

The First Americans

About 120,000 years ago, the Earth fell into an ice age. The northern polar ice cap grew southward, water solidified into ice, and ocean levels fell. With the lowering of the oceans, hidden land was exposed, including a land bridge connecting Siberia (located in modern-day eastern Russia) and Alaska. Between 15,000 and 50,000 years ago, various small, nomadic hunting groups from Asia crossed the land bridge, becoming the first human inhabitants of the Americas.

Over the next millennia, these earliest Americans dispersed across much of the Western Hemisphere. As the Ice Age came to an end around 10,000 years ago and Earth's atmosphere warmed, the land that these groups inhabited changed dramatically. Sea levels rose and melting glaciers filled the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Basin with water. Glaciers receded northward, and frozen plains gave way to deciduous eastern forests, grassy central plains, and desert throughout the West. In time, the land bridge disappeared back under the body of water now known as the Bering Strait.

The descendants of the earliest Americans changed with the landscape. As Ice Age animals such as woolly mammoths disappeared, hunters began to prey on smaller game. The groups also fished and gathered local provisions, like seeds and nuts, from the land. About 5,000 years ago, some groups began to domesticate plants. As these groups learned how to farm and more efficiently use natural resources, they required less land, and many in the East and Midwest gave up their nomadic lifestyle and established small, stable communities by around 300 B.C.

The Emergence of Tribes

Once they established permanent settlements, Native American groups began to form what are known today as tribes. Different tribes developed their own languages and social hierarchies, and distinct religious beliefs and practices. Many tribes invented specialized tools such as the bow and arrow, and mastered skills like pottery, weaving, and basketry.

Tribes in neighboring geographic areas often maintained contact with each other through trade and warfare. Through this contact, an extensive trade network developed, spanning much of the North and South American continent. However, the tribes remained distinct, each adapting to its own particular geography. Modern day anthropologists and archeologists categorize Native American tribes by geographic area.

Northwest Coast

Chinook, Haida, and other tribes spanned the Pacific coast from Alaska to California, living primarily off the abundant fish. The Northwest tribes built totem poles depicting supernatural creatures. They were proficient in other arts as well.

California

Within California, tribes such as the Chumash and Pomo lived in small villages of about one hundred people. They specialized in processing acorns, which were one of the region's many abundant resources that allowed local tribes to prosper.

Southwest

In the early history of the Southwest, the dominant Anasazi tribe—known for their elaborate cliff dwellings—mastered irrigation and farming. By the civilization's peak in the twelfth century, some village populations topped 1,000. A system of roads connected many of these villages, and it seems likely that Anasazi trade networks extended as far as northern Mesoamerica, since archeologists have found artifacts in Anasazi territory that could only have been produced by civilizations in Mexico.

Yet around 1300 a.d., tens of thousands of Anasazi people deserted their dwellings en masse, possibly due to drought, warfare, or depletion of natural resources. They spread throughout the Southwest, and their descendants, such as the Hopi and Zuni, are known as Pueblo tribes. (Pueblo means "village" in Spanish, and refers to both the people and the villages in which they lived.) These Pueblo tribes, along with the Navajos and Apaches who migrated from the north around the fourteenth century, farmed along rivers using advanced irrigation techniques, foraged for food, and mined turquoise for trade with Mexico.

Great Basin, Plateau

The Paiute, Shoshone, and Ute tribes made their home in the Great Basin, between the Sierra Nevada Mountains to the west and the Rockies to the east. This land, too dry for farming, gave rise to foraging bands who hunted small mammals and gathered seeds and nuts. Other tribes inhabited the Plateau—a high, flat expanse to the north of the Great Basin—and lived as food gatherers, picking berries, seeds, and roots.

Plains

The Cheyenne, Sioux, and other tribes hunted in the Great Plains, which extended from the Rocky Mountains to the Mississippi River. The Plains were largely uninhabited before the arrival of Columbus. When Europeans brought horses and guns into the Plains, the tribes developed into powerful hunting groups.

Eastern Woodlands

The Iroquois tribes, known as the Five Nations, controlled the Northeast. The Cherokee and other tribes inhabited the Southeast; the Fox, Chee, and others lived around the Great Lakes; and the Mississippian culture dominated the Mississippi flood plains. While all these Eastern Woodlands tribes hunted, many were skilled in agriculture, employing the “slash and burn” technique and crop rotation to manage their land for food production. These tribes are also known for their skill with crafts and their well-developed trading networks.

Of these Eastern Woodlands tribes, the Mississippian tribes in particular were skilled in small-scale architecture. Known as “mound builders,” they built large platform mounds at the center of their towns, which served as religious temples for ceremony or burial, or as the homes of tribal leaders. Before the age of European exploration, the Mississippian centers collapsed and the inhabitants fled to establish small villages.

Mesoamerica

Some Native Americans formed rich and powerful civilizations in Mesoamerica, south of the present-day United States. The ancient Aztecs (centered near Mexico City) are known for their architecture, which includes stone pyramids. The Maya of Central America are also known for their architecture, as well as their advanced astronomy, mathematics, calendar systems, and for developing their own form of writing. The Incas, based in Peru, built an extensive network of towns throughout the Andes.

Exploration Before Columbus

By the time **Christopher Columbus** landed in the Western Hemisphere in 1492, the New World had already been “discovered” more than once. First, of course, there were the Native Americans we discussed in the previous chapter. But there is solid evidence that other Europeans made it to the Americas long before Columbus did. Around A.D. 1000, Viking Norsemen led by **Leif Ericson** sailed from Norway across the Atlantic Ocean and settled in Newfoundland, in northeast Canada. These Vikings also explored some distance up and down the coast. This settlement, however, was short-lived. The Norsemen soon sailed back across the ocean, having had little to no effect on North America.

The Age of Exploration

Though Columbus was not the first to discover the New World, his landing in the New World in 1492 is important: it ushered in an era of unprecedented European exploration and settlement of the Americas. This period is known as the Age of Exploration. During this age, European explorers searched for trade routes, overseas wealth, and adventure. Technological innovations spurred the exploration boom. A “maritime revolution” in Europe saw the invention of the the astrolabe, a device used to determine latitude; the caravel, an large ship of unprecedented speed; and the magnetic compass.

Important Names in The Age of Exploration		
Name	Country	Achievement(s)
Christopher Columbus	Spain	1492: Reached Bahamas; explored Cuba, Haiti 1493: Established Santo Domingo

John Cabot	England	1497/8: Claimed Nova Scotia, Newfoundland for England
Amerigo Vespucci	Spain, Portugal	1499: Explored coast of S. America for Spain 1501: Explored coast of S. America for Portugal
Ponce de Leon	Spain	1513/21: Explored Florida
Name	Country	Achievement(s)
Ferdinand Magellan	Spain	1519: Began the first circumnavigation of the globe
Hernando Cortez	Spain	1519–1522: Conquered the Aztecs in Mexico
Francisco Pizarro	Spain	1530–1536: Conquered the Incas in Peru
Hernando de Soto	Spain	1539–1542: Explored coast between Mississippi River and Florida
Jacques Cartier	France	1542: Traveled St. Lawrence River to Montreal
Samuel de Champlain	France	1608–1615: Explored Great Lakes, founded Quebec, established fur trade with Native Americans
Henry Hudson	Netherlands	1609–1611: Sailed up Hudson River

The Major Players in the Age of Exploration

The individual explorers often get the glory, but for the SAT II test, it is more important that you know the broader context: the nations that sponsored those explorers; the reasons those nations were so interested in exploring and settling the New World; and the geographical territories that each nation claimed as its own. Don't get us wrong: familiarity with the individual explorers is helpful (that's why we gave you the chart), but you should understand the explorer's contributions within the larger context of the age.

Spain

The Spanish monarchy began the Age of Exploration when it sponsored Christopher Columbus's journey westward, across the Atlantic Ocean, in search of Asia. Columbus failed to reach Asia, landing instead on the Bahama Islands in 1492. He returned to the New World in 1493 and established the settlement of Santo Domingo as a base for further exploration. In 1493, the Pope declared that all lands west of the Azores and the Cape Verde Islands belonged to Spain, but Portugal, another great sea power, disputed the papal decree. The two countries reached a compromise with the **Treaty of Tordesillas** in 1494, which divided all future discoveries between Castile (a region of Spain) and Portugal.

The Treaty of Tordesillas reveals that both Portugal and Spain led the charge in exploring the New World. But while the Portuguese focused on navigation and geographical observation, the Spanish put their efforts into expedition and colonization.

After the Treaty of Tordesillas, Spain quickly established itself as the premier European power in the New World, sending wave after wave of explorers into South America. These Spanish expeditions, led by **conquistadors**, set out in search of gold, slaves, lucrative trade routes, and fame. Indeed, they succeeded in creating an enormous empire. By 1522, the Spaniard Hernando Cortez had conquered the Aztecs in Mexico and by 1536, under the leadership of Francisco Pizarro, Spain had conquered the Incas in Peru. Conquistadors plundered the indigenous tribes for treasure and slave labor. They established numerous *encomiendas*—sprawling estates populated with native slaves. Under Conquistador rule, many of the natives died from disease, malnutrition, and fatigue, and they were soon replaced on the *encomiendas* by African slaves brought in by Portuguese slave traders.

In North America, Spain initially proved just as dominant. Ponce de Leon claimed Florida for Spain in 1513, and Hernando de Soto led a Spanish exploration of the southeastern United States in 1539, discovering the Mississippi River. In 1565, Spain established the first successful European settlement in North America—a fortress in St. Augustine, Florida. Around the turn of the seventeenth century, Spanish settlers moved into the Southwest, establishing the colony of Santa Fe in 1610. In an effort to maintain control of North America, the Spanish attacked many British and French settlements and destroyed forts. Spain saw its claim on Florida as particularly important in the effort to diminish English and French expansion southward.

France

France also played a strong role in the New World, though its efforts were mainly confined to North

America. The French led the charge to find a Northwest Passage, a much-hoped-for water route through which ships might be able to cross the Americas to access Asia. In three voyages between 1534 and 1542, French explorer **Jacques Cartier** traveled the St. Lawrence River as far as Montreal. The Northwest Passage eluded him (it doesn't exist), but his explorations established France's early dominance of North America's major waterways. In 1562, French settlers briefly and unsuccessfully attempted to settle in what is now South Carolina, and in 1564, the Spanish attacked and destroyed a French settlement near Jacksonville, Florida.

Despite its failures, France continued to be a major player in North America. Most notably, the French engaged in the highly profitable fur trade, setting up trading outposts throughout Newfoundland, Maine, and regions farther west. **Samuel de Champlain** founded the first permanent French settlement in 1608 at Quebec, and established a fur trade with the region's Native American tribes. By the end of the seventeenth century the French controlled the St. Lawrence River, the Mississippi River, the Great Lakes and, therefore, much of the land in the heart of the continent. Of all the European colonial powers, the French enjoyed the best relationship with Native Americans.

The Netherlands

The Dutch East India Company became interested in North American settlement in 1609, when **Henry Hudson** sailed up the river that now carries his name. In 1625, the Dutch bought Manhattan island from the natives who lived there and established the settlement of New Amsterdam at the mouth of the Hudson River. While the colony flourished on account of the fur trade, the Dutch did little to expand their landholdings beyond their domain around the Hudson. A European conflict between England and the Netherlands spread to the New World in 1664, during which the English took over New Amsterdam, renaming it New York. After 1664, Dutch influence waned.

England

Compared to other European powers, England got a relatively late start in the exploration and colonization of the New World. True, King Henry VII of England did send explorer **John Cabot** across the Atlantic in 1497, and Cabot claimed Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and the Grand Banks for England. But after Cabot's efforts, the English became more concerned with domestic issues and generally ceased exploring. For much of the sixteenth century, England had no real presence in the New World.

English interest in the New World increased in the second half of the sixteenth century. Religious groups (such as the Puritans, who disagreed with the practices of the Church of England) saw the New World as a place where they could practice their religion without persecution. The English monarchy was enticed by the wealth pouring into Spain from Mexico, South America, and the West Indies; and the riches Captain Francis Drake and others plundered from Spanish ships off of Central America in the late 1570s particularly piqued England's interest. Catholic Spain felt threatened by British sea power and the influx of English Protestants, and the two European powers quickly became bitter rivals, each scheming to position strategic bases throughout the New World.

England's first effort to establish a settlement in the New World ended badly. In 1584, Sir Walter Raleigh gained a royal charter to found the settlement of Roanoke, located on an island off the coast of North Carolina. Raids by Native American tribes and disease devastated the settlement, and it was eventually abandoned. Still, the Spanish monarchy, determined to eliminate their New World rivals, dispatched the great Spanish Armada in 1588 to attack the British off the coast of England. Through luck and ingenuity, a fleet of outgunned English ships decimated the Armada. With this victory, England began its ascent as a premier naval power, which bolstered its colonial efforts, and Spain fell into a slow decline.

The struggle between Britain and Spain dragged on throughout the end of the sixteenth century, so that by 1600 the English crown and Parliament were hesitant to spend money on colonization. In place of government funding, **joint-stock companies** formed to gather funding for colonization through the sale of public stock. Along with religious groups—who saw the rise of the English navy as a real opportunity to move to the New World and escape religious persecution—these companies were responsible for most English colonization throughout the seventeenth century.

Effects of Colonization on the Natives

Colonization had a disastrous effect on the native population. War, slavery, and starvation claimed many lives, but disease, especially smallpox, had the most devastating effect. In Mexico, the native population plummeted from 25 million in 1519 to 2 million by 1600. European settlement physically displaced numerous tribes, setting in motion the sad fate of Native Americans throughout American

history.

The Spanish, however, provided the Native Americans of the Great Plains with an unintended gift: horses. During the conquistadors' expeditions into the Southwest, some horses escaped and formed large herds on the Great Plains. Within a few generations, Native Americans in the plains region became experts on horseback, expanding their hunting and trading capabilities and dramatically transforming Native American culture.

The Early English Colonies

Because England got such a late start in the colonization game, they couldn't just set up their colonies wherever they wanted. Spain dominated South America, Mexico, the West Indies, the American Southwest, and Florida. The French held sway along North America's major waterways. In addition, the dense forests and occasionally hostile Native American tribes prevented English settlers from moving westward past the Appalachian Mountains. The early English settlements were therefore concentrated along the eastern coast of North America.

There were three types of British colonies: royal, proprietary, and self-governing. Each type had its own characteristics.

- **Royal colonies** were owned by the king.
- **Proprietary colonies**, such as Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware, were basically land grants from the British government. Individuals were awarded huge tracts of land that they would then supervise and govern, usually in return for political or financial favors. These colonial governors reported directly to the king.
- **Self-governing colonies**, including Rhode Island and Connecticut, formed when the king granted a charter to a joint-stock company, and the company then set up its own government independent of the crown. The king could revoke the colonial charter at any time and convert a self-governing colony into a royal colony.

The SAT II test will focus on the particularly important English colonies of Jamestown, Plymouth, and the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Jamestown

Nearly twenty years after the failure of the English settlement at Roanoke, two separate joint-stock companies set out to found settlements along the Atlantic seaboard. In 1606, England's King James I authorized a charter granting land in what was then called Virginia (but stretched from modern-day Maine to North Carolina) to the Virginia Company of Plymouth and the Virginia Company of London. Colonists, considered employees of their respective companies, journeyed to America in 1607. The Virginia Company of Plymouth failed miserably, and its settlement in Sagadahoc, Maine was abandoned within two years. The Virginia Company of London was more successful, though in the New World, success was something of a relative term.

Jamestown's Early Years

The 105 original Jamestown colonists were all men. Jamestown was a business venture, not a place to raise a family. The colonists took this ethic to heart and focused all their efforts on getting rich, neglecting to tend to any sort of agriculture. As a result, more than half of the colonists died of malnourishment and starvation within the first year. Only 38 colonists remained when reinforcements arrived in 1608.

Captain **John Smith**, one of the surviving original colonists, soon emerged as a prominent leader. In 1608, Smith organized work gangs to ensure the colony had food and shelter and made rules to control sanitation and hygiene. During the winter of 1608–1609, only twelve of 200 men died. Smith also excelled in diplomacy, maintaining friendly ties with the nearby Powhatan Confederacy. But when Smith was wounded in 1609 and returned to England, the colony staggered toward collapse. Out of a population of about 500 colonists in Jamestown in September 1609, 400 died by May 1610. Relations with the nearby Native Americans deteriorated, and in 1610 the first Anglo-Powhatan War erupted.

Tobacco, Money, and Success

In the end, Jamestown was saved—not by gold or silver—but because it had the perfect climate for growing tobacco. **John Rolfe**, an Englishman who married the Powhatan leader's daughter,

Pocahontas, introduced to the colony West Indian tobacco, a salable strain with many advantages over local varieties. From 1616 to 1619, Jamestown's tobacco exports grew nearly twenty-fold. Sensing the possibility for great profit, the Virginia Company dispatched money and supplies and awarded land grants to anyone able to pay for his own passage to Jamestown, or for the passage of another laborer.

The profits produced by tobacco saved Jamestown and ensured the settlement's success.

As the colony grew in size, its members began to desire a better system of government. In 1619, the colonists formed a general assembly, the **House of Burgesses**. The House of Burgesses was the first representative government in the New World, though its power was limited because the Virginia Company could still overrule its actions. That same year, the first Africans were brought to Jamestown. Originally working as indentured servants, by the 1640s most Africans were bought and sold as slaves.

Jamestown's House of Burgesses, formed in 1619, was America's first representative government.

The year 1622 was a tragic one for Jamestown. A second war with the Powhatan tribe, a slump in tobacco prices, fraudulent practices by local officials, and high death rates from disease, all conspired to transform the normal rigors of colonial life into extremely hard times. Under this strain, the joint-stock company collapsed and James I revoked its charter, making Virginia a royal colony in 1624.

Plymouth Plantation

In 1620, 102 settlers sailed across the Atlantic on the **Mayflower**, having procured a patent for settlement from the Virginia Company of London. These colonists agreed to send lumber, fish, and fur back to England for seven years before they could assume ownership of the land. Most of these settlers were *Separatists* from England, who wanted to separate from the Anglican Church (the Church of England). These Separatists had originally left England for the Netherlands to escape religious persecution. The voyage to the New World offered an even greater escape.

Separatists renounced the Church of England and established their own self-governing congregations. Among the Separatist groups are Pilgrims, Quakers, and Baptists. Separatists are distinct from Puritans, who originally wanted to "purify" the Anglican Church without separating from it.

In November of 1620, the *Mayflower* landed at Plymouth Bay, outside the bounds of the British possession of Virginia. Since they had no legal right to settle there, the leaders of the *Pilgrims*, as the Separatists who came to the New World were called, insisted that all males sign the *Mayflower Compact*, which established the colony of Plymouth Plantation as a "civil body politic" under the sovereignty of James I of England.

The Mayflower Compact is often described as America's first example of true self-government.

The Pilgrims were unprepared for the harsh New England winter, and about half of the settlers died by March 1621. Those who survived owed their lives to the aid of some English-speaking Native Americans, who taught the Pilgrims how to grow corn. After that terrible first winter, Plymouth quickly grew and prospered. Within a few years, the colony expanded into Cape Cod and the southeastern part of modern Massachusetts.

The Massachusetts Bay Colony

During the first half of the seventeenth century, religious and political oppression in England grew worse. In 1628, the **Puritans** struck a deal with the English government, under which the Puritans would leave England and settle north of the Plymouth Plantation on the condition that they would have political control of their colony. The Puritans wanted their colony to be a theocracy, and emphasized religion over trade. In 1630, under the leadership of **John Winthrop**, who had been elected governor, about 900 Puritans traveled to Massachusetts. These Puritans eventually settled at the site of modern-day Boston. Winthrop's colony was a community based on the Bible. He saw Massachusetts Bay as "a city upon a hill," a beacon of religious righteousness that would shine throughout the world. As happened in most settlements, the colonists were unprepared for the first winter and almost one-third of the settlers died. But by mid-1631, the colonists had put the worst behind them and the Massachusetts Bay Colony began to thrive.

Government of Massachusetts Bay

The Massachusetts Bay colony was initially run by a General Court that allowed membership only to landholding Puritan men. After public outcry, all Puritan freemen, regardless of wealth or holdings, were allowed entrance. As the number of settlers increased and the General Court became too large, the

settlers established a representative government, electing two representatives from each district to the General Court.

Religion and Massachusetts Bay

The Massachusetts Bay Colony operated according to a system called **congregationalism**, in which each independent church congregation served as the center of a community's political and social life. Only those individuals with good standing in the church could participate in government.

Some inhabitants, however, broke with the Puritan leaders over the strong relationship between church and state. One such dissenter was **Roger Williams**. Unlike those in power, who believed that there must be legal separation but substantial cooperation between church and state, Williams argued that total separation was necessary. He feared that without separation the state would corrupt the church. In 1635, Williams was banished from Massachusetts. He eventually established the colony of Rhode Island in 1647, where the government renounced the Church of England and permitted religious freedom. Another dissenter was **Anne Hutchinson**, whose religious teachings were taken by some to be attacks on Puritan religious codes. Hutchinson found support in Henry Vane, who had become governor of the colony after Winthrop left office. But Winthrop staunchly opposed Hutchinson and succeeded in ousting Vane from office. In 1637, Hutchinson and her followers were banished; most of them settled in Rhode Island.

Some Massachusetts dissenters who went on to found new settlements in New England: Roger Williams (Providence, RI), Anne Hutchinson (Portsmouth, RI and Pelham Bay, NY).

The Colonial Economy: Mercantilism

Beginning around 1650, the British government pursued a policy of **mercantilism** in international trade. Mercantilism stipulates that in order to build economic strength, a nation must export more than it imports. To achieve this favorable balance of trade, the English passed regulatory laws exclusively benefiting the British economy. These laws created a trade system whereby Americans provided raw goods to Britain, and Britain used the raw goods to produce manufactured goods that were sold in European markets and back to the colonies. As suppliers of raw goods only, the colonies could not compete with Britain in manufacturing. English ships and merchants were always favored, excluding other countries from sharing in the British Empire's wealth.

Between 1651 and 1673, the English Parliament passed four **Navigation Acts** meant to ensure the proper mercantilist trade balance. The acts declared the following:

- Only English or English colonial ships could carry cargo between imperial ports.
- Certain goods, including tobacco, rice, and furs, could not be shipped to foreign nations except through England or Scotland.
- The English Parliament would pay "bounties" to Americans who produced certain raw goods, while raising protectionist tariffs on the same goods produced in other nations.
- Americans could not compete with English manufacturers in large-scale manufacturing.

The Navigation Acts severely restricted colonial trade, to the benefit of England.

The colonists initially complained about these strictures on trade. In New England in particular, many colonists evaded the restrictions of the Navigation Acts by smuggling. But although relations between England and the colonies were often full of friction (as in 1684, when Charles II revoked the Massachusetts Bay Colony's charter as punishment for smuggling), the two sides never came to any real conflict. Instead, England developed a policy of **salutary neglect** toward the colonies, which meant that the trade laws that most hurt the colonial economy were not enforced. Threatened by the presence of the French in North America, British officials knew that at some point they would have to clash with the French over the domination of the continent, and they needed the colonists to support them when that time came. The British did not want to alienate their much-needed allies through aggressive trade restrictions.

With the prospect of war against the French looming, the British employed salutary neglect to maintain the colonists' loyalty.

The Triangular Trade

British mercantilism manifested itself in the form of the **triangular trade**. Trade routes linked the

American Colonies, West Indies, Africa, and England. Each port provided shippers with a payoff and a new cargo. New England rum was shipped to Africa and traded for slaves, which were brought to the West Indies and traded for sugar and molasses, which went back to New England. Other raw goods were shipped from the colonies to England, where they were swapped for a cargo of manufactured goods.

Mercantilism and the triangular trade proved quite profitable for New England tradesmen and ship builders. But in the Southern Colonies, where the Navigation Acts vastly lowered tobacco prices, economies suffered. The triangular trade also spurred a rise in the slave population and increased the merchant population, forming a class of wealthy elites that dominated trade and politics throughout the colonies.

Life in Colonial America

By 1700, more than 250,000 people of European origin or descent lived within what is now the United States. These settlers covered much of the eastern seaboard. Each region of colonization was economically and socially distinct, as each area developed differently based on geography, immigration trends, and other factors.

The New England Colonies

The New England colonies spanned modern-day Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. New England's economy centered on small farming, fishing, and home manufactures, as well as sea trade and shipbuilding. The region quickly expanded as immigrants streamed in and families grew.

New England economy was based on small-scale agriculture, fishing, home manufactures, shipbuilding, and trading.

Life was fairly stable for New Englanders. They often lived 15–25 years longer than their British counterparts or colonists in other regions, due in part to a better diet. Puritan communities were close-knit, and because all followers of God were expected to read the Bible, they placed great emphasis on education. New England was likely the most literate community in the world.

