abolitionists like Thomas Clarkson, drumming up moral and financial support from British and Irish antislavery societies. He was neither the first nor the last runaway slave to make this voyage, but his great success abroad contributed significantly to rousing morale among weary abolitionists at home.



Frederick Douglass was perhaps the most famous African American abolitionist, fighting tirelessly not only for the end of slavery but for equal rights of all American citizens. This copy of a daguerreotype shows him as a young man, around the age of 29 and soon after his self-emancipation. Print, c. 1850 after c. 1847 daguerreotype. [Wikimedia](#).

The model of resistance to the slave power only became more pronounced after 1850, when a long-standing Fugitive Slave Act was given new teeth. Though a legal mandate to return runaway slaves

had existed in U.S. federal law since 1793, the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 upped the ante by harshly penalizing officials who failed to arrest runaways and private citizens who tried to help them. This law, coupled with growing concern over the possibility of that slavery would be allowed in Kansas when it was admitted as a state, made the 1850s a highly volatile and violent period of American antislavery. Reform took a backseat as armed mobs protected runaway slaves in the north and fortified abolitionists engaged in bloody skirmishes in the west. Culminating in John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, the violence of the 1850s convinced many Americans that the issue of slavery was pushing the nation to the brink of sectional cataclysm. After two decades of immediatist agitation, the idealism of revivalist perfectionism had given way to a protracted battle for the moral soul of the country.

For all of the problems that abolitionism faced, the movement was far from a failure. The prominence of African Americans in abolitionist organizations offered a powerful, if imperfect, model of interracial coexistence. While immediatists always remained a minority, their efforts paved the way for the moderately antislavery Republican Party to gain traction in the years preceding the Civil War. It is hard to imagine that Abraham Lincoln could have become president in 1860 without the ground prepared by antislavery advocates and without the presence of radical abolitionists against whom he could be cast as a moderate alternative. Though it ultimately took a civil war to break the bonds of slavery in the United States, the evangelical moral compass of revivalist Protestantism provided motivation for the embattled abolitionists.

PART XIII

MODULE 13: AN AGE OF EXPANSIONISM

38. Life and Culture in the West

Western settlers usually migrated as families and settled along navigable and drinkable rivers. Settlements often coalesced around local traditions, especially religion, carried from eastern settlements. These shared understandings encouraged a strong sense of cooperation among western settlers that helped forge some of the early communities on the frontier.

Before the Mexican War, the West for most Americans still referred to the fertile area between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River with a slight amount of overspill beyond its banks. With soil exhaustion and land competition increasing in the East, most early western migrants sought a greater measure of stability and self-sufficiency by engaging in small scale farming. Boosters of these new agricultural areas along with the U.S. government encouraged perceptions of the west as a land of hard-built opportunity that promised personal and national bounty.

Women migrants bore the unique double burden of travel while conforming to restrictive gender norms. Societal standards such as “the cult of true womanhood,” which emphasized piety, purity, domesticity, and submissiveness as the key virtues of women, and the “separate spheres,” which focused on the role of the woman in the home, often accompanied men and women as they traveled west to begin their new life.

While many societal standards continued just as they had in the established communities people left behind, there often existed an openness of frontier society that resulted in more power for women. Husbands needed partners in setting up a homestead and working in the field to provide food for the family. Suitable wives were in short supply, enabling some to negotiate more power in their households, although typically on an informal level.

Economic busts constantly threatened western farmers. As the economy worsened after the panic of 1819, farmers were unable to pay their loans due to falling prices and overfarming. The dream of subsistence and stability abruptly ended as many migrants lost their land and moved farther west. The federal government consistently sought to increase access to land in the west, including by lowering the amount of land required for purchase. Smaller lots made it easier for more farmers to clear land and begin farming faster.

The availability of affordable loans fueled the growth of land speculation. The amount of money in circulation eclipsed more than \$100 million dollars by 1817, much of it being lent by state banks. While the federal government, through the Second Bank of the United States (rechartered in 1816) took a more conservative approach to lending, state banks – particularly those of the frontier states – offered loans more freely to new migrants looking to buy land. Just as cash cropping gave western migrant communities hopes of quickly striking it rich, land speculation promised the same outcome for state bank investors.

Predictably, the booms in speculation and agriculture busted together in the Panic of 1819. Farmers failed in the cash crop market and could not repay their loans. The mortgages of these western farmers were supposed to have guaranteed the stability of the banks. However, as state banks grew in economic power, they printed far more notes than they had cash or gold to back the notes. The speculation in land fueled a speculation in banknotes, both of which fell together. These banks, in their last acts of desperation demanded immediate mortgage payment in specie from farmers, payments that farmers simply could not make. Making matters worse for farmers and exacerbating the effects of the panic was overproduction and foreign competition flooding the markets. Even though profitability and land purchases picked up by the mid-1820s, the rate of growth greatly slowed and land prices never returned to their pre-crash highs.

In response, Congress embraced higher tariffs in 1824 and 1828 that sought to protect American agriculture from foreign

competition. Many Americans looked upon banking more skeptically, particularly the Bank of the United States. Andrew Jackson made destruction of the bank a key political issue and succeeded in taking government deposits out of the bank and circulating them to state banks. Unfortunately, this policy had a disastrous effect as state banks used this money to make more speculative loans. This recreated the pre-1819 atmosphere and created the Crash of 1837. However, these deposits also helped state banks fuel transportation improvements that proved helpful for farmers and consumers.

More than anything else, new road and canals created economic growth in the 1820s and 1830s. Canal improvements expanded in the east, while road building prevailed in the west. Congress continued to allocate funds for internal improvements. Federal money pushed the National Road, begun in 1811, farther west every year. Laborers' needs to construct these improvements increased employment opportunities and encouraged non-farmers to move the West. However, roads were expensive to build and maintain and some Americans strongly opposed spending money on these projects.

Steamboats first came into limited usage in the United States prior to 1810. However, their importance and number grew quickly throughout the 1810s and into the 1820s. Steam power augmented the already widespread use of slow moving human-rowed or mule-pulled flatboats and keelboats already parading down various waterways throughout the East. As water trade and travel grew in popularity, local and state governments along with the federal government all allocated funds for the improvement and connecting of rivers and streams.

Steamboats offered greater reliability, power, speed, and versatility. As a result of the steamboat's popularity and profitability, hundreds of miles of new canals popped up throughout the eastern landscape, and to a lesser degree in the West (although in smaller numbers and length). The most notable of these early projects was the Erie Canal. That project, completed in 1825, linked the Great Lakes to New York City. The profitability of the canal helped New

York outpace its east coast rivals to become the center for commercial import and export in the United States.

Steamboats and canals, with roads playing their part as well, undoubtedly revolutionized travel and economics in the early United States. Population grew in canal and river towns. Trade, fueled by a growing need for raw materials of construction and foodstuffs for growing towns, increased just as fast. The needs of families and communities, increasingly dependent on construction and commercial life for their livelihoods, turned to manufactured products and distantly-produced food sold in the marketplace in order to feed their consumptive needs.

Railroads, although hampered by some of the obstacles of road building, made the labor and investment costs worth the risk by reducing transportation time in a way roads could not. Early railroads like the Baltimore and Ohio line sought to tie those cities to lucrative western trades routes in the hopes of displacing New York as a central port of trade. Railroads encouraged the rapid growth of towns and cities all along the routes through the encouragement of boosterism in search of speculative profits. The West benefited greatly from the growth of railroads. Not only did rail lines promise to move commerce faster, but the rails also encouraged the spreading of towns farther away from their traditional locations along waterways. The filling in of lands previously left to tribal nations increased conflict throughout the West, but these conflicts were seen as acceptable to white settlers looking to expand farmlands and profits.

Eastern and western towns that lacked navigable waterway connections suddenly had new outlets to the markets that augured for greater profit, refining of culture, and a sharing of national impulses. Railroads and canals carried not only cargo but new settlers and new political issues along their paths. However, technological limitations, constant need for repairs, conflicts with native Americans, political disagreements over funding and routes, and the challenge of understanding and adapting to new technology all hampered railroading and kept canals and steamboats as integral

parts of the transportation system. However, this early period of construction and use of railroads set the stage for their rapid expansion in the decades after the Civil War.

39. Texas, Mexico, and America

Before the debate over slavery in the West reached a national level, the issue became one of the prime forces behind the Texas revolution and that republic's annexation to the United States. After gaining its independence from Spain in 1821 Mexico hoped to attract new settlers to its northern areas in order to create a buffer between it and the expanding western populations of the United States. New immigrants, mostly from the southern United States, poured into Texas. Over the next twenty-five years, concerns over growing Anglo influence and possible American designs on Texas produced great friction between Mexican and American populations. In 1829, Mexico, hoping to quell anger and immigration, outlawed slavery and required all new immigrants to convert to Catholicism. American immigrants, eager to expand their agricultural fortunes, largely ignored these requirements. In response, Mexican authorities closed their territory to any new immigration in 1830— a prohibition roundly elided by Americans who often squatted on public lands.

In 1834, an internal conflict between federalists and centralists in the Mexican government led to the political ascendancy of General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna. Santa Anna, Governing as a dictator, repudiated the federalist Constitution of 1824, pursued a policy of authoritarian central control, and crushed several revolts throughout Mexico prompted by his coup. Texian settlers opposed Santa Anna's centralizing policies and met in November after issued a statement of purpose that emphasized their commitment to the Constitution of 1824 and declared Texas to be a separate state within Mexico. After angry Mexican rejection of the offer, Texian leaders soon abandoned their fight for the Constitution of 1824 and declared independence on March 2, 1836. The Texas Revolution of

1835-1836 was a successful secessionist movement in the northern district of the Mexican state of Coahuila y Tejas that resulted in an independent Republic of Texas.

At the Alamo and Goliad, Santa Anna crushed smaller rebel forces and massacred hundreds of Texian prisoners. The Mexican army pursued the retreating Texian army deep into East Texas, spurring a mass panic and evacuation by Anglo civilians known as the “Runaway Scrape.” Santa Anna consistently failed to make adequate defensive preparations and was eventually caught by surprise on April 21, 1836 by an attack from the outnumbered Texian army led by Sam Houston. The battle of San Jacinto lasted only eighteen minutes and resulted in a decisive victory for the Texans, who retaliated for previous Mexican atrocities by continuing to kill fleeing and surrendering Mexican troops for hours after the initial assault. Santa Anna was captured in the aftermath and compelled to sign the Treaty of Velasco on May 14, 1836, by which he agreed to withdraw his army from Texas and acknowledged Texas independence. Although a new Mexican government never recognized the Republic of Texas, the United States and several other nations gave the new country diplomatic recognition.

Texas annexation had remained a political landmine since the Republic declared independence from Mexico in 1836. American politicians feared that adding Texas to the Union would provoke a war with Mexico and re-ignite sectional tensions by throwing off the balance between free and slave states. However, after his expulsion from the Whig party, President John Tyler saw Texas statehood as the key to saving his political career. In 1842, he began work on opening annexation to national debate. Harnessing public outcry over the issue, Democrat James K. Polk rose from virtual obscurity to win the presidential election of 1844. Polk and his party campaigned on promises of westward expansion, with eyes toward Texas, Oregon, and California. In the final days of his presidency, Tyler at last extended an official offer to Texas on March 3, 1845. The republic accepted on July 4, becoming the twenty-eighth state.

Mexico denounced annexation as “an act of aggression, the most

unjust which can be found recorded in the annals of modern history.” However, perhaps the most important point of conflict between Mexico and the United States was a narrow strip of land to which both countries now laid claim. While Mexico drew the southwestern border of Texas at the Nueces River, Texans had claimed that the border lay roughly 150 miles further west at the Rio Grande. Neither claim was realistic. The sparsely populated area, known as the Nueces strip, was in fact controlled by independent Indian tribes.

In November of 1845, President Polk secretly dispatched John Slidell to Mexico City in order to attempt a purchase of the Nueces strip along with large sections of New Mexico and California. The mission was an empty gesture, designed largely to pacify those in Washington who insisted on diplomacy before war. Predictably, officials in Mexico City refused to receive Slidell. Earlier that year, Polk had also sent a 4,000 man army under General Zachary Taylor to Corpus Christi, Texas; just northeast of the Nueces River. Upon word of Slidell’s refusal in January 1846, Polk ordered Taylor to cross into the disputed territory. The President hoped that this show of force would push the lands of California onto the bargaining table as well. He badly misread the situation. After losing Texas, the Mexican public strongly opposed surrendering any more ground to U.S. expansionism. Popular opinion left the shaky government in Mexico City without room to negotiate. On April 24, Mexican cavalrymen attacked a detachment of Taylor’s troops just north of the Rio Grande, killing eleven U.S. soldiers.

It took two weeks for the news to reach Washington. Polk sent a message to Congress on May 11. “We have tried every effort at reconciliation...but now, after reiterated menaces, Mexico...has invaded our territory and shed American blood upon the American soil.” However, with fighting already underway, a vote against war became a vote against supporting American soldiers under fire. Congress passed a declaration of war on May 13. Only a few members of both parties, notably John Quincy Adams and John C. Calhoun, voted against the measure. However, opposition to “Mr.

Polk's War" soon grew widespread. Upon declaring war in 1846, Congress issued a call for 50,000 volunteer soldiers. Spurred by promises of adventure and conquest abroad, thousands of eager men flocked to assembly points across the country.

In the early fall of 1846, the U.S. Army invaded Mexico on multiple fronts and within a year's time General Winfield Scott's men took control of Mexico City. However, the city's fall did not bring an end to the war. Scott's men occupied Mexico's capital for over four months while the two countries negotiated. In the United States, the war had been controversial from the beginning. Embedded journalists sent back detailed reports from the front lines, and a divided press spun and debated the news viciously. Volunteers found that the real experience of war was not as they expected. Disease killed seven times as many American soldiers as combat did. Harsh discipline, conflict within the ranks, and violent clashes with civilians led soldiers to desert in huge numbers. Peace finally came on February 2, 1848 with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.



"General Scott's entrance into Mexico." Lithograph. 1851. Originally published in George Wilkins Kendall & Carl Nebel, *The War between the United States and Mexico Illustrated, Embracing Pictorial Drawings of all the Principal Conflicts* (New York: D. Appleton), 1851. [Wikimedia](#).

The new American Southwest attracted a diverse group of entrepreneurs and settlers to the commercial towns of New Mexico, the fertile lands of eastern Texas, and the famed gold deposits of California and the Rocky Mountain chains. This postwar migration built upon migration to the region dating back to the 1820s, when the lucrative Santa Fe trade enticed merchants to New Mexico and generous land grant opportunities brought numerous settlers to Texas. The Gadsden Purchase of 1854 further added to American gains north of Mexico.

The U.S.-Mexican War had an enormous impact on both countries. The American victory helped set the United States on the path to becoming a world power, elevated Zachary Taylor to the presidency, and served as a training ground for many of the Civil War's future commanders. Most significantly, however, Mexico lost roughly half of its territory. Yet, the United States' victory was not without danger. Ralph Waldo Emerson predicted ominously at the beginning of the war that, "Mexico will poison us." Indeed, the conflict over whether or not to extend slavery into the newly won territory pushed the nation ever closer to disunion and civil war.

40. Manifest Destiny and the Gold Rush

California, belonging to Mexico prior to the war, was at least three arduous months travel from the nearest American settlements. While missionaries made the trip more frequently, there was some sparse settlement in the Sacramento valley. The fertile farmland of Oregon, like the black dirt lands of the Mississippi valley, attracted more settlers than California.