Religion dominated all aspects of life in New England. In order to vote or hold office, a person had to be a member in good standing of the church. Religious dissenters were subjected to public spectacle or banishment. Fervent religious superstition also fueled New England's most notorious scandal: the Salem Witch Trials of 1692 and 1693.

Beginning with the Mayflower compact, and continuing with the Massachusetts Bay Colony charter, the New England Colonies quickly established a tradition of self-government. By 1641, 55 percent of males in Massachusetts could vote—a much higher percentage than in England. Connecticut developed a similar government with even more voting rights: all male landowners were granted suffrage under the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut, which in 1639 became the first written constitution in the New World.

The increase in self-government in New England went hand in hand with increased resistance against British authority. In an effort to create a united defense against Dutch encroachment and aggressive Native American tribes, colonists organized the New England Confederation in 1643. England viewed this attempt to unite the colonies as potentially dangerous, but the confederation persisted and even helped to crush a Native American uprising during King Phillip's War (1675–1676). In the end, infighting among the colonies doomed the confederation.

Then in 1655, four royal commissioners inspecting Massachusetts were treated rudely and urged King Charles II to revoke the colony's charter. Charles did not comply, but the incident solidified a tradition of antagonism between New England and the mother country. After years of increasing acrimony, Charles' successor, James II, revoked the Massachusetts Bay charter in 1685 and established the Dominion of New England, which unified all of New England under one royal governor. However, when the 1688 Glorious Revolution in England replaced James II with the Protestants William and Mary, angry colonists forced the royal governor to return to England. By 1691, the Massachusetts Bay Colony charter was reinstated.

The Middle Colonies

The Middle Colonies included New York and New Jersey, and later Pennsylvania. England took control of New York and New Jersey (then called New Amsterdam and New Sweden, respectively) from the Dutch in 1664. New York was made a royal province in 1685, and New Jersey in 1702. Both colonies were governed by a royal governor and a general assembly. Economically, the colonies relied on grain production, shipping, and fur trading with the local Native Americans.

In 1681, Charles II granted the last unclaimed tract of American land to **William Penn**. Penn, a Quaker, launched a “holy experiment” by founding a colony based on religious tolerance. The Quakers had long been discriminated against in the Americas and England for their religious beliefs and their refusal to bear arms. Seeking religious freedom, Quakers, Mennonites, Amish, Moravians, Baptists, and others flocked to the new colony. Pennsylvania soon became economically prosperous, in part because of the industrious Quaker work ethic. By the 1750s, Pennsylvania’s capital, Philadelphia, had become the largest city of the colonies with a population of 20,000.

The Southern Colonies

Virginia, centered in Jamestown, dominated the Southern colonies, which included the Chesapeake colonies, Maryland, and the Carolinas. The region was more religiously and ethnically diverse than the Middle or New England colonies, harboring immigrants from all over Europe, many Roman Catholics (especially in Maryland), and a large number of African slaves. In the South, families were smaller than in other regions because adult men far outnumbered women. Men, after all, were needed to work on the region’s massive plantations.

Plantations, which produced tobacco, rice, and indigo, influenced all aspects of life in the South. The size of plantations limited the development of cities and a merchant class, which had brought such wealth to New England. Plantations drew many immigrants to the Chesapeake region during the seventeenth century through the institution of **indentured servitude**. Indentured servants were adult men, mostly white, who bound themselves to labor on plantations for a fixed number of years until they earned their freedom and, with it, a small plot of land. However, once free, indentured servants still had to struggle to survive, and conflict arose between the freed servants and the increasingly powerful plantation owners. These tensions flared in **Bacon’s Rebellion** of 1676. Nathaniel Bacon, an impoverished nobleman, accused the royal governor of Virginia of failing to protect the less wealthy farmers from Native American raids. Bacon led a group of about 300 farmers and indiscriminately attacked the Native Americans. The royal governor branded him a rebel, and Bacon led his men to Jamestown, where he occupied, looted, and burned the city while demanding political reforms. Bacon died suddenly the same year, abruptly terminating the rebellion, but tensions between rich and poor remained.

As tobacco plantations grew in size and demand for workers increased, slavery became the preferred source of labor: it proved economically profitable and eased the class struggles. Slavery was officially sanctioned by law in 1660. At this time, fewer than 1,000 slaves lived in Maryland and Virginia. Over the next forty years, that number grew to nearly 20,000. Slavery later spread to the Carolinas, and by the early eighteenth century it was so entrenched in these areas that slaves outnumbered free whites.

Black slaves were increasingly brought to the Southern colonies during the late 1600s to support an economy based on massive cash crops like tobacco, rice, and eventually cotton. By 1660, slavery was officially recognized by law.

Colonial Culture

In eighteenth-century Europe, the intellectual movement known as the **Enlightenment** championed the principles of rationalism and logic, while the Scientific Revolution worked to demystify the natural world. Upper-class Americans, including many of the colonists who would eventually lead the American Revolution, were heavily influenced by Enlightenment ideas and embraced reason and science, viewing with skepticism any beliefs that could not be proven by clear logic or experiment. Religion was a prime target for Enlightenment thinkers. The American most representative of Enlightenment ideals was **Benjamin Franklin**, who devoted his life to intellectual pursuits. Franklin published *Poor Richard’s Almanac*, a collection of proverbs, in 1732. He created the American Philosophical Society in 1743.

The First Great Awakening

Perhaps in response to the religious skepticism espoused by the Enlightenment, the 1730s and 1740s saw a broad movement of religious fervor called the **First Great Awakening**. During this time, revival ministers stressed the emptiness of material comfort, the corruption of human nature, and the need for immediate repentance lest individuals incur divine fury. These revivalists, such as Jonathan Edwards and the Englishman George Whitefield, stressed that believers must rely on their own conscience to achieve an inner emotional understanding of religious truth. Jonathan Edwards gave an impassioned sermon called “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,” in which he proclaimed that man must save himself by immediately repenting his sins.

The Great Awakening was a revival movement meant to purify religion from material distractions and renew one’s personal faith in God. The movement was a reaction against the waning of religion and the spread of skepticism during the Enlightenment of the 1700s.

The Great Awakening is often credited with democratizing religion, since revivalist ministers stressed that anyone who repents can be saved by God, not just those who are prominent members of established churches. For this reason, the movement appealed to all classes and groups. Revival ministers reached out to the poor, to slaves, and to Native Americans. The Great Awakening divided American Protestants, pitting the revivalists, or “New Lights,” against the “Old Lights”—established ministers happy with the status quo. This division resulted in the formation of many new religious congregations and sects, and the founding of universities such as Princeton, Columbia, Brown, and Dartmouth to accommodate revivalist teachings.

Colonial Wars

By the late 1600s, the French and English had emerged as the two dominant forces in North America. The two nations jockeyed for position in Europe and the New World, resulting in occasional wars that took place on both continents (though the wars on the two continents often had different names, and sometimes occurred over slightly different time periods). This series of wars, which ranged through the first half of the 18th century, culminated in the French and Indian War of 1754–1763.

The Path to War

In the early 1750s, Virginia, Pennsylvania, France, and the Iroquois tribe all claimed ownership of the Ohio Valley. The French began constructing forts to stave off English colonial advances and to maintain their fur trade with local Native Americans. In 1754, a young George Washington, on the orders of the Virginia governor, led 400 Virginia militiamen against the French. He was quickly forced to surrender and lead his men home.

Following this and other skirmishes, colonial delegates gathered in Albany, New York. Benjamin Franklin submitted the **Albany Plan**, which called for the colonies to unify in the face of French and Native American threats. The Albany Plan, remarkable for its attempt to establish a unified colonial government, won the support of the delegates but was rejected by the colonies, who were not yet ready for union. British officials did not push for the union because they were wary of the powerful colonial entity it would create.

The French and Indian War

Soon after the Albany meeting, the **French and Indian War** broke out, pitting England against France and its Native American allies. This war paralleled the Seven Years War in Europe (1756–1763). England held a great advantage in men and supplies, yet in the first two years the cunning guerrilla tactics of the French and their allies resulted in numerous humiliating losses for the English. Still, under the able leadership of Prime Minister William Pitt, England righted itself and pushed France out of the Ohio Valley and into Canada. In 1759, English forces captured Quebec, effectively ending the war in North America. Under the **Treaty of Paris** (1763), Britain gained all of the land in North America east of the Mississippi.

The euphoria of victory, however, soon wore off. Due to the costs of the war, England faced financial difficulties. The English reasoned that because the colonies benefited the most from the war, they should be taxed to alleviate England’s war debt. England ended its century-long policy of salutary neglect. This change in policy sparked an escalating tension between England and its colonists that eventually led to the American Revolution.

The Writs of Assistance

Tensions between the colonies and England initially arose during the French and Indian War. Colonial traders smuggled French goods from the French West Indies in order to avoid English taxes—set by the 1733 Molasses Act—on molasses, rum, and sugar imported from non-British territories. As its war debt accumulated, England strictly enforced the Molasses Act in order to raise more revenue from the colonies. In 1760, England authorized British revenue officers to use **writs of assistance**. Writs of assistance served as general search warrants, allowing customs officials to enter and investigate any ship or building suspected of holding smuggled goods.

The writs of assistance proved a useful tool in combating smuggling, allowing the British to seize and ransack buildings and ships at will. The colonists were furious. In 1761, Boston merchants challenged the constitutionality of the writs before the Massachusetts Supreme Court, arguing that the writs stood “against the fundamental principles of law.” Although they lost the case, the merchants and colonists continued to protest the writs, believing Britain had overstepped its bounds.

Colonists and many British observers were outraged at the breach of what had been considered traditional English liberties. Writs of assistance allowed officials to enter and ransack private homes and ships without proving probable cause for suspicion, a customary prerequisite for any search in England.

British Impositions and Colonial Resistance, 1763–1770

After the **French and Indian War**, Britain was the premier colonial power in North America. The Treaty of Paris (1763) more than doubled British territories in North America and eliminated the French as a threat. While British power seemed more secure than ever, there were signs of trouble brewing in the colonies. The main problem concerned British finances. The British government had accumulated a massive debt fighting the French and Indian War, and now looked to the American colonies to help pay it. **King George III** and his prime minister, George Grenville, noted that the colonists had benefited most from the expensive war and yet had paid very little in comparison to citizens living in England. To even this disparity, Parliament passed a series of acts (listed below) designed to secure revenue from the colonies. In addition, royal officials revoked their policy of **salutary neglect** and began to enforce the Navigation Acts, and newer taxation measures, with vigor. Angry colonists chafed under such tight control after years of relative independence.

The Proclamation Line

In efforts to keep peace with the Native Americans, the British government established the Proclamation Line in 1763, barring colonial settlement west of the Allegheny Mountains in Pennsylvania. The Proclamation declared that colonists already settled in this region must remove themselves, negating colonists’ claims to the West and thus inhibiting colonial expansion.

The Sugar Act

In 1764, Parliament passed the **Sugar Act** to counter smuggling of foreign sugar and to establish a British monopoly in the American sugar market. The act also allowed royal officials to seize colonial cargo with little or no legal cause. Unlike previous acts, which had regulated trade to boost the entire British imperial economy, the Sugar Act was designed to benefit England at the expense of the American colonists.

A major criticism of the Sugar Act was that it aimed not to regulate the economy of the British Empire but to raise revenue for the British government. This distinction became important as the colonists determined which actions of the British government warranted resistance.

The Stamp Act

As a further measure to force the colonies to help pay off the war debt, Prime Minister Grenville pushed the **Stamp Act** through Parliament in March 1765. This act required Americans to buy special watermarked paper for newspapers, playing cards, and legal documents such as wills and marriage licenses. Violators faced juryless trials in Nova Scotian vice-admiralty courts, where guilt was presumed until innocence was proven.

Like the Sugar Act, the Stamp Act was aimed at raising revenue from the colonists. As such, it elicited fierce colonial resistance. In the colonies, legal pamphlets circulated condemning the act on the grounds that it was “taxation without representation.” Colonists believed they should not have to pay

Parliamentary taxes because they did not elect any members of Parliament. They argued that they should be able to determine their own taxes independent of Parliament.

Prime Minister Grenville and his followers retorted that Americans were obliged to pay Parliamentary taxes because they shared the same status as many British males who did not have enough property to be granted the vote or who lived in certain large cities that had no seats in Parliament. He claimed that all of these people were “virtually represented” in Parliament. This theory of **virtual representation** held that the members of Parliament not only represented their specific geographical constituencies, but they also considered the well-being of all British subjects when deliberating on legislation.

Opposition to the Stamp Act

The Stamp Act generated the first wave of significant colonial resistance to British rule. In late May 1765, the Virginia House of Burgesses passed the **Virginia Resolves**, which denied Parliament’s right to tax the colonies under the Stamp Act. By the end of the year, eight other colonial legislatures had adopted similar positions.

As dissent spread through the colonies, it quickly became more organized. Radical groups calling themselves the **Sons of Liberty** formed throughout the colonies to channel the widespread violence, often burning stamps and threatening British officials. Merchants in New York began a boycott of British goods and merchants in other cities soon joined in. Representatives of nine colonial assemblies met in New York City at the **Stamp Act Congress**, where they prepared a petition asking Parliament to repeal the Stamp Act on the grounds that it violated the principle of “no taxation without representation.” The congress argued that Parliament could not tax anyone outside of Great Britain and could not deny anyone a fair trial, both of which had been consequences of the Stamp Act.

The Stamp Act Congress was a major step in uniting the colonies against the British. Nine colonial delegations attended and agreed that there could be no taxation without representation.

Under strong pressure from the colonies, and with their economy slumping because of the American boycott of British goods, Parliament repealed the Stamp Act in March 1766. But, at the same time, Parliament passed the **Declaratory Act** to solidify British rule in the colonies. The Declaratory Act stated that Parliament had the power to tax and legislate for the colonies “in all cases whatsoever,” denying the colonists’ desire to set up their own legislature.

The Townshend Duties

In 1767, Britain’s elite landowners exercised political influence to cut their taxes by one-fourth, leaving the British treasury short £500,000 from the previous year. By that time, Chancellor Charles Townshend dominated government affairs. His superior, Prime Minister William Pitt (who was the second prime minister after Grenville) had become gravely ill, and Townshend had assumed leadership of the government. Townshend proposed taxing imports into the American colonies to recover Parliament’s lost revenue, and secured passage of the Revenue Act of 1767. Popularly referred to as the **Townshend Duties**, the Revenue Act taxed glass, lead, paint, paper, and tea entering the colonies. The profits from these taxes were to be used to pay the salaries of the royal governors in the colonies. In practice, however, the Townshend Duties yielded little income for the British; the taxes on tea brought in the only significant revenue.

Opposition to the Townshend Duties

While ineffective in raising revenue, the Townshend Duties proved remarkably effective in stirring up political dissent, which had lain dormant since the repeal of the Stamp Act. Protest against the taxes first took the form of intellectual and legal dissents and soon erupted in violence.

In December 1767, the colonist John Dickinson published **Letters From a Pennsylvania Farmer** in the Pennsylvania Chronicle. This series of twelve letters argued against the legality of the Townshend Duties and soon appeared in nearly every colonial newspaper. They were widely read and admired. Political opposition to the Townshend Duties spread, as colonial assemblies passed resolves denouncing the act and petitioning Parliament for its repeal.

Popular protest once again took the form of a boycott of British goods. Although the colonial boycott was only moderately successful at keeping British imports out of the colonies, it prompted many British merchants and artisans to mount a significant movement in Britain to repeal the Townshend Duties. Sailors joined the resistance by rioting against corrupt customs officials. Many customs officials exploited the ambiguous and confusing wording of the Townshend Act to claim that small items stored in a sailor’s chest were undeclared cargo. The custom’s officers then seized entire ships based on that

charge. Often, they pocketed the profits. Known as “customs racketeering,” this behavior amounted to little more than legalized piracy.

In 1768, 1,700 British troops landed in Boston to stem further violence, and the following year passed relatively peacefully. But tension again flared with the **Boston Massacre** in March 1770, when an unruly mob bombarded British troops with rocks and dared them to shoot. In the ensuing chaos, five colonists were killed. The Boston Massacre marked the peak of colonial opposition to the Townshend Duties.

Parliament finally relented and repealed most of the Townshend Duties in March 1770, partially because England was now led by a new prime minister, Lord North. North eliminated most of the taxes but insisted on maintaining the profitable tax on tea. In response, Americans ended the policy of general non-importation, but maintained voluntary agreements to boycott British tea. Non-consumption kept the tea tax revenues far too low to pay the royal governors, effectively nullifying what remained of the Townshend Duties.

Road to Revolution, 1770–1775

From 1770 to 1772, the British ignored the colonies and tension cooled substantially. However, in the fall of 1772, Lord North began preparations to pay royal governors out of customs revenue rather than let the colonial assemblies control payment. This would deny the assemblies the “power of the purse,” breaking assemblies’ ability to effectively check royal power by withholding, or threatening to withhold, payment. In response to this threat, **Samuel Adams** urged every Massachusetts community to appoint a committee to coordinate colony-wide measures protecting colonial rights. Within the year, approximately 250 **Committees of Correspondence** formed throughout the colonies. These committees linked political leaders of almost every colony in resistance to the British.

The Committees of Correspondence began on the community level in Massachusetts and eventually became the means by which the colonies coordinated their efforts to preserve their rights.

The Boston Tea Party

The British East India Company suffered from the American boycott of British tea. In an effort to save the company, Parliament passed the **Tea Act** in 1773, which eliminated import tariffs on tea entering England and allowed the company to sell directly to consumers rather than through merchants. These changes lowered the price of British tea to below that of smuggled tea, which the British hoped would end the boycott. Parliament planned to use the profits from tea sales to pay the salaries of the colonial royal governors, a move which, like the Townshend Duties, particularly angered colonists.

While protests of the Tea Act in the form of tea boycotts and the burning of tea cargos occurred throughout the colonies, the response in Boston was most aggressive. In December 1773, a group of colonists dressed as Native Americans dumped about \$70,000 worth of the tea into Boston Harbor. This event, known as the **Boston Tea Party**, took on an epic status.

The Intolerable Acts

Parliament responded swiftly and angrily to the Tea Party with a string of legislation that came to be known as the **Intolerable Acts**. The Intolerable Acts included the four Coercive Acts of 1773 and the Quebec Act. The four Coercive Acts:

- Closed Boston Harbor to trade until the city paid for the lost tea.
- Removed certain democratic elements of the Massachusetts government, most notably by making formerly elected positions appointed by the crown.
- Restricted town meetings, requiring that their agenda be approved by the royal governor
- Declared that any royal agent charged with murder in the colonies would be tried in Britain.
- Instated the Quartering Act, forcing civilians to house and support British soldiers

The Quebec Act, unrelated to the Coercive Acts but just as offensive to the colonists, established Roman Catholicism as Quebec’s official religion, gave Quebec’s royal governors wide powers, and extended Quebec’s borders south to the Ohio River and west to the Mississippi, thereby inhibiting westward expansion of the colonies.

The colonists saw the Intolerable Acts as a British plan to starve the New England colonists while reducing their ability to organize and protest. The acts not only imposed a heavy military presence in

the colonies, but also, in the colonists' minds, effectively authorized the military to murder colonists with impunity. Colonists feared that once the colonies had been subdued, Britain would impose the autocratic model of government outlined in the Quebec Act.

The First Continental Congress

In September 1774 the Committees of Correspondence of every colony except Georgia sent delegates to the **First Continental Congress**. The Congress endorsed Massachusetts' **Suffolk Resolves**, which declared that the colonies need not obey the Coercive Acts since they infringed upon basic liberties. The delegates voted for an organized boycott of British imports and sent a petition to **King George III**, which conceded that Parliament had the power to regulate commerce but objected to its arbitrary taxation and denial of fair trials to colonists. Preparing for possible British retaliation, the delegates also called upon all colonies to raise and train local militias. By the spring of 1775, colonists had established provincial congresses to enforce the decrees of the Continental Congress. The power of these congresses rivaled that of the colonial governors.

British Acts and Colonial Responses	
British Act	Colonial Response(s)
Writs of Assistance, 1760	Challenged laws in Massachusetts Supreme Court, lost case (discussed in previous chapter)
Sugar Act, 1764	Weak protest by colonial legislatures
Stamp Act, 1765	Virginia Resolves, mobs, Sons of Liberty, Stamp Act Congress
Townshend Duties, 1767	<i>Letters from a Pennsylvania Farmer</i> , boycott, Boston Massacre
Tea Act, 1773	Boston Tea Party
Intolerable Acts, 1773	First Continental Congress

The First Battles

In April 1775, colonial **minutemen** met and exchanged fire with British soldiers attempting to seize a supply stockpile in Concord, a town near Boston. The first confrontation came in Lexington, just east of Concord. Once in Concord, the British troops faced a much larger colonial force. In the skirmish, the British lost 273 men and were driven back into Boston. The Battle of Lexington and Concord convinced many colonists to take up arms. The next night, 20,000 New England troops began a month-long siege of the British garrison in Boston. In June of 1775, the English attacked the colonial stronghold outside Boston in the Battle of Bunker Hill. The English Redcoats successfully dislodged the colonials from the hillside stronghold, but lost 1,154 men in contrast to the 311 colonial casualties.

Attempted Reconciliation

In May 1775, as violence broke out all over New England, the **Second Continental Congress** convened in Philadelphia. Congress was split. New England delegates urged independence from Britain. Other delegates, mostly those from the Middle Colonies, favored a more moderate course of action. This faction, led by John Dickinson, fervently opposed complete separation from England. In an effort to reconcile with the King, Dickinson penned the Olive Branch Petition, offering peace under the following conditions:

- A cease-fire in Boston
- The Coercive Acts be repealed
- Negotiations between the colonists and Britain commence immediately

The Olive Branch Petition reached Britain the same day as news of the Battle of Bunker Hill. King George III rejected reconciliation and declared New England to be in a state of rebellion in August 1775.

The Declaration of Independence

In June 1775, the Second Continental Congress elected **George Washington** commander in chief of the newly established American Continental Army. Meanwhile, the British forces abandoned Boston and moved to New York City, which they planned to use as a staging point for conquering New England.

In January 1776, **Thomas Paine's** pamphlet, **Common Sense**, was published and widely distributed. Paine called for economic and political independence, and proposed that America become a new kind of nation founded on the principles of liberty. By May 1776, Rhode Island had declared its independence and New England was deep in rebellion.

In June, the Second Continental Congress adopted a resolution of independence, officially creating the United States of America. **Thomas Jefferson's** draft of the **Declaration of Independence** was officially approved on July 4. The Declaration of Independence proclaimed a complete and irrevocable break from England, arguing that the British government had broken its contract with the colonies. It extolled the virtues of democratic self-government, and tapped into the Enlightenment ideas of John Locke and others who promoted equality, liberty, justice, and self-fulfillment.

The Revolutionary War

The SAT II U.S. History will not ask you specific questions about facts during the Revolutionary War, such as the names of generals or the succession of battles. It is more important to know about the events leading up to and following the war. This short summary of the war will help you put those events into a greater context.

Sizing up the Competitors

After the delegates at the Second Continental Congress signed the Declaration of Independence, the two sides readied themselves for war. The numbers were heavily in Britain's favor. In 1776, 11 million people inhabited the British Isles. Only 2.5 million lived in the newly formed United States, and not all of the colonists favored independence.

The colonists were able to build an army about equal in size to the British forces, but while British forces were well-trained veterans backed by the powerful British navy, the American forces were poorly funded and under-trained. The Continental Army and local militias could not compete with the Redcoats (British troops) in pitched battles. For this reason, American forces fought few major battles during the first year of the war—when they did fight, they lost badly.

The colonists found much-needed allies in their war against Britain when, in 1778, France joined the war on the American side. Within two years Spain and the Dutch Republic had also declared war against Britain. Caught in an international war, the British had to split their troops between Europe and North America. With their forces thus divided, the British relied more and more on loyalists to fight in the colonies, and soon found that they had overestimated loyalist support.

Division Among the Colonists

The signing of the Declaration of Independence ignited a sharp division in the colonies between the **Whigs**, in favor of independence, and the **Tories**, British loyalists and sympathizers. Approximately 20 percent of free Americans were Tories. Tory influence was most powerful in the Middle Colonies and in Georgia. Slaves also made up a significant number of Tory loyalists, responding to Britain's promises of freedom for any slave who fought to restore royal authority. The most prominent Whig strongholds were New England, Virginia, and South Carolina.