Exacerbating concerns was the presence of often over-dramatized stories of Indian attack that filled migrants with a sense of foreboding, although the majority of settlers encouraged nonviolence and often no Indians at all. The slow progress, disease, human and oxen starvation, poor trails, terrible geographic preparations, lack of guidebooks, threatening wildlife, vagaries of weather, and general confusion were all more formidable and regular challenges than Indian attack. Despite the harshness of the journey, by 1848 there were approximated 20,000 Americans living west of the Rockies, with about three-fourths of that number in Oregon.



The great environmental and economic potential of the Oregon Territory led many to pack up their families and head west along the Oregon Trail. The Trail represented the hopes of many for a better life, represented and reinforced by images like Bierstadt's idealistic Oregon Trail. In reality, the Trail was violent and dangerous, and many who attempted to cross never made it to the "Promised Land" of Oregon. Albert Bierstadt, Oregon Trail (Campfire), 1863. [Wikimedia](#).

The lure and imagination of the West lured many migrants to the far west. However, those with the adventuring spirit and stomach were modest. Many who moved sought the reflection of what they believed themselves to be in the great untamed lands of the West. The romantic vision of life west of the Mississippi attracted a certain breed of Americans. The rugged individualism and martial prowess of the West and the Mexican war was the first spark that drew a new breed different than the modest agricultural communities of the near-west.

If the great draw of the West stood as manifest destiny's kindling then the discovery of gold in California was the spark the set that fire ablaze. The strongest driving forces of Manifest Destiny lay in the somewhat coordinated movement of settlers via trails (slave-

based, subsistence agriculture, and religious), the military (War with Mexico and American Indians, filibustering adventures), and political focus (the expansion of slavery, Compromise of 1850) toward the western territory added to the United States. Undoubtedly, while the vast majority of those leaving the Eastern seaboard and old Mississippi valley frontier via the wagon trails sought land ownership, the lure of getting rich quick drew a not unsizable portion of the migration's primarily younger single male participants (with some women) to gold towns throughout the West. These core constituencies of adventures and fortune-seekers then served as magnets for the arrival of corresponding providers of services associated with the gold rush. The rapid growth of towns and cities throughout the West, notably San Francisco whose population grew from about 500 in 1848 to almost 50,000 by 1853, and the seemingly endless possibility for individual success in all matters of pursuit put a positive economic spin on the tenets of manifest destiny. Yet, the lawlessness, predictable failure of most fortune seekers, conflicts with native populations of the area – including Mexican, Spanish, American Indian, Chinese, and Japanese populations – and the explosion of the slavery question all demonstrated the downside of Manifest Destiny's promise. The gold rush sped up the already quickening political march to the Pacific.

On January 24, 1848 James W. Marshall, a contractor hired by John Sutter, discovered gold on Sutter's sawmill land in the Sacramento valley area of the then territory of California. The agitation of the territory's relatively small American population, much like Texas before it, attracted substantial U.S. military effort in aid of some American forces already there at the onset of the Mexican war. Encouragement of westward migration was as much an individual economic imperative as it was a national defense necessity. The discovery of gold did much to solve at least one of those issues as the integration of the quickly populated state California, and with it the vital port of San Francisco, augmented American strength and national economic grounding. Throughout the 1850s, Californians beseeched Congress for a transcontinental railroad to provide

service for both passengers and goods from the Midwest and the East Coast. The potential economic benefits for communities along proposed railroads made the debate over the railroad's route rancorous and overlapped on top of growing dissent over the slavery issue. For their part, the economic boom ushered in by the gold rush allowed the state government of California to begin work on a state rail system in the Sacramento Valley in 1854.

The great influx of people and the great diversity on display, encased in a combative and aggrandizing atmosphere of individualistic pursuit of fortune, produced all sorts of antagonisms. Linguistic, cultural, economic, and racial conflict roiled both urban and rural areas. By the end of the 1850s, Chinese and Mexican immigrants made up 1/5th of the mining population in California mining towns. The competition for land, resources, and riches furthered individual and collective abuses particularly against American Indians and the older Mexican communities and missions established before statehood. California's towns, as well as those dotting the landscape throughout the West, struggled to balance security with economic development and the protection of civil rights and liberties.

PART XIV

MODULE 14: SECTIONAL CRISIS

4I. Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men

The conclusion of the Mexican War gave rise to the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The treaty infuriated anti-slavery leaders in the United States. The spoils gained from the Mexican War were impressive, but it was clear they would help expand slavery. In the end, the United States brokered a deal to purchase the California and New Mexico Territories for \$15 million dollars. This acquisition included lands that would become the future states of California, Utah, Nevada, most of Arizona, and well as parts of New Mexico, Colorado, and Wyoming. Also in 1848, the administration worked to create the Oregon Territory.



Questions about the balance of free and slave states in the Union became even more fierce after the US acquired these territories from Mexico by the 1848 in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Map of the Mexican Cession. [Wikimedia](#).

The acquisition of so much land made it imperative to anti-slavery leaders that these lands not be opened to slavery. But knowing that the Liberty Party was not likely to provide a home to many moderate voters, leaders instead hoped to foster a new and more competitive party, which they called the Free Soil Party. Anti-slavery leaders came into the 1848 election hoping that their vision of a federal government divorced from slavery might be heard. But both the Whigs and the Democrats, nominated pro-slavery southerners. Left unrepresented, anti-slavery Free Soil leaders swung into action.

Demanding an alternative to the pro-slavery status quo, Free Soil leaders assembled so-called “Conscience Whigs,” like those found in Massachusetts under Charles Francis Adams, alongside western ex-Liberty Party leaders like Salmon P. Chase of Ohio. The new coalition called for a national convention in August 1848 at Buffalo, New York. A number of ex-Democrats committed to the party right away, including an important group of New Yorkers loyal to Martin Van Buren. The Free Soil Party’s platform bridged the eastern and the western leadership together and called for an end to slavery in Washington DC and a halt on slavery’s expansion in the territories. The Free Soil movement hardly made a dent in the 1848 Presidential election, but it drew more than four times the popular vote that the Liberty Party had won earlier. It was a promising start. In 1848, Free Soil leaders claimed just 10% of the popular vote, but won over a dozen House seats, and even managed to win one Senate seat in Ohio, which went to Salmon P. Chase. In Congress, Free Soil members had enough votes to swing power to either the Whigs or the Democrats.

The admission of Wisconsin as a free state in May 1848 helped cool tensions after the Texas and Florida admissions. But news from a number of failed revolutions in Europe alarmed American reformers. As exiled radicals filtered out of Europe and into the United States, a women’s rights movement also got underway in July at Seneca Falls, New York. Representing the first of such meetings ever held in United States history, it was led by figures like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, women with deep ties to the

abolitionist cause. Frederick Douglass also appeared at the convention and took part in the proceedings, where participants debated the Declaration of Sentiments, Grievances and Resolutions. By August 1848, it seemed plausible that the Free Soil Movement might tap into these reforms and build a broader coalition. In some ways that is precisely what it did. But come November, the spirit of reform failed to yield much at the polls. Whig candidate Zachary Taylor bested Democrat Lewis Cass of Michigan.

The upheavals signaled by 1848 came to a quick end. Taylor remained in office only a brief time until his unexpected death from a stomach ailment in 1850. During Taylor's brief time in office, the fruits of the Mexican War began to spoil, threatening the whole country with sickness. While he was alive, Taylor and his administration struggled to find a good remedy. Increased clamoring for the admission of California, New Mexico, and Utah pushed the country closer to the edge. Gold had been discovered in California, and as thousands continued to pour onto the West Coast and through the trans-Mississippi West, the admission of new states loomed. In Utah, Mormons were also making claims to an independent state they called Deseret. By 1850, California wanted admission as a slave state. With so many competing dynamics underway, and with the President dead and replaced by Whig Millard Fillmore, the 1850s were off to a troubling start.

Congressional leaders like Henry Clay and newer legislators like Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois were asked to broker a compromise, but this time it was clear no compromise could bridge all the diverging interests at play in the country. Clay eventually left Washington disheartened by affairs. It fell to young Stephen Douglas, then, to shepherd the bills through the Congress, which he in fact did. Legislators rallied behind the "Compromise of 1850," an assemblage of bills passed late in 1850, managed to keep the promises of the Missouri Compromise alive.



Henry Clay ("The Great Compromiser") addresses the U.S. Senate during the debates over the Compromise of 1850. The print shows a number of incendiary personalities, like John C. Calhoun, whose increasingly sectional beliefs were pacified for a time by the Compromise. P. F. Rothornel (artist), c. 1855. [Wikimedia](#).

The Compromise of 1850 tried to offer something to everyone, but in the end it only worsened the sectional crisis. For southerners, the package offered a tough new fugitive slave law that empowered the federal government to deputize regular citizens in assisting with the arrest of runaways. The New Mexico territory, meanwhile, newly buttressed by additional lands from the nearby State of Texas, (Texas gave away some of its lands to erase some of its debts) and the Utah Territory, would be allowed to determine their own fates as slave or free states based on popular sovereignty. The Compromise also allowed territories to submit suits directly to the Supreme Court over the status of fugitive slaves within its bounds.

The admission of California as the newest free state in the Union

cheered many northerners, but even the admission of a vast new state full of resources and rich agricultural lands did not fully satisfy many northerners. In addition to California, northerners also gained a ban on the slave trade in Washington, D.C., but not the full emancipation abolitionists had long strived for. Texas, which had already come into the Union as a slave state, was asked to give its lands up and give them to New Mexico. This, proponents argued, might limit the number of representatives Texas could send as a slave state, and in the process help perhaps bolster the number of free state voters in New Mexico. But the Compromise debates soon grew ugly.

After the Compromise of 1850 debates, anti-slavery critics became increasingly certain that slaveholders had co-opted the federal government, and that a southern “Slave Power” secretly held sway in Washington, where it hoped to use its representative advantages, built into the 3/5 compromise of the Constitution, to make slavery a national institution. This idea had floated around anti-slavery circles for years, but in the 1850s anti-slavery leaders increasingly argued that Washington worked on behalf of slaveholders while ignoring the interests of white working men.

The 1852 Presidential election gave the Whigs their most stunning defeat and effectively ended their existence as a national political party. Whigs captured just 42 of the 254 electoral votes needed to win. With the Compromise of 1850 in place, with plenty of new lands for white settlers to improve, everything seemed in its right place for a peaceful consensus to re-emerge. Anti-slavery feelings continued to run deep, however, and their depth revealed that with a Democratic Party misstep, a coalition united against the Democrats might yet emerge and bring them to defeat. One measure of the popularity of anti-slavery ideas came in 1852 when Harriet Beecher Stowe published her bestselling anti-slavery novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Sales for *Uncle Tom's Cabin* were astronomical, eclipsed only by sales of the Bible. The book became a sensation and helped move antislavery into everyday conversation for many northerners. Despite the powerful antislavery message, Stowe's

book also reinforced many racist stereotypes. Even abolitionists struggled with the deeply ingrained racism that plagued American society. While the major success of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* bolstered the abolitionist cause, the terms outlined by the Compromise of 1850 appeared strong enough to keep the peace.



Uncle Tom's Cabin intensified an already hot debate over slavery throughout the United States. The book revolves around Eliza (the woman holding the young boy) and Tom (standing with his wife Chloe), each of whom takes a very different path: Eliza escapes slavery using her own two feet, but Tom endures his chains only to die by the whip of a brutish master. The horrific violence that both endured melted the hearts of many northerners and pressed some to join in the fight against slavery. Full-page illustration by Hammatt Billings for *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 1852. [Wikimedia](#).

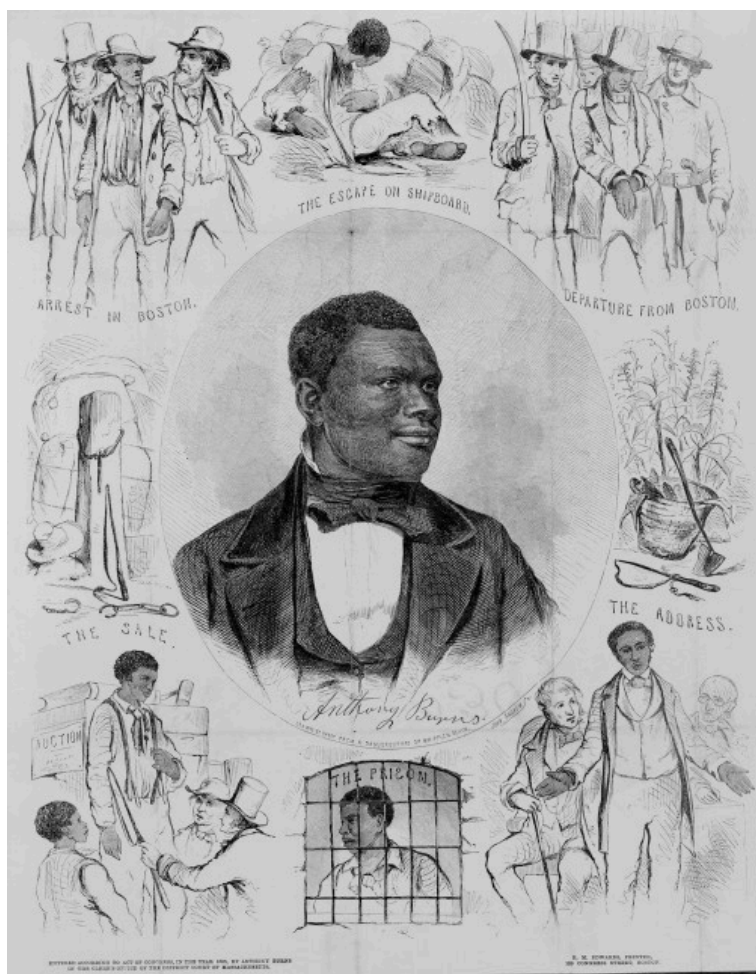
Democrats by 1853 were badly splintered along sectional lines over slavery, but they also had reasons to act with confidence. Voters had returned them to office in 1852 following the bitter fights over the Compromise of 1850. Emboldened, Illinois Senator Stephen A. Douglas introduced a set of additional amendments to a bill drafted in late 1853 to help organize the Nebraska Territory, the last of the Louisiana Purchase lands. In 1853, the Nebraska Territory was huge, extending from the northern end of Texas to the Canadian Border. Altogether, it encompassed present-day Nebraska, Wyoming, South

Dakota, North Dakota, Colorado and Montana. Douglas's efforts to amend and introduce the bill in 1854 opened dynamics that would break the Democratic Party in two and, in the process, rip the country apart.

Douglas proposed a bold plan in 1854 to cut off a large southern chunk of Nebraska and create it separately as the Kansas Territory. Douglas had a number of goals in mind. The expansionist Democrat from Illinois wanted to organize the territory to facilitate the completion of a national railroad that would flow through Chicago. But before he had even finished introducing the bill, opposition had already mobilized. Salmon P. Chase drafted a response in northern newspapers that exposed the Kansas-Nebraska Bill as a measure to overturn the Missouri Compromise and open western lands for slavery. Kansas-Nebraska protests emerged in 1854 throughout the North, with key meetings in Wisconsin and Michigan. Kansas would become slave or free depending on the result of local elections, elections that would be greatly influenced by migrants flooding to the state to either protect or stop the spread of slavery.