War in the North

Early in the war, General George Washington's forces around New York were driven back to Pennsylvania by the superior British forces. Beginning on Christmas 1776, Washington fought back and won decisive victories at Trenton and Princeton, New Jersey. In October 1777, the Continentals (colonists) won another decisive victory at the Battle of Saratoga. This victory raised the U.S. army's morale and convinced France to recognize U.S. independence and to join the war against Britain.

In early December 1777, 11,000 troops under George Washington's command marched through the snow to spend the winter at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, where they regrouped and trained. In June 1778, these newly trained troops met the British at the Battle of Monmouth Courthouse, which lasted six hours in 100° heat. The battle ended when the Redcoats retreated, bringing victory in the North to the Americans.

War on the Frontier

The British enlisted the help of Native Americans all along the American frontier. In modern Illinois and Indiana, bands of militiamen from Kentucky and elsewhere ventured into the wilderness to combat British attempts to establish forts and to ally with Native Americans. Farther east, the Americans led an attack against the pro-British Iroquois, burning some twenty villages to the ground, destroying a million bushels of corn, and forcing the Iroquois into Canada.

War in the South

In 1778, France joined the war against Britain, as did Spain and the Dutch Republic in 1779 and 1780, respectively. Finding themselves in a larger war than they'd anticipated, the British turned their attention to the South, where the seaports provided the flexibility necessary to carry out a geographically broad assault, and loyalist influences were far stronger than they were in the North. The British gained control of the Continental garrison at Charleston, South Carolina in May 1780. In August 1780, they crushed a group of poorly trained Continentals at Camden, South Carolina. The British troops continued to win battles between March and September 1781, though not without a significant cost to their forces.

The War Ends

Washington moved his forces from New York toward Yorktown, Virginia, where the British had established a new base. Near Yorktown, Washington joined 2,500 French troops and a small American force. In October 1781, these troops besieged the British base until the smaller British force surrendered. The defeat crushed the Redcoats' fighting spirit as well as British public support, effectively ending the war.

King George III initially refused to admit defeat, but official peace talks finally began in June 1782. The **Treaty of Paris of 1783** was signed in September 1783. In it, the British recognized American independence and defined the borders of the United States as follows: the northern border along Canada, the western border along the Mississippi, and the southern border along Spanish Florida (a line disputed by Spain). The treaty stipulated that the Continental Congress would recommend restoration of confiscated property to loyalists, and Britain agreed to evacuate its troops.

With the Treaty of Paris of 1783, the British recognized American independence and agreed to evacuate their troops. The United States borders were set along Canada, the Mississippi, and Spanish Florida.

A New Government for the United States

The thirteen states of the new United States of America began the process of creating state governments during the **Revolutionary War**. Rhode Island and Connecticut maintained their colonial charters while excising references to British sovereignty, but many states wrote new constitutions. State constitutions differed from traditional British constitutions in that they were written documents ratified by the people and could be amended by popular vote. These constitutions varied widely, but shared the following similarities:

- By 1784, all thirteen state constitutions contained a bill of rights outlining the civil rights and freedoms accorded citizens.
- In general, the constitutions established weak executive branches and responsive legislatures. Most called for bicameral legislatures and for appointed, rather than elected, officials.
- Most reduced property requirements for voting and otherwise increased social equality.
- Most called for no official state religion.

The Articles of Confederation

In an attempt to create a unified national government, John Dickinson brought the **Articles of Confederation** to the Continental Congress in July 1776. Congress adopted the Articles and sent copies out for ratification by state legislatures; the Articles became law in 1781.

The Articles of Confederation favored the rights of individual colonies, now called states, instead of a strong centralized system. The central government established by the Articles was virtually powerless. It consisted solely of a severely restricted Congress, with no executive branch or judicial department. Congress had no power to tax, raise troops, regulate interstate commerce, or make binding national treaties; it could only request taxes from states, not demand them, and therefore could not regulate currency or raise money for the nation. The Articles of Confederation demonstrated the colonists' dislike of centralized authority and their fear of falling under a system as potentially tyrannical as they felt the British system had been.

Three major political challenges arose, testing the viability of the government created by the Articles of Confederation. The first challenge was addressing the nation's finances. After the war, the United

States faced enormous debt. In 1781 and again in 1783, Congress proposed an import tax to finance the national budget and guarantee the payment of war debts, but each time, a state rejected the proposal (Rhode Island in 1781 and New York in 1783). With no power to force taxation on the states without state approval, Congress could do nothing to regulate the economy. The government was financially helpless.

The government faced the challenge of westward expansion with more success. Settlers, speculators, and state governments all pressed for expansion into the lands granted to the U.S. under the Treaty of Paris. The government attempted to control this expansion with the Land Ordinance of 1785, which outlined the protocol for settlement. A second ordinance, the **Northwest Ordinance** of 1787, forbade slavery in the territory above the Ohio River, contained a settlers' bill of rights, and defined the process through which territories could become states. In such expansion efforts, the government faced fierce opposition from the Native Americans and Spanish along the frontier. The Spanish, denying the validity of the Treaty of Paris, closed the port of New Orleans to American ships in 1784.

The third challenge to the Articles of Confederation concerned the government's ability to maintain law and order. Depression, inflation, and high taxes made life miserable for many Americans. The plight of farmers in western Massachusetts led to **Shays's Rebellion**. In August 1786, Daniel Shays, angered by high taxes and debt he could not repay, led about 2,000 men in closing the courts in three western Massachusetts counties to prevent foreclosure on farms. The rebellion exposed the inability of the central government to control revolt and impose order, and heightened an already growing sense of panic nationwide.

For many Americans, Shays's Rebellion, along with the economic depression, revealed the shortcomings of national government under the Articles of Confederation. Congress could neither suppress revolt nor regulate inflation; it had neither policing nor financial power.

The Constitution

In September 1786, delegates from five states met at the **Annapolis Convention**. Originally concerned with interstate commerce, the delegates turned their focus to the shortcomings of the national government. They proposed a convention to consider amending the Articles of Confederation. Congress agreed, and asked the states to appoint delegates to convene in Philadelphia.

In May 1787, fifty-five delegates, representing every state except Rhode Island, met in Philadelphia. Notable delegates included George Washington, John Dickinson, **John Jay**, **Benjamin Franklin**, **Alexander Hamilton**, and **James Madison**. The delegates were convinced of the need for a stronger national government. The first question facing the delegates was whether to amend the Articles of Confederation or to create a new framework of government. The decision was made to create a new framework embodied in a new constitution, and the convention became known as the **Constitutional Convention**.

Writing the Constitution: Conflict and Resolution

The main difficulty in drafting the **Constitution** immediately became clear: achieving a balance between the needs of large and small states. James Madison presented the **Virginia Plan**, a framework of government that contained one potential solution to this problem. The plan called for a bicameral (two house) legislature with representation in both houses proportional to population. These houses of Congress would jointly name the president and federal judges. But the smaller states opposed the Virginia Plan, since representation by population would give more power to the larger states. Smaller states supported the **New Jersey Plan**, which called for a unicameral (one house) Congress in which each state would have an equal number of seats.

In June 1787, a committee assigned to resolve this conflict approved the **Connecticut Compromise**, which created a bicameral legislature where each state received an equal vote in the upper house, and representation in the lower house was proportional to population. In September 1787, the new Constitution was approved by the convention and sent to the states for ratification.

The Connecticut Compromise combined the Virginia Plan's suggestion of proportional representation and the New Jersey Plan's suggestion of equal representation for all states, creating the House of Representatives and the Senate as we know them today.

A second debate resolved by the Constitution concerned the representation of slave states: whether slaves should be counted as persons or as property for the purposes of representation and taxation. Northern states, where slavery was not as common, argued that to count slaves as members of the

population would give the South an unfair advantage in the lower house, where representation was proportional to population. The solution came in the **three-fifths clause**, which allowed three-fifths of all slaves to be counted as people.

The Constitution Completed

The document that emerged from Philadelphia represented, ultimately, a balance between a number of different forces:

- The delegates' acceptance of the need to strengthen the national government and their fear of government despotism and tyranny
- The interests of the larger and smaller states
- The interests of northern and southern states

The government was granted the powers to set and collect taxes, to regulate interstate commerce, and to conduct diplomacy in international affairs. The national government was also given the power to invoke military action against the states. The Constitution declared all acts and treaties made by Congress to be binding on the states.

The Constitution proposed a government composed of three branches: the legislative, executive, and judicial. A system of **checks and balances**, in which each branch of the government held certain powers over the others protected against tyranny, and was the cornerstone of the new government. According to the checks and balances:

- The president, the head of the executive branch, could veto acts of Congress and was responsible for appointing Supreme Court and other federal judges.
- Congress, as a joint body, was given the power to impeach, try, and remove the president or Supreme Court justices from office, if necessary. The upper house of Congress, the Senate, could ratify or reject treaties proposed by the president, and had to approve the president's cabinet appointments.
- The judicial branch, headed by the Supreme Court, had the power to interpret the laws passed by Congress.

The writers of the Constitution wanted to increase the power of the national government without debilitating the states. They reserved for state legislatures the powers to elect members of the Senate and to select delegates for the Electoral College that elected the President. They further stipulated that the Constitution could be amended by a vote of three-fourths of the state legislatures.

Federal government can:	State governments can:
Regulate foreign and interstate commerce	Regulate intrastate commerce
Levy taxes	Run elections
Conduct international relations	Provide education
Declare and wage war	Maintain the integrity of state borders
Raise an army and navy	Maintain police power
Coin money	Ratify proposed constitutional amendments

The centerpiece of the Constitution was the establishment of the checks and balances system, which would prevent any of the three branches of government from becoming too powerful.

The Fight For Ratification

Once approved by the Constitutional Convention in 1787, the Constitution was sent to the states for ratification. Only two-thirds (nine) of the states were needed to ratify it to put the new government into operation. Since states that did not ratify the Constitution would remain under the authority of the Articles of Confederation, the possibility existed that the United States would be divided into two countries.

The process of ratification began with two opposed and entrenched sides. The supporters of the Constitution called themselves **Federalists**. Their opponents went by the name **Anti-federalists**. The Anti-federalists claimed the Constitution granted too much power to the national government. They argued that the Constitution doomed the states to be dominated by a potentially tyrannical central government. Federalists defended the necessity of a strong national government and lauded the Constitution as the best possible framework.

The Federalists pushed ratification through eight state conventions by May 1788, though Rhode Island

and North Carolina both rejected the Constitution outright. Virginia and New York, states crucial to the Union in terms of population and economics, remained undecided. In June 1788, New Hampshire became the ninth state to ratify the Constitution, making the document the legitimate framework of national government. Debate gripped Virginia and New York. In late June 1788, Virginia finally ratified the Constitution by a narrow 53 percent majority. In New York, disputes continued for a month until Alexander Hamilton's Federalists finally emerged victorious by a margin only slightly greater than that in Virginia.

The writings of the political leaders of this period are an important part of American history. The most notable works are collected in **The Federalist Papers**, a series of articles written by John Jay, James Madison, and Alexander Hamilton. Exactly how much influence these papers had on the ratification of the Constitution is up for debate, but the articles do clearly explain the arguments in favor of the Constitution.

The Federalist Era Begins: George Washington as President

George Washington was elected the United States' first president and took the oath of office on April 30, 1789. His vice president was **John Adams**.

The First Congress

The Constitution provided the new country with only a skeleton framework, which had to be elaborated upon and implemented. When Washington took office, no judiciary department existed, meaning that no laws could be enforced. Nor were there any executive posts such as attorney general or secretary of state. Also, no taxes had been set and the navy had been disbanded. During Washington's two terms as president, from 1789 to 1797, Congress developed the nation's much-needed legal, bureaucratic, and military machinery.

The first Congress under the Constitution convened in New York City in March 1789. Congress immediately set out to establish a judicial branch, develop the executive branch, set a legislative agenda, and meet the popular demand for a bill of rights. As Congress worked out the details of government bureaucracy and domestic policy, Washington focused primarily on matters of finance, diplomacy, and the military. He interacted very little with Congress. He rarely spoke publicly about policy, suggested few laws, and vetoed only two bills in all eight years of his presidency.

Creating the Courts

Congress created a court system with the **Judiciary Act of 1789**. The act established a federal district court in each state, affirmed that the Supreme Court exercised final jurisdiction in all legal matters, and set the number of Supreme Court judges at six. In 1796 the Supreme Court first asserted its power to determine the constitutionality of congressional statutes.

Building a Cabinet

The Constitution only provided the general framework of the executive branch without specifying the number and the duties of executive posts. In 1789, Congress established what came to be known as the cabinet: three executive posts (secretary of state, of war, and of treasury), as well as the office of Attorney General. Washington appointed **Thomas Jefferson** as secretary of state, **Alexander Hamilton** as secretary of treasury, Henry Knox as secretary of war, and Edmund Randolph as attorney general.

The Bill of Rights

The Bill of Rights was a concession made by the Federalists to the Anti-federalists, who were concerned that a strong government would usurp the rights of individuals and states. James Madison led the group that drafted the first ten amendments to the Constitution, collectively known as the **Bill of Rights**, which the state legislatures ratified in December 1791. The Bill of Rights sought to enumerate certain liberties that could not be invaded by the federal government.

The Bill of Rights	
1	freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, petition
2	right to bear arms
3	soldiers shall not be quartered in any house without owner's consent

4	protection against unreasonable search and seizure
5	rights of accused persons: required indictment by grand jury; no double jeopardy; right to refuse self-incrimination; right to due process; just compensation
6	right to speedy and public trial, confrontation by witnesses, ability to call one's own witnesses
7	right to trial by jury
8	protections against excessive bail and cruel and unusual punishment
9	all rights not enumerated by the Constitution are retained by the people
10	powers not delegated to the United States are reserved to the States, or to the people

Federalists vs. Anti-federalists

The conflict between the Federalists and the Anti-federalists shaped much of the nation's early political debate and policy. The Federalists, led by Secretary of Treasury Alexander Hamilton, pushed for a strong central government, while the Anti-federalists, led by Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, advocated states' rights over central power. Anti-federalists argued that the federal government should be limited to issues of national defense and interstate commerce, with all other powers left to the states. The Anti-federalists were mainly southern and agrarian, while the Federalists were concentrated in the Northeast and represented mercantile interests.

The growing divide between Federalists and Anti-federalists revealed itself most in the debate over national finances. In 1790, Hamilton proposed that the national government assume the unpaid war debts of the states. Anti-federalists believed this plan granted the national government undue economic power over the states. Southern states particularly opposed the plan, since they had already paid off nearly all of their debts while the northern states lagged behind. Despite Southern and Anti-federalist opposition, the plan passed, in part because of a concession by the North to the South: in 1800, the nation's capital was moved from New York to a southern locale near the Potomac River, present-day Washington, D.C.

The National Bank

Even more controversial was Hamilton's proposal to establish a national bank. Hamilton claimed the **Bank of the United States** would provide a secure depository for federal revenue, issue currency and federal loans, regulate the activities of smaller banks, and extend credit to U.S. citizens. Opposing the proposal, Anti-federalists such as Thomas Jefferson feared that the creation of the bank would tie private individuals too closely to government institutions. Anti-federalists also argued that the Constitution did not explicitly give the federal government the power to grant such charters.

This latter argument came to characterize the view of **strict constructionists**, including Jefferson and **James Madison**, who believed that the national government should be confined to the powers expressly enumerated in the Constitution—nowhere did the Constitution give Congress the power to grant the bank a charter. Such a strict interpretation of the Constitution, they believed, was necessary to protect against tyranny. In opposition, Hamilton and his followers favored a loose reading of the Constitution, especially of the **elastic clause** (Article I, Section VIII), which states that Congress shall have the power "to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution . . . powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States." For **loose constructionists** like Hamilton, this clause gave Congress the power to do anything not expressly forbidden by the Constitution, including founding a national bank. After much debate between the loose and strict constructionists, Congress approved the bank by a thin margin, granting it a 20-year charter in February 1791.

Tariffs

One final issue dividing Congress concerned protective tariffs. In December 1791, Hamilton proposed the passage of high protective tariffs to generate revenue for the national government and to foster industrial development. Jefferson and Madison both opposed this protectionist economic policy, fearing that industries would become too dependent upon government aid. Many congressmen also opposed the tariff for favoring industrial and merchant interests of the North over the more rural and agrarian South. In the face of such opposition, the tariff bill did not pass.

Hamilton's major proposals for national finance: national assumption of state debt; a national bank; protectionist tariffs. All of these issues pitted Federalists against Anti-federalists, or loose constructionists against strict constructionists.

The Rise of Political Parties

The framers of the Constitution considered political parties to be self-serving factions detrimental to the good of government. However, by the end of Washington's term, the division between the strict constructionists and the loose constructionists had hardened into two distinct political parties: the loose constructionists formed the core of the **Federalist** party, while the strict constructionists comprised the core of the Democratic-Republican party—or, simply, the **Republicans**.

The birth of the Republican Party can be traced to 1793, when Jefferson resigned from Washington's cabinet in opposition to Federalist policy decisions, especially the financial decisions of Alexander Hamilton. Republicans attempted to arouse political awareness and spread criticism of Federalist decisions through a media campaign, which centered around America's first opposition newspaper, *The National Gazette*. They also founded political societies and clubs across the nation. Washington clearly allied himself with the Federalists in 1794 by accusing the Republicans of inciting the Whiskey Rebellion (discussed below). That same year, the Republicans won a slight majority in the House of Representatives, signaling the arrival of the party as a legitimate political movement.

Led by Jefferson and Madison, the Republicans aimed to limit the power of central government and to expand the rights of states and individuals. They argued that liberty could only be protected if political power rested firmly in the hands of the people and those government officials who were closest and most responsive to the people. The Federalist Party, led by Washington and Hamilton, preferred a system in which elected officials would rule without the direct influence of the people, as part of a very powerful central government. While the Federalists were concentrated in the Northeast, the Republicans had their stronghold in the South.

The Federalists, led by Washington and Hamilton, called for a strong central government. They represented the industrial and manufacturing interests, which were concentrated in the Northeast. The Republicans, led by Jefferson and Madison, advocated powerful state governments over centralized power, and represented the more rural and agrarian South, as well as the Western frontier.

The Whiskey Rebellion

In July 1794, frontier farmers in western Pennsylvania who produced whiskey from corn violently protested against Hamilton's 1791 excise tax on domestically produced whiskey. This revolt, which became known as the **Whiskey Rebellion**, represented the first major test of the national government's ability to enforce its laws within the states.

Whereas the earlier Shays's Rebellion exposed the central government's weakness under the Articles of Confederation, the Whiskey Rebellion revealed the new government's strength. President Washington responded decisively, leading 13,000 men into Pennsylvania to crush the rebellion. His actions demonstrated the broad reach and commitment of the national government. Many Anti-federalists condemned Washington's response, saying it was excessively oppressive and favored commercial interests over those of small-scale farmers (since commercial interests benefited most from the excise tax). Overall, the rebellion only strengthened the political power of Washington, Hamilton, and the Federalists. Many frontier farmers did, however, shift their loyalty from the Federalist to the Republican Party. The revolt also further divided the two parties.

Westward Expansion

During the 1790s, the U.S. attempted to expand its territory westward. The government devised policies for settlement and admitted three new states to the union: Vermont (1791), Kentucky (1792), and Tennessee (1796). Such expansion efforts incited opposition from Spain and Britain, both of which still owned some western territory and wanted to own more. Native Americans who inhabited much of this coveted land also resisted U.S. expansion. Military efforts in 1790 and 1791, aimed at forcing peace with the Native Americans on U.S. terms, yielded little success. The tense relations continued in stalemate until 1794, when U.S. troops routed a group of Native American warriors at the Battle of Fallen Timbers. After this defeat, 12 Native American tribes signed the **Treaty of Greenville**, which cleared the Ohio territory of tribes and opened it up to U.S. settlement.

Foreign Relations: U.S. Neutrality

Throughout his term in office, Washington worked to preserve U.S. neutrality in international relations. By keeping the U.S. out of European conflicts, he hoped to develop and enhance U.S. domestic policy and unite the nation under one strong, efficient government. Foreign affairs, however,

grew increasingly difficult to ignore. The French Revolution (1789-1799) inspired opposing loyalties within the federal government. Jefferson and other Republicans sympathized with the revolutionary cause, which championed individual rights against the aristocratic government. Hamilton and other Federalists opposed it.

In 1793, when revolutionary France went to war with Britain and Spain, U.S. loyalties were again divided. Northern merchants pressed for a pro-British policy, mostly because of trade interests, while Southern planters pushed for an alliance with France. Refusing to be drawn into the war, Washington issued the **Proclamation of American Neutrality**. Although neutrality was the national policy, Southwestern settlers offered some military support to the French against the Spanish in Florida and in the Mississippi Valley, and 1,000 Americans enlisted with the French as privateers, terrorizing the British navy. The British navy retaliated by seizing more than 250 American vessels during the winter of 1794, forcing their crews into service in the Royal Navy through a policy known as “impressment.” Tension flared further when Canada’s royal governor denied U.S. claims to the land north of the Ohio River and encouraged the Native Americans in the region to resist expansion. War seemed almost inevitable as the British and Spanish troops began building forts on U.S. territory.

Desperate to avoid war, Washington dispatched negotiators to the warring European nations. John Jay negotiated **Jay’s Treaty** (1795) with Britain, which secured the removal of British troops from American land and reopened very limited trade with the British West Indies, but he did not address the British seizure of American ships or the “impressment” of American sailors. Although criticized by many Americans, especially Anti-federalists, for being too beneficial to Britain, Jay’s Treaty did keep the U.S. out of a potentially ruinous war against a stronger and more established nation. Thomas Pinckney negotiated the **Treaty of San Lorenzo** (1795) with Spain, which granted the U.S. unrestricted access to the Mississippi River and removed Spanish troops from American land.

Washington strove to maintain U.S. neutrality in foreign affairs.

Washington’s Farewell Address

In 1796, Washington retired from office, deciding not to run for a third term. He thereby set the precedent of presidents serving no more than two terms in office—a precedent that became law with the ratification of the Twenty-Second Amendment (1951). In his farewell address, Washington implored future generations to avoid embroilment in the affairs of other nations, and to concentrate on the creation of “efficient government” at home. He warned that the development of parties would destroy the government, fearing that special interest groups and foreign nations would come to dominate the two factions.

The Election of 1796: Divided Government

The election of 1796 was the first major political contest between Republicans and Federalists. John Adams ran as a Federalist, and Thomas Jefferson as a Republican. Republicans controlled the South, while Federalists dominated New England, New Jersey, and South Carolina. Adams won the presidency by three electoral votes. Jefferson became vice president following Constitutional protocol, which stated that the candidate with the second highest number of votes would become vice president. The two rivals teamed together for what proved to be a tense and unproductive partnership.

Federalism Under Adams

The neutrality that George Washington worked so hard to maintain was threatened soon after Adams took office. The French saw Jay’s Treaty (between the U.S. and Britain) as a signal that the U.S. supported Britain in Britain’s ongoing war against France. France had delayed retribution, hoping Jefferson would win the presidency because, as an Anti-federalist, he was sympathetic to the French. Upon his loss, France delayed no longer and began to seize American ships en route to British ports. Within one year, the French attacked more than 300 American ships and ordered that all Americans captured aboard British naval vessels be hanged.

In response to such aggression, Adams dispatched a peace commission to Paris. In what became known as the **XYZ affair**, the French foreign minister, Charles de Talleyrand, refused to meet with the commission, and instead sent three anonymous agents to deliver a bribe: Talleyrand would not negotiate with the U.S. until he received \$250,000 for himself and a \$12 million loan for France. In his report to Congress about the event, Adams labeled the three agents X, Y, and Z—hence the “XYZ affair.”

This attempt at extortion aroused public outrage among the American people, some of whom rallied for war. Citing the need for readiness should a war break out, Congress tripled the American army in 1798. In what became known as the **Quasi-war**, Congress then sent armed ships to protect Americans at sea. Although France and America never officially declared war, from 1798 to 1800, the U.S. navy seized 93 French privateers while only losing one ship.

The Alien and Sedition Acts

Riding the tide of anti-French sentiment, the Federalists overwhelmingly won the 1798 congressional elections. In an effort to protect national security, should the country enter into war with France, Congress passed a series of four measures called the **Alien and Sedition Acts** in 1798. The acts unprecedentedly asserted the power of the central government.

- The Alien Enemies Act, the first and least controversial act, defined the procedure by which, during wartime, U.S. authorities could deport a citizen of an enemy nation whom they deemed a threat to national security.
- The Alien Friends Act allowed the president to deport any citizen of any foreign nation whom he deemed a threat to the U.S., even in the absence of proof.
- The Naturalization Act changed the residency requirement for becoming a citizen of the United States from five to fourteen years.
- The Sedition Act, the final and most controversial act, forbade any individual or group to speak, write, or publish anything of a “false, scandalous and malicious” nature that brought the Congress and/or the president “into contempt or disrepute.”

The Alien and Sedition Acts granted the federal government unprecedented power to infringe upon the liberty of individuals.

Of the four Sedition Acts, two—the Alien Friends Act and the Sedition Act—were set to expire near the time of the 1800 elections, so that the acts would not be used against the Federalists should they lose power. Just before the presidential election of 1800, four of the five major Republican newspapers were charged with sedition, arousing the anger of many who felt the Federalists were exploiting their political power to breach civil liberties and stifle their political opponents.

In opposition to the Alien and Sedition Acts, both Kentucky and Virginia endorsed manifestos on states' rights written by **Thomas Jefferson** and **James Madison**, respectively. The **Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions** (1798) declared that state legislatures could deem acts of Congress unconstitutional, on the theory that states' rights superseded federal rights. They argued that the federal government was merely a representative of the compact of states, not an overriding power, and therefore states had the final say on federal laws. In 1799, Kentucky passed a further resolution that declared states could nullify objectionable federal laws. This doctrine of states' rights and nullification would emerge again in later political crises between the North and South concerning issues of tariffs and slavery.

Jefferson's Revolution: The Beginning of Republican Rule

The election of 1800 marked the beginning of a 28-year period during which Republicans dominated national politics. Jefferson's party won easily, in part because of the public outrage over the Federalist Alien and Sedition Acts; in many ways, the acts proved the undoing of the Federalist Party.

The election was a protracted affair. All of the Republican electors had voted for both Jefferson and Burr, so that both candidates earned the same number of electoral votes for president. Burr, who had been backed by the Republican Party as vice president, now had as legitimate a claim to the presidency as Jefferson did. The task of choosing the president fell to the House of Representatives. After seven days and thirty-six ballots, the House selected Jefferson. To prevent future election deadlocks of this sort, the Twelfth Amendment, ratified in 1804, changed the election process so that candidates must be clearly listed as either running for president or vice president.

Jefferson described his victory as the “Revolution of 1800.” He believed that the Republican victory over the Federalists was “as real a revolution in the principles of our government as that of 1776 was in its form.” Unlike the Federalists, who had pushed for a strong central government and had favored industrial and commercial interests, the Jeffersonian Republicans aimed to limit central government in favor of states' rights and individual liberties, and favored an agrarian republic over an urban,

industrialized one.

Once in office, Jefferson cut back on federal expenditures and federal bureaucracy. He persuaded Congress to cut almost all internal taxes, and balanced the cut with reductions in military expenditures and other government endeavors. For income, the government relied mostly on land sales and customs duties.

Midnight Judges and Judicial Review

Before the end of his term, John Adams appointed a number of Federalist judges to federal court positions in an effort to mitigate the upcoming Republican rule. Adams signed the judges' commissions during his final few hours in office—hence the name “midnight judges” or “midnight appointments.” One such appointment was Federalist William Marbury as justice of the peace in the District of Columbia. But Adams failed to deliver Marbury's commission on time. Marbury, in response, asked the Supreme Court for a writ of mandamus to force Jefferson's secretary of state, James Madison, to deliver the commission and accept the appointment. In February 1803, Chief Justice John Marshall and the court denied Marbury's request, ruling that Congress had overstepped its constitutional bounds by giving the Supreme Court the authority to issue such a writ in the first place (Congress had issued such authority in the Judiciary Act of 1789). The **Marbury v. Madison** ruling was the first time that the Supreme Court declared an act of Congress to be unconstitutional.

Chief Justice John Marshall's ruling in the case of Marbury v. Madison asserted the Supreme Court's power of judicial review and marked the first time the Supreme Court declared an act of Congress unconstitutional.

The Louisiana Purchase

In 1800, France acquired the Louisiana Territory from Spain. Fearing that the new French ruler, Napoleon, had plans to build an empire in the Americas, Jefferson sent negotiators to France in an attempt to purchase the territory. The envoy found that Napoleon had abandoned his plan for a colonial empire, in part because a massive slave revolt in Haiti, led by Toussaint L'Ouverture, had severely depleted Napoleon's forces. Napoleon thus agreed to sell all of the Louisiana territory in order to finance French efforts in the war in Europe. After some negotiation, the price was set at \$15 million in April 1803. With the **Louisiana Purchase**, the U.S. gained a massive, uncharted piece of land, nearly doubling the country's size for the price of thirteen and a half cents per acre.

The Louisiana Purchase nearly doubled the size of the U.S. and eliminated the French (and remnant Spanish) control of New Orleans and the Mississippi River.

Jefferson, always a strict constructionist, feared that the purchase would be deemed unconstitutional because the Constitution did not explicitly grant such purchasing and expansionist powers to the federal government. He personally drafted a constitutional amendment authorizing the national government to acquire new lands. He was eventually convinced by fellow Republicans, however, to drop the amendment and directly submit the purchase treaty to the Senate to prevent Napoleon from recanting his sale offer. The Senate speedily ratified the purchase. Thus Jefferson, in spite of his overall aims to restrict the central government's power, initiated a dramatic expansion of federal powers by backing the purchase.

Westward Exploration

Even before the Louisiana Purchase, Jefferson was fascinated with the undiscovered frontier. He envisioned the U.S. as an agrarian republic, not an industrial powerhouse, and therefore sought to open up new farming along the vast and fertile frontier. Once the Louisiana Purchase was negotiated, Jefferson commissioned teams of explorers, including Meriwether Lewis, who was a captain in the army, and Lieutenant William Clark, to map out the new territory. In 1804, **Lewis and Clark** set off from St. Louis with 45 soldiers. In the Dakotas, they met **Sacajawea**, an Indian woman who proved indispensable as a guide. The group reached the Pacific Ocean in 1805 and landed back at St. Louis in 1806, having traveled nearly 3,000 miles in two and a half years. The success of the Lewis and Clark expedition inspired increased exploration and settlement of the new territory.

Tension Overseas: The Embargo Act

In 1803, as part of the Napoleonic Wars, France and Britain resumed war against each other. Trading with both nations and clinging to neutrality, the U.S. soon found itself drawn into the battle when the

French and British took aggressive measures that violated U.S. neutrality rights. The French policy, known as the Continental System, subjected to seizure any ship that first stopped in a British port. Through a series of countermeasures known as Orders in Council, Britain blockaded French-controlled ports in Europe. The British also began searching American ships for goods from the French West Indies and threatening American crews with impressment into the Royal Navy.

Anglo-American tensions peaked in the **Chesapeake-Leopard** affair in 1807, when the British frigate HMS *Leopard* opened fire on the American frigate USS *Chesapeake* off the Chesapeake Bay, after its request to board the *Chesapeake* was denied. When the British finally did board, they hanged four crew members and sailed away. Outraged, Jefferson banned all British warships from American waters. Congress then passed the **Embargo Act** of 1807, which prohibited any ship from leaving a U.S. port for a foreign port, effectively ending both exportation and importation. Jefferson and Congress hoped that such a measure would so damage the British and French economies that the countries would be forced to honor U.S. neutrality. Yet such peaceable coercion failed: the Embargo Act hurt the U.S. economy more than England's or France's.

James Madison and the War of 1812

Jefferson retired from office after serving two terms, solidifying the two-term limit precedent that Washington had set. James Madison, Jefferson's secretary of state, won the election of 1808 and became president on March 4, 1809. He immediately confronted the nation's deteriorating foreign relations.

Under Madison, Congress first replaced the Embargo Act with the **Non-Intercourse Act**, which prevented trade with Britain and France only, thereby opening up all other foreign markets. But because the British and French were the largest and most powerful traders in the world, the Non-Intercourse Act did little to stimulate the struggling U.S. economy. In 1810, Congress substituted **Macon's Bill No. 2** for the Non-Intercourse Act, as a ploy for either Britain or France to lift trade restrictions. Macon's Bill No. 2 resumed open trade with both Britain and France and stated that if either nation repealed its restrictions on neutral shipping, the United States would install an embargo against the other nation. Napoleon seized this opportunity and repealed French restrictions, provoking an American declaration of non-intercourse with Britain. Despite Napoleon's promise, the French continued to seize American ships.

The War Hawks

As it became clear that peaceable coercion would not ease the hostilities, Madison faced increasing pressure from **War Hawks** within Congress. Led by South Carolina's **John C. Calhoun** and Kentucky's **Henry Clay**, the War Hawks resented the post-embargo recession that had plagued southern and western regions from 1808 to 1810, and advocated war rather than disgraceful terms of peace. They also hoped that, through war, the U.S. would win some western and southwestern territories, annex Canada in order to eliminate the British and Native American threat along the frontier, and open up new lands to settlement.

The War Hawks feared that the British were recruiting Native Americans along the Canadian border to fight American settlers. Heightening these fears, a Shawnee chief, **Tecumseh**, and his brother "The Prophet" attempted to unite a number of tribes in Ohio and Indiana under an anti-white government. In response, future president William Henry Harrison, then governor of the Indiana Territory, crushed the Shawnees in the 1811 **Battle of Tippecanoe**, though his own forces also suffered heavy losses. Almost 30 years later, Harrison would run for president on his popularity as an Indian fighter, using the campaign slogan, "Tippecanoe and Tyler too!" (John Tyler ran as his vice president.) Although the Battle of Tippecanoe represented an American victory over the Shawnees, it did not end the threat of Anglo-Indian alliance—Tecumseh and the Shawnees later allied with British troops during the **War of 1812**.

The War of 1812

The SAT II U.S. History rarely asks specific questions about war facts, such as the names of battles and generals. It is more important to know what caused the war and how it ended.

In June 1812, convinced of the inevitability of war against Britain, Madison sent a message to Congress enumerating British violations of U.S. neutrality rights, including the presence of British ships in

American waters and the impressment of American sailors. In a conciliatory measure, Britain repealed the Orders in Council, its aggressive naval policy, but it was too late. Congress had already passed a declaration of war, and the War Hawks pushed for full engagement.

The American forces, however, were outmatched by British forces, in part because the Republicans had drastically cut military expenditures and programs, leaving the U.S. forces seriously underfunded and under-trained. Nonetheless, the war ended in stalemate, mainly because the British were also occupied with events in Europe. The signing of the **Treaty of Ghent** in December 1814 ended the war and restored the status quo. The treaty did not mention free trade or sailor's rights.

Two weeks after the signing of Treaty of Ghent, but before news of the treaty had reached America, American troops won a decisive victory in the Battle of New Orleans. General **Andrew Jackson's** troops defended the city, killing more than 2,000 British troops while losing only thirteen men. The timing of the Battle of New Orleans inspired the popular misconception that the U.S. had won the war and had forced the British to surrender and sign the treaty. Even without officially "winning" the war, the U.S. did succeed in protecting itself against one of the world's premier powers, for which reason the War of 1812 has been called the "second war of independence."

The Hartford Convention

In 1814, during the later stages of the War of 1812, a group of disillusioned Federalists met at the **Hartford Convention**, where the New England-based party enumerated its complaints against the ruling Republican Party. Some Federalists called for New England's secession, but cooler heads prevailed and called for a resolution summarizing New England's grievances, both general and those specifically relating to the War of 1812. These complaints included the charge that Republicans were neglecting the needs of New England industry and commerce. The war, and its accompanying trade restrictions in particular, hurt New England because of the region's concentration of seaboard manufacturers and merchants. The group at the Hartford Convention also drafted seven constitutional amendments meant to politically strengthen the Northeast, including an amendment to abolish the three-fifths clause, to change the policy by which Congress declared war, and to set a maximum time limit for trade embargoes.

The Federalists had hoped to deliver their resolution to Madison as the U.S. struggled in a deadlocked war and anti-war sentiment ran high. They arrived in Washington, D.C., however, just as news spread of the victory at New Orleans and the signing of the Treaty of Ghent. The perceived war victory and the restoration of peace stripped the Federalists of their central complaints and made them look like traitors and secessionists. Many Federalists who had attended the convention were forever stigmatized as disloyal Americans, crippling their political careers. The embarrassment of the Hartford Convention marked the end of the Federalist Party as a prominent influence in national politics.

American Nationalism and the Spirit of Cooperation

The perceived American victory in the War of 1812 ushered in an era of nationalism and cooperation. On a cultural level, the war yielded a number of important symbols of national pride and cooperative spirit, including the "Star-Spangled Banner," which a young American, Francis Scott Key, composed while observing the British attack on Fort McHenry. Another patriotic element emerging from the war was the popular term "White House" for the presidential mansion (after the British burned Washington, D.C., in battle, the presidential mansion was covered in whitewash to conceal the stains).

Influenced by the postwar spirit, Madison presented a nationalist policy program. With the Federalists no longer posing a political threat to Republican leadership after the debacle of the Hartford Convention, Madison proposed a number of policies that Republicans might earlier have avoided, since the policies, which increased the power of the central government, were rather Federalist in nature. In 1816, Madison signed the bill to charter the **Second Bank of the United States**, pushed through a moderate tariff bill in order to protect America's growing industries, and urged federal funding for internal improvements, including a national system of roads and canals. In Congress, **Henry Clay** fleshed out these nationalist economic policies in his **American System**, a policy program aimed at economic self-sufficiency.

Nationalist proposals under Madison included the charter for the Second Bank of the United States, protectionist tariffs, and federal funding for internal improvements.

Monroe and the Era of Good Feelings

The demise of the Federalist Party was confirmed in the 1816 presidential election, which **James Monroe** won easily. Monroe was the first clear representative of the one-party system under the Republicans. His term in office became known as the **Era of Good Feelings**, in part because of the political cooperation stemming from one-party politics, and because of America's high morale after the War of 1812. This unifying nationalist spirit peaked in the election of 1820, which Monroe won in a landslide: 231 votes to his opponent **John Quincy Adams's** one.

Monroe rarely departed from James Madison's nationalistic program. He supported federal funding for internal improvements, though he hesitated to authorize direct federal involvement, and he raised protective tariffs to spur American manufacturing.

The Transportation Revolution Begins

In 1817, ten years after the invention of the steamboat, New York began construction of the **Erie Canal**, the first major canal project in the United States. Upon its completion in 1825, the canal stretched 363 miles, from Albany to Buffalo, much farther than any other American or European canal. A system of canals soon developed around the nation, linking waterways from the Northeast to the frontier West. At the same time, the U.S. government invested in the National Road, which by 1818 stretched from Cumberland, Maryland, to Wheeling, Virginia. Added to this were webs of privately owned toll roads around each major U.S. city, which served as the foundation for the growing road system.

Economic Boom and Bust

Postwar economic prosperity enhanced political optimism in the United States. The economy dramatically expanded as a result of a postwar borrowing and buying frenzy. Banks lent money with little or no collateral to businessmen seeking to buy land, build factories, and develop industries. The high protective tariff of 1816 promoted further domestic development. Accompanying this expansion was the steady rise of **inflation**, the increase of paper money and credit leading to higher prices and less valuable currency.

In 1818, the global demand for American goods declined, in part because Europe had recovered from the devastation of the Napoleonic Wars. As a result of the decline in trade, the U.S. economy began to collapse and banks contracted their lending practices. Many state banks folded and many borrowers declared bankruptcy. In what became known as the **Panic of 1819**, land values fell 50 to 75 percent, rich land speculators lost fortunes, and homesteaders became mired in debt. The depression lasted roughly three years.

The Transcontinental Treaty

Spain and the U.S. long debated whether or not the Louisiana Purchase included western Florida. In 1819, the matter was settled when Spain agreed to the Adams-Onís Treaty, also known as the **Transcontinental Treaty**. By the terms of this treaty, Spain ceded eastern Florida to the United States, renounced all claims to western Florida, and agreed to a southern border of the United States west of the Mississippi River extending all the way to the Pacific Ocean, thereby recognizing U.S. claims to the Oregon Territory. This treaty gave the United States its first legitimate claim to the west coast.

The Missouri Compromise

Despite its name, the Era of Good Feelings was not all cooperation and goodwill. The period also saw political controversy between the North and South. Westward expansion spawned sectional conflict, as the North and South feuded about whether western territories should be slave-holding or free.

In 1819 the Union consisted of eleven free states and eleven slave states. But the application for statehood by the territory of Missouri threatened to upset this balance. Congress fell into heated debate, until James Tallmadge, Jr. of New York proposed a resolution. He proposed an amendment to the bill for Missouri's admission that would prohibit the further introduction of slaves into Missouri and mandate the emancipation at age twenty-five of slaves' offspring born after the state was admitted to the Union. The House approved the bill with the **Tallmadge Amendment**, but the Senate struck the amendment from the bill.

The application of Maine for statehood allowed the Senate to escape its deadlock and agree on the terms of the **Missouri Compromise**. Maine was to be admitted as a free state and Missouri as a slave

state, but in the remainder of the Louisiana Territory, slavery would be prohibited north of 36°30' latitude (the southern border of Missouri). However, the compromise rapidly disintegrated when Missouri submitted a draft constitution that prohibited free blacks from entering the state. Northern opposition blocked Missouri from statehood until 1821, when **Henry Clay** designed a new agreement that prohibited Missouri from discriminating against citizens of other states, including blacks with citizenship. The Compromise cooled tensions between the North and South, but only temporarily. Sectional conflict would only increase in the years to come.

Elements of the Missouri Compromise, in its final form: Maine admitted as a free state; Missouri admitted as a slave state; slavery prohibited in the Louisiana Territory north of 36°30'; Missouri prohibited from discriminating against black citizens of other states.

The Monroe Doctrine

During James Monroe's presidency, several revolutions against Spanish rule flared up in South and Central America and ousted the colonial governments. New leaders such as Simon Bolivar established independent regimes. The U.S., having itself broken away from colonial rule, officially recognized these new countries, and established lucrative trading relations with many of them. Fearing that European governments would intervene and try to reassert colonial dominance, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams composed the **Monroe Doctrine**, which Monroe revealed in 1823. This doctrine declared American dominance in the Western Hemisphere and warned against European interference in the Americas. It consisted of three principles:

- Unless American interests were involved, the United States would stay out of European wars.
- The "American continents", including both North and South America, were not subject to any further colonization by European powers.
- The United States would construe any attempt at European colonization in the New World as an "unfriendly act."

Although the U.S. had little military power to back up its claims, the declaration nonetheless had immense symbolic importance, announcing the United States as a world power equal to the great European nations.

The Monroe Doctrine asserted U.S. preeminence in the affairs of the Americas, a position that has informed American foreign relations ever since.

The Marshall Court

John Marshall was appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in 1801, and remained in office until he died in 1835. Under his leadership, the court became as powerful a government force as Congress and the president. A staunch Federalist, Marshall delivered decisions that strengthened the central government at the expense of states' rights, and he upheld a broad reading of the Constitution. Despite the death of the Federalist Party in the early 1800s, Marshall continued to exert a strong Federalist influence on government. His rulings elicited resistance from the Republican leadership and sparked political controversy in an age otherwise known for its spirit of cooperation. The Supreme Court rulings exposed latent dissent within the American government concerning issues of government authority, state versus federal rights, and the regulation of trade.

Marshall's first significant decision came in the 1803 case of **Marbury v. Madison**, discussed earlier. This ruling established the principle of **judicial review**, the Supreme Court's power to rule an act of Congress unconstitutional. The Court did not again invoke this power until the **Dred Scott** case, 54 years later.

In 1819, the Supreme Court delivered two controversial decisions on the issue of state versus federal rights. In **Dartmouth College v. Woodward** (1819), Marshall ruled that New Hampshire could not convert Dartmouth College into a state university because the college's charter, issued by Britain before the American Revolution, qualified as a contract, and the Constitution forbids states to interfere with contracts. A month later, Marshall delivered an even more momentous decision in **McCulloch v. Maryland** (1819), which questioned whether Maryland could tax the Second Bank of the United States. Marshall argued that the federal government's power must be considered supreme within its sphere, and that states did not have the power to interfere with the exercise of federal powers. He therefore deemed the Maryland tax unconstitutional. Republicans, long-standing advocates of states' rights, were outraged by these two rulings, since they stripped state governments of the necessary power to impose the will of their people on corporations operating within their borders.

The case of **Gibbons v. Ogden** (1824) concerned the issue of interstate commerce. The case involved a New York state steamboat franchise that had been granted a monopoly by the state legislature to run passenger ships between New York and New Jersey. This state license conflicted with a federal license, granted to another boat operator, to run the same steamboat route. Marshall ruled in favor of the federal license, arguing that a state cannot interfere with Congress's right to regulate interstate commerce. Marshall thus interpreted "commerce" broadly to include all forms of business, not just the exchange of goods—an interpretation that would prove crucial to the drafting and constitutional defense of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, with which Congress prohibited discrimination in public accommodations. As they had with Marshall's earlier rulings, Republicans condemned this ruling as too antagonistic toward states' rights.

Chief Justice Marshall issued significant rulings on judicial review, federal versus state power, the sanctity of contracts, and congressional control of interstate commerce. He transformed the Court into a formidable government force, equal to Congress and the president.

Return of the Two-Party System: 1824–1828

From 1800 to 1824, the Republican Party faced little political opposition and fostered a spirit of political unity and cooperation. The election of 1824, however, marked a return to factional politics.

In the 1820s, voter participation rose dramatically. By 1820, most states had eliminated wealth-based voting requirements, so that all free white males could vote. In some northern states, free black men could vote as well. The voting procedure also changed: secret written ballots replaced voting aloud, which stopped social superiors from influencing their inferiors at polling time. In addition, many appointive offices became elective, and the process by which state legislatures chose Electoral College members gave way to popular election. The democratic and egalitarian spirit of the time has prompted many historians to call the 1820s "the age of the common man." Women and most blacks, however, were still barred from political involvement.

During the 1820s, the U.S. electorate expanded, increasing popular participation in politics.

The Election of 1824: First Modern Election

Greater popular involvement in politics, along with party in-fighting, fragmented the Republican Party. Before the election of 1824, party leaders chose a single presidential candidate to represent the party in a centralized nomination system known as the **congressional caucus**. In the election of 1824, however, many states allowed their citizens to vote directly for presidential candidates, so that instead of one candidate representing the Republicans, five Republican candidates emerged to compete for the presidency. These candidates highlighted the divisions within American society and within the crumbling Republican coalition. **John Quincy Adams** (John Adams' son) was New England's choice for president. **John C. Calhoun** and William Crawford vied for the South's support, and **Henry Clay** and **Andrew Jackson** came out of the West, the former appealing to merchants and manufacturers and the latter to more rural groups. The Republican Party leaders in the congressional caucus chose Crawford as the party's official candidate, but it was clear that the caucus no longer spoke for the party as a whole. Because of the demise of the congressional caucus system, the 1824 election is called the first modern election: it was the first election in which party leaders no longer had exclusive control over the nomination process.

Andrew Jackson won more popular and electoral votes than any other candidate, but he did not win a majority, so the election was thrown into the House of Representatives. Clay, the Speaker of the House, backed Adams for the presidency and helped ensure Adams's victory. In return, Adams rewarded Clay by making him secretary of state. Jackson and his supporters saw this backroom deal-making as a political conspiracy and denounced it as a "**corrupt bargain**."

Adams in Office

Adams' presidency was shadowed by an uncooperative Congress. Unlike Adams, who advocated a loose reading of the Constitution, most in Congress were strict constructionists, favoring states' rights over central power. Congress thus rejected all of Adams's proposals for federally funded internal improvements, a national system of roads and canals, higher tariffs, and federal schools. That Adams was considered unpleasant and refused to engage in political maneuvering—trading favors and distributing patronage—did not win him any support, either.

The Democratic Party

The factions within the Republican Party that arose in 1824 became the foundation of a new political party. Jackson's supporters, led by **Martin Van Buren** and John C. Calhoun (who was also Adams' vice president), rallied together and formed what became known as the **Democratic Party**. Angered over Jackson's loss in 1824, Democrats chose to nominate Jackson for president in 1828. The opposition, now known as the **National Republican Party**, supported Adams for re-election.

Democrats portrayed Jackson as a hero of the common man and states' rights, and Adams as an aloof aristocrat. This campaign tactic worked. Jackson swept 56 percent of the popular vote. Just as important, the election returns revealed the nation's growing sectionalism: Adams won much of the New England vote, while Jackson carried the South and Southwest.

The new two-party system reflected a sectional split within the United States. The South and West supported Jackson's Democrats, while the North sided with Adams and the National Republicans.

Jackson as President

Andrew Jackson came to Washington in 1829, intending to rule according to the will of the people and not the Washington select. A strong presence in the White House, he exerted stringent control over his administration and was the first president to use the veto power extensively. He took a heavy hand with Congress and other government departments. He also broke with many traditions, and in doing so, set new ones that continue to affect American politics.