Ordinary Americans in the North increasingly resisted what they believed to be a pro-slavery federal government on their own terms. The rescues and arrests of fugitive slaves Anthony Burns in Boston and Joshua Glover in Milwaukee, for example, both signaled the rising vehemence of resistance to the nation's 1850 fugitive slave law. The case of Anthony Burns illustrates how the Fugitive Slave Law radicalized many northerners. On May 24, 1854, 20-year-old Burns, a preacher who worked in a Boston clothing shop, was clubbed and dragged to jail. One year earlier, Burns had escaped slavery in Virginia, and a group of slave catchers had come to return him to Richmond. Word of Burns' capture spread rapidly through Boston, and a mob gathered outside of the courthouse demanding that Burns' release. Two days after the arrest, the crowd stormed the courthouse and stabbed a Deputy U.S. Marshall to death. News reached Washington, and the federal government sent soldiers. Boston was placed under Martial Law. Federal troops lined the streets of Boston as Burns was marched to a ship where he was sent

back to slavery in Virginia. After spending over \$40,000, the United States Government had successfully reenslaved Anthony Burns. The outrage among Bostonians only grew. And Anthony Burns was only one of hundreds of highly publicized episodes of the federal governments imposing the Fugitive Slave Law on rebellious northern populations. In the words of Amos Adams Lawrence, “We went to bed one night old-fashioned, conservative, compromise Union Whigs & woke up stark mad Abolitionists.”



Anthony Burns, the fugitive slave, appears in a portrait at the center of this 1855. Burns' arrest and trial, possible because of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act, became a rallying cry. As a symbol of the injustice of the slave system, Burns' treatment spurred riots and protests by abolitionists and citizens of Boston in the spring of 1854. John Andrews (engraver), "Anthony Burns," c. 1855. [Library of Congress](#).

As northerners radicalized, organizations like the New England Emigrant Aid Society provided guns and other goods for pioneers

willing to go to Kansas and establish the territory as anti-slavery through the doctrines of popular sovereignty. On all sides of the slavery issue, politics became increasingly militarized.

The year 1855 nearly derailed the northern anti-slavery coalition. A resurgent anti-immigrant movement briefly took advantage of the Whig collapse, and nearly stole the energy of the anti-administration forces by channeling its frustrations into fights against the large number of mostly Catholic German and Irish immigrants then flooding American cities. Calling themselves “Know-Nothings,” on account of their tendency to pretend ignorance when asked about their activities, the Know-Nothing or American Party made impressive gains, particularly in New England and the Middle Atlantic, in races throughout 1854 and 1855. But the anti-immigrant movement simply could not capture the nation’s attention in the ways the anti-slavery movement already had.

The anti-slavery political movements that started in 1854 and 1855 coalesced as the coming Presidential election of 1856 accelerated the formation of a political party. Harkening back to the founding fathers, this new party called itself the Republican Party. After a thrilling convention that helped launch the national party at Pittsburgh in February, Republicans moved into a highly charged summer expecting great things for their cause. Following an explosive speech before Congress on May 19-20, Charles Sumner was beaten by congressional representative Preston Brooks of South Carolina right on the floor of the Senate chamber. Among other accusations, Sumner accused Senator Andrew Butler of South Carolina of defending slavery so he could have sexual access to black women. Butler’s cousin, representative Brooks felt that he had to defend his relative’s honor, and nearly killed Sumner as a result.



The Caning of Charles Sumner, 1856. [Wikimedia](#).

The violence in Washington pales before the many murders occurring in Kansas. Proslavery raiders attacked Lawrence, Kansas. Radical abolitionist John Brown retaliated, murdering several proslavery Kansans in retribution. As all of this played out, the House failed to expel Brooks. Brooks resigned his seat anyway, only to be re-elected by his constituents later in the year. He received new canes emblazoned with the words “Hit him again!”

With sectional tensions at a breaking point, both parties readied for the coming Presidential election. In June 1856, the newly named Republican Party held its nominating national convention at Philadelphia, and selected Californian John Charles Frémont. Frémont’s anti-slavery credentials may not have pleased many abolitionists, but his dynamic and talented wife, Jessie Benton Frémont, appealed to more radical members of the coalition. The Kansas-Nebraska Debate, the organization of the Republican Party, and the 1856 Presidential Campaign all energized a new generation of political leaders, including Abraham Lincoln. Beginning with his speech at Peoria, Illinois, in 1854, Lincoln carved out a message that encapsulated better than anyone else the main ideas and visions of the Republican Party. Lincoln himself was slow to join the coalition,

yet by the summer of 1856, Lincoln had fully committed to the Frémont campaign.

Despite a tremendous outpouring of support, John Frémont went down in defeat in the 1856 Presidential Election. Republicans took comfort in pointing out that Frémont had in fact won 11 of the 16 free states. This showing, they urged, was truly impressive for any party making its first run at the Presidency. Yet northern Democrats in crucial swing states remained unmoved by the Republican Party's appeals. Ulysses S. Grant of Missouri, for example, worried that Frémont and Republicans signaled trouble for the Union itself. Grant voted for the Democratic candidate, James Buchanan, believing a Republican victory might bring about disunion. In abolitionist and especially free black circles, Frémont's defeat was more than a disappointment. Believing their fate had been sealed as permanent non-citizens, some African Americans would consider foreign emigration and colonization. Others began to explore the option of more radical and direct action against the Slave Power.

42. From Sectional Crisis to National Crisis

White anti-slavery leaders in the North were left to wonder what happened in November 1856, but few took the news too hard. They hailed Frémont's defeat as a "glorious" one and looked ahead to the party's future successes. For those still in slavery, or hoping to see loved ones freed, the news was of course much harder to take. The Republican Party had promised the rise of an anti-slavery coalition, but voters rebuked it. The lessons seemed clear enough.

Kansas loomed large over the 1856 election, darkening the national mood. The story of voter fraud in Kansas had begun years before in 1854, when nearby Missourians first started crossing the border to tamper with the Kansas elections. Noting this, critics at the time attacked the Pierce administration for not living up to the ideals of popular sovereignty by ensuring fair elections. From there, the crisis only deepened. Kansas voted to come into the Union as a free state, but the federal government refused to recognize their votes and instead recognized a sham pro-slavery legislature.

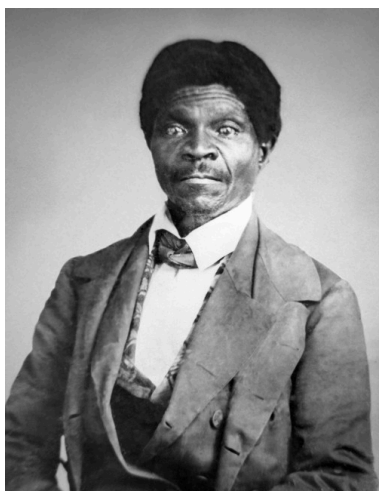
The sectional crisis had at last become a national crisis. "Bleeding Kansas" was the first place to demonstrate that the sectional crisis could easily, and in fact already was, exploding into a full-blown national crisis. As the national mood grew increasingly grim, Kansas attracted militants representing the extreme sides of the slavery debate.

In the days after the 1856 Presidential election, Buchanan made his plans for his time in office clear. He talked with Chief Justice Roger Taney on inauguration day about a court decision he hoped to see handled during his time in office. Indeed, not long after the inauguration, the Supreme Court handed down a decision that would come to define Buchanan's Presidency. The Dred Scott decision, *Scott v. Sandford*, ruled that black Americans could not be

citizens of the United States. This gave the Buchanan administration and its southern allies a direct repudiation of the Missouri Compromise. The court ruled that Scott, a Missouri slave, had no right to sue in United States courts. The Dred Scott decision signaled that the federal government was now fully committed to extending slavery as far and as wide as it might want.

The Dred Scott decision seemed to settle the sectional crisis by making slavery fully national, but in reality it just exacerbated sectional tensions further. In 1857, Buchanan sent U.S. military forces to Utah, hoping to subdue Utah's Mormon communities. This action, however, led to renewed charges, many of them leveled from within his own party, that the administration was abusing its powers. Far more important than the Utah invasion, however, was the ongoing events in Kansas. It was Kansas that at last proved to many northerners that the sectional crisis would not go away unless slavery also went away.

The Illinois Senate race in 1858 put the scope of the sectional crisis on full display. Republican candidate Abraham Lincoln challenged the greatly influential Democrat Stephen Douglas. Pandering to appeals to white supremacy, Douglas hammered the Republican opposition as a "Black Republican" party bent on racial equality. The Republicans, including Lincoln, were thrown on the defensive. Democrats hung



Dred Scott's Supreme Court case made clear that the federal government was no longer able or willing to ignore the issue of slavery. More than that, all black Americans, Justice Taney declared, could never be citizens of the United States. Though seemingly a disastrous decision for abolitionists, this controversial ruling actually increased the ranks of the abolitionist movement. Photograph of Dred Scott, 1857. [Wikimedia](#).

on as best they could, but the Republicans won the House of Representatives and picked up seats in the Senate. Lincoln actually lost his contest with Stephen Douglas, but in the process firmly established himself as a leading national Republican. After the 1858 elections, all eyes turned to 1860. Given the Republican Party's successes since 1854, it was expected that the 1860 Presidential election might produce the nation's first anti-slavery president.

In the troubled decades since the Missouri Compromise, the nation slowly tore itself apart. Congressman clubbed each other nearly to death on the floor of the Congress, and by the middle 1850s Americans were already at war on the Kansas and Missouri plains. Across the country, cities and towns were in various stages of revolt against federal authority. Fighting spread even further against Indians in the Far West and against Mormons in Utah. The nation's militants anticipated a coming breakdown, and worked to exploit it. John Brown, fresh from his actions in Kansas, moved east and planned more violence. Assembling a team from across the West, including black radicals from Oberlin, Ohio, and throughout communities in Canada West, Brown hatched a plan to attack Harper's Ferry, a federal weapon's arsenal in Virginia (now West Virginia). He would use the weapons to lead a slave revolt. Brown approached Frederick Douglass, though Douglass refused to join.



John Brown implored Frederick Douglass, the African American leader, to join him on the raid at Harper's Ferry. Though Douglass would not join him, he became labelled as a co-conspirator. He made a strong case for his legal innocence, but also embraced Brown as an ally and approved of his violent methods. This simultaneous distancing from yet uniting with Brown was a common tactic for abolitionists and Republicans after the raid in 1859. Jacob Lawrence, the great 20th-century African American artist, depicted a tense moment wherein Brown beseeches Douglass for his participation and support. Jacob Lawrence, Douglass argued against John Brown's plan to attack the arsenal at Harpers Ferry. [Wikimedia](#).

Brown's raid embarked on October 16. By October 18, a command under Robert E. Lee had crushed the revolt. Many of Brown's men, including his own sons, were killed, but Brown himself lived and was imprisoned. Brown prophesied while in prison that the nation's crimes would only be purged with blood. He went to the gallows in December 1859. Northerners made a stunning display of sympathy on the day of his execution. Southerners took their reactions to mean that the coming 1860 election would be, in many ways, a referendum on secession and disunion.

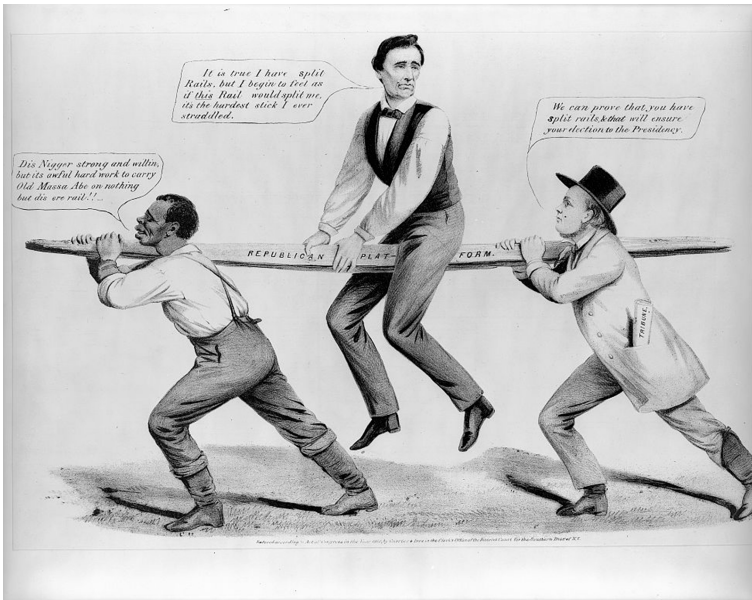


The execution of John Brown made him a martyr in abolitionist circles and a confirmed traitor in southern crowds. Both of these images continued to pervade public memory after the Civil War, but in the North especially (where so many soldiers had died to help end slavery) his name was admired. Over two decades after Brown's death, Thomas Hovenden portrayed Brown as a saint. As he is led to his execution for attempting to destroy slavery, Brown poignantly leans over a rail to kiss a black baby. Thomas Hovenden, *The Last Moments of John Brown*, c. 1882-1884. [Wikimedia](#).

Republicans wanted little to do with Brown and instead tried to

portray themselves as moderates opposed to both abolitionists and proslavery expansionists. In this climate, the parties opened their contest for the 1860 Presidential election. The Democratic Party fared poorly as its southern delegates bolted its national convention at Charleston and ran their own candidate, Vice President John C. Breckenridge of Kentucky. Hoping to field a candidate who might nonetheless manage to bridge the broken party's factions, the Democrats decided to meet again at Baltimore, and nominated Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois.

The Republicans, meanwhile, held their boisterous convention in Chicago. The Republican platform made the party's anti-slavery commitments clear, also making wide promises to its white constituents, particularly westerners, with the promise of new land, transcontinental railroads, and broad support of public schools. Abraham Lincoln, a candidate few outside of Illinois truly expected to win, nonetheless proved far less polarizing than the other names on the ballot. Lincoln won the nomination, and with the Democrats in disarray, Republicans knew their candidate Lincoln had a good chance of winning.



In this political cartoon, Abraham Lincoln uncomfortably straddles a rail supported by a black man and Horace Greeley (editor of the New York "Tribune"). The wood board is a dual reference to the antislavery plank of the 1860 Republican platform – which Lincoln seemed to uneasily defend – and Lincoln's backwoods origins. Louis Maurer, "The Rail Candidate," Currier & Ives, c. 1860. [Library of Congress](#).

Abraham Lincoln won the 1860 contest on November 6, gaining just 40% of the popular vote and not a single southern vote in the Electoral College. Within days, southern states were organizing secession conventions. John J. Crittenden of Kentucky proposed a series of compromises, but a clear pro-southern bias meant they had little chance of gaining Republican acceptance. Crittenden's plan promised renewed enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law, and offered a plan to keep slavery in the nation's capital. Republicans by late 1860 knew that the voters who had just placed them in power did not want them to cave on these points, and southern states proceed with their plans to leave the Union. On December 20, South Carolina voted to secede, and issued its "Declaration of

the Immediate Causes.” The Declaration highlighted failure of the federal government to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act over competing personal liberty laws in northern states. After the war many southerners claimed that secession was primarily motivated by a concern to preserve states’ rights, but the very first ordinance of secession’s primary complaint, and many that came after, listed the federal government’s failure to exert its authority over the northern states.

The year 1861, then, saw the culmination of the secession crisis. Before he left for Washington, Lincoln told those who had gathered in Springfield to wish him well and that he faced a “task greater than Washington’s” in the years to come. Southerners were also learning the challenges of forming a new nation. The seceded states grappled with internal divisions right way, as states with slaveholders sometimes did not support the newly seceded states. In January, for example, Delaware rejected secession. But states in the lower south adopted a different course. The State of Mississippi seceded. Later in the month, the states of Florida, Alabama, Georgia, and Louisiana also all left the Union. By early February, Texas had also joined the newly seceded states. In February, southerners drafted a constitution protecting slavery and named a westerner, Jefferson Davis of Mississippi, as their President. When Abraham Lincoln acted upon his constitutional mandate as Commander in Chief following his inauguration as President of the United States in Washington on March 4, rebels calling themselves members of the Confederate States of America opened fire. Within days, Abraham Lincoln would demand 75,000 volunteers from the North to crush the rebellion, and the American Civil War began.