The Kitchen Cabinet and Spoils System

Past presidents had used the cabinet as a policy forum, selecting men of different backgrounds to represent the varied allegiances and interests of the country. Jackson, by contrast, surrounded himself with only his political allies and close friends from Tennessee. Because cabinet members were all Jackson supporters and often had questionable political skill, opponents dubbed Jackson's advisors the "**Kitchen Cabinet**."

For all government appointments, Jackson favored a rotation of office known as the **spoils system**, whereby the winning party (in this case, Jackson's Democrats) would remove officeholders belonging to the opposing party and fill the open position with its own supporters—"to the victor belongs the spoils." Jackson reasoned that ordinary party members could fill government positions as well as any trained officials.

Nullification Crisis

The first and most important crisis Jackson faced while in office was the **Nullification Crisis**. Congress had raised protective tariffs steadily over the previous decade: in 1816, in 1824, and again in 1828, a year before Jackson's presidency. These tariffs protected Western farming interests, New England manufacturers, and Pennsylvania miners, but they hurt farmers in the South. Southern politicians grew so angry at the imbalance that they named the 1828 tariff the "**Tariff of Abominations**." South Carolina reacted by flying its flags at half-mast when the tariff was passed, and threatened to boycott New England's manufactured goods.

Led by John C. Calhoun, a South Carolina native, the state denounced the tariff as unconstitutional on the argument that Congress could only levy tariffs that raised revenue for common purposes, not tariffs that protected regional interests. Calhoun argued that federal laws must benefit all equally in order to be constitutional, and urged southern states to nullify, or void, the tariffs within their own borders. Calhoun's justification for nullification, published in his *South Carolina Exposition and Protest* (1828), were largely derived from Jefferson and Madison's arguments in the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions (1798). Calhoun, like Jefferson and Madison, argued that the states were sovereign over the central government, and therefore the states should have the final authority to judge the constitutionality of laws affecting their regions. Calhoun saw the Constitution as a compact of states, not an overriding federal power, which meant that all powers that the Constitution did not explicitly delegate to the federal government fell, without question, to the states.

Jackson came into office in 1829, after the publication of Calhoun's protest. Southern interests hoped that Jackson would modify the "Tariff of Abominations," especially since Calhoun served as Jackson's vice president. Although Jackson did push through a modified, milder tariff in 1832, the changes did

little to satisfy many southerners. By 1832, Calhoun had grown so enraged over the tariff bills that he resigned from office and returned home to South Carolina; he and Jackson had permanently split over the issue. In November 1832, the South Carolina legislature approved Calhoun's Ordinance of Nullification, which nullified the tariffs of 1828 and 1832 and ordered state officials to stop collecting duties at South Carolina's ports. The state threatened to secede if the national government intervened to force tax collection.

Jackson responded swiftly and decisively, denouncing the nullifiers and sending arms to loyal Unionists in South Carolina. The following March, Jackson signed the two-part **Compromise of 1833**. The tariff of 1833 provided for a gradual lowering of duties over the next decade. The second measure, the **Force Bill**, authorized the president to use the U.S. Army and Navy, if necessary, to force the collection of customs duties in South Carolina. South Carolina at first nullified the Force Bill, but under threat of force, reconsidered and rescinded its previous nullifications.

The Nullification Crisis was precipitated by a series of tariffs that hurt the Southern economy. Drawing on Madison and Jefferson's Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions, Calhoun urged Southern states to nullify the tariffs within their own borders, arguing that states' rights were supreme and advancing a compact theory of the Union: that is, the Union as a compact of states only, not an overriding central power. The Crisis was averted by the Compromise of 1833.

Indian Removal Act

Jackson was determined to secure Native American lands for U.S. settlement. The **Indian Removal Act**, passed in 1830, granted Jackson the funds and the authority to move Native Americans to assigned lands in the West, using as much force as necessary. U.S. officials began aggressively clearing out the Cherokee tribe from the Southwest, and Georgia took control of the former Cherokee territory.

In 1832, the Supreme Court under Chief Justice John Marshall delivered a ruling against Cherokee removal. In **Worcester v. Georgia**, the Court ruled that the Cherokee comprised a "domestic dependent nation" with a right to freedom from molestation. Jackson opposed the ruling and proceeded with removal, supposedly commenting in defiance, "John Marshall has made his decision; now let him enforce it." Without the president enforcing its decision, the Supreme Court could not protect the Cherokees, and the aggressive Cherokee removal continued unabated. Between 1835 and 1838, the U.S. army forced bands of Cherokees to move west on a journey known as the **Trail of Tears**. Nearly one quarter of the tribe died on the journey.

Cherokees staggered along the Trail of Tears from Georgia to Oklahoma between 1835 and 1838. Between 2,000 and 4,000 of the 16,000 migrating Cherokees died from the harsh conditions.

Opposition to the Bank

In 1816, the **Second Bank of the United States** received a twenty-year charter from Congress. In 1832, four years before the charter expired, Congress approved a recharter, but Jackson issued the **Bank veto**, denouncing the Bank as a privileged monopoly, unfriendly to the interests of the West. After easily winning reelection in 1832, Jackson effectively destroyed the Bank by removing its federal deposits and placing the money in state banks. Jackson's critics called these banks "pet banks," because they seemed to be chosen based solely on their allegiance to the Democratic Party. In 1836, Jackson further enhanced the power of state banks by signing the Deposit Act, which increased the number of state banks serving as depositories and loosened federal control over the banking system. Despite these changes, Jackson did not succeed in fundamentally altering either the banking system or the use of paper money.

Jackson's war on the Bank succeeded in ending the life of the Second Bank of the United States but failed to fundamentally change the banking system or stem the inflation caused by the state banks' extension of credit.

The Rise of the Whig Party

During Andrew Jackson's second term in office, leaders of the National Republican Party and other opponents of Jackson allied to form the **Whig Party**. Led by Henry Clay, **Daniel Webster**, and John C. Calhoun (who had split from Jackson and the Democratic Party over tariffs and nullification), the Whig Party comprised different factions—Southern Republicans, Northern Democrats, and social reformers. These groups were united in their hatred of Jackson, whom many considered so tyrannical that they called him "King Andrew I." Whigs opposed Jackson's strong-armed political tactics; Southern Whigs in particular fumed over Jackson's handling of protective tariffs and the Nullification

Crisis. Northern Democrats defected to the Whigs because of Jackson's anti-business stance—Jackson had cultivated an image as “friend to the common man” and grew increasingly hostile toward business and merchant interests, and, more generally, toward industry representing elite, privileged Americans.

By the election of 1836, the Whigs had become a national party with widespread popularity. On the strength of Jackson's common appeal, however, the Democrats maintained their hold on the presidency. In the election, Jackson's chosen successor, Martin Van Buren, defeated William Henry Harrison and three other Whig candidates.

The Whig Party continued to grow in popularity, though, and in 1840 won the presidential election backing William Henry Harrison. But the party lost its national prominence soon thereafter. United in their dislike of Jackson, the Whigs were irreconcilably divided on other major issues, most notably slavery and protective tariffs. Southern Republican Whigs could never wholly ally with Northern Democratic Whigs on such matters. The Whig alliance began to disintegrate and, by the 1850s, disappeared from the political scene completely.

Van Buren in Office

Martin Van Buren was the “Crown Prince” to Jackson's “King Andrew I” and won the 1836 election largely because of Jackson's support. Unable to escape from the shadow of his charismatic predecessor, Van Buren ruled mostly in obscurity, simply continuing the Jacksonian tradition.

The Panic of 1837

Van Buren assumed office in the midst of a severe economic depression. During 1835 and 1836, Andrew Jackson's policy of removing federal deposits from the Second Bank of the United States and placing them in state banks promoted an economy of speculative buying, risky lending, and unregulated banking practices. Prices increased and land sales multiplied rapidly from 1835 to 1837. In an attempt to stabilize the currency, Jackson issued the **Specie Circular** in 1836, which required that land payments be made in gold and silver rather than in paper money or on credit. This move caused prices to drop and left speculators with enormous debt. Many banks failed and the economy fell into a depression called the **Panic of 1837**. Unemployment spread and wages dropped by one-third between 1836 and 1842.

Van Buren spent his time in office trying to solve the nation's economic woes. He called for the creation of an Independent Treasury, which would hold public funds in reserve and prevent excessive lending by state banks, thereby guarding against inflation. Van Buren and his Democrat supporters hailed the **Independent Treasury Bill**, signed in 1840, as a second Declaration of Independence, using it as a rallying call to battle against the entire banking system. In Louisiana and Arkansas, Democrats succeeded in prohibiting banks altogether. By 1840, the Democrats had firmly established themselves as an anti-bank party.

Jacksonian Legacies

Andrew Jackson forever changed the face of American government by promoting a more egalitarian political climate. To extend politics to the so-called “common man,” he fought for a system in which all groups had a voice in government (excluding slaves, women, and Native Americans). He questioned the ascendancy of the business community and championed the rights of small farmers, empowering them to meet economic elites on an even playing field. Known as “the age of the common man,” the Jacksonian Age thus witnessed a rise in popular politics and in overall political involvement.

In summary, legacies of Jackson's years in office include:

- A return to the two-party system, which remains with us today. This system aroused public political participation to a point never before seen in American history, in part because the public had a clear-cut choice between two distinct political agendas. Party competition forced both parties to clearly define their positions on major issues and to remain responsive to the popular will.
- Heightened voter turnout. The number of American voters jumped from 1.5 million in 1836 to 2.4 million in 1840—the greatest proportional jump between elections in American history. (Even in losing the election of 1840, Van Buren received 400,000 more popular votes than any

presidential candidate before him.) The jump in voting resulted from the rise in the number of eligible voters and the number of voters who chose to vote. Eighty percent of eligible white males voted in 1840, as opposed to less than 60 percent in the three previous elections.

- The development of a strong executive. Jackson was the first president to use the veto power extensively to express his political will, and he controlled his cabinet closely to ensure that the executive department was united in pursuing its goals. Jackson revolutionized the presidency by setting an example of strength that nearly every president has followed.

Religion

Since the Revolution, America had become increasingly secular. Educated Americans, in particular, came to embrace the doctrines of the **Enlightenment**, which favored logic and reason over piety. Partly as a reaction against this growing rationalism, the Second Great Awakening emerged in the 1800s and caused a resurgence of religious faith.

Enlightenment Critique of Religion

Influenced by the Enlightenment ideals of logic and reason, many Americans began to question certain elements of the Christian faith, embracing new rational views on religion. Proponents of **rationalism** held that religious beliefs should not simply be accepted but should instead be acquired through investigation and reflection. For most rationalists, the existence of God was proven most prominently by the orderly workings of nature, which hinted at a rational creator. The most extreme rationalists, called **Deists**, argued that where the Bible conflicted with reason, it should be ignored. Deists, including Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson, believed that a rational God, like a celestial clockmaker, had created a perfect universe and then stepped back to let it operate according to natural laws.

The ideas of the Enlightenment led Americans to seek more rational religious ideas. These Americans criticized traditional religion and looked to science and logic for proof of their religious beliefs.

Along with Deism, other rationalist challenges arose to traditional religion, including Universalism and Unitarianism. Universalism held that science and reason ensured that all souls would eternally progress toward salvation, regardless of the adoption of any specific creed. Between 1794 and 1807, **Thomas Paine** published his Universalist book, *The Age of Reason*, which objected to all organized religion. Many critics condemned this book as a defense of atheism. The other new creed, Unitarianism, opposed the Christian doctrine of the trinity (the belief that God exists in three equal and eternal parts: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit). Unitarianism gained a small following of religious liberals during the late eighteenth century, and grew throughout the early nineteenth century to emerge as a separate denomination with its own churches.

The Second Great Awakening

About seventy years after the First Great Awakening, the **Second Great Awakening** emerged during the early 1800s, partly as a backlash against the spread of rationalism, and partly in response to calls for an organized religion more accessible to the common man. As in the First Great Awakening, revivalist ministers during the Second Great Awakening urged followers to reach a personal, emotional understanding of God. Women, blacks, and Native Americans participated heavily in the revival meetings.

The revivals began in Connecticut in 1790. Unlike the revivals during the First Great Awakening, which were emotionally raucous and neared hysteria, these revivals were often calmer and quieter, as gatherers respectfully observed believers in prayer. In New England, these revivals spawned a movement to educate and reform America. Social activists, inspired by their renewed religious spirit, founded all sorts of evangelical and reform groups: the American Bible Society (1816), the Society for the Promotion of Temperance, abolition groups, and groups urging educational reform and women's rights.

Religious fervor quickly spread to the West, where revivals more closely resembled the earlier, more animated revivals. In Kentucky and Tennessee, **camp meetings** were rowdy gatherings filled with dancing, singing, and shouting. The Methodists, who emphasized that religion was a matter of the heart rather than an issue of logic, came to dominate frontier revivals. By 1845, Methodism was the most popular denomination of Protestantism in the U.S.

While the Second Great Awakening made great strides toward converting a secularized American public, it was not without critics. Some claimed the revivals encouraged more lust than salvation. Unitarians criticized the emotional displays of the revivals and argued that goodness sprang from gradual character building, not sudden emotional conversion.

Transcendentalism and Literature

Along with the Second Great Awakening, other religious reform movements arose in the nineteenth century to challenge rationalism. One such movement was **transcendentalism**, which emerged during the 1830s. Transcendentalists argued that knowledge did not come exclusively through the intellect, but also through the senses, intuition, and sudden insight. They believed that concepts such as God, freedom, and absolute truth were inborn and could be accessed through inner experience and emotional openness.

Two prominent transcendentalists were the authors Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, whose works emphasized spontaneous and vivid expression of emotion rather than logic and analysis. In his essays “Nature” and “Self-Reliance,” **Ralph Waldo Emerson** claimed that all people were capable of seeing the truth if they relied on their inner selves and trusted their hearts. In *Walden*, **Henry David Thoreau** recounted his two years spent living in a cabin in the woods away from civilization and materialism. He advocated living a simple life according to one’s conscience, not according to society’s repressive codes.

Mormonism

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, also known as **Mormonism**, was the most controversial challenge to traditional religion. Its founder, **Joseph Smith**, claimed that God and Jesus Christ appeared to him and directed him to a buried book of revelation. The Book of Mormon, similar in form and style to the Bible, tells of the descendants of a sixth century B.C.E. prophet whose family founded a civilization in South America. Violent religious persecution forced Mormons to move steadily westward in search of land upon which to establish a perfect spiritual community. After Smith’s murder in Illinois, a new leader, Brigham Young, led the Mormons to present-day Utah, where they have since prospered.

Social Reform

The 1820s and 1830s saw a great rise in popular politics, as free white males achieved universal suffrage. Women, blacks, and Native Americans, however, remained excluded from the political process and were often neglected by politicians. In protest, these marginalized groups and their sympathizers organized reform movements to heighten public awareness and to influence social and political policy. Many reformers believed that they were doing God’s work, and the Second Great Awakening did much to encourage them in their missions.

These reform movements, like many issues of the day, quickly became sectional in nature. New England and Midwestern areas settled by New Englanders were most likely to be reformist. Southerners, by contrast, actively opposed the abolition of slavery, pursued temperance and school reform only halfheartedly, and largely ignored women’s rights.

Abolitionism

Perhaps the most prominent and controversial reform movement of the period was abolitionism, the anti-slave movement. Although abolitionism had attracted many followers in the revolutionary period, the movement lagged during the early 1800s. By the 1830s, the spirit of abolitionism surged, especially in the Northeast. In 1831, **William Lloyd Garrison** launched an abolitionist newspaper, *The Liberator*, earning himself a reputation as the most radical white abolitionist. Whereas past abolitionists had suggested blacks be shipped back to Africa, Garrison worked in conjunction with prominent black abolitionists, including **Fredrick Douglass**, to demand equal civil rights for blacks. Garrison’s battle cry was “immediate emancipation,” but he recognized that it would take years to convince enough Americans to oppose slavery. To spread the abolition fervor, he founded the New England Anti-Slavery Society in 1832 and the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1833. By 1840, these organizations had spawned more than 1,500 local chapters. Even so, abolitionists were a small minority in the United States in the 1830s and 1840s, often subjected to jeering and physical violence.

William Lloyd Garrison’s newspaper, The Liberator, spoke for the most extreme abolitionists. Along

with Frederick Douglass, Garrison called for emancipation of slaves and full civil rights for blacks.

Opposed to abolitionism, Southern congressmen succeeded in pushing the **gag rule** through Congress in 1836. This rule tabled all abolitionist petitions in Congress and thereby served as a preemptive strike against all anti-slavery discussions. The gag rule was not repealed until 1844, under increased pressure from Northern abolitionists and others concerned with the restriction of the right to petition granted by the Constitution.

Women's Rights

The position of American women in the early 1800s was legally and socially inferior to men. Women could not vote and, if married, could not own property or retain their own earnings. The reform movements of the 1830s, specifically abolition and temperance, gave women a chance to get involved in the public arena. Women reformers soon began to agitate not just for temperance and abolition, but also for women's rights. Activists such as Angelina and Sarah Grimké, **Elizabeth Cady Stanton**, and **Lucretia Mott** argued that men and women are created equal and should be treated as such under the law. These advocates allied with abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, also an ardent feminist, merging the powers of the abolition and the women's rights movements. Other advocates of both causes include Sojourner Truth and Frederick Douglass.

In 1848, Mott and Stanton organized a women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York. The **Seneca Falls Convention** issued a Declaration of Sentiments, modeled on the Declaration of Independence, that stated that all men and women are created equal. The Declaration and other reformist strategies, however, effected little change. While some states passed Married Women's Property Acts to allow married women to retain their property, women would have to wait until 1920 to gain the vote.

Public Schools

The movement to reform public schools began in rural areas, where one-room schoolhouses provided only minimal education. School reformers hoped to improve education so that children would become responsible citizens sharing common cultural values. Extending the right to vote to all free males no doubt helped galvanize the movement, since politicians began fearing the affects of an illiterate, ill-educated electorate.

In 1837, **Horace Mann** of Massachusetts became secretary of that state's board of education. He reformed the school system by increasing state spending on schools, lengthening the school year, dividing the students into grades, and introducing standardized textbooks. Much of the North reformed its schools along the lines dictated by Horace Mann, and free public schools spread throughout the region. The South, however, made little progress in public education, partly owing to its low population density and a general indifference toward progressive reforms.

Temperance

The production and consumption of alcohol in the United States rose markedly in the early 1800s. The temperance movement emerged as a backlash against the rising popularity of drinking. Founded in 1826, the American Temperance Society advocated total abstinence from alcohol. Many advocates saw drinking as an immoral and irreligious practice that caused poverty or mental instability. Others saw it as a male indulgence that harmed women and children who often suffered abuse at drunkards' hands. During the 1830s, an increasing number of workingmen joined the movement in concern over the ill effects of alcohol on job performance. By 1835, about 5,000 temperance societies were affiliated with the American Temperance Society. Owing largely to this association's impact, consumption of liquor began to decrease in the late 1830s and early 1840s, and many states passed restrictions or bans on the sale of alcohol.

Prisons, Poorhouses, and Asylums

Beginning in the 1820s, social activists pressed for prison reform. These reformers argued that prisons, instead of simply confining criminals, should focus on rehabilitation through instruction, order, and discipline. Believing crime was largely the result of childhood neglect and trauma, prison reformers hoped that such methods would counteract the effects of a poor upbringing and effectively purge criminals of their violent and immoral tendencies.

Further rehabilitative efforts were directed at the poor and the insane. To combat poverty, almshouses were built for poor invalids. Workhouses were built for the able-bodied poor in the hopes that a

regimented environment would turn them into productive citizens. Until the early 1840s, the insane were confined in these poorhouses or in prisons, living in miserable conditions that often exacerbated their illnesses. In 1843, **Dorothea Dix**, a Massachusetts schoolteacher, described to the state legislature the conditions of the insane in prison and encouraged the construction of insane asylums to better rehabilitate the mentally ill. In the following years, asylums opened throughout the United States.

Utopian Communities

The most extreme reform movement in the United States was the utopian movement, founded in the first half of the 1800s on the belief that humans could live perfectly in small experimental societies. Though **utopian communities** varied in their philosophies, most were designed and founded by intellectuals as alternatives to the competitive economy. Utopian communities aimed to perfect social relationships; reform the institutions of marriage and private property; and balance political, occupational, and religious influences. Most utopian communities did not last beyond the early 1850s, but one, the Oneida community in New York, survived from 1848 to 1881.

The North and South Diverge

In the 80 years between the American Revolution and the Civil War, the North and South developed along distinct and opposing lines—economically, politically, and culturally. While the North became an industrial and manufacturing powerhouse deeply affected by social reform movements like abolitionism and women’s rights, the South became a cotton kingdom, founded on slavery, whose inhabitants generally abstained from or opposed such reformist tendencies.

Manufacturing in the North

Manufacturing first took hold in New England. The region’s poor soil made large-scale farming unprofitable, and its extensive waterways and steady influx of immigrants favored the development of manufacturing—the waterways supplied power for mills and facilitated trade, while the immigrants comprised a nearly inexhaustible labor supply. Small New England mills gave way to larger, more productive ones, and the expansion of foreign markets allowed the factory system to blossom. Factories became the center of planned towns designed to accommodate the needs of the factory owners and workers.

Cotton and Slavery in the South

The South took a very different economic course than the North. After the Revolution, when tobacco income plummeted, cotton reinvigorated the stagnant southern economy. The widespread use of the **cotton gin**, invented by Eli Whitney in 1793, made cotton plantations efficient and profitable. The demand for cotton also grew because of the developing textile industries in the North and in Britain. Cotton plantations spread across the South, and by 1850, the southern U.S. grew more than 80 percent of the world’s cotton.

As the cotton-based economy boomed so did slavery, since slaves were needed to man the large-scale and labor-intensive plantations. Although Congress banned the importation of slaves in 1808, the smuggling of slaves continued until the 1850s, and the southern slave population doubled between 1810 and 1830. Three-quarters of these slaves worked on cotton plantations, while the remainder worked a variety of skilled and unskilled jobs. The rise in slavery led to the development of a slave culture, and also to an increasing, though generally unfounded, fear of slave revolts. Various slave uprisings did occasionally erupt, however—most notably, Nat Turner’s Rebellion in Virginia in 1831.

The South became a veritable “Cotton Kingdom,” remaining rural and agrarian while the North became industrialized. Rich plantation owners saw little reason to spend their capital on risky industrial projects when cash crops brought in a large, steady income.

The Blossoming of American Literature

During the early 1800s, American literature began to divide from its British roots. Washington Irving and **James Fenimore Cooper** helped carve out the early territory of American literature, using distinctly American literary themes. Washington Irving achieved international acclaim, writing often

satirical accounts of life in colonial New York. Two of his most famous stories are “Rip Van Winkle” and “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow.” James Fenimore Cooper, the author of *The Pioneers* (1823) and *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), is credited with creating the first western hero. In “The American Scholar” (1837), Ralph Waldo Emerson lauded such American literary advances and urged American authors to continue setting their own course.

Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, and Edgar Allan Poe emerged in the late 1840s and early 1850s as prominent writers of fiction. They portrayed individuals as conflicted and obsessive, proud and guilt-ridden. In *The Scarlet Letter*, published in 1850, Hawthorne explores the moral dilemmas of an adulterous Puritan minister. Melville’s *Moby-Dick* (1851) portrays a sea captain’s tortured obsession. Poe’s macabre short stories and poems, including “The Tell-Tale Heart” (1843) and “The Raven” (1844), examine depravity and moral corruption.

Prominent essayists and poets also emerged during the 1840s and 1850s. Two of the most renowned essayists were the Transcendentalists Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau (discussed in the Transcendentalism section), who favored emotion and intuition over pure logic. The poet **Walt Whitman**, a follower of Emerson, celebrated America for producing a new type of democratic man uncorrupted by European vice in his compilation of poems, *Leaves of Grass*, published in 1855.

Settling the West

In the mid-1800s, Americans surged westward past the Mississippi River, the previously drawn boundary of the frontier. As settlers migrated toward the Pacific coast in their overloaded wagons, the West became the fastest growing area of the country. Despite fierce resistance from Native Americans, Mexicans, and the British, Americans eventually claimed the entire region west of the Mississippi. However, westward expansion had its costs: settlers, Native Americans, and the integrity of the Union suffered at its hands.

Manifest Destiny

Fueling the expansion westward was the popular belief that it was America’s **manifest destiny** to expand across Texas, toward the Pacific coast. In 1845, a New York journalist wrote of “our manifest destiny to overspread and to possess the whole of our continent which Providence has given us for the development of the great experiment of liberty.” Manifest destiny tapped into America’s nationalist spirit, which had been growing since the War of 1812, and echoed Protestant beliefs that America was a “called nation”—that is, chosen by God as a haven where Protestants could spread their faith.