43. Assignment: Pre-Civil War Perspectives

History contains many people with different circumstances and perspectives. To understand actions in the past, a historian must understand their perspective and concerns and how they interacted.

Imagine you are one of the following people from the decades before the US Civil War:

- An abolitionist (white or black, male or female)
- A women's rights activist (white or black, male or female)
- A free black person
- An enslaved black person
- A white person in the US south (male or female, poor, middle-class, or rich.)
- A white person in the US north (male or female, poor, middle-class, or rich.)

Tell your (imaginary) life story? How do you make your living? How do you feel about the major issues of the day? What are your primary concerns (economic, social, or political)? Why? Write about 200 words.

PART XV

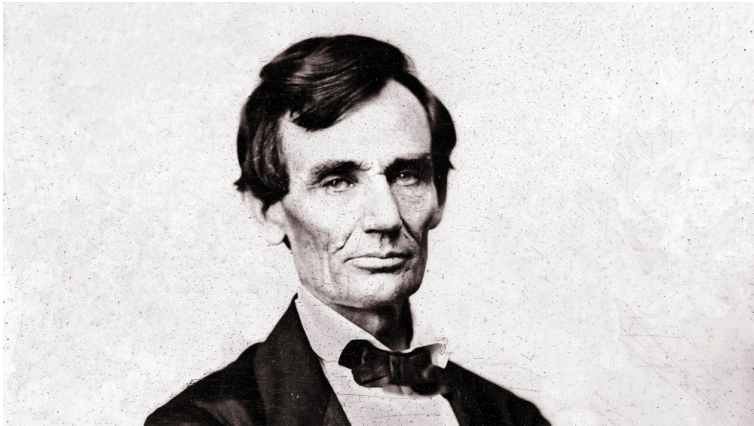
MODULE 15: SECESSION & CIVIL WAR

44. The Election of 1860 and Secession

As the fall of 1860 approached, a four-way race for the Presidency—and the future of America—emerged. The ghost of John Brown, the militant abolitionist hung after his actions at Harper's Ferry, loomed large in early 1860. In April, the Democratic Party convened in Charleston, South Carolina, acknowledged bastion of secessionist thought in the South. The goal was to nominate a single candidate for the party ticket, but it became very clear that the Democratic convention would be one marked by hostility and division. The northern and southern wings of the party could not agree on any one man. Northern Democrats pulled for Senator Stephen Douglas, a pro-slavery moderate championing popular sovereignty, while Southern Democrats were intent on endorsing someone *other* than Douglas. The failure to include a pro-slavery platform resulted in Southern delegates walking out of the convention, preventing Douglas from gaining the two-thirds majority required for a nomination. A subsequent convention in Baltimore nominated Douglas for the Democratic ticket, while southerners nominated current Vice President John C. Breckenridge of Kentucky as their presidential candidate. The nation's oldest party had split into two over differences in policy toward slavery.

Certainly, few Americans expected a strong showing from the Republican Party. Indeed, the Republicans were hardly unified themselves. The leading men of the party all vied for their party's nomination at the Chicago convention in May 1860. There was a growing recognition among the conveners that the party's nominee would need to be someone who would be able to carry all the free states—only in that situation could a Republican nominee potentially win. Such an electoral reality meant that the early favorite, New

York Senator William Seward, came under attack during the convention. Some believed his pro-immigrant position would prevent him from carrying Pennsylvania and New Jersey in a general election. Abraham Lincoln, as a relatively unknown but likable politician, rose from a pool of potential candidates, and was selected by the delegates on the third ballot.



Abraham Lincoln, August 13, 1860, via [Library of Congress](#).

The electoral landscape was further complicated through the emergence of a fourth candidate, Tennessee's John Bell, heading the Constitutional Union Party. Lincoln carried all free states with the exception of New Jersey (which he split with Douglas). 81.2% of the voting electorate came out to vote—at that point the highest ever for a presidential election. But, Lincoln's 180 electoral votes came with under 40% of the popular vote. Lincoln was trailed by Breckenridge with his 72 electoral votes, carrying 11 of the 15 slave states, Bell came in third with 39 electoral votes, with Douglas coming in last, only able to garner twelve electoral votes despite carrying almost 30% of the popular vote. All future Confederate states, with the exception of Virginia, excluded Lincoln's name from their ballots, making the victory even more remarkable.

South Carolina acted almost immediately, calling a convention to declare secession. On December 20, 1860, the South Carolina convention voted unanimously 169-0 to dissolve their Union with the United States. The other states across the Deep South soon followed suit. Mississippi adopted their own resolution on January 9, 1861, Florida followed on January 10, Alabama January 11, Georgia on January 19, Louisiana on January 26, and Texas on February 1. While Texas was the only state to put the issue up for vote amongst the entire voting population, most other states hovered around an 80% vote in favor of secession at their respective conventions.

President James Buchanan would not directly address the issue of secession prior to his term's end in early March. Any effort to try and solve the issue therefore fell upon Congress, specifically a "Committee of Thirteen" including prominent men such as Stephen Douglas, William Seward, Robert Toombs, and John Crittenden. In what became known as "Crittenden's Compromise," Senator Crittenden proposed a series of Constitutional Amendments that guaranteed slavery in southern states/territories, denied the Federal Government interstate slave trade regulatory power, and offered to compensate slave owners of unrecovered fugitive slaves. The Committee of Thirteen ultimately voted down the measure and it likewise failed in the full Senate vote (25-23). Prospects for reconciliation appeared grim.

The seven seceding states met in Montgomery, Alabama on February 4th to organize a new nation. The delegates selected Jefferson Davis of Mississippi as president and established a capital in Montgomery, Alabama (it would move to Richmond in May). When Davis received the telegram, his wife later wrote, "he looked so grieved that I feared some evil had befallen our family. After a few minutes he told me like a man might speak of a sentence of death." Out of a sense of duty, Davis accepted. Whether the states of the Upper South would join the Confederacy remained uncertain. By the early spring of 1861, North Carolina and Tennessee had not held secession conventions, while others in Virginia, Missouri, and Arkansas initially voted down secession. Despite this boost to the

Union, it became abundantly clear that these acts of loyalty in the Upper South were highly conditional and relied on a clear lack of intervention on the part of the Federal government. This was the situation facing Abraham Lincoln on his inauguration in March 4, 1861.

45. Video: The Election of 1860

In this video, John Green teaches you about the election of 1860. As you may remember, things were not great at this time in U.S. history. The tensions between the North and South were rising, ultimately due to the single issue of slavery. The North wanted to abolish slavery, and the South wanted to continue on with it. It seemed like a war was inevitable, and it turns out that it was. But first the nation had to get through this election. You'll learn how the bloodshed in Kansas, and the truly awful Kansas-Nebraska Act led directly to the decrease in popularity of Stephen Douglas, the splitting of the Democratic party, and the unlikely victory of a relatively inexperienced politician from Illinois, Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln's election would lead directly to the secession of several southern states, and thus to the Civil War. You'll learn about all this, plus Dred Scott, Roger Taney, and John Brown.



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://library.achievingthedream.org/forsythtechamericanhistory1/?p=85>

46. From Soil to Shore: Military War on the Ground and in the Water

In his inaugural address, Lincoln declared secession “legally void.” While he did not intend to invade Southern states, he would use force to maintain possession of federal property within seceded states. Union forces, led by U.S. Army Major Robert Anderson, held Charleston, South Carolina’s Ft. Sumter in April 1861. The fort was in need of supplies, and Lincoln intended to resupply it. South Carolina called for U.S. soldiers to evacuate the fort. Major Anderson refused. “The firing on that fort will inaugurate a civil war greater than any the world has yet seen...you will lose us every friend at the North. You will wantonly strike a hornet’s nest which extends from mountains to ocean. Legions now quiet will swarm out and sting us to death. It is unnecessary. It puts us in the wrong. It is fatal,” cautioned Georgia senator Robert Toombs to Jefferson Davis prior to an attack on Fort Sumter. After decades of sectional tension, official hostilities erupted on April 12, 1861, when Confederate Brig. Gen. P. G. T. Beauregard fired on the fort. Anderson surrendered on April 13th and the Union troops evacuated. In response to the Confederate attack, President Abraham Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers. The American Civil War had begun.

S.S. BALTIC. OFF SANDY HOOK APR. EIGHTEENTH. TEN THIRTY A.M. . VIA
 NEW YORK. . HON. S. CAMERON, SECY. WAR. WASHN. HAVING DEFENDED
 FORT SUMTER FOR THIRTY FOUR HOURS. UNTIL THE QUARTERS WERE EN
 TIRELY BURNED THE MAIN GATES DESTROYED BY FIRE. THE GORGE WALLS
 SERIOUSLY INJURED. THE MAGAZINE SURROUNDED BY FLAMES AND ITS
 DOOR CLOSED FROM THE EFFECTS OF HEAT. FOUR BARRELS AND THREE
 CARTRIDGES OF POWDER ONLY BEING AVAILABLE AND NO PROVISIONS
 REMAINING BUT PORK. I ACCEPTED TERMS OF EVACUATION OFFERED BY
 GENERAL BEAUREGARD BEING ON SAME OFFERED BY HIM ON THE ELEVEN
 INST. PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF HOSTILITIES AND MARCHED
 OUT OF THE FORT SUNDAY AFTERNOON THE FOURTEENTH INST. WITH
 COLORS FLYING AND DRUMS BEATING. BRINGING AWAY COMPANY AND
 PRIVATE PROPERTY AND SALUTING MY FLAG WITH FIFTY GUNS. ROBERT
 ANDERSON, MAJOR FIRST ARTILLERY, COMMANDING.

Sent to then Secretary of War Simon Cameron on April 13, 1861, this telegram announced that after “thirty hours of defending Fort Sumter, Major Robert Anderson had accepted the evacuation offered by Confederate General Beauregard. The Union had surrendered Fort Sumter, and the Civil War had officially begun. “Telegram from Maj. Robert Anderson to Hon. Simon Cameron, Secretary, announcing his withdrawal from Fort Sumter,” April 18, 1861; Records of the Adjutant General’s Office, 1780’s-1917; Record Group 94; [National Archives](#).

The assault on Fort Sumter, and subsequent call for troops,

provoked the Upper South into alliance with the Confederacy. In total, eleven states joined the new nation. Unionists refused to accept this new southern nation and responded with a vigorous military campaign to reduce its armies, property, and economy.

Shortly after Lincoln's call for troops, the Union adopted General-in-Chief Winfield Scott's Anaconda Plan and established a naval blockade around the Confederate states. This strategy intended to strangle the Confederacy by cutting off access to coastal ports and inland waterways. Like an anaconda snake, they planned to surround and squeeze the Confederacy.



Winfield Scott's Anaconda Plan meant to slowly squeeze the South dry of its resources, blocking all coastal ports and inland waterways to prevent the importation of goods or the export of cotton. This print, while poorly drawn, does a great job of making clear the Union's plan. J.B. Elliott, "Scott's great snake. Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1861," 1861. [Library of Congress](#).

With geographic, social, political, and economic connections to both the North and the South, the Border States—Delaware,

Maryland, Missouri, and Kentucky—were critical to the outcome of the war. Lincoln and his military advisors realized that the loss of the Border States could mean a significant decrease in Union resources. Consequently, Lincoln hoped to foster loyalty among their citizens, so that Union forces could minimize their occupation in the regions. In spite of terrible guerrilla warfare in Missouri and Kentucky, the four Border States remained loyal to the Union throughout the war.

Also that spring, Confederate strategists, like their Federal counterparts, prepared for what they believed would be a short war. This belief crumbled on July 21, 1861. Three months after the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter, Union and Confederate forces met at the Battle of Bull Run, near Manassas, Virginia, officially opening the war's Eastern Theater. While not particularly deadly, the Confederate victory proved that the Civil War would be long and costly. Furthermore, in response to the embarrassing Union rout, Lincoln removed Brig. Gen. Irvin McDowell of command and promoted Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan to commander of the newly formed Army of the Potomac. For nearly a year after the First Battle of Bull Run, the Eastern Theater remained relatively silent. Skirmishes only resulted in a bloody stalemate. Unlike the First Battle of Bull Run, ensuing campaigns resulted in major casualties.

Union military leaders sought to expand the war into the West in hopes of crushing the rebellion. In February 1862, Union Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's capture of Confederate Forts Henry and Donelson along the Tennessee River marked the opening of the Western Theater. Fighting in the West greatly differed from that in the East. At the First Battle of Bull Run, for example, two large armies fought for control of the nations' capitals; while in the West, Union and Confederate forces fought for control of the rivers, since the Mississippi River and its tributaries were a key tenet of the Union's Anaconda Plan. One of the deadliest of these clashes occurred along the Tennessee River at the Battle of Shiloh on April 6-7, 1862. This battle, lasting only two days, was the costliest single battle in American history up to that time. The Union victory shocked both the Union and the Confederacy with approximately

23,000 casualties, a number that exceeded casualties from all of the United States' previous wars combined.

In the fall of that year, casualty numbers would again shock the nation as Lee's Army of Northern Virginia invaded Maryland (a border state loyal to the Union) on September 3, 1862. Emboldened by their success in the previous spring and summer, Lee and Confederate President Jefferson Davis planned to win a decisive victory in Union territory and end the war. On September 17, 1862, McClellan and Lee's forces collided at the Battle of Antietam near the town of Sharpsburg. This battle was the first major battle of the Civil War to occur on Union soil and it remains the bloodiest single day in American history with over 20,000 soldiers killed, wounded, or missing in just twelve hours.



Photography captured the horrors of war as never before. Some Civil War photographers arranged the actors in their frames to capture the best picture, even repositioning bodies of dead soldiers for battlefield photos. Alexander Gardner, "[Antietam, Md. Confederate dead by a fence on the Hagerstown road]," September 1862. [Library of Congress](#).

Despite the Confederate withdrawal and the high death toll, the Battle of Antietam was not a decisive Union victory. It did, however, result in two significant events. First, McClellan's failure to crush Lee resulted in his removal. Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside replaced

McClellan as commander of the Army of the Potomac. Second, and more importantly, the Confederate withdrawal gave Lincoln the confidence to issue the Emancipation Proclamation, which freed all the slaves in the ten states in rebellion. Framing it as a war measure, Lincoln and his Cabinet hoped that stripping the Confederacy of their labor force would not only debilitate the Southern economy, but also weaken Confederate morale. Nevertheless, Confederates continued fighting; and Union and Confederate forces clashed again at Fredericksburg, Virginia in December 1862. The Battle of Fredericksburg was a Confederate victory that resulted in staggering Union casualties.

Following their success at Fredericksburg, Lee's Army of Northern Virginia continued its offensive strategy in the East. One of the war's major battles occurred near the village of Chancellorsville, Virginia between April 30 and May 6, 1863. While the Battle of Chancellorsville was an outstanding Confederate victory against Union Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker (who replaced Burnside as the commander of the Army of the Potomac after his defeat at the Battle of Fredericksburg), it also resulted in heavy casualties and the mortal wounding of Major General "Stonewall" Jackson.

In spite of Jackson's death, Lee continued his offensive against Federal forces and invaded Pennsylvania in the summer of 1863. During the three-day battle (July 1-3) at Gettysburg, heavy casualties crippled both sides. Yet, the devastating July 3 infantry assault on the Union center, also known as Pickett's Charge, caused Lee to retreat from Pennsylvania. The Gettysburg Campaign was Lee's final northern incursion and the Battle of Gettysburg remains as the bloodiest battle of the war, and in American history, with 51,000 casualties.

Concurrently in the West, Union forces continued their movement along the Mississippi River and its tributaries, capturing New Orleans on May 1, 1862. With New Orleans occupied and with help from the U. S. Navy, Grant launched his campaign against Vicksburg, Mississippi in the winter of 1862. His Vicksburg

Campaign, which lasted until July 4, 1863, ended with the city's surrender and split the Confederacy in two.

The Union and Confederate navies helped or hindered army movements around the many marine environments of the southern United States. And each navy employed the latest technology to outmatch the other. The Confederate Navy, led by Stephen Russell Mallory, had the unenviable task of constructing a fleet from scratch and trying to fend off a vastly better equipped Union Navy. Led by Gideon Welles of Connecticut, the Union Navy successfully implemented General-in-Chief Winfield Scott's Anaconda Plan.

The Union blockade initially struggled to contain the Confederate blockade runners, especially at ports like Charleston, South Carolina and Wilmington, North Carolina. The blockade was not particularly effective until halfway through the war. Major Confederate ports and financial trade centers, including those on the Mississippi River like New Orleans, had come under Union control by mid-1863.

Grant's successes at Vicksburg and Chattanooga, Tennessee (November 1863) and Meade's cautious pursuit of Lee after Gettysburg prompted Lincoln to promote Grant to general-in-chief of the Union Army in early 1864. This change in command not only allowed for Grant's second-in-command, Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman to launch his infamous March to the Sea, in which his men devastated Georgia and the Carolinas, but it also resulted in some of the bloodiest battles of the Eastern Theater. These battles, such as the Battle of the Wilderness, the Battle of Cold Harbor, and the siege of Petersburg, as part of Grant's Overland Campaign would earn Grant his nickname "The Butcher."



New and more destructive warfare technology emerged during this time that utilized discoveries and innovations in other areas of life, like transportation. This photograph shows Robert E. Lee's railroad gun and crew used in the main eastern theater of war at the siege of Petersburg, June 1864-April 1865. "Petersburg, Va. Railroad gun and crew," between 1864 and 1865. [Library of Congress](#).

Incredibly deadly for both sides, these Union campaigns in both the West and the East, destroyed Confederate infrastructure and demonstrated the efficacy of the Union's strategy of attrition and hard war. As a result of Sherman's "March to the Sea," a devastating hard war campaign through Georgia and the Carolinas, and Grant's dogged pursuit of the Army of Northern Virginia, Lee surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia to Grant at Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865. The remaining Confederate forces surrendered that summer.



Unions soldiers pose in front of the Appomattox Court House after Lee's surrender in April 1865. [Wikimedia](#).

47. Confederate Nationalism and Union War Aims

Elite southerners began conceiving of the South as distinct from the rest of the United States long before secession. Elite antebellum southerners feared that abolitionism would threaten slavery, leading southern politicians to advance the position of states' rights. They argued that the ultimate power rested in the states rather than in the federal government. Cultural theories followed politics, as southern intellectuals developed the myth of the cavalier, which claimed that elite southerners, unlike northerners, descended from aristocratic Englishmen, and thus northerners and southerners were distinct and separate peoples. Although most antebellum southerners' loyalty was still to the U.S., as early as 1850, radical secessionists known as fire-eaters called for a separate southern nation. The majority of southerners remained loyal to the Union until the fall of 1860, when Abraham Lincoln, representing the new antislavery Republican Party, was elected president.

New Confederates quickly shed their American identity and adopted a new southern nationalism. Confederate nationalism was based on several ideals. Foremost among these was slavery. As Confederate Vice President Andrew Stephens stated in his "Cornerstone Speech," the Confederacy's "foundations are laid, its cornerstone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery... is his natural and normal condition."



The emblems of nationalism on this currency reveal much about the ideology underpinning the Confederacy: George Washington standing stately in a Roman toga indicates the belief in the South's honorable and aristocratic past; John C. Calhoun's portrait emphasizes the Confederate argument of the importance of states' rights; and, most importantly, the image of African Americans working in fields demonstrates slavery's position as foundational to the Confederacy. A five and one hundred dollar Confederate States of America interest bearing banknote, c. 1861 and 1862. [Wikimedia](https://www.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Confederate_States_of_America_5_dollar_note_1862.jpg).

The election of Lincoln in 1860 demonstrated that the South's was politically overwhelmed. Slavery was omnipresent in the pre-war South, and it served as the most common frame of reference for unequal power. To a Southern man, there was no fate more terrifying than the thought of being reduced to the level of a slave. Religion likewise shaped Confederate nationalism and identity, as southerners believed that the Confederacy was fulfilling God's will.

The Confederacy even veered from the American constitution by explicitly invoking Christianity in their founding document.

It is a common misconception that Civil War soldiers enlisted and fought for largely personal reasons such as camaraderie rather than for more abstract notions such as honor, patriotism, or their rights. However, to Americans during the mid-nineteenth century, these were not abstract concepts. This was an age of romanticism in literature and philosophy, and ideas like honor and duty held great sway. The men who fought in the Union and Confederate placed as much value on fighting and possibly dying for the cause as they did on unit cohesion and comradeship.

The heritage of the American Revolution provided an additional source of southern nationalism. Confederates claimed that northerners had betrayed the original intent of the Founding Fathers. The Confederacy was thus supposedly the true heir of the American Revolution, a belief that was made visibly apparent by the inclusion of an image of George Washington on the Great Seal of the Confederacy.

On March 4, 1861, when newly-elected President Abraham Lincoln took the oath of office, he directly addressed the southern portion of his splintering constituency:

“We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.”

In the process of preserving the Union, friendship and diplomacy gave way to war. Like Lincoln, most northerners in the late-1850s and 1860s viewed the Union—that is, the constitutional compact between the states to form a federal government—as permanent. As such, the vast majority of men that answered President Lincoln’s call for troops did so with the fervent belief that they were taking up

arms to save the Union. By saving the Union, these northern soldiers also viewed themselves as direct descendants of the Founding Fathers and protectors of their Revolutionary legacy.

For Union soldiers, the need to preserve the Union was paramount. The Revolution had purchased something truly unique with dear blood; a representative democracy. They feared that if a minority could dissolve part of the country whenever they lost a fair and open election, then this great experiment would collapse. By splitting over the 1860 election, the fear was a precedent would be established, and soon there would be another split, and another, until nothing remained of the United States but a series of small, warring factions. So many social commentators in Europe would be proven right and the Founders would have been proven wrong; a democratic people could not govern themselves. Additionally, Union soldiers viewed themselves as guardians of law and order. A rebellion and attempted secession against a properly elected government was treason.

Not all southerners participated in Confederate nationalism. Unionist southerners, most common in the upcountry, retained their loyalty to the Union, joining the Union army and working to defeat the Confederacy. Although sacrifice could enhance devotion to the Confederacy for some southerners, the suffering of war, combined with unpopular measures such as the draft, also weakened morale. Black southerners, most of whom were slaves, overwhelmingly supported the Union, often running away from plantations to follow the Union army. The weakening of southern nationalism, along with southern support for the Union, ultimately aided the eventual Union victory.

Cut off from their southern brethren, the northern branches of the Democratic Party divided. War Democrats largely stood behind President Lincoln and their support was necessary for passage of the Thirteenth Amendment, abolishing slavery. “Peace Democrats”—also known as “Copperheads”—clashed frequently with both War Democrats and Republicans. Copperheads were sympathetic to the Confederacy; they exploited public anti-war

sentiment (often the result of a lost battle or mounting casualties) and tried to push President Lincoln to negotiate an immediate peace, regardless of political leverage or bargaining power. Had the Copperheads succeeded in bringing about immediate peace, the Union would have been forced to recognize the Confederacy as a separate and legitimate government while the institution of slavery would have remained intact. With a Union victory in sight following General William T. Sherman's successful Atlanta Campaign in 1864, Copperhead support largely evaporated.

48. Experiences of Soldiers and Civilians



Pennsylvania Light Artillery, Battery B, Petersburg, Virginia. Photograph by Timothy H. O'Sullivan, 1864. [The Metropolitan Museum of Art](#)

Daily life for a Civil War soldier was one of routine. A typical day began around 6am and involved drill, marching, lunch break, and more drilling followed by policing the camp. Weapon inspection and cleaning followed, perhaps one final drill, dinner, and taps around 9 or 9:30 pm. Soldiers in both armies grew weary of the routine. Picketing or foraging afforded welcome distractions to the monotony.

Soldiers devised clever ways of dealing with the boredom of camp life. The most common activity was writing. These were highly literate armies; nine out of every ten Federals and four out of every five Confederates could read and write. Letters home served as a tether linking soldiers to their loved ones. Soldiers also read; newspapers were in high demand. News from other theatres of war, events in Europe, politics in Washington and Richmond, and local concerns were voraciously sought and traded.

While there were nurses, camp followers, and some women who

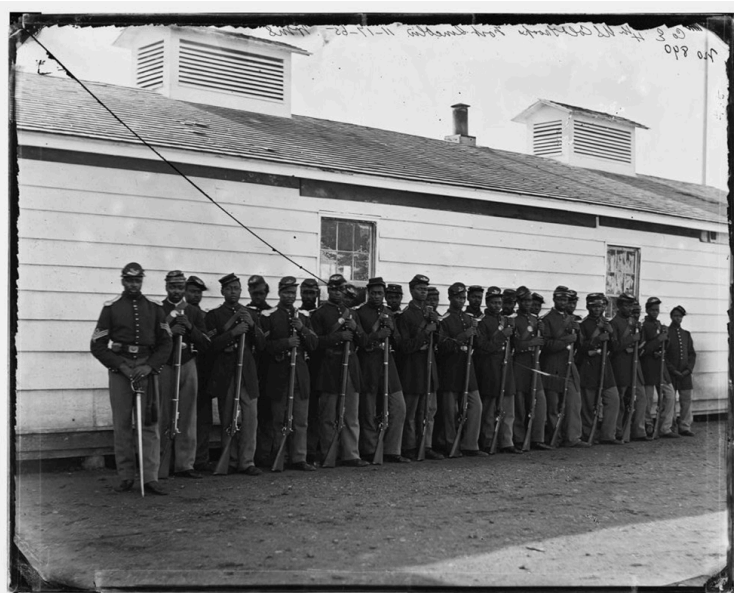
disguised themselves as men, camp life was overwhelmingly male. Soldiers drank liquor, smoked tobacco, gambled, and swore. Social commentators feared was that when these men returned home, with their hard-drinking and irreligious ways, all decency, faith, and temperance would depart. But not all methods of distraction were detrimental. Soldiers also organized debate societies, composed music, sang songs, wrestled, raced horses, boxed, and played sports.

Neither side could consistently provide supplies for their soldiers, so it was not uncommon, though officially forbidden, for common soldiers to trade with the enemy. Confederate soldiers prized northern newspapers and coffee. Northerners were glad to exchange these for southern tobacco. Supply shortages and poor sanitation were synonymous with Civil War armies. The close proximity of thousands of men bred disease. Lice were soldiers' daily companions.

As early as 1861, black Americans implored the Lincoln administration to serve in the army and navy. Lincoln, who initially waged a conservative, limited war, believed that the presence of African American troops would threaten the loyalty of slaveholding Border States, and white volunteers who might refuse to serve alongside black men. However, army commanders could not ignore the growing populations of formerly enslaved people who escaped to freedom behind Union army lines. As the number of refugees ballooned, some generals considered commissioning African Americans as laborers and cooks.

As United States armies penetrated deeper into the Confederacy, requiring increased numbers of troops to occupy the South and battle rebel armies, politicians and the Union high command came to understand the necessity, and benefit, of enlisting African American men into the army and navy. Although a few commanders began forming black units in 1862, such as Massachusetts abolitionist Thomas Wentworth Higginson's First South Carolina Volunteers (the first regiment of black soldiers), widespread enlistment did not occur until the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect on January 1, 1863. "And I further declare and make

known,” Lincoln’s Proclamation read, “that such persons of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.”



The creation of black regiments was another kind of innovation during the Civil War. Northern free blacks and newly freed slaves joined together under the leadership of white officers to fight for the Union cause. This novelty was not only beneficial for the Union war effort; it also showed the Confederacy that the Union sought to destroy the foundational institution (slavery) upon which their nation was built. William Morris Smith, “[District of Columbia. Company E, 4th U.S. Colored Infantry, at Fort Lincoln],” between 1863 and 1866. [Library of Congress](#).



This African American family dressed in their finest clothes (including a USCT uniform) for this photograph, projecting respectability and dignity that was at odds with the southern perception of black Americans. “[Unidentified African American soldier in Union uniform with wife and two daughters],” between 1863 and 1865. [Library of Congress](#).

The language describing black enlistment indicated Lincoln’s implicit desire to segregate African American troops from the main campaigning armies of white soldiers. “I believe it is a resource which, if vigorously applied now, will soon close the contest. It works doubly, weakening the enemy and strengthening us,” Lincoln remarked in July 1863 about black soldiering. Although more than 180,000 black men (10 percent of the Union army) served during the war, the majority of United States Colored Troops (USCT) remained stationed behind the lines as garrison forces, often laboring and

performing non-combat roles. Inequality, more than glory, defined the black soldiering experience.

African American soldiers in the Union army endured rampant discrimination and earned less pay than white soldiers. Black soldiers also faced the possibility of being murdered or sold into slavery if captured by Confederate forces. James Henry Gooding, a black corporal in the famed 54th Massachusetts Volunteers, wrote to Abraham Lincoln in September 1863, questioning why he and his fellow volunteers were paid less than white men. Gooding argued that, because he and his brethren were born in the United States and selflessly left their private lives and to enter the army, they should be treated “as American SOLDIERS, not as menial hirelings.”



“Two Brothers in Arms.” [The Library of Congress](#).

African American soldiers defied the inequality of military service and used their positions in the army to reshape society, North and South. The majority of USCT had once been enslaved, and their presence as armed, blue-clad soldiers sent shockwaves throughout the Confederacy. To their friends and families, African American soldiers symbolized the embodiment of liberation and the destruction of slavery. To white southerners, they represented the utter disruption of the Old South’s racial and social hierarchy. As members of armies of occupation, black soldiers wielded martial authority in towns and plantations. At the end of the war, as a

black soldier marched by a cluster of Confederate prisoners, he noticed his former master among the group. “Hello, massa,” the soldier exclaimed, “bottom rail on top dis time!”

In addition to a majority of USCT garrisoning and occupying the South, other African American soldiers performed admirably on the battlefield, shattering white myths that docile, cowardly black men would fold in the maelstrom of war. Black troops fought in more than 400 battles and skirmishes, including Milliken’s Bend and Port Hudson, Louisiana; Fort Wagner, South Carolina; Nashville; and the final campaigns to capture Richmond, Virginia. Fifteen black soldiers received the Medal of Honor, the highest honor bestowed for military heroism. Through their voluntarism, service, battlefield contributions, and even death, African American soldiers laid their claims for citizenship. “Once let a black man get upon his person the brass letters U.S.” Frederick Douglass, the great black abolitionist, proclaimed, “and there is no power on earth which can deny that he has earned the right to citizenship.”



Frederick Douglass. ca 1866. The New-York Historical Society.