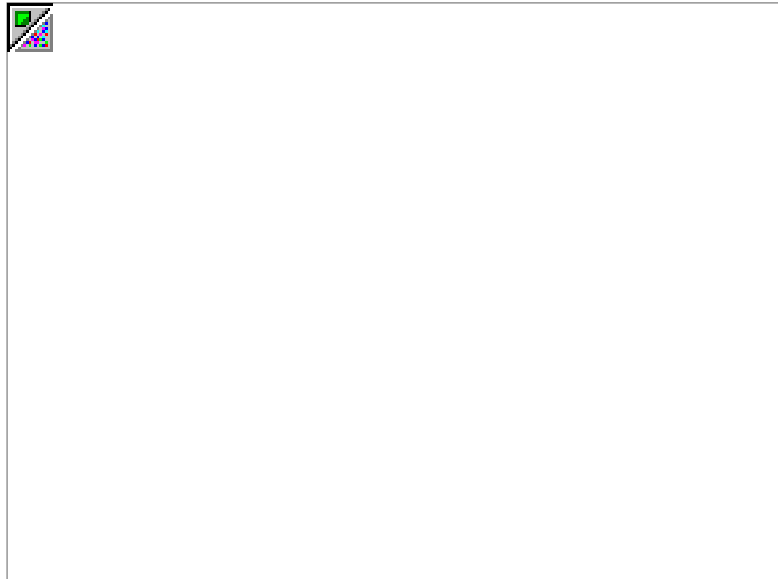
Texas and the Mexican War

During the 1820s, Americans streamed into Texas, then a Mexican territory, often receiving land grants from the Mexican government. Mexico gave these grants in the hopes of promoting the region’s trade and development. By 1830, about 7,000 Americans lived in Texas, outnumbering Hispanic settlers two to one and alarming the Mexican government. In 1834, rebel Texan leaders, most of them American, declared their independence from the Mexican dictatorship. After two years of fighting, Texas became an independent republic, although the Mexican government refused to officially acknowledge its independence.

Because most Texan settlers were American, the question immediately arose of Texas’s potential statehood. President **John Tyler**, who became president in 1841 after William Henry Harrison died in office, favored the annexation of Texas and its admission to the Union. In 1844, Democrat **James K. Polk** won the presidential election on a platform determined to “re-annex Texas and re-occupy Oregon.” One month into his presidency, Congress voted to annex Texas. In 1845, Texas was admitted into the Union as the twenty-eighth state. Mexico, still refusing to recognize Texas’ independence, threatened war over the annexation.

War erupted a year later over the new state’s borders: the U.S. argued that the southern Texas border lay along the Rio Grande River, while Mexico insisted that the border lay much farther north. After trying unsuccessfully to buy the New Mexican and Californian territories from Mexico, the U.S. found a pretense to declare war against Mexico in 1846, when Mexican troops crossed the Rio Grande. The **Mexican War** spread throughout Texas, New Mexico, and California, and into the Mexican interior, finally ending in U.S. victory. With the **Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo**, signed in February 1848, Mexico ceded Texas, New Mexico, and California to the U.S. for \$15 million. (Note that this ceded

territory encompassed present-day Arizona, Nevada, California, Utah, and parts of New Mexico, Colorado, and Wyoming.) The treaty secured the West for American settlement, and American land now stretched continuously from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean.



Oregon

Polk's presidential campaign slogan, "Fifty-four Forty or Fight," referred to the latitude coordinates of northwest territory claimed by both the U.S. and Great Britain. The area included present-day Oregon, Washington, and Idaho; parts of Montana and Wyoming; and much of western Canada. Northerners also pushed for acquisition, since the admission of Oregon, a free state, would balance the annexation of slave-holding Texas. However, Polk, once in office, could not commit to "fight" for the territory—already caught up in border disputes with Mexico, he did not wish to engage in further conflict and instead proposed a compromise with Britain. The 1846 compromise divided the Oregon territory along the forty-ninth parallel. South of this line lay U.S.-owned Oregon, and north lay the British-owned Washington territories. Oregon was admitted as a state in 1859.

California Gold Rush

In January 1848, an American carpenter struck gold in California's Sierra Nevada Mountains. As news of this discovery drifted east, a gold rush began, drawing hordes to the West Coast in search of their fortunes. California attracted about 100,000 immigrants in a single year, including Mexicans, Europeans, and Americans from the East coast. This influx of settlers led to the growth of numerous cities and mining towns, and pressure grew for California to organize its own government, either independent of the Union or as a state.

Removal of Native Americans

A central aspect of the opening of the West was the removal of the Native Americans who already occupied the land. Removal started during Andrew Jackson's presidency with the **Indian Removal Act** of 1830, which authorized the president to force the removal of Midwestern tribes to reservations in Oklahoma and elsewhere. By the early 1860s, the U.S. government had systematized this "Indian territory" into small reservations and, in 1867 set aside two large tracts of land—one north of Nebraska and one south of Kansas—for tribal resettlement. The threat of force convinced many tribes to comply with resettlement. But some tribes, the Sioux in particular, fiercely resisted. In 1874, the U.S. Army sent Colonel **George Armstrong Custer** into South Dakota to fight the Sioux. At the Battle of Little Bighorn, in 1876, the Sioux crushed Custer and his men. After this defeat, the Army adopted a different tactic by launching a war of attrition, persistently harassing the Sioux and gradually weakening their will to resist. U.S. forces finally vanquished the Sioux in the Battle of Wounded Knee in 1890. Over the next decade, the Sioux relocated to reservations.

Not all Americans supported such aggressive removal tactics. Helen Hunt Jackson's *A Century of Dishonor*, published in 1881, attempted to raise public awareness of the Native American plight. Some hoped to "save" the Native Americans through religion, or to "civilize" them by teaching them

white ways. Other humanitarians suggested that the best approach would be to fully integrate the tribes into white society.

These latter concerns were expressed in the 1887 **Dawes Severalty Act** (or simply the Dawes Act), which called for the breakup of the reservation system and the treatment of Native Americans as individuals rather than as tribes. Congressman Henry Dawes believed that private land ownership would help Native Americans become “civilized” and assimilated. Under the act, formally communal land from the reservations was distributed to individuals in 160-acre allotments, and these individuals were guaranteed U.S. citizenship after twenty-five years. The surplus land that remained of the reservations after these allotments had been made was sold to white settlers and land speculators. In practice, much of the land parceled out to Native Americans wound up in white hands after poverty forced many Native Americans to sell their plots. As a result, many Native Americans were left homeless, destitute, and dependent on federal aid for survival. Though passed with good intent, the Dawes Act had disastrous effects: it disintegrated tribal communities and deprived Native Americans of millions of acres of land, clearing the way for American settlement in the process.

Another factor impairing the Native American way of life was the mass slaughter of buffalo. Many Plains tribes depended on buffalo for food, leather, and other material needs. But by the 1870s the buffalo population hovered near extinction, as white hunters killed 9 million buffalo between 1872 and 1875. American hunters often killed the animals solely for their hide, leaving the carcass to rot, while Army generals killed the buffalo in deliberate attempts to drive Native Americans off of desired lands.

The Homestead Act and the Transcontinental Railroad

To promote settlement of the West, Congress passed the **Homestead Act** in 1862, which offered 160 acres to anyone who would cultivate and improve the land. Much of this western land, however, was ill-suited to farming, so ranchers and railroad builders ended up owning most of it.

Another way Congress spurred settlement was by extending the railroad network into the West. In 1862, Congress passed the Pacific Railway Act, which chartered the Union Pacific Railroad company and authorized the building of the **transcontinental railroad**. While the Union Pacific Railroad Company built tracks westward from Iowa, the Central Pacific Railroad Company built tracks eastward from California. The two tracks converged on May 10, 1869 in Promontory, Utah. This historic moment marked the completion of the first transcontinental railroad, and by 1884, there were four such lines. Whereas just fifty years earlier it had taken pioneers many grueling months to cross the nation, Americans could now travel from coast to coast in a week’s time. Railroads attracted many new settlers to the newly accessible West by offering free transportation and long-term loans to travelers.

Effects of Expansion: Sectional Tension Intensified

The expansion of the U.S. into the West reopened a controversy that had been temporarily settled by the 1821 **Missouri Compromise**: the balance of slave-holding versus free lands. Regional passions flared as the nation debated the extension of slavery into the new territories. In 1844, Congress repealed the 1836 **gag rule**, which had suppressed all debates on slavery, and disputed the status of the newly acquired territories. Texas entered the Union as a slave state in 1845 because the territory was already slave-holding when it sought admission. But the other lands ceded by Mexico—including California and New Mexico—were undecided, so Northern and Southern interests rallied to recruit these lands to their side.

In 1846, Democratic congressman David Wilmot attempted to preempt the debates that would erupt when the U.S. gained additional western lands by proposing the **Wilmot Proviso**, which stipulated that slavery be prohibited in any territory gained from Mexico. With strong support from the North, the proviso passed through the House of Representatives but stalled in the Senate, where it was repeatedly reintroduced without success. The issue sparked intense sectional debate. In the debates, four main arguments emerged:

- Antislavery Northerners cited the **Northwest Ordinance** of 1787, which forbade slavery north of the Ohio River, as proof that the founding fathers opposed the extension of slavery, and therefore that America should add no new slave states.
- Southerners, led by John C. Calhoun, argued that all lands acquired from Mexico should become slave-holding.
- Moderates, including President Polk, suggested that the 36°30' line from the Missouri Compromise be extended into the Western territory, so that all territory north of the line would be free, and all territory south of the line would be slave-holding.

- Others suggested the system of **popular sovereignty**, in which the settlers themselves, through their local governments, would decide whether their regions should be slave-holding or free.

Before the 1848 election, antislavery advocates united to form the **Free-Soil Party** and nominated Martin Van Buren for president. The Free-Soil Party consisted of antislavery **Whigs**, members of the abolitionist Liberty Party, and a faction of the **Democratic Party** (known as the Barnburners) that supported the Wilmot Proviso. Although the Free-Soil Party did not win any electoral votes, it did earn 10 percent of the national popular vote. Van Buren lost the election to Whig candidate **Zachary Taylor**.

The Compromise of 1850

Although he held slaves himself, President Taylor opposed the extension of slavery into the territories of California and New Mexico. In 1849, California requested admission as a free state, which frightened the South because the admission of another free state into the Union would make slave-holding interests a minority in Congress. Southern Congressmen tried to block California's admission. With the national government in gridlock, **Henry Clay** stepped forward in May 1850 to present a compromise, much as he had thirty years earlier when Missouri sought statehood. Clay's 1850 proposals included five points:

- California would be admitted as a free state.
- The remainder of the Mexican cession would be divided into two separate territories, New Mexico and Utah, and these territories would decide by popular sovereignty whether to be slave-holding or free.
- Texas would cede its claim to parts of the New Mexico territory, and, in exchange, the government would cover Texas's \$10 million war debt.
- The slave trade would be abolished in the District of Columbia, but slavery itself would continue.
- Congress would strengthen the **Fugitive Slave Act** by requiring citizens of any state, slave or free, to assist in the capture and return of runaway slaves.

Clay's proposal threw Congress into an eight-month discussion known as the "**Great Debate**." Proponents of each side—the North and the South—criticized Clay's compromise for being too lenient on the other. Most prominent among the debaters were Clay, **Daniel Webster**, and **John C. Calhoun**. Eventually, the bill passed. Two events in particular facilitated its passage: first, when President Taylor died in July 1850, Vice President **Millard Fillmore** took over and adopted a pro-compromise position. Second, **Stephen A. Douglas** took over for Henry Clay as speaker of the house and divided the compromise bill up into separate components, each of which passed. Together, the separate bills became known as the **Compromise of 1850**.

The Compromise of 1850 called for the admission of California as a free state; the strengthening of the Fugitive Slave Law; popular sovereignty in Utah and New Mexico concerning the question of slavery; the abolition of the slave trade in D.C.; and the federal assumption of Texas's debt.

Compromise Undermined: A Divided Nation

During the Great Debate, one particular point of contention was the strengthening of the **Fugitive Slave Act**. The Fugitive Slave Act denied alleged fugitives the right to a trial and did not allow them to testify in their own defense. It further granted court-appointed commissioners greater payment if they ruled in favor of the slaveholder. In addition, the law authorized federal marshals and southern posses to enter the North and target runaway slaves who had escaped decades earlier. The Fugitive Slave Act reminded Northerners of their complicity with the institution of slavery.

Some Northerners worked vigorously to undermine the Fugitive Slave Act, whether through legal tactics, organized social protest, or violent resistance. During the 1850s, nine Northern states passed **personal liberty laws** to counteract the Fugitive Slave Act. These state laws guaranteed all alleged fugitives the right to a trial by jury and to a lawyer, and they prohibited state jails from holding alleged fugitives. In terms of social resistance, Northern Vigilance Committees worked hard to protect escaped slaves, at times in conjunction with the **Underground Railroad**—a network of safe houses and escorts throughout the North that helped escaped slaves to freedom. **Harriet Tubman**, a former slave, was instrumental in forming this network, and was sometimes referred to as "Moses." (In the

Bible, Moses led the Israelites to freedom.) Less systematic resistance came in the form of violent protest. In 1854, a Boston mob broke into a courthouse and killed a guard in a failed attempt to free a fugitive slave.

Controversial provisions of the Fugitive Slave Act prompted Northerners to resist its enforcement through violent protest, clandestine efforts to aid escaped slaves, and legal tactics such as personal liberty laws.

Such strong-armed resistance against the Fugitive Slave Act revealed that Northern abolitionist sentiment was rising. No event did more to encourage Northern abolitionism and sympathy for runaway slaves than the 1852 publication of ***Uncle Tom's Cabin***, written by Harriet Beecher Stowe. Stowe wrote about slavery with grim reality, telling the story of a black slave who is torn from his family, sold from place to place, and eventually whipped to death. Three hundred thousand copies of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* were sold in 1852, and 1.2 million had been sold by the summer of 1853. Dramatized versions of the story were produced at playhouses throughout the North, attracting audience members from all segments of society.

Election of 1852

As a symptom of the national division, the Whig party disintegrated during the 1850s along North and South lines, and its 1852 presidential candidate fared badly. The Free Soil Party's candidate also won little support. The winner was Democratic nominee **Franklin Pierce**.

Compromise Collapses

President Franklin Pierce sought to avoid the controversial slave issue and instead focused on territorially expanding into Mexico and Cuba and on opening up international trade. However, he could not keep the slavery issue at bay for long. Beginning with the **Kansas-Nebraska Act** of 1854, the tenuous stalemate of the Compromise of 1850 dissolved. Regional passions soon exploded into violence that foreshadowed the coming Civil War.

The Kansas-Nebraska Act

In January 1854, Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois proposed a bill to organize Nebraska (part of the Louisiana Purchase) as a territory, in order to facilitate the building of a transcontinental railroad along a northern route from Chicago to the West. Because the Nebraska Territory lay above the 36°30' line, set by the Missouri Compromise to disallow slavery, Nebraska would automatically become a candidate for admission as a free state. Southerners therefore planned to oppose the bill unless Douglas made some concessions.

To ensure passage of the bill, Douglas yielded to Southerners who desired to void the Missouri Compromise's 36°30' line. He inserted in his Nebraska bill an explicit repeal of the Missouri Compromise so that no territory would be automatically designated non-slaveholding. As an alternative, the bill declared that the slavery issue in the Nebraska region would be decided by popular sovereignty, thus extending the Compromise of 1850's concept of popular sovereignty to territories outside New Mexico and Utah. Douglas further divided the Nebraska Territory into two parts: Nebraska to the west of Iowa, and Kansas to the west of Missouri. Many assumed that this meant Kansas would be reserved for slavery and Nebraska for free soil. With these concessions attached, the bill passed through Congress and became law in May 1854.

The Kansas-Nebraska Act, however, did not stave off sectional conflict. Because Nebraska was likely to prohibit slavery, as a territory above the 36°30' line, Kansas became a battleground for sectional interests. Both Northern abolitionist groups and Southern interests rushed into the territory to try to control the local elections. In March 1855, during the first election of the territorial legislature, thousands of pro-slavery inhabitants of Western Missouri crossed into Kansas to tilt the vote in favor of slaveholding interests. Because of the election fraud perpetrated by these "border ruffians," a pro-slavery government swept into power. This new government immediately ousted antislavery legislators and set up a pro-slavery constitution known as the Lecompton Constitution.

In opposition to the new legislature, abolitionist **John Brown** led a massacre of five men at a pro-slavery camp, setting off an outbreak of violence. More than 200 people died in the ensuing months of

violence, earning the territory the nickname **Bleeding Kansas**. Three years later, in 1859, Brown led an even larger antislavery revolt in Virginia, when he attempted to seize federal arsenal at **Harpers Ferry** in order to arm a massive slave uprising. His raid was unsuccessful, however, and he was caught and hanged.

The *Dred Scott* Decision

Distraught by the violence of Bleeding Kansas, President **James Buchanan**, who was elected in 1856, sought a judicial resolution to the issue of slavery's extension. A case he saw as potentially providing such a resolution was that of Dred Scott, in which Scott, a Missouri slave, sued for his freedom on the basis that his owner had taken him to live in a free state (Illinois), and later a free territory (Wisconsin). In March 1857, Chief Justice **Roger B. Taney** delivered the majority opinion on ***Dred Scott v. Sandford***.

To begin his ruling, Taney stated that Scott, as a slave, had no right to sue in federal court, and further claimed that no black, whether slave or free, could become a citizen of the United States. Slaves were property only, according to Taney, and would remain property even if they resided in free territory. Furthermore, Taney ruled that Congress could not forbid slavery in any U.S. territory because doing so would violate the Fifth Amendment's protection of property, including slaves, from being taken away without due process. This decision rendered the Missouri Compromise unconstitutional (though the Compromise had already been effectively nullified by the Kansas-Nebraska Act). Taney further suggested that the Compromise of 1850 and the Kansas-Nebraska Act were unconstitutional, since they enforced popular sovereignty, which allowed territorial governments to prohibit slavery and therefore violated the Fifth Amendment as interpreted by the Court. Though Buchanan initially had hoped that the *Dred Scott* ruling might resolve the debates about extending slavery, it actually aggravated sectional tensions. Northerners harshly condemned the ruling, while Southerners celebrated it.

The Dred Scott decision ruled the Missouri Compromise unconstitutional, and affirmed the status of slaves as simple property. Further, the decision cast serious doubt upon the legality of the Compromise of 1850.

The New Politics of Sectionalism

The Whig Party, which was an anti-Jackson alliance between Southern Republicans and Northern Democrats, disintegrated in the 1850s over the increasingly contentious issue of slavery. In its place, the **Republican Party** arose as the chief political opposition to the Democrats. The Republican Party crystallized in opposition to slavery, while the Democrats supported the institution.

From Whigs to Republicans

The Kansas-Nebraska Act divided the Whigs Southern pro-slavery and Northern antislavery components. The fractures ran so deep that even Northern Whigs were divided, between antislavery "Conscience Whigs" and conservatives who supported the Compromise of 1850. This split forced many antislavery Whigs to look for a political alternative less muddled by internal conflict.

One alternative was the American Party, which became known as the **Know-Nothing Party** because the members met secretly and refused to identify themselves. This party was a nativist organization (anti-foreigner) that spread anti-German, anti-Irish, and anti-Catholic propaganda. Most members also favored temperance and opposed slavery. It seemed the Know-Nothings would form the primary opposition party to the Democrats until, in 1855, they also succumbed to sectional conflict when the party's Southern branch made acceptance of the Kansas-Nebraska Act part of the Know-Nothing platform. The Know-Nothing party found itself weakened and near ruin.

In its place, a new Republican Party emerged as the premier antislavery coalition. The Republicans originally formed in the North between 1854 and 1855, as Northern Democrats, antislavery Whigs, and former Free Soil party members united to oppose the Democratic Party. Although all Republicans disapproved of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, some Republicans merely wanted to restore the Missouri Compromise. Others were middleground free-soilers, and still others were adamant abolitionists. Nevertheless, opposition to slavery's extension united these disparate groups.

The Whig Party disintegrated during the mid-1850s, throwing Northern Whigs into the Know-Nothing Party and the Republican Party. By 1856, the Republican Party had risen to national prominence as the main opposition to the Democrats.

Republicans and Democrats Face Off: Lincoln-Douglas Debates

In the 1858 midterm elections, Republicans and Democrats faced off for the first time. The most visible of these battles took place in Illinois, where prominent Democratic Senator Stephen A. Douglas faced a reelection challenge in the form of Republican **Abraham Lincoln**. This campaign pitted the Republican Party's rising star, Lincoln, against the Democratic Party's leading senator. In a series of seven debates known as the **Lincoln-Douglas Debates**, Douglas advocated popular sovereignty while Lincoln espoused the free-soil argument.

Douglas painted a picture of his opponent as an abolitionist and an advocate of racial equality and racial mixing, positions that were still very unpopular at the time. Lincoln countered that he was not an abolitionist—that he simply opposed the *extension* of slavery into the territories, but did not aim to abolish slavery where it already existed, in the South. He further claimed, “I have no purpose to introduce political and social equality between the white and the black races ,” but still argued that “notwithstanding all this, there is no reason in the world why the negro is not entitled to all the natural rights enumerated in the Declaration of Independence.” In attack of his opponent, Lincoln challenged that Douglas's belief in popular sovereignty, in particular his “**Freeport Doctrine**,” was incompatible with the *Dred Scott* decision. In this doctrine, Douglas stated that territorial governments could effectively forbid slavery by refusing to enact slave codes, even though the *Dred Scott* decision had explicitly deprived Congress of the authority to restrict slavery in the territories.

In the end, neither candidate emerged from the debates as the clear victor. Although Douglas won the Senate seat, he alienated Southern supporters by encouraging disobedience of the *Dred Scott* decision with his Freeport Doctrine. Lincoln, meanwhile, lost the election, but emerged with national prominence as a spokesman for antislavery interests.

Republican Ascendancy: The Election of 1860

In 1860, Buchanan announced he would not run for reelection. The Democratic Party ruptured over whom to nominate in Buchanan's place. While Northern Democrats defended the doctrine of popular sovereignty and nominated Stephen Douglas for president, Southern Democrats opposed popular sovereignty in favor of the *Dred Scott* decision—which provided absolute protection of slavery in all territories—and nominated vice president John Breckenridge for president. Southern moderates from the lower South walked out of the Democratic Convention and formed their own party, the Constitutional Party, which nominated John C. Bell for president. These three candidates faced Republican nominee Abraham Lincoln.

Lincoln emerged with a majority of the electoral votes, 180 in total. He carried all eighteen free states, but had not even appeared on the ballots of a number of slave states, and in 10 slave states, had not received a single popular vote. Lincoln's election so alienated the South that secession seemed imminent. While South Carolina had threatened earlier to secede from the **Union** over the Tariff of Abominations in 1828, the current threat was much more dire.

In the election of 1860, Republican Abraham Lincoln defeated three challengers representing the country's varying pro-slavery political positions—Northern Democrats, Southern Democrats, and Southern moderates.

Toward War

Abraham Lincoln's victory in the election of 1860 began a chain of events that pushed the nation rapidly toward civil war.

Secession

During the 1860 election, some Southerners threatened secession pending Lincoln's victory, even though he promised that while he would forbid the extension of slavery into the territories, he would not interfere with slavery in the South. In December 1860, soon after Lincoln's victory, a special South Carolina convention voted unanimously for secession. By February 1861, six more Southern states followed suit: Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas. Delegates from all seven states met to establish the **Confederate States of America**, and they chose **Jefferson Davis** as the Confederacy's first president.

Lincoln refused to recognize the confederacy and declared the secession “legally void.” Although he

personally favored the gradual emancipation of slaves with compensation given to slave owners, as president, he strove to preserve the Union first and foremost, by whatever means necessary—even if that meant freeing no slaves at all. He once said, “If I could save the Union without freeing *any* slaves I would do it, and if I could save the Union by freeing *all* the slaves I would do it.” Lincoln hoped that loyal Unionists in the South would help him overturn secession.

However, the nation’s rift only widened in the early months of Lincoln’s presidency. In April 1861, Confederate troops opened fire on the federal army base at Fort Sumter, forcing federal troops to surrender. Lincoln proclaimed the Lower South in rebellion and called for an army to suppress the insurrection. The threat of incoming federal troops prompted Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina to secede and join the Confederacy. Maryland, Delaware, Kentucky, and Missouri, all slave states, remained in the Union.

The Confederate attack on federal troops at Fort Sumter sparked the secession of the Upper South and the commitment of the North to war



Mobilizing for War

Each side predicted an early victory for itself. While the North seemed favored to win the war, given its larger and better-equipped army, the South also had some distinct military advantages.