Women also played a major role in the Civil War. According to a Congressional Report, “Franklin Thompson shar[ed] in all [the regiment’s] toils and privations, marching and fighting in the various engagements in which it participated . . . [he was] never absent from duty, obeying all orders with intelligence and alacrity, his whole aim

and desire to render zealous and efficient aid to the Union cause.” It was not until after the war that the government and Thompson’s comrades in arms discovered that “he” was actually a woman by the name of Sarah Emma Edmonds. Edmonds was not the only woman who joined the army during the Civil War. Cousins Mary and Mollie Bell served in the Confederate Army under the aliases Tom Parker and Bob Martin. An article in the Indianapolis *Daily Ledger* stated that “romantic young ladies of late are frequently found in the military service,” indicating that these cases were not isolated incidents.

When South Carolinians fired on Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861, Mary Chesnut was in Charleston. She reported in her diary that after the cannons began to fire, “The women were wild there on the housetop.” This excitement increased the willingness of women to do what they could for the war effort, including strongly encouraging their husbands to join the army. Gertrude Clanton Thompson wrote that “When Duty and Honor called him it would be strange if I would influence him to remain ‘in the lap of inglorious ease’ when so much is at stake. Our country is invaded – our homes are in danger – We are deprived or they are attempting to deprive us of that glorious liberty for which our Fathers fought and bled and shall we tamely submit to this? Never!” However, there were many women who did not support the war, particularly as it wore on. One of these women wrote a letter to North Carolina Governor, Zebulon Vance, saying “Especially for they sake of suffering women and children, do try and stop this cruel war.”

For some women, the best way to support their cause was spying on the enemy. When the war broke out, Rose O’Neal Greenhow was living in Washington D.C., where she travelled in high social circles, gathering information for her Confederate contact. Suspecting Greenhow of espionage, Allan Pinkerton placed her under surveillance, instigated a raid on her house to gather evidence, and then placed her under house arrest, after which she was incarcerated in Old Capitol prison. Upon her release, she was sent, under guard, to Baltimore, Maryland. From there Greenhow went

to Europe to attempt to bring support to the Confederacy. Failing in her efforts, Greenhow decided to return to America, boarding the blockade runner *Condor*, which ran aground near Wilmington, North Carolina. Subsequently, she drowned after her lifeboat capsized in a storm. Greenhow gave her life for the Confederate cause, while Elizabeth “Crazy Bet” Van Lew sacrificed her social standing for the Union. Van Lew was from a very prominent Richmond, Virginia family and spied on the Confederacy, leading to her being “held in contempt & scorn by the narrow minded men and women of my city for my loyalty.” Indeed, when General Ulysses Grant took control of Richmond, he placed a special guard on Van Lew. In addition to her espionage activities, Van Lew also acted as a nurse to Union prisoners in Libby Prison.

Van Lew was not alone in nursing wounded or ill soldiers. The publisher’s notice for *Nurse and Spy in the Union Army* states, “In the opinion of many, it is the privilege of woman to minister to the sick and soothe the sorrowing—and in the present crisis of our country’s history, to aid our brothers to the extent of her capacity.” Mary Chesnut wrote, “Every woman in the house is ready to rush into the Florence Nightingale business.” However, she indicated that after she visited the hospital “I can never again shut out of view the sights that I saw there of human misery. I sit thinking, shut my eyes, and see it all.” Hospital conditions were often so bad that many volunteer nurses quit soon after beginning. Kate Cumming volunteered as a nurse shortly after the war began. She, and other volunteers, travelled with the Army of Tennessee. However, all but one of the women who volunteered with Cumming quit within a week.



Pauline Cushman was an American actress, a perfect occupation for a wartime spy. Using her guile to fraternize with Confederate officers, Cushman she snuck military plans and drawings to Union officials in her shoes. She was caught, tried, and sentenced to death, but was apparently saved days before her execution by the occupation of her native New Orleans by Union forces. Women like Cushman, whether spies, nurses, or textile workers, were essential to the Union war effort. "Pauline Cushman," between 1855 and 1865. [Library of Congress](#).

In the North, the conditions in hospitals were somewhat superior. This was partly due to the organizational skills of women like Dorothea Dix, who was the Union's Superintendent for Army Nurses. Additionally, many women were members of the United States Sanitary Commission and helped to staff and supply hospitals in the North, helping to prevent supply shortages more often than in southern hospitals.

There were other women who travelled with the armies as well. Some of them were the wives or daughters of officers, while others were cooks or laundresses. A third group, prostitutes, sometimes travelled with the army, and sometimes congregated in nearby cities, making them relatively easy for the men in both armies to patronize. In Washington D.C. alone, there were at least 450 brothels, with names like "Headquarters U.S.A.," "The Wolf's Den," and "Madam Russel's Bake Oven." Many prostitutes suffered from

venereal diseases, including syphilis and gonorrhea, which they transmitted to soldiers. The treatment for these diseases in the 1860s was a urethral shot of salts of mercury – leading to the saying “A night with Venus, a lifetime with Mercury.”

Northern women often found it difficult to prove their loyalty, since the enemy was far away. For pro-Confederate Southern women, there were more opportunities to show their scorn for the enemy. Some women in New Orleans took these demonstrations to the level of dumping their chamber pots onto the heads of unsuspecting Federal soldiers who stood underneath their balconies, leading to Benjamin Butler’s infamous General Order Number 28, which arrested all rebellious women as prostitutes.

Many women who were enthusiastic at the beginning of the war became increasingly disillusioned by death and destruction. Others spent four years supporting the war effort. There was no single, unified women’s experience during the Civil War.

Most African Americans pragmatically hoped that a Union victory would result in their freedom. Though generally suspicious of whites, slaves reasoned that their enemy’s enemy was their friend. Slaves overheard their masters cursing the North and the Republican Party; why would their masters speak that way unless the North somehow threatened slavery? Rumors of sectional crisis, the 1860 election, secession, and civil war spread along the “grapevine telegraph,” an informal chain of communication that brought news to even the remotest slave communities. Many slaves rightly doubted that the white North had their interests at heart, but they hoped the North would liberate them to deprive the South of a huge source of capital, labor, and status.

Though the U.S. government and military understood the war was about slavery in the abstract, they did not intend for the war to involve actual slaves. Their intentions, however, did not matter, because African American forced the Union army to deal with them. Almost as soon as the war began, runaway slaves appeared at Union camps, asking for refuge.

Fugitive slaves posed a dilemma for the Union military. Soldiers

were forbidden to interfere with slavery or assist runaways, but many soldiers found such a policy unchristian. Even those indifferent to slavery were reluctant to turn away potential laborers or help the enemy by returning his property. Also, fugitive slaves could provide useful information on the local terrain and the movements of Confederate troops. Union officers became particularly reluctant to turn away fugitive slaves when Confederate commanders began impressing slaves to work on fortifications. Every slave who escaped to Union lines was a loss to the Confederate war effort.

In May 1861, General Benjamin F. Butler went over his superiors' heads and began accepting fugitive slaves who came to Fortress Monroe in Virginia. In order to avoid the issue of the slaves' freedom, Butler reasoned that runaway slaves were "contraband of war," and he had as much a right to seize them as he did to seize enemy horses or cannons. Later that summer Congress affirmed Butler's policy in the First Confiscation Act.

The act left "contrabands," as these runaways were called, in a state of limbo. Once a slave escaped to Union lines, her master's claim was nullified. She was not, however, a free citizen of the United States. Runaways huddled together in "contraband camps," where disease and malnutrition were rampant. The men were impressed to perform the drudge work of war: raising fortifications, cooking meals, and laying railroad tracks.

Still, life as a contraband offered a potential path to freedom, and thousands of slaves seized the opportunity. Panicked slaveholders abandoned their land at the news of an approaching Union army, while their slaves awaited Yankee liberators. One slave, beloved by her owners as their "mammy," helped her owners load their belongings and then, to their surprise, told them she was not coming with them. Some slaves moved out of their small cabins and into their old masters' homes. Others simply left, perhaps to search for a long-lost child, parent, or spouse.



Enslaved African Americans who took freedom into their own hands and ran to Union lines congregated in what were called contraband camps, which existed alongside Union army camps. As is evident in the photograph, these were crude, disorganized, and dirty places. But they were still centers of freedom for those fleeing slavery. Contraband camp, Richmond, Va, 1865. The Camp of the Contrabands on the Banks of the Mississippi, Fort Pickering, Memphis, Tenn, 1862. American Antiquarian Society, from [Shades of Gray and Blue](#).

It would be untrue, however, to say that every slave welcomed the Union army with open arms. War brought destruction and chaos, and many slaves preferred the devil they knew to the devil they didn't. Yankee soldiers raided plantations for food and other supplies, leaving slaves without many of the necessities of life. For slaves living far from the war and Union lines, the northern army loomed like a distant stormcloud; it could bring death or freedom, and slaves could only guess at the outcome.

Many slaves accompanied their masters in the Confederate army. They served their masters as “camp servants,” cooking their meals, raising their tents, and carrying their supplies. The Confederacy also impressed slaves to perform manual labor.

There are three important points to make about these “Confederate” slaves. First, their labor was almost always coerced. Second, people are complicated and have varying, often contradictory loyalties. A slave could hope in general that the Confederacy would lose but at the same time be concerned for the safety of his master and the Confederate soldiers he saw on a daily basis.

Finally, white Confederates did not see African Americans as their equals, much less as soldiers. There was never any doubt that black laborers and camp servants were property. Though historians disagree on the matter, it is a stretch to claim that not a single African American ever fired a gun for the Confederacy; a camp servant whose master died in battle might well pick up his dead master’s gun and continue firing, if for no other reason than to protect himself. But this was always on an informal basis. The Confederate government did, in an act of desperation, pass a law in March 1865 allowing for the enlistment of black soldiers, but only a few dozen African Americans (mostly Richmond hospital workers) had enlisted by the war’s end.

A different picture emerges when we examine the slave’s impact on Union decision making. Slaves forced the Union to see them as people rather than property. Their very presence in contraband camps and fortification works drove the federal government to issue the Emancipation Proclamation and call for black soldiers and sailors. The enslaved people of the South refused to let the United States ignore them.

49. The Election of 1864 and Emancipation

The presidential contest of 1864 featured a transformed electorate. Three new states (West Virginia, Nevada, and Kansas) had been added since 1860 while the eleven states of the Confederacy did not participate.

Lincoln and his Vice President, Andrew Johnson (Tennessee), ran as nominees of the National Union Party. The main competition came from his former commander, General George B. McClellan. Though McClellan himself was a “War Democrat,” the official platform of the Democratic Party in 1864 revolved around negotiating an immediate end to the Civil War. McClellan’s Vice Presidential nominee was George H. Pendleton of Ohio—a well-known “Peace Democrat.”

On Election Day—November 8, 1864—Lincoln and McClellan each needed 117 electoral votes (out of a possible 233) to win the presidency. For much of the ’64 campaign season, Lincoln downplayed his chances of reelection and McClellan assumed that large numbers of Union soldiers would grant him support. However, thanks in great part to William T. Sherman’s military victories in Georgia, which included the fall of Atlanta on September 2, 1864, and overwhelming support from Union troops, Lincoln won the election easily. Additionally, Lincoln received support from more radical Republican factions (such as John C. Fremont and members of the Radical Democracy Party) that demanded the end of slavery.

In the popular vote, Lincoln crushed McClellan by a margin of 55.1% to 44.9%. In the Electoral College, Lincoln’s victory was even more pronounced at a margin of 212 to 21. As Lincoln won twenty-two states, McClellan only managed to carry three: New Jersey, Delaware, and Kentucky.

In the wake of reelection, Abraham Lincoln delivered his second inaugural address on March 5, 1865, in which he concluded:

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just, and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations.



With crowds of people filling every inch of ground around the U.S. Capitol, President Lincoln delivered his inaugural address on March 4, 1865. Alexander Gardner, “Lincoln’s Second Inaugural,” between 1910 and 1920 from a photograph taken in 1865. [Wikimedia](#).

Emancipation played a major role in the election and the war. Yet, Abraham Lincoln did not abolish slavery with the stroke of his pen,

nor should he be celebrated with the title of the “Great Emancipator.” While Lincoln played a leading role, the accolades bestowed upon him by contemporaries and subsequent generations obscure the elaborate process by which numerous actors in the Congress, the military, and enslaved people themselves brought about emancipation.

Of course, abolitionists had long struggled to obtain freedom for enslaved persons, but the war brought them unexpected allies. Politically, the roots of emancipation can be found in the First Confiscation Act of 1861. Republicans in Congress authorized military officials to do the actual work of freeing enslaved persons, a process called military emancipation. With each military victory, beginning with naval actions along the Atlantic seaboard, the U.S. military deployed constitutional measures to seize contraband. In August, General John C. Fremont declared all enslaved people in Missouri to be free, while General Benjamin Butler emancipated hundreds at Fortress Monroe in Virginia. Lincoln condemned Fremont’s actions, but Butler’s became military policy.

Rank-and-file soldiers and sailors pushed beyond the mandate of the law. Most Union soldiers had never before encountered enslaved people. In their diaries and their sketchbooks, soldiers and sailors recorded their interactions with newly freed African Americans, legitimating an essential humanity that would find popular reverberations in newspapers and magazines. Moreover, the increasingly visual culture of the 1860s in the North relied on photographs and sketches of the freedmen to provide evidence not only of their abuse at the hand of southern slaveholders, but also of their resilience and determination to resist them.

Perhaps most important to bringing about emancipation were the enslaved people themselves, who remained ever vigilant for opportunities to gain freedom. This process unfolded unevenly and violently, with African American women often playing leading roles in community organization. In a sense, these efforts can be seen as extensions of earlier tactics of resistance, but the events of the Civil War presented unprecedented opportunities for new and more

lasting forms of fighting back. Once free, African Americans continued to work for freedom by enlisting in the Union army, supporting military efforts of their liberators, and, in time, supporting political measures that enabled their full civil rights.

To ensure the permanent legal end of slavery, Republicans drafted the Thirteenth Amendment during the war. Yet the end of legal slavery did not mean the end of racial injustice. During the war, ex-slaves were often segregated into disease-ridden contraband camps. After the war, the Republican Reconstruction program of guaranteeing black rights succumbed to persistent racism and southern white violence. Long after 1865, most black southerners continued to labor on plantations, albeit as nominally free tenants or sharecroppers, while facing public segregation and voting discrimination. The effects of slavery persisted long after emancipation.

50. Videos: The Civil War

In part one of our two part look at the U.S. Civil War, John looks into the causes of the war, and the motivations of the individuals who went to war. The overarching causes and the individual motivations were not always the same, you see. John also looks into why the North won, and whether that outcome was inevitable. The North's industrial and population advantages are examined, as are the problems of the Confederacy, including its need to build a nation at the same time it was fighting a war. As usual, John doesn't get much into the actual battle by battle breakdown. He does talk a little about the overarching strategy that won the war, and Grant's plan to just overwhelm the South with numbers. Grant took a lot of losses in the latter days of the war, but in the end, it did lead to the surrender of the South. If you want to learn more about the Civil War, Crash Course recommends these books:

- *Battle Cry of Freedom* by James McPherson
- *The Civil War* by Shelby Foote



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://library.achievingthedream.org/forsythtechamericanhistory1/?p=90>

In this second video, John Green teaches you how the Civil War played a large part in making the United States the country that it is today. He covers some of the key ways in which Abraham Lincoln influenced the outcome of the war, and how the lack of foreign intervention also helped the Union win the war. John also covers the technology that made the Civil War different than previous wars. New weapons helped to influence the outcomes of battles, but photography influenced how the public at large perceived the war. In addition, John gets into the long term effects of the war, including the federalization and unification of the United States. All of these things are covered along with homesteading, land grant universities, railroads, federal currency, and taxes.