The Union’s advantages over the South:

- **Population size:** The North had a population of 22 million (23 states) versus the South’s 9 million (11 states). Northern forces totaled 2,100,000, compared to the South’s paltry 800,000.
- **Greater wartime funding:** Both the North and South sold war bonds, but the North also instituted an income tax and had more effective tax collection. The Northern economy also fared better during the war, suffering only moderate inflation, while the Southern economy collapsed from severe inflation (prices in the South rose more than 300 percent annually).
- **More advanced industry:** The North held more than 90 percent of the nation’s industrial plants and could easily produce heavy artillery weapons. The North also had 70 percent of the nation’s railroad tracks and could therefore effectively transport arms and food to distant troops. The South, on the other hand, had to import arms until it could build an industrial base, could not afford supplies, and could not efficiently ship food and equipment to its troops.
- **More abundant food resources:** Northern agriculture was geared toward grain, whereas the South specialized in the growing of inedible cash crops like cotton, tobacco, and indigo.

The Confederacy’s advantages over the North:

- **Geography:** The Confederacy was fighting for independence at home, while the Union was entering enemy territory. Whereas the North would have to ship men and supplies long

distances and occupy conquered territory, the South could maintain an arc of defense by moving its men around very little.

- **Military tradition and morale:** The South had a stronger military tradition and more experienced military leaders. During the war, fewer Southern troops defected than Northern troops, suggesting a higher morale among Confederate forces.

The Civil War

The Civil War began more as a battle over the preservation of the Union than as a battle over slavery. Many felt that the real issue at stake was the question of states' rights versus federal power—whether states could secede from the Union in protest against federal policy, regardless of whether that policy concerned slavery or another issue, such as tariffs. Slavery was therefore considered the catalyst for the nation's rupture, but not the primary cause. It was not until Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation that slavery emerged as the central issue at stake.

In the East, the Union Army aimed to capture the Confederate capital of Richmond, Virginia. Most of the early battles ended in stalemate, with both sides suffering devastating losses. After a Southern victory in June 1862, Confederate general **Robert E. Lee** led his forces on a powerful march northward from Virginia, aiming to break Union lines. What followed, in September 17, 1862, was the bloodiest single-day battle in the Civil War: the **Battle of Antietam**, in which more than 8,000 men died on the field and 18,000 were wounded. Though a strategic draw, the battle proved a Union victory in that Lee halted his Confederate advance northward. Lincoln responded to this victory by issuing the **Emancipation Proclamation**.

General Lee struck northward into Pennsylvania in July 1863, but was again blocked by a strong Union defense. In the three-day **Battle of Gettysburg**, 90,000 Union soldiers battled 75,000 Confederates and secured a Union victory. The losses were ruinous to both sides: a total of 7,000 soldiers died on the field and 40,000 were wounded. Although fighting would continue for more than a year after the Battle of Gettysburg, the battle proved a decisive victory for the Union, and the war thereafter tilted in the Union's favor. Later that year, Lincoln delivered his famed **Gettysburg Address**, in which he portrayed the war as a test of democracy's strength.

In the West, the Union experienced successes much earlier on. Led by General **Ulysses S. Grant**, the Union secured control of the Mississippi River and moved southward. At the Battle of Shiloh, in April 1862, Grant's troops were ambushed by Confederates, but Grant proved victorious. Both sides suffered heavy losses, as nearly one-third of the 77,000 men involved were killed.

The Emancipation Proclamation

Early in the war, Union officials were uncertain how to treat Southern slaves who fled to the North or were captured by the army. Lincoln was cautious in his approach to this matter, since the Union contained four slave states and many pro-slavery Democrats. He vaguely supported the policy of confiscation, in which slaves who had worked for the Confederate military were considered captives of war and put to work for the Union army. Each Union loss in the war, however, made emancipation a more attractive recourse, since slave labor drove the Southern economy and allowed the Confederacy to devote more white men to war. Lincoln eventually came to favor emancipation, and only awaited the right moment to announce his decision.

After the Union victory at Antietam in September 1862, Lincoln issued the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, declaring all slaves under rebel control free as of January 1, 1863. The final Emancipation Proclamation was issued on January 1. In practice, the Proclamation freed very few slaves because it did not affect the slave states within the Union or the parts of the Confederacy under Union control. But as a political move, it proved decisive and brilliant. The proclamation mobilized the support of European liberals (Great Britain and France had outlawed slavery earlier in the century), and it appeased the **Radical Republicans** in Congress. Abolishing slavery thus became one of the Union's primary objectives for war, along with preserving the Union.

The Emancipation Proclamation freed all slaves under rebel control on January 1, 1863. Though the practical effect of the proclamation on Southern slaves was slight, it proved a brilliant political move.

Black Soldiers

The Emancipation Proclamation did significantly affect the war by bolstering the Union's forces. After

the Proclamation, the Union began to enlist black soldiers in conquered areas of the South. In all, almost 200,000 blacks enlisted. By the end of the war, black soldiers comprised almost one-tenth of the Union Army. Although blacks were paid less than whites and assigned to less desirable posts, their military service was an important symbol of black citizenship.

Union Victory

In early 1864, Lincoln appointed General Ulysses S. Grant commander of all Union armies. The string of Union victories that followed that summer, especially General William T. Sherman's victories in Georgia, helped Lincoln win reelection in 1864. Union forces continued to rout the Confederate Army after Lincoln's reelection, destroying much of Georgia and South Carolina in what is known as **Sherman's March to the Sea**: Sherman and his troops first burned Atlanta, and then marched toward the coast, demolishing everything in their way, including railroads and factories. Sherman estimated that his forces ruined \$100 million worth of property.

One month after Sherman's forces conquered Charleston, South Carolina, Grant took the Confederacy capital in Richmond, Virginia. Robert E. Lee's forces officially surrendered to Grant on April 9, 1865. One month later, Confederacy President Jefferson Davis was captured in Georgia.

Reconstruction

More Americans died in the Civil War than in any other conflict before or since. The war was particularly disastrous for the South, where one in twenty white men were killed or wounded, and the land lay in ruins. After the Union victory, the nation faced the complex tasks of reintegrating the damaged South into the Union and helping heal the nation's wounds.

Presidential Reconstruction Under Lincoln

Unlike the Radical Republicans in Congress who wanted to severely punish the Confederate states, Lincoln proposed a more forgiving and flexible plan for Reconstruction. In December 1863, before the war had ended, Lincoln issued the Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction, also known as the "**Ten Percent Plan**," which offered pardon to any former Confederates who would take an oath to support the Constitution. This pardon was not extended to officers in the Confederate armed forces above certain ranks, or to those who had resigned Union government posts to aid in the rebellion. When one-tenth of a state's voting population had taken the oath of loyalty to the Union and established a new government, Lincoln would recognize that government.

Lincoln's plan for Reconstruction, known as the "Ten Percent Plan," allowed a state to reenter the Union when 10 percent of its voters pledged allegiance to the Union.

Radical Republicans in Congress denounced the plan for being too lenient on the South and for not securing any rights for freed slaves. Moreover, these Republicans believed that Congress, not the president, should dictate the terms by which the nation would reunite. In July 1864, Congress proposed its own plan for Reconstruction by passing the **Wade-Davis Bill**, which declared that each Confederate state would be run by a military governor. After half of each state's eligible voters took an oath of allegiance to the Union, a state convention could be called to overturn secession and outlaw slavery. Lincoln, however, vetoed the bill by leaving it unsigned for more than ten days after the adjournment of Congress. With Congress and the president in a deadlock over the terms of the Confederate states' readmission, reconstruction stalled.

Radical Republicans opposed Lincoln's "Ten Percent Plan," and instead proposed a more stringent and punitive plan calling for military rule of the South.

The Radical Republicans in Congress did succeed in dictating some terms of Reconstruction. To help former slaves adjust to their new lives, Congress established the **Freedmen's Bureau**, which offered education, employment, economic relief, and legal aid to freed slaves. The Freedmen's Bureau helped build hospitals and supervised the founding of black schools throughout the South, including Howard University in Washington, D.C., and Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee. In addition to the Freedmen's Bureau, Congress passed the **Thirteenth Amendment**, which abolished slavery. The Amendment was ratified by twenty-seven states in December 1865, though Lincoln did not live to see that day.

In April 1865, soon after Lee's surrender, Lincoln was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth, an actor and

supporter of the Confederacy. Vice President **Andrew Johnson** became president.

Presidential Reconstruction Under Johnson

A Southern Democrat who opposed secession, Johnson had been added to the presidential ticket in 1864 to broaden Lincoln's support. When Johnson became president, Congress was in recess, so Johnson forged ahead with a slight modification of Lincoln's Reconstruction plan without facing any opposition from Congress.

Under Johnson's plan, nearly all Southerners would be pardoned who took an oath of allegiance to the Union, with the exception of high-ranking Confederate officials and powerful plantation owners, who would be forever barred from government. His plan further required reconstructed state governments to denounce secession and ratify the Thirteenth Amendment. Even so, Johnson pardoned many powerful ex-Confederates and allowed reconstructed Southern governments to be dominated by pro-slavery forces—by Confederate army officers, plantation owners, and former government officials.

Governed by these Confederate forces, many of the “reconstructed” Southern governments refused to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment and further enforced **black codes** in an attempt to create a subjugated black workforce. Most states outlawed interracial marriage and jury service by blacks, and banned blacks from the right to testify against whites. Most codes also imposed a curfew on blacks and limited their access to public institutions. South Carolina further required licenses for blacks wishing to enter nonagricultural employment. When Radical Republicans attacked the black codes, Johnson defended the codes along with his overall plan for reconstruction.

Andrew Johnson presented a weak plan for Reconstruction, liberally pardoning ex-Confederates and allowing reconstructed governments to be dominated by pro-slavery forces, which passed black codes to keep the freedmen subjugated.

Congressional Reconstruction

Congress reconvened in December 1865 and immediately expressed displeasure with Johnson's Reconstruction plan. Radical Republicans, led by Senator **Charles Sumner** and Representative Thaddeus Stevens, set out to dismantle Johnson's Reconstruction plan and to dictate Reconstruction on Congress's terms. They called for black voting rights, confiscation of Confederate estates, and military occupation of the South.

Congress then passed two bills by overriding Johnson's veto: the Civil Rights Act, which granted blacks full citizenship and civil rights, and an act to extend the life of the Freedmen's Bureau. Johnson's attempt to veto these two bills prompted many moderates to ally themselves with the Radicals against his plan.

To give the Civil Rights Act constitutional protection, Congress passed the **Fourteenth Amendment** in 1866, which declared all persons born or naturalized in the United States to be citizens of their states and of the nation, and prohibited states from denying citizens equal protection and due process of the law. Congress thus reversed the *Dred Scott* decision, which had denied blacks citizenship. Not surprisingly, Johnson opposed the amendment and every Southern state except Tennessee rejected it, leaving the radicals without enough support to ratify the amendment.

After an overwhelming victory in the 1866 Congressional election, Radicals gained the power they needed to push for passage of the Fourteenth Amendment and military occupation of the South. With a two-thirds majority in the House and a four-fifths majority in the Senate, Republicans charged ahead with Reconstruction on their own terms. In March 1867, Congress passed the **Reconstruction Act of 1867** over Johnson's veto, which invalidated state governments formed under presidential Reconstruction and imposed martial law on the ex-Confederate states. Only Tennessee, which had ratified the Fourteenth Amendment, escaped invalidation and military subjugation. The other ten states were reorganized into five military districts run by Union generals. The act also expedited passage of the Fourteenth Amendment by requiring that Southern states ratify the Fourteenth Amendment in order to be eligible for readmission into the Union. In June 1868, seven ex-Confederate states voted to ratify the amendment, and the amendment finally passed.

Under the stringent terms of congressional Reconstruction, ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment was made a condition of readmission to the Union.

Impeachment Crisis

In March 1867, the same month Congress passed the Reconstruction Act, Congress passed two bills to

limit President Johnson's authority. The Tenure of Office Act prohibited the president from removing civil officers without Senate approval, while the Command of the Army Act prevented the president from issuing military orders except through the commanding general, **Ulysses S. Grant** (who could not be removed without the Senate's approval). In August 1867, with Congress out of session, Johnson suspended Secretary of War Edwin Stanton and replaced him with Grant. Republicans in Congress refused to approve Johnson's change, and called for impeachment on the grounds that Johnson had violated the Tenure of Office Act. In truth, Johnson's violation served as a mere excuse for Congress to launch impeachment proceedings; Congress's real motivation was to remove a president hostile to Reconstruction.

Johnson's impeachment trial began in March 1868 and lasted nearly three months. Johnson escaped impeachment by one vote but was left effectively powerless. His acquittal set a precedent against impeachment based on political rivalry, lasting until the Clinton impeachment crisis of the late 1990's.

Congressional Reconstruction Continues

The **Fifteenth Amendment**, proposed in 1869 and passed in 1870, guaranteed the right to vote to any citizen regardless of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. The amendment aimed to promote black suffrage in the South, and to guarantee it in the North and West. (Much of the North had not yet extended suffrage to blacks, even though the South had been required to do so by Congress.) The last Southern states awaiting readmission—Texas, Mississippi, and Virginia—were required to ratify the new amendment as a precondition for readmission.

Working to undermine the Fifteenth Amendment was the **Ku Klux Klan** (KKK), founded in 1866 in Tennessee and operating in all Southern states by 1868. The Klan conducted raids to intimidate black voters as part of its campaign to assert white supremacy in the South. Along with these raids, the Klan orchestrated lynchings and floggings of blacks. In May 1870, to counter the Klan's impairment of black suffrage and to bolster the Fifteenth Amendment, Congress passed the **Enforcement Acts of 1870 and 1871**, which protected black voters. Congress also passed the Ku Klux Klan Act in 1871 to authorize the president to use federal troops and emergency measures to overthrow the Klan. Although incidences of vigilantism declined, the Klan maintained a strong presence in many areas.

Reconstructed Governments in the New South

Because of the enfranchisement of blacks, the disfranchisement of ex-Confederates, and the influx of Northern opportunists, the Republican Party dominated Reconstruction governments in the South. All Southern Reconstruction constitutions guaranteed universal male suffrage, and Louisiana and South Carolina even opened public schools to blacks. To fund these schools and other new social programs, state governments raised state taxes and accumulated exorbitant debt.

Opponents of Reconstruction accused these new governments of being unsound and corrupt—and, indeed, many involved in these new governments did take bribes and exchanged favors for votes. Democrats called the Southern moderates who cooperated with Republicans **scalawags**, and labeled the Northern opportunists **carpetbaggers** (an unsavory title meant to suggest that the Northerners came to the South just to gain easy political power and wealth through bribes). Led by Democratic politicians, the Ku Klux Klan attacked and even murdered many of these "scalawags," "carpetbaggers," and other political leaders.

Reconstruction Wanes

During the 1870s, the Radical Republicans lost influence in Congress when two key leaders, Charles Sumner and Thaddeus Stevens, died, and many others turned moderate. The Radicals' demise, along with reports of corruption in "reconstructed" governments, sapped Northerners' enthusiasm for Reconstruction. At the same time, economic panic and political scandal diverted the nation's attention. Another factor contributing to the end of Reconstruction were the rulings of the Supreme Court. In a series of decisions, the Court reversed many of the trends the Radicals had begun.

The Supreme Court Repudiates Reconstruction

In a series of cases in the 1860s and 1870s, the Supreme Court established a narrow reading of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. The Court ruled that the Fourteenth Amendment only protected the rights of national citizenship, not state citizenship, and therefore allowed for a number of restrictions on state voting privileges. In the years following this decision, many Southern states imposed literacy tests, poll taxes, property requirements, and grandfather clauses (which allowed only those men to vote whose grandfathers had voted) in an effort to limit voting among blacks. Since many

blacks were poor and uneducated, and their grandfathers had not voted, they could not pass these new voting requirements. The Court also limited the scope of the Fifteenth Amendment, ruling that the amendment did not confer the right of suffrage upon anyone, but merely prohibited the barring of suffrage based on race, color, or previous condition of servitude. Since the Enforcement Acts of 1870 and 1871 served to reinforce the Fifteenth Amendment, the Court declared key parts of the acts invalid.

Corruption and Dissent in the Grant Administration

In 1868, the Union Civil War hero **Ulysses S. Grant** defeated the Democratic candidate for president, Horatio Seymour. Grant's two terms in office were laden with scandal, including the 1869 "Black Friday" scandal, the 1875 "Whiskey Ring," and the 1876 "Belknap scandal." In "Black Friday," Grant's brother-in-law conspired with two powerful industrialists to corner the gold market; in the "Whiskey Ring," Grant's personal secretary was proven to have taken bribes from a group of distillers seeking to evade millions of dollars in taxes; and in the "Belknap scandal," Grant's secretary of war, William E. Belknap, was impeached for accepting bribes to sell Native American trading posts in Oklahoma. The widespread corruption in Grant's administration weakened the Republican Party and diverted the nation's attention from Reconstruction.

Approaching the election of 1872, dissident Republicans split off from the party in protest of Grant's corruption and formed a new political party called the **Liberal Republicans**. Liberal Republicans opposed corruption and favored sectional harmony. The new party joined with the Democrats and nominated Horace Greeley for president. Greeley, though a determined campaigner, lost convincingly to Grant. Despite Grant's victory, the division in the Republican Party was a clear sign of the loss of momentum for Congressional Reconstruction.

The division of the Republican Party during the election of 1872 demonstrated the weakening of support for Reconstruction. The solid core in Congress, which had pushed Reconstruction measures through, disintegrated in the wake of the Grant administration's corruption.

The Panic of 1873

In Grant's second term in office, the nation faced serious economic woes. As a result of over-expansion by railroad builders and businessmen, the nation's economy collapsed, in what is known as the **Panic of 1873**. The stock market crashed, the largest bank in the nation failed—as did many smaller banks and firms—and 25 percent of railroads shut down. This economic panic, coupled with Grant's many political scandals, distracted the nation from Reconstruction.

The End of Reconstruction

The 1872 split in the Republican Party hastened the collapse of Republican rule in the South. Moderates in Congress pushed through Amnesty Acts allowing almost all ex-Confederate officials to return to politics and hold office. Using tactics such as promising tax cuts and engaging in outright violence and intimidation, Democrats took control of one state after another. Some Republicans gave up and moved back North, while others defected to the Democratic Party. By 1877, Democrats gained enough votes to win state elections in every one of the former Confederate states.

Democrats called their return to power **Redemption**. Once under Democratic control, every state in the South cut expenses, ended social programs, and revised their tax systems to grant relief to landowners. Many blacks migrated northward to escape the discriminatory policies of the Redeemed South. In 1879, 4,000 blacks from Mississippi and Louisiana reached Kansas to settle on land outside the grasp of southern Democrats.

In the 1876 presidential election, Republicans nominated the moderate Rutherford B. Hayes, and Democrats nominated Samuel J. Tilden. Although Tilden won the popular vote, Republicans challenged the election returns from South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana. Republicans still controlled the political machinery in these states, and threw out enough votes to ensure Hayes's victory. To prevent Democrats from obstructing Hayes's path to the White House, Republicans promised that in return for the Presidency, Hayes would remove federal troops from South Carolina and Louisiana. After he assumed office, Hayes abided by this so-called **Hayes-Tilden Compromise**, and removed federal troops from the last two occupied states in the South. By January 1877, Democrats had won control of all Southern state governments and Redemption was complete. Southern governments, under Democratic rule, reimposed laws severely restricting black suffrage and civil rights. Reconstruction was officially over.

Reconstruction died in January 1877, after the Hayes-Tilden Compromise removed troops from the

last two occupied states in the South and allowed Democrats in those states to take control of the legislature.

Society in the South after Reconstruction

While blacks gained freedom in the South, they hardly gained equality. Despite the Radical Republicans' efforts at Reconstruction, many blacks in the South struggled with poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment. As Reconstruction waned, the condition of freedmen worsened. The Freedmen's Bureau closed, voting restrictions such as poll taxes and literacy tests proliferated, and racist violence spread. Discrimination in the South further intensified with the passage of **Jim Crow laws** in the 1880s. Jim Crow laws segregated many public accommodations such as trains, steamboats, streetcars, and schools, and restricted or forbade black access to other facilities, like theaters and restaurants. The Supreme Court upheld such segregation in its *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision (1896), which declared all "separate but equal" facilities to be constitutional. This decision cleared the way for decades of demoralizing discrimination against blacks.

Destitute and unemployed, many blacks moved to cities in search of work. As a result of this migration, the population of urban blacks in the South increased by 75 percent in the late 1800s. Other freedmen tried to establish farms of their own, but, lacking resources and equipment, were forced to rent out land as tenant farmers under the **sharecropping system**. By the end of the 1860s, the sharecropping system had replaced slave-filled plantations as the driving force behind the Southern economy. Under this system, freedmen and poor whites rented out plots of land from plantation owners. In exchange for use of the land, shelter, and farming equipment, these laborers, known as sharecroppers, would give the landowner up to one half of their crop yield. The system ensured that the sharecropper could never raise enough money to gain real financial independence.

Big Business in the Industrial Age

Business ruled during the years after the Civil War. Just before the Civil War, Congress passed legislation allowing businesses to form corporations without a charter from the U.S. government. After the Civil War, these corporations came to dominate much of American business, and, in the process, to define American life.

The era of Big Business began when entrepreneurs in search of profits consolidated their businesses into massive corporations, which were so large that they could force out competition and gain control of a market. Control of a market allowed a corporation to set prices for a product at whatever level it wanted. These corporations, and the businessmen who ran them, became exceedingly wealthy and powerful, often at the expense of many poor workers. Some of the most powerful corporations were **John D. Rockefeller's** Standard Oil Company, **Andrew Carnegie's** Carnegie Steel, Cornelius Vanderbilt's New York Central Railroad System, and **J.P. Morgan's** banking house. These corporations dominated almost all aspects of their respective industries: by 1879, for example, Rockefeller controlled 90 percent of the country's oil refining capacity. Much of the public saw the leaders of big business as "**robber barons**" who exploited workers in order to amass vast fortunes.

In 1882, Rockefeller further solidified this control by establishing a monopoly or **trust**, which centralized control of a number of oil-related companies under one board of trustees. As a result, Rockefeller owned nearly the entire oil business in the United States, and he could set prices at will. Companies in other industries quickly imitated this trust model and used their broad market control to push prices higher.

Trusts integrated control of many companies, both horizontally by combining similar companies, and vertically by combining companies involved in all stages of production. Trusts were used to gain control of markets and force out competition.

The Government and Big Business

In the early years of the Industrial Revolution, the government maintained a hands-off attitude toward business. The government, and much of the nation, believed in the principles of **laissez-faire** economics, which dictated that the economic market should run freely without government interference. According to the theory, free, unregulated markets led to competition, which in turn led to fair prices of goods for consumers. The government did not want to interfere in the free market.

Any concern for the plight of the poor during this time was minimized by the tenets of **social Darwinism**, which became popular in the late 1800s. Social Darwinism adapted Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, "survival of the fittest," to the business world, arguing that competition was necessary to foster the healthiest economy (just as competition in the natural world was necessary to foster the healthiest, or fittest, species). Proponents of social Darwinism adhered to a "help those who help themselves" philosophy: government shouldn't invest in programs for the poor, because the poor had no positive impact on the nation's financial health. The rich, meanwhile, were strong, hard working citizens who contributed to national progress, and, as such, should not be subject to government regulation. Prominent social Darwinists included Herbert Spencer and Andrew Carnegie, whose essay promoting free market economy, "The Gospel of Wealth," was published in 1889.

The Move Toward Regulation

By the 1880s, however, it was beginning to become clear that markets were *not* free. Corporations had grown so big and powerful that they controlled markets entirely. Consumers grew enraged over the high prices that monopolies had set, while small businesses demanded protection from being squeezed out of the market. Railroad monopolies were overcharging small-time customers, especially farmers, while giving rebates to powerful politicians and favored clients.

State legislatures tried to limit the abuses of the railroads by issuing maximum rate laws, which set a ceiling on the prices a railroad could charge. Congress struck these laws down, claiming they were unconstitutional. But as public anger continued to grow over the practices of corporations, the federal government began to change its tune. Congress passed the **Interstate Commerce Act** in 1887 to try to stop railroads from price discrimination. Later, in 1888, legislative committees in Congress began investigations into the business practices of the "robber barons."

Two years later, Congress passed the **Sherman Antitrust Act**, which outlawed trusts and any other contracts that restrained free trade. Though this act eventually became extremely important in regulating business, in its early years it was rarely enforced. In fact, the act was so loosely phrased that it sometimes had the opposite of its intended effect: instead of regulating business monopolies, it regulated the labor unions that challenged these monopolies. In the 1890s, courts invoked the Sherman Antitrust Act to restrain laborers' right to strike, ruling that strikes violated the act's prohibition against "a conspiracy in restraint of trade." Big business thus benefited from the judiciary's (in particular the Supreme Court's) pro-business stance and its unwillingness to restrict commercial behavior. It was not until the early 1900s that government began to enforce the Sherman Antitrust regulatory policies in full.