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://library.achievingthedream.org/forsythtechamericanhistory1/?p=90>

PART XVI

APPENDICES

51. The Declaration of Independence

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. —That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, —That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. —Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harrass our people, and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction

foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

For Quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world:

For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:

For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury:

For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences:

For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies:

For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the

merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our Brittish brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

The 56 signatures on the Declaration appear in the positions indicated:

Column 1

Georgia:

Button Gwinnett

Lyman Hall

George Walton

Column 2

North Carolina:

William Hooper

Joseph Hewes

John Penn

South Carolina:

Edward Rutledge

Thomas Heyward, Jr.

Thomas Lynch, Jr.

Arthur Middleton

Column 3

Massachusetts:

John Hancock

Maryland:

Samuel Chase

William Paca

Thomas Stone

Charles Carroll of Carrollton

Virginia:

George Wythe

Richard Henry Lee

Thomas Jefferson

Benjamin Harrison

Thomas Nelson, Jr.

Francis Lightfoot Lee

Carter Braxton

Column 4

Pennsylvania:

Robert Morris

Benjamin Rush

Benjamin Franklin

John Morton

George Clymer

James Smith

George Taylor

James Wilson

George Ross

Delaware:

Caesar Rodney

George Read

Thomas McKean

Column 5

New York:

William Floyd

Philip Livingston

Francis Lewis

Lewis Morris

New Jersey:

Richard Stockton

John Witherspoon

Francis Hopkinson

John Hart

Abraham Clark

Column 6

New Hampshire:

Josiah Bartlett

William Whipple

Massachusetts:

Samuel Adams

John Adams

Robert Treat Paine

Elbridge Gerry

Rhode Island:

Stephen Hopkins

William Ellery

Connecticut:

Roger Sherman

Samuel Huntington

William Williams

Oliver Wolcott

New Hampshire:

Matthew Thornton

52. The Constitution

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Article. I.

Section. 1.

All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

Section. 2.

The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

No Person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the Age of twenty five Years, and been seven Years a Citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons. The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct. The Number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty Thousand, but each State shall have at Least one Representative; and until such enumeration shall be made, the State of New Hampshire shall

be entitled to chuse three, Massachusetts eight, Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations one, Connecticut five, New-York six, New Jersey four, Pennsylvania eight, Delaware one, Maryland six, Virginia ten, North Carolina five, South Carolina five, and Georgia three.

When vacancies happen in the Representation from any State, the Executive Authority thereof shall issue Writs of Election to fill such Vacancies.

The House of Representatives shall chuse their Speaker and other Officers; and shall have the sole Power of Impeachment.

Section. 3.

The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the Legislature thereof, for six Years; and each Senator shall have one Vote.

Immediately after they shall be assembled in Consequence of the first Election, they shall be divided as equally as may be into three Classes. The Seats of the Senators of the first Class shall be vacated at the Expiration of the second Year, of the second Class at the Expiration of the fourth Year, and of the third Class at the Expiration of the sixth Year, so that one third may be chosen every second Year; and if Vacancies happen by Resignation, or otherwise, during the Recess of the Legislature of any State, the Executive thereof may make temporary Appointments until the next Meeting of the Legislature, which shall then fill such Vacancies.

No Person shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty Years, and been nine Years a Citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State for which he shall be chosen.

The Vice President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no Vote, unless they be equally divided.

The Senate shall chuse their other Officers, and also a President pro tempore, in the Absence of the Vice President, or when he shall exercise the Office of President of the United States.

The Senate shall have the sole Power to try all Impeachments. When sitting for that Purpose, they shall be on Oath or Affirmation. When the President of the United States is tried, the Chief Justice

shall preside: And no Person shall be convicted without the Concurrence of two thirds of the Members present.

Judgment in Cases of Impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from Office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any Office of honor, Trust or Profit under the United States: but the Party convicted shall nevertheless be liable and subject to Indictment, Trial, Judgment and Punishment, according to Law.

Section. 4.

The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by Law make or alter such Regulations, except as to the Places of chusing Senators.

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every Year, and such Meeting shall be on the first Monday in December, unless they shall by Law appoint a different Day.

Section. 5.

Each House shall be the Judge of the Elections, Returns and Qualifications of its own Members, and a Majority of each shall constitute a Quorum to do Business; but a smaller Number may adjourn from day to day, and may be authorized to compel the Attendance of absent Members, in such Manner, and under such Penalties as each House may provide.

Each House may determine the Rules of its Proceedings, punish its Members for disorderly Behaviour, and, with the Concurrence of two thirds, expel a Member.

Each House shall keep a Journal of its Proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such Parts as may in their Judgment require Secrecy; and the Yeas and Nays of the Members of either House on any question shall, at the Desire of one fifth of those Present, be entered on the Journal.

Neither House, during the Session of Congress, shall, without the Consent of the other, adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other Place than that in which the two Houses shall be sitting.

Section. 6.

The Senators and Representatives shall receive a Compensation for their Services, to be ascertained by Law, and paid out of the Treasury of the United States. They shall in all Cases, except Treason, Felony and Breach of the Peace, be privileged from Arrest during their Attendance at the Session of their respective Houses, and in going to and returning from the same; and for any Speech or Debate in either House, they shall not be questioned in any other Place.

No Senator or Representative shall, during the Time for which he was elected, be appointed to any civil Office under the Authority of the United States, which shall have been created, or the Emoluments whereof shall have been encreased during such time; and no Person holding any Office under the United States, shall be a Member of either House during his Continuance in Office.

Section. 7.

All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with Amendments as on other Bills.

Every Bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it become a Law, be presented to the President of the United States; If he approve he shall sign it, but if not he shall return it, with his Objections to that House in which it shall have originated, who shall enter the Objections at large on their Journal, and proceed to reconsider it. If after such Reconsideration two thirds of that House shall agree to pass the Bill, it shall be sent, together with the Objections, to the other House, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and if approved by two thirds of that House, it shall become a Law. But in all such Cases the Votes of both Houses shall be determined by yeas and Nays, and the Names of the Persons voting for and against the Bill shall be entered on the Journal of each House respectively. If any Bill shall not be returned by the President within ten Days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the Same shall be a Law, in like Manner as if he had signed it, unless the Congress by their Adjournment prevent its Return, in which Case it shall not be a Law.

Every Order, Resolution, or Vote to which the Concurrence of the Senate and House of Representatives may be necessary (except on a question of Adjournment) shall be presented to the President of the United States; and before the Same shall take Effect, shall be approved by him, or being disapproved by him, shall be repassed by two thirds of the Senate and House of Representatives, according to the Rules and Limitations prescribed in the Case of a Bill.

Section. 8.

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

To borrow Money on the credit of the United States;

To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes;

To establish an uniform Rule of Naturalization, and uniform Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States;

To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures;

To provide for the Punishment of counterfeiting the Securities and current Coin of the United States;

To establish Post Offices and post Roads;

To promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries;

To constitute Tribunals inferior to the supreme Court;

To define and punish Piracies and Felonies committed on the high Seas, and Offences against the Law of Nations;

To declare War, grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal, and make Rules concerning Captures on Land and Water;

To raise and support Armies, but no Appropriation of Money to that Use shall be for a longer Term than two Years;

To provide and maintain a Navy;

To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces;

To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections and repel Invasions;

To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively, the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress;

To exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the Acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States, and to exercise like Authority over all Places purchased by the Consent of the Legislature of the State in which the Same shall be, for the Erection of Forts, Magazines, Arsenals, dock-Yards, and other needful Buildings;—And

To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

Section. 9.

The Migration or Importation of such Persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the Year one thousand eight hundred and eight, but a Tax or duty may be imposed on such Importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each Person.

The Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the public Safety may require it.

No Bill of Attainder or ex post facto Law shall be passed.

No Capitation, or other direct, Tax shall be laid, unless in Proportion to the Census or enumeration herein before directed to be taken.

No Tax or Duty shall be laid on Articles exported from any State.

No Preference shall be given by any Regulation of Commerce or Revenue to the Ports of one State over those of another: nor shall

Vessels bound to, or from, one State, be obliged to enter, clear, or pay Duties in another.

No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.

No Title of Nobility shall be granted by the United States: And no Person holding any Office of Profit or Trust under them, shall, without the Consent of the Congress, accept of any present, Emolument, Office, or Title, of any kind whatever, from any King, Prince, or foreign State.

Section. 10.

No State shall enter into any Treaty, Alliance, or Confederation; grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal; coin Money; emit Bills of Credit; make any Thing but gold and silver Coin a Tender in Payment of Debts; pass any Bill of Attainder, ex post facto Law, or Law impairing the Obligation of Contracts, or grant any Title of Nobility.

No State shall, without the Consent of the Congress, lay any Imposts or Duties on Imports or Exports, except what may be absolutely necessary for executing it's inspection Laws: and the net Produce of all Duties and Imposts, laid by any State on Imports or Exports, shall be for the Use of the Treasury of the United States; and all such Laws shall be subject to the Revision and Controul of the Congress.

No State shall, without the Consent of Congress, lay any Duty of Tonnage, keep Troops, or Ships of War in time of Peace, enter into any Agreement or Compact with another State, or with a foreign Power, or engage in War, unless actually invaded, or in such imminent Danger as will not admit of delay.

Article. II.

Section. 1.

The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his Office during the Term of four Years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same Term, be elected, as follows

Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector.

The Electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by Ballot for two Persons, of whom one at least shall not be an Inhabitant of the same State with themselves. And they shall make a List of all the Persons voted for, and of the Number of Votes for each; which List they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the Seat of the Government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the Presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the Certificates, and the Votes shall then be counted. The Person having the greatest Number of Votes shall be the President, if such Number be a Majority of the whole Number of Electors appointed; and if there be more than one who have such Majority, and have an equal Number of Votes, then the House of Representatives shall immediately chuse by Ballot one of them for President; and if no Person have a Majority, then from the five highest on the List the said House shall in like Manner chuse the President. But in chusing the President, the Votes shall be taken by States, the Representation from each State having one Vote; A quorum for this Purpose shall consist of a Member or Members from two thirds of the States, and a Majority of all the States shall be necessary to a Choice. In every Case, after the Choice of the President, the Person having the greatest Number of Votes of the Electors shall be the Vice President. But if there should remain two or more who have equal Votes, the Senate shall chuse from them by Ballot the Vice President.

The Congress may determine the Time of chusing the Electors, and the Day on which they shall give their Votes; which Day shall be the same throughout the United States.

No Person except a natural born Citizen, or a Citizen of the United States, at the time of the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be

eligible to the Office of President; neither shall any Person be eligible to that Office who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty five Years, and been fourteen Years a Resident within the United States.

In Case of the Removal of the President from Office, or of his Death, Resignation, or Inability to discharge the Powers and Duties of the said Office, the Same shall devolve on the Vice President, and the Congress may by Law provide for the Case of Removal, Death, Resignation or Inability, both of the President and Vice President, declaring what Officer shall then act as President, and such Officer shall act accordingly, until the Disability be removed, or a President shall be elected.

The President shall, at stated Times, receive for his Services, a Compensation, which shall neither be encreased nor diminished during the Period for which he shall have been elected, and he shall not receive within that Period any other Emolument from the United States, or any of them.

Before he enter on the Execution of his Office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation:—"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

Section. 2.

The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States; he may require the Opinion, in writing, of the principal Officer in each of the executive Departments, upon any Subject relating to the Duties of their respective Offices, and he shall have Power to grant Reprieves and Pardons for Offences against the United States, except in Cases of Impeachment.

He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public

Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law: but the Congress may by Law vest the Appointment of such inferior Officers, as they think proper, in the President alone, in the Courts of Law, or in the Heads of Departments.

The President shall have Power to fill up all Vacancies that may happen during the Recess of the Senate, by granting Commissions which shall expire at the End of their next Session.

Section. 3.

He shall from time to time give to the Congress Information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary Occasions, convene both Houses, or either of them, and in Case of Disagreement between them, with Respect to the Time of Adjournment, he may adjourn them to such Time as he shall think proper; he shall receive Ambassadors and other public Ministers; he shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed, and shall Commission all the Officers of the United States.

Section. 4.

The President, Vice President and all civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors.

Article III.

Section. 1.

The judicial Power of the United States, shall be vested in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish. The Judges, both of the supreme and inferior Courts, shall hold their Offices during good Behaviour, and shall, at stated Times, receive for their Services, a Compensation, which shall not be diminished during their Continuance in Office.

Section. 2.

The judicial Power shall extend to all Cases, in Law and Equity,

arising under this Constitution, the Laws of the United States, and Treaties made, or which shall be made, under their Authority;—to all Cases affecting Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls;—to all Cases of admiralty and maritime Jurisdiction;—to Controversies to which the United States shall be a Party;—to Controversies between two or more States;— between a State and Citizens of another State,—between Citizens of different States,—between Citizens of the same State claiming Lands under Grants of different States, and between a State, or the Citizens thereof, and foreign States, Citizens or Subjects.

In all Cases affecting Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, and those in which a State shall be Party, the supreme Court shall have original Jurisdiction. In all the other Cases before mentioned, the supreme Court shall have appellate Jurisdiction, both as to Law and Fact, with such Exceptions, and under such Regulations as the Congress shall make.

The Trial of all Crimes, except in Cases of Impeachment, shall be by Jury; and such Trial shall be held in the State where the said Crimes shall have been committed; but when not committed within any State, the Trial shall be at such Place or Places as the Congress may by Law have directed.

Section. 3.

Treason against the United States, shall consist only in levying War against them, or in adhering to their Enemies, giving them Aid and Comfort. No Person shall be convicted of Treason unless on the Testimony of two Witnesses to the same overt Act, or on Confession in open Court.

The Congress shall have Power to declare the Punishment of Treason, but no Attainder of Treason shall work Corruption of Blood, or Forfeiture except during the Life of the Person attainted.

Article. IV.

Section. 1.

Full Faith and Credit shall be given in each State to the public Acts, Records, and judicial Proceedings of every other State. And the Congress may by general Laws prescribe the Manner in which

such Acts, Records and Proceedings shall be proved, and the Effect thereof.

Section. 2.

The Citizens of each State shall be entitled to all Privileges and Immunities of Citizens in the several States.

A Person charged in any State with Treason, Felony, or other Crime, who shall flee from Justice, and be found in another State, shall on Demand of the executive Authority of the State from which he fled, be delivered up, to be removed to the State having Jurisdiction of the Crime.

No Person held to Service or Labour in one State, under the Laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in Consequence of any Law or Regulation therein, be discharged from such Service or Labour, but shall be delivered up on Claim of the Party to whom such Service or Labour may be due.

Section. 3.

New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union; but no new State shall be formed or erected within the Jurisdiction of any other State; nor any State be formed by the Junction of two or more States, or Parts of States, without the Consent of the Legislatures of the States concerned as well as of the Congress.

The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

Section. 4.

The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion; and on Application of the Legislature, or of the Executive (when the Legislature cannot be convened), against domestic Violence.

Article. V.

The Congress, whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose Amendments to this Constitution, or,

on the Application of the Legislatures of two thirds of the several States, shall call a Convention for proposing Amendments, which, in either Case, shall be valid to all Intents and Purposes, as Part of this Constitution, when ratified by the Legislatures of three fourths of the several States, or by Conventions in three fourths thereof, as the one or the other Mode of Ratification may be proposed by the Congress; Provided that no Amendment which may be made prior to the Year One thousand eight hundred and eight shall in any Manner affect the first and fourth Clauses in the Ninth Section of the first Article; and that no State, without its Consent, shall be deprived of its equal Suffrage in the Senate.