The Growth of Unions

Although labor unions began forming in the early 1800s, they did not gain any significant membership base or bargaining power until the 1860s and 1870s. The harsh, even hazardous, working conditions arising from industrialization drove laborers to organize into unions. One of the first major unions was the **Knights of Labor**, founded in 1869. The Knights demanded equal pay for women, an end to child labor, and a progressive income tax, among other reforms. The union claimed a substantial membership, including women, blacks, and immigrants. In 1885, the group staged a successful strike against railroad "robber baron" Jay Gould. The strike so severely crippled Gould's operation that he had no choice but to fold. On the strength of this victory, the Knights' membership and political power grew. The Knights successfully supported a number of politicians for election and forced laws favorable to workers through Congress.

The Knights' power waned, however, after the leadership lost control of the local chapters and a series of unauthorized strikes grew violent. The bloody **Haymarket riot** in Chicago in 1886 sounded the union's death knell. The riot, intended to protest police cruelty against strikers, got out of hand when one member of the Knights of Labor threw a bomb, killing a police officer. In the resultant chaos, nine people were killed and close to sixty injured. Prominent leaders of the Knights of Labor were convicted of inciting the riot, and public support for the union plummeted.

To salvage the labor movement, craft laborers who had been members of the Knights of Labor broke off and formed the **American Federation of Labor** (AFL). Whereas the Knights of Labor had boasted an open membership policy and sweeping labor goals, the AFL catered exclusively to skilled laborers and focused on smaller, more practical issues: increasing wages, reducing hours, and imposing safety measures. **Samuel Gompers**, the AFL's leader from 1886 to 1924, proved a master tactician who united many labor groups in a federation of trade unions.

More radical labor organizations also emerged, most notably the **Industrial Workers of the World**, nicknamed the Wobblies, founded in 1905. More famous for their militant anticapitalism than for being large or influential, the Wobblies never grew to more than 30,000 members before fading away in about 1920.

Between 1880 and 1905, union activity in the the United States led to well over 35,000 strikes. As evidenced by the Haymarket riot, these demonstrations at times erupted in violence. This violence alienated much of the American public and the popular support for unions plunged, and employers were free to exact severe retribution on striking workers. As a result, strikes proved largely ineffective at advancing the labor cause.

Major strikes and outbreaks of stike-related violence during the later nineteenth century tended to impair the labor cause instead of advance it. Public sympathy for unions plummeted, companies imposed anti-union hiring policies, and the Supreme Court authorized the use of injunctions against strikers.

In addition to the Haymarket riot, some of the more notable strikes include:

- The **railroad strike** followed the onset of a national economic recession in 1877. Railroad workers for nearly every rail line struck, provoking widespread violence and requiring federal troops to subdue the angry mobs. The strike prompted many employers to get tough on labor by imposing an antiunion policy: they required workers to sign contracts barring them from striking or joining a union. Some employers even hired private detectives to root out labor agitators and private armies to suppress strikes.
- Workers staged the 1892 **Homestead strike** against Carnegie Steel Company to protest a pay cut and seventy-hour workweek. Ten workers were killed in the riot. Federal troops were called in to suppress the violence, and non-union workers were hired to break the strike.
- In the 1894 **Pullman strike**, **Eugene Debs** led thousands of workers in a strike against the Pullman Palace Car Company after wages were slashed. The courts ruled that the strikers violated the Sherman Antitrust Act and issued an injunction against them. When the strikers refused to obey the injunction, Debs was arrested and federal troops marched in to crush the strike. In the ensuing frenzy, thirteen died and fifty-three were injured. The Supreme Court later upheld the use of injunctions against labor unions, giving businesses a powerful new weapon to suppress strikes. Organized labor began to fade in strength, and did not resurge until the 1930s.

Industrialization, Urbanization, and Immigration

Business and industrialization centered on the cities. The ever increasing number of factories created an intense need for labor, convincing people in rural areas to move to the city, and drawing immigrants from Europe to the United States. As a result, the United States transformed from an agrarian to an urban nation, and the demographics of the country shifted dramatically.

Immigration

Roughly 10 million European immigrants settled in the U.S. between 1860 and 1890. Nearly all of these immigrants were from northern and western Europe, which was the traditional point of origin for European immigrants to the United States. During the 1890s, though, new immigrants began to come to the United States: Greeks, Slavs, Armenians, and Jews from various countries. Most of these “new” European immigrants settled in the Northeast, dominated by Irish and Italians, and the Midwest, dominated by Germans. While the West also experienced an influx of European immigrants, it mostly attracted immigrants from China. Lured by the prospect of earning money by working on the expanding western railroad system, many Chinese immigrants settled in California.

Many immigrants found the transition to American life difficult, despite their efforts to ease the transition by founding churches and charity organizations. Often poor, immigrants lived in dirty, crowded conditions and worked unskilled jobs in potentially dangerous factories. More than 500,000 injuries to workers were reported each year in the 1880s and 1890s. Immigrants, especially “new” immigrants, also faced extreme discrimination in the workplace from native workers who resented the immigrants’ willingness to accept lower wages and work in worse conditions. In the presidential election of 1880, both major party platforms included anti-immigration measures, and in 1882 Congress passed the **Chinese Exclusion Act**, placing a ten-year ban on Chinese immigration.

The Development of Urban Life

The growth of U.S. cities gave rise to a number of features of urban life not before seen in American history. One such feature was the spread of **tenements**, which were narrow four- or five-story buildings with few windows, limited plumbing and electricity, and tiny rooms often packed with people, mostly blacks and immigrants. Tenements were the main housing available in slums and ghettos, the segregated communities into which blacks and immigrants were forced by poverty, prejudice, even law. These ghettos fostered disease, high infant mortality, and horrific levels of pollution, and were often the site of racial and ethnic strife.

While tenements housed the poor, plush areas arose to house the rich. During the 1870s and 1880s, the cities' rich inhabitants moved outside the city center to escape the overcrowded conditions.

Developments sprung up around many of the major cities, their cleanliness and preservation of green spaces a sharp contrast to the cities they abutted. Electric streetcars, commuter trains, and trolleys ferried these inhabitants to and from their city jobs.

Machine Politics

Local politics during this era were marked by **machine politics**, so called because the system and the party, rather than individuals, held power. In virtually every region of the U.S., local officials, or "machines," controlled voter loyalty by distributing political and economic benefits such as offices, jobs, and city contracts. "Machines" were presided over by "party bosses," professional politicians who dominated city government. These bosses often controlled the jobs of thousands of city workers and influenced the activities of schools, hospitals, and other city-run services. Machine politics thrived on corruption, which contributed to the system's collapse around the turn of the twentieth century.

U.S. Presidents

The presidents of this period were generally weak, pro-business, and never served more than one term in office (with the exception of Grover Cleveland, who served two non-consecutive terms). None of these presidents are terribly important in terms of the test, though it is helpful to have a general sense of the politics of the nation during the period. We have included a quick overview of each administration so you can keep track of all the political turnover.

- James Garfield, elected in 1880, was fatally shot four months after taking office.
- Chester Arthur, Garfield's vice president, served as president from 1881 to 1885. Congress, spurred on by Arthur's reputation as a corrupt politician and a supporter of machine politics, passed the **Pendleton Act** in efforts to create a meritocratic and professional civil service.
- Grover Cleveland served as president from 1885 to 1889. He pushed for a reduction of tariffs, and, in 1887, he signed the Interstate Commerce Act into law.
- Benjamin Harrison was president from 1889 to 1893. A pro-business Republican, he supported high protective tariffs, and brought about a severe economic depression beginning in 1893.
- Grover Cleveland won a second term from 1893 to 1897. He is the only president to serve two terms out of sequence. His second term was dominated by efforts to deal with the economic depression that started in 1893, under Benjamin Harrison.

The Struggles of Farmers

Farmers found themselves on the bottom rungs of the economic ladder after the Civil War. They struggled to pay off mounting debts as land prices rose but crop prices plummeted. Struggling farmers demanded help from state and federal governments. When this relief did not come, Midwestern farmers banded together to form the **Grange** in 1867. By 1875, the Grange had more than 800,000 members. The Grange offered farmers education and fellowship through biweekly social functions, at which farmers shared their grievances and discussed agricultural and political reforms. To increase farm profits, Grangers negotiated deals with machinery companies and set up cooperatives and grain storage facilities. They also fought against railroad companies for hiking prices for short-distance shipment. The efforts of the Grange played a big role in the passage of the 1887 Interstate Commerce Act.

By 1880, the Grange had faded and was replaced by the **Farmers' Alliance**. Beginning as a local phenomenon in Texas in the late 1870s, alliances spread throughout the South and Northwest, and by 1890, boasted a membership of 1.5 million nationwide. The alliances proved to be powerful political forces. Alliance-supported candidates did well throughout the Great Plains and South in the elections of 1890. In 1892 Alliance members were central actors in the founding of the People's Party of the United

States, or **Populist Party**, discussed below.

Political Activism: Farmers and Labor Unite

The Populist Party, founded by members of the Farmer's Alliance, also drew support from urban laborers. The Populist Party supported policies that would create inflation, making debts easier to pay off and raising crop prices. The party's candidate in the 1892 election did not do well.

However, the **Panic of 1893** gave the Populists new life. In the three years after 1893, unemployment soared, worker strikes spread, and support for the Populist Party grew. Already opposed to President Cleveland, the Populists were further enraged by Cleveland's deals with J.P. Morgan and other powerful industrialists to bail out the U.S. government: the bankers lent \$62 million to the government in return for U.S. bonds. The Populists portrayed Cleveland as a pro-business Republican who neglected the poor, and they began rallying for the next election.

In the 1896 election, the Populists joined with the Democratic Party in supporting **William Jennings Bryan**. Republicans backed **William McKinley**, who ran on a pro-business platform and supported high protective tariffs. Six years earlier, as a Representative in Congress, McKinley had engineered the passage of the **McKinley Tariff** (1890), a protective tariff that raised the price of imports by nearly 50 percent. By doing so, he gained the support of business interests. Boosted by this business backing and the enormous contributions from the industrialists J.P. Morgan and John D. Rockefeller, McKinley won the election against Bryan.

During McKinley's two terms as president, the depression eased and prosperity began to return. This turnaround, combined with Bryan's defeat, broke up the Populist Party and pushed the Democratic Party back to its minority position in the South.

The Social Response to Industrialization

Industrialization had far-reaching effects on American society. Social reform movements sprung up around the country to address the needs of the new industrial society, and American authors used literature to comment on the changes they saw occurring.

The Socioeconomic Divide

While poor urbanites lived in crowded tenements and worked at grueling and often unsafe jobs, a few men amassed wealth beyond these city-dwellers' imaginations. Social theories were developed to justify the growing gap between rich and poor:

- **social Darwinism**, discussed above. Yale professor William Graham Sumner's 1883 book, *What Social Classes Owe to Each Other*, argued that social programs to help the poor worked against nature and sapped the hardworking individual of his due reward. In an 1889 essay, "The Gospel of Wealth," **Andrew Carnegie** applied Charles Darwin's theories to human society, stating that free-market economics and governmental noninterference provided a forum where survival of the fittest could play out.
- The **Gospel of Success** centered on the claim that any man could achieve wealth through hard work. **Horatio Alger** wrote fictional tales of hard-working young men going from "rags to riches" based solely on their ambition and determination.

Andrew Carnegie and Horatio Alger, among others, tried to justify the gap between rich and poor by arguing that hard work could make any man wealthy and that programs to help the poor went against the natural process of evolution as played out in human society.

These justifications for the growing gap between rich and poor did not go unchallenged. Henry George's book *Progress and Poverty* (1879) urged that the government use tax income to fund social programs for the poor, while Lester Frank Ward's *Dynamic Sociology* (1883) also argued that government power be harnessed for social aid. In 1890, Jacob Riis exposed the conditions of immigrants in New York City tenements in *How the Other Half Lives*, and in 1899, Thorsten Veblen's *Theory of the Leisure Class* attacked the "conspicuous consumption" of the affluent.

Many other works directly criticized the capitalist system. In an 1888 book entitled *Looking Backward From 2000 to 1887*, Edward Bellamy conceived of a socialist utopia in which the government controlled all means of production and distribution. Bellamy's moderate socialism accompanied a rise in American interest in Marxism, which condemned the capitalists' exploitation of the working class

and foretold revolution. Marxism, however, never gained a significant following in the U.S., perhaps because other means, short of revolution, eventually emerged to address poverty and exploitation.

Addressing Poverty

In the late nineteenth century, most middle-class reformers believed that poverty arose from lax morals and lack of self-discipline. They therefore focused their relief efforts on improving morality rather than addressing the crippling low wages and unhealthy working and living conditions of the poor. Among their aims, reformers sought to “Americanize” poor immigrants and rid them of customs deemed offensive or impractical. Their programs mostly targeted children, whom they believed to be the most malleable. Organizations like the **Young Men’s Christian Association** and later the Young Women’s Christian Association (YMCA, YWCA), provided housing and recreational activities for urban children. Imported from England in 1880, the **Salvation Army** provided food, shelter, and employment to the urban poor while preaching temperance and morality. The New York Charity Organization Society operated similarly, promoting morality and self-sufficiency.

In the 1880s, a new generation of social workers, led by **Jane Addams**, argued that providing education and opportunity was more important than preaching morality. In 1889, Addams and a friend established **Hull House** in Chicago, where they lived and worked among the poor immigrants they aimed to help. Addams set up a kindergarten, a day nursery, and an employment bureau for the poor.

Women in the Industrial Revolution

Middle-class women in the industrial age became involved in a wider sphere beyond the home. Women joined the labor force in record numbers and also became active in social reform movements. Women were especially prominent in the temperance movement, primarily through the **Woman’s Christian Temperance Union** (WCTU). Other issues included prison reform, labor arbitration, and public health concerns. As social activism among women increased, so did their desire for the right to vote. Despite this fervor, women only slowly gained social and political power. Their most significant gains came in the area of education, as a number of higher learning institutions went coed or created separate schools for women. By 1900, more than 70 percent of colleges admitted women. Feminine empowerment was also seen in feminist literature such as *The Awakening*, by Kate Chopin, published in 1899.

Works of Fiction

Social commentary of a subtler sort emerged in the works of fiction produced by American authors during the period of industrialization. Realism replaced romanticism as the genre of choice for American authors. Henry James, an expatriate who left America for Europe in 1875, wrote about the psychological experience of being an American in Europe in books like *Daisy Miller* (1879) and *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881). Other authors hit much closer to home, commenting on the era of industrialization around them. No author was better known for this than **Mark Twain**, whose 1873 satirical novel, *The Gilded Age* (cowritten with Charles Dudley Warner), described the Industrial Revolution as a period that looked like gold on the outside but on the inside was hollow. Twain, like other authors, described an America full of urban poverty, political crookedness, and class tensions. These elements, especially class and racial tensions, are present in his most famous works, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), in which he uses the perspective of two young boys to expose ignorance and hatred in American society

Expansionism

In the 1860s and early 1870s, the U.S. focused primarily on domestic issues: Reconstruction, settlement of the American West, and industrialization. Apart from acquiring Alaska from Russia in 1867, the U.S. achieved little in the area of foreign expansion. But as the American factory system developed and industrial output soared, the nation began to look abroad with new interest, because, as a rising industrial power, the U.S. needed to find foreign markets in which to sell its manufactured products and from which to acquire raw goods. Initially, the policy that the U.S. pursued to meet its growing economic needs was one of expansionism rather than imperialism. Instead of imposing a military presence and colonial government—as many European countries were doing in Africa and throughout the globe—the U.S. aimed to advance its interests through investments and business transactions. American businesses began opening up production sites and markets in Latin America and elsewhere.

McKinley and Imperialism

William McKinley, elected president in 1896, advanced a much more aggressive foreign policy. McKinley was extremely pro-business, and instead of simply developing commercial markets abroad, McKinley supported military intervention and U.S. acquisition of foreign lands.

The Spanish-American War

Nationalist rebels in Cuba had been resisting Spanish rule since 1895. Americans became increasingly sympathetic to the rebels' cause primarily because of sensationalist news reports about Spanish brutality. Embroiled in a vicious circulation war, New York newspapers—especially the *New York Journal*, owned by **William Randolph Hearst**, and the *New York World*, owned by **Joseph Pulitzer**—exaggerated and even invented accounts of atrocities committed by the Spanish military against the rebels. These inflammatory journalistic practices, called **yellow journalism**, convinced much of the American public to side with the rebels, and to call for government action against Spain. In April 1898, McKinley got the opening he desired. A U.S. ship, the **Maine**, exploded in Havana. The cause of the explosion was unknown, but the Spaniards were blamed. McKinley sent a war message to Congress and was authorized to use force in the interest of Cuban independence.

The **Spanish-American War** lasted only two months. Before the war, Spain, a long-established imperial power, had been feared as a formidable enemy. But Spain's strength had been overestimated, and the U.S. easily overwhelmed the Spanish forces. One of the most famous battles was the U.S. capture of San Juan Hill in Cuba, an attack led by **Theodore Roosevelt**, who headed the volunteer Rough Riders unit. America's easy victory established the U.S. as a significant presence on the world stage, and signaled Spain's demise as a military powerhouse.

With the Treaty of Paris, which ended the war in December 1898, Cuba achieved independence and Spain ceded the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico to the U.S. for a payment of \$20 million. America's decisive war victory, coupled with the nation's economic prosperity, led to an overwhelming reelection win for McKinley in 1900. The victory also encouraged the government to further demonstrate American strength abroad.

The Spanish-American War lasted only two months and ended in a decisive victory for the United States, encouraging the government to further demonstrate its strength abroad.

The Legacy of Victory: Increasing Imperialism

Victory in the Spanish-American War left the U.S. with new decisions to make. By the end of 1898, the U.S. had acquired a number of new island territories: Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, ceded to the U.S. in the Treaty of Paris; Cuba, which the U.S. Army had governed for four years; and Hawaii, which the U.S. annexed in 1898 independent of the Spanish-American War. In establishing U.S. governing policies abroad, Congress faced two pressing questions: first, how to grant Cuban independence in a way that would also protect American interests on the island; and second, whether or not to annex the Philippines.

Cuba

In 1901, the **Platt Amendment** enumerated the conditions for the U.S. Army's withdrawal from Cuban soil. The amendment required Cuba to vow to make no treaty with a foreign power, to limit its independence, and reserved for the U.S.:

- The right to intervene in Cuba when it saw fit.
- The right to maintain a naval base in Cuba, at Guantánamo Bay.

Though the Cubans did not like the restrictions on Cuban sovereignty, they did accept the amendment. The U.S. held wide powers over Cuba for more than thirty years, and maintains its military base to this day.

The Philippines

In the Senate, proponents of expansionism won the debate about the Philippines. Influenced by business interests who saw the Philippines as a valuable gateway to China, the Senate voted to annex

the country rather than give it independence. Filipino rebels resisted U.S. rule by attacking the U.S. base of operations, setting off two years of fighting that finally ended with a U.S. victory. The Philippines remained a part of the United States until 1946, when the U.S. granted it independence.

The U.S. in China

The U.S. government aimed to promote U.S. business and open trade markets in China. China's Manchu Dynasty was weak and particularly vulnerable to foreign intervention, as evidenced by the **spheres of influence** that other nations—Russia, Germany, France, England, and Japan—had succeeded in carving out. These nations had each secured exclusive trading rights to certain key ports in China, so that entire regions, or spheres, were blocked to U.S. business. In 1899, as a way to open up all “exclusive” ports to American business, Secretary of State John Hay proclaimed an **Open Door policy** in China, which meant that no favoritism would be awarded at Chinese ports. European countries, however, refused to endorse this policy. In the following years, Hay continued working to secure advantages for U.S. firms as part of his policy of economic expansionism, which sought not to control new territory but rather to open new markets.

The Open Door policy was invoked to combat European spheres of influence in China and aid U.S. businesses in Chinese markets.

The extreme influence that European nations and the United States exerted in China angered many Chinese. This anger exploded in 1899 in the form of the **Boxer Rebellion**. In this revolt, an antiforeign secret society calling itself the Harmonious Righteous Fists, known as the Boxers to westerners, killed thousands of foreigners and Chinese Christians and captured Beijing (Peking) in 1900. The U.S. sent 2,500 troops as part of an international force that marched on Beijing and drove out the Boxers. By helping dispel the Boxer threat, the U.S. secured some bargaining power in the settlement that followed. Hay demanded that an Open Door policy be implemented in all of China, and other powers agreed. The Boxer Rebellion had weakened the Chinese government and by the end of the uprising, the U.S. government committed itself to aiding China's government in the interest of maintaining open markets for the U.S. in the Far East.

Anti-imperialism

Not all Americans supported American imperialism. In November 1898, after the fighting had ended in the Spanish-American War but before any treaty had been signed, an organization known as the **Anti-Imperialist League** arose in the U.S. The league opposed American expansion and foreign involvement on the grounds that the U.S. had no right to force its will upon others and also because such involvement would likely incite further conflict. The group had many illustrious members, including the writer Mark Twain and the philosopher William James. In 1899 the anti-imperialists had nearly succeeded in preventing the Senate from ratifying the expansionist Treaty of Paris. This time, however, the forces of imperialism won out, and the Anti-Imperialist League lost whatever strength it might have had.

Assassination of McKinley

In September 1901, President McKinley was shot by an anarchist named Leon Czolgosz. Vice President **Theodore Roosevelt** became president, and continued to implement an aggressive foreign policy. His presidency marked the beginning of the Progressive Era.

Agitation for Reform

Theodore Roosevelt's assumption of the presidency in 1901 coincided with the beginning of what became known as the Progressive Era, which lasted roughly until 1917. These years were marked by progressivism, a fervent reform impulse in America promoting social justice and democracy. This movement arose partly in response to the ill effects of industrialization: urban poverty and ruthless business policy, including the exploitation of workers and natural resources. Progressives agitated for far-reaching reform in politics, business, poverty relief, and conservation. Progressives represented a diverse base: farmers, laborers, small-business owners, and many of America's elite, including esteemed authors, philosophers, and statesmen. On a crusade to rout out corruption in all areas of life, Progressives saw themselves as enhancing the welfare of the entire nation.

Novelists and Muckrakers

Novelists and journalists helped spread the progressive spirit through the nation by exposing the political corruption and corporate immorality that had been the norm during the Industrial Revolution. Known as “**muckrakers**,” a term coined by Roosevelt to describe their journalistic tactics of “raking the filth” in search of wrongs, these authors and journalists wrote searing accounts of corporate and political evils. Their writings moved the public to demand reform. Among the most notable muckraking exposés:

- Ida Tarbell’s *History of Standard Oil* (1904) exposed the ruthless and exploitative practices of Rockefeller’s oil company.
- **Upton Sinclair**’s *The Jungle* (1906) exposed the inhumane working environment and unsanitary conditions in meatpacking plants.
- Lincoln Steffens’s *The Shame of the Cities* (1904) explored political corruption in local governments.

Through their writings, muckrakers such as Upton Sinclair exposed the dark side of industrialization during the early 1900s, leading to public calls for reform.

Local Government Reform

Political reform on the local level actually began to spread through American cities in the late 1890s, when municipal and state governments passed a slew of progressive laws. These laws included labor laws that established the eight-hour workday and workers’ compensation and restricted child labor. Local governments also attacked private monopolies in gas, water, and electricity by regulating rates and weakening the companies’ political power. Some states, including Wisconsin and California, reformed the statewide election system by developing the direct primary, in which party members rather than the party leadership selected candidates for office.

Social Control: Morality, Immigration, and Eugenics

Many Progressives saw it as their duty to “clean up” America through moral and social reform. Early attempts at moral reform included censorship of movies and attempts to end prostitution. Moral reform peaked with the prohibition movement, which sought the legal abolition of alcohol. Led by the **Anti-Saloon League**, prohibition gained momentum through the Progressive Era and in 1919 finally succeeded in pushing the Eighteenth Amendment through Congress. This amendment outlawed the manufacture, transport, and sale of alcoholic beverages (see next chapter).

The social reform movement included another, more menacing side. Many reformers, seeing social problems as most prevalent in poor immigrant communities, sought to end immigration. Knowing that immigrants were seldom literate, Congress passed bills requiring literacy tests as a condition for entry to the U.S. in 1896, 1913, 1915, and 1917. The first three were defeated by presidential vetoes, but Congress passed the 1917 bill over the president’s veto.

By far the darkest side of progressive reform was the **eugenics** movement, centered on the premise that genetic manipulation could reform American society. Many eugenicists hoped to turn the U.S. into an exclusively white and Protestant nation. In