Article. VI.

All Debts contracted and Engagements entered into, before the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be as valid against the United States under this Constitution, as under the Confederation.

This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof; and all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding.

The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the Members of the several State Legislatures, and all executive and judicial Officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution; but no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States.

Article. VII.

The Ratification of the Conventions of nine States, shall be sufficient for the Establishment of this Constitution between the States so ratifying the Same.

Done in Convention by the Unanimous Consent of the States present the Seventeenth Day of September in the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and Eighty seven and of the

Independance of the United States of America the Twelfth In
witness whereof We have hereunto subscribed our Names,

G. Washington

Presidt and deputy from Virginia

Delaware

Geo: Read

Gunning Bedford jun

John Dickinson

Richard Bassett

Jaco: Broom

Maryland

James McHenry

Dan of St Thos. Jenifer

Danl. Carroll

Virginia

John Blair

James Madison Jr.

North Carolina

Wm. Blount

Richd. Dobbs Spaight

Hu Williamson

South Carolina

J. Rutledge

Charles Cotesworth Pinckney

Charles Pinckney

Pierce Butler

Georgia

William Few

Abr Baldwin

New Hampshire

John Langdon

Nicholas Gilman

Massachusetts

Nathaniel Gorham

Rufus King

Connecticut

Wm. Saml. Johnson

Roger Sherman

New York

Alexander Hamilton

New Jersey

Wil: Livingston

David Brearley

Wm. Paterson

Jona: Dayton

Pennsylvania

B Franklin

Thomas Mifflin

Robt. Morris

Geo. Clymer

Thos. FitzSimons

Jared Ingersoll

James Wilson

Gouv Morris

Constitutional Amendments

The U.S. Bill of Rights (Amendments 1-10)

The Preamble to The Bill of Rights

Congress of the United States begun and held at the City of New-York, on Wednesday the fourth of March, one thousand seven hundred and eighty nine.

The Conventions of a number of the States, having at the time of their adopting the Constitution, expressed a desire, in order to prevent misconstruction or abuse of its powers, that further declaratory and restrictive clauses should be added: And as extending the ground of public confidence in the Government, will best ensure the beneficent ends of its institution.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, two thirds of both Houses concurring, that the following Articles be proposed

to the Legislatures of the several States, as amendments to the Constitution of the United States, all, or any of which Articles, when ratified by three fourths of the said Legislatures, to be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of the said Constitution; viz.

Articles in addition to, and Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America, proposed by Congress, and ratified by the Legislatures of the several States, pursuant to the fifth Article of the original Constitution.

Note: The following text is a transcription of the first ten amendments to the Constitution in their original form. These amendments were ratified December 15, 1791, and form what is known as the “Bill of Rights.”

Amendment I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Amendment II

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

Amendment III

No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

Amendment IV

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Amendment V

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand

Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

Amendment VI

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence.

Amendment VII

In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

Amendment VIII

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

Amendment IX

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

Amendment X

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

Amendment XI

The Judicial power of the United States shall not be construed to extend to any suit in law or equity, commenced or prosecuted

against one of the United States by Citizens of another State, or by Citizens or Subjects of any Foreign State.

Amendment XII

The Electors shall meet in their respective states and vote by ballot for President and Vice-President, one of whom, at least, shall not be an inhabitant of the same state with themselves; they shall name in their ballots the person voted for as President, and in distinct ballots the person voted for as Vice-President, and they shall make distinct lists of all persons voted for as President, and of all persons voted for as Vice-President, and of the number of votes for each, which lists they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of the government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate; – the President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted; – The person having the greatest number of votes for President, shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers not exceeding three on the list of those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. But in choosing the President, the votes shall be taken by states, the representation from each state having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the states, and a majority of all the states shall be necessary to a choice. [And if the House of Representatives shall not choose a President whenever the right of choice shall devolve upon them, before the fourth day of March next following, then the Vice-President shall act as President, as in case of the death or other constitutional disability of the President. –]* The person having the greatest number of votes as Vice-President, shall be the Vice-President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed, and if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list, the Senate shall choose the Vice-President; a quorum for the purpose shall consist of two-thirds of the whole number of

Senators, and a majority of the whole number shall be necessary to a choice. But no person constitutionally ineligible to the office of President shall be eligible to that of Vice-President of the United States.

**Superseded by Section 3 of the 20th amendment.*

Amendment XIII

Section 1.

Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2.

Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Amendment XIV

Section 1.

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Section 2.

Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice-President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the Executive and Judicial officers of a State, or the members of the Legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age,* and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of

such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State.

Section 3.

No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice-President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may by a vote of two-thirds of each House, remove such disability.

Section 4.

The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any State shall assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave; but all such debts, obligations and claims shall be held illegal and void.

Section 5.

The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

**Changed by Section 1 of the 26th amendment.*

Amendment XV

Section 1.

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude—

Section 2.

The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Amendment XVI

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.

Amendment XVII

The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, elected by the people thereof, for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote. The electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State legislatures.

When vacancies happen in the representation of any State in the Senate, the executive authority of such State shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies: *Provided*, That the legislature of any State may empower the executive thereof to make temporary appointments until the people fill the vacancies by election as the legislature may direct.

This amendment shall not be so construed as to affect the election or term of any Senator chosen before it becomes valid as part of the Constitution.

Amendment XVIII

Section 1.

After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes is hereby prohibited.

Section 2.

The Congress and the several States shall have concurrent power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Section 3.

This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

Amendment XIX

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Amendment XX

Section 1.

The terms of the President and the Vice President shall end at noon on the 20th day of January, and the terms of Senators and Representatives at noon on the 3d day of January, of the years in which such terms would have ended if this article had not been ratified; and the terms of their successors shall then begin.

Section 2.

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting shall begin at noon on the 3d day of January, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.

Section 3.

If, at the time fixed for the beginning of the term of the President, the President elect shall have died, the Vice President elect shall become President. If a President shall not have been chosen before the time fixed for the beginning of his term, or if the President elect shall have failed to qualify, then the Vice President elect shall act as President until a President shall have qualified; and the Congress may by law provide for the case wherein neither a President elect nor a Vice President elect shall have qualified, declaring who shall then act as President, or the manner in which one who is to act shall be selected, and such person shall act accordingly until a President or Vice President shall have qualified.

Section 4.

The Congress may by law provide for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the House of Representatives may choose a President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them, and for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the Senate may choose a Vice President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them.

Section 5.

Sections 1 and 2 shall take effect on the 15th day of October following the ratification of this article.

Section 6.

This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission.

Amendment XXI

Section 1.

The eighteenth article of amendment to the Constitution of the United States is hereby repealed.

Section 2.

The transportation or importation into any State, Territory, or possession of the United States for delivery or use therein of intoxicating liquors, in violation of the laws thereof, is hereby prohibited.

Section 3.

This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by conventions in the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

Amendment XXII

Section 1.

No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice, and no person who has held the office of President, or acted as President, for more than two years of a term to which some other person was elected President shall be elected to the office of the President more than once. But this Article shall not apply to any person holding the office of President when this Article was proposed by the Congress, and shall not prevent any person who may be holding the office of President, or acting as President, during the term within which this Article becomes operative from holding the office of President or acting as President during the remainder of such term.

Section 2.

This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission to the States by the Congress.

Amendment XXIII

Section 1.

The District constituting the seat of Government of the United States shall appoint in such manner as the Congress may direct:

A number of electors of President and Vice President equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives in Congress to which the District would be entitled if it were a State, but in no event more than the least populous State; they shall be in addition to those appointed by the States, but they shall be considered, for the purposes of the election of President and Vice President, to be electors appointed by a State; and they shall meet in the District and perform such duties as provided by the twelfth article of amendment.

Section 2.

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Amendment XXIV

Section 1.

The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax.

Section 2.

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Amendment XXV

Section 1.

In case of the removal of the President from office or of his death or resignation, the Vice President shall become President.

Section 2.

Whenever there is a vacancy in the office of the Vice President, the President shall nominate a Vice President who shall take office upon confirmation by a majority vote of both Houses of Congress.

Section 3.

Whenever the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that he is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, and until he transmits to them a written declaration to the contrary, such powers and duties shall be discharged by the Vice President as Acting President.

Section 4.

Whenever the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive departments or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall immediately assume the powers and duties of the office as Acting President.

Thereafter, when the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that no inability exists, he shall resume the powers and duties of his office unless the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive department or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit within four days to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office. Thereupon Congress shall decide the issue, assembling within forty-eight hours for that purpose if not in session. If the Congress, within twenty-one days after receipt of the latter written declaration, or, if Congress is not in session, within twenty-one days after Congress is required to assemble, determines by two-thirds vote of both Houses that the President

is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall continue to discharge the same as Acting President; otherwise, the President shall resume the powers and duties of his office.

Amendment XXVI

Section 1.

The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age.

Section 2.

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Amendment XXVII

No law, varying the compensation for the services of the Senators and Representatives, shall take effect, until an election of Representatives shall have intervened.

53. Presidents of the United States of America

Presidents of the United States of America

Order	Election Year	President
1	1788–1789	George Washington
1	1792	George Washington
2	1796	John Adams
3	1800	Thomas Jefferson
3	1804	Thomas Jefferson
4	1808	James Madison
4	1812	James Madison
5	1816	James Monroe
5	1820	James Monroe
6	1824	John Quincy Adams
7	1828	Andrew Jackson
7	1832	Andrew Jackson
8	1836	Martin Van Buren
9	1840	William Henry Harrison
10	1840	John Tyler
11	1844	James K. Polk
12	1848	Zachary Taylor
13	1848	Mallard Fillmore
14	1852	Franklin Pierce
15	1856	James Buchanan
16	1860	Abraham Lincoln
16	1864	Abraham Lincoln
17	1864	Andrew Johnson
18	1868	Ulysses S. Grant
18	1872	Ulysses S. Grant
19	1876	Rutherford B. Hayes
20	1880	James A. Garfield
21	1880	Chester A. Arthur

Order	Election Year	President
22	1884	Grover Cleveland
23	1888	Benjamin Harrison
24	1892	Grover Cleveland
25	1896	William McKinley
25	1900	William McKinley
26	1904	Theodore Roosevelt
27	1908	William Howard Taft
28	1912	Woodrow Wilson
28	1916	Woodrow Wilson
29	1920	Warren G. Harding
30	1924	Calvin Coolidge
31	1928	Herbert Hoover
32	1932	Franklin D. Roosevelt
32	1936	Franklin D. Roosevelt
32	1940	Franklin D. Roosevelt
32	1944	Franklin D. Roosevelt
33	1948	Harry S. Truman
34	1952	Dwight D. Eisenhower
34	1956	Dwight D. Eisenhower
35	1960	John F. Kennedy
36	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
37	1968	Richard Nixon
37	1972	Richard Nixon
38	1972	Gerald Ford
39	1976	Jimmy Carter
40	1980	Ronald Reagan
40	1984	Ronald Reagan
41	1988	George H. W. Bush
42	1992	Bill Clinton

Order	Election Year	President
42	1996	Bill Clinton
43	2000	George W. Bush
43	2004	George W. Bush
44	2008	Barack Obama
44	2012	Barack Obama

54. U.S. Political Map



(credit: U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey, The National Atlas of the United States of America/nationalatlas.gov)

55. U.S. Topographical Map



56. United States Population Chart

United States Population Chart¹

Census Year	Population	Census Year	Population
1610	350	1820	9,638,453
1620	2,302	1830	12,866,020
1630	4,646	1840	17,069,453
1640	26,634	1850	23,191,876
1650	50,368	1860	31,443,321
1660	75,058	1870	38,558,371
1670	111,935	1880	50,189,209
1680	151,507	1890	62,979,766
1690	210,372	1900	76,212,168
1700	250,888	1910	92,228,496
1710	331,711	1920	106,021,537
1720	466,185	1930	123,202,624
1730	629,445	1940	132,164,569
1740	905,563	1950	151,325,798
1750	1,170,760	1960	179,323,175
1760	1,593,625	1970	203,211,926
1770	2,148,076	1980	226,656,805
1780	2,780,369	1990	248,709,873
1790	3,929,214	2000	281,421,906
1800	5,308,483	2010	308,745,538
1810	7,239,881		

Footnotes

- [1.](#) Population figures for the decades before the first U.S. census in 1790 are estimates.

57. Final Exam Review Terms

Chapter 33

1. Dwight Eisenhower
2. Korean War conclusion
3. McCarthy Army Hearings
4. Ed Murrow
5. Joseph Welch
6. John Foster Dulles
7. Liberation policy
8. Brinkmanship
9. MAD
10. Ho Chi Minh
11. Domino Theory
12. Viet Minh
13. NATO
14. SEATO
15. Geneva Accords
16. Ngo Dinh Diem
17. Gamal Abdel Nasser
18. Suez Crises
19. Nikita Khrushchev
20. Hungary Revolt
21. Sputnik
22. NASA
23. ICBM
24. Iron Curtain
25. U2 Summit
26. Fidel Castro
27. Brown v. Board
28. Little Rock Nine
29. Earl Warren
30. Montgomery Bus Boycott

31. Rosa Parks
32. Martin Luther King, Jr.
33. Southern Christian Leadership Conference
34. Military-Industrial Complex

Chapter 34

1. John F. Kennedy
2. Woolworth Sit-in
3. Freedom Rides
4. March on Washington
5. Bay of Pigs
6. Cuban Missile Crisis
7. Berlin Wall
8. Lyndon B. Johnson
9. Great Society
10. War on Poverty
11. Civil Rights Act 1964
12. Voting Rights Act 1965
13. Black Power
14. Malcolm X
15. Nation of Islam
16. Black Panthers
17. Stokely Carmichael
18. "African-American"
19. Gulf of Tonkin Resolution
20. Search and Destroy
21. Body Count
22. Rolling Thunder
23. Tet Offensive
24. Walter Cronkite
25. Napalm
26. Huey Helicopters
27. Agent Orange
28. 1968 Democratic Convention

Chapter 35

1. New Left Student Movements
2. SDS
3. Counterculture
4. Woodstock
5. Betty Freidan
6. *Feminine Mystique*
7. NOW
8. Roe vs. Wade
9. Sexual Revolution
10. Caesar Chavez
11. AIM
12. Neil Armstrong
13. Richard Nixon
14. My Lai
15. Pentagon Papers
16. Henry Kissinger
17. Credibility Gap
18. Détente
19. OPEC
20. Stagflation
21. Watergate
22. Freedom of Information Act
23. War Powers Act
24. Gerald Ford
25. WIN
26. Jimmy Carter
27. Camp David Accords
28. Panama Canal Treaty
29. Iranian Hostage Crisis
30. Ayatollah Khomeini
31. Disco
32. Multiculturalism
33. Corporate Rock

Chapter 36

1. Ronald Reagan
2. Jerry Falwell
3. Moral Majority
4. Reaganomics
5. Evil Empire
6. Strategic Defense Initiative
7. Iran-Contra
8. Oliver North
9. Mikhail Gorbachev
10. Glasnost
11. Perestroika
12. Tiananmen Square
13. Berlin Wall Collapse
14. Manuel Noriega
15. George Bush
16. Desert Storm
17. Map Terms
18. Vietnam
19. Cuba
20. Iran
21. Berlin
22. Panama
23. Little Rock, AR
24. Nicaragua
25. Moscow
26. Beijing
27. Cambodia

58. Further Reading

The Pre-Columbian World and Early Globalization

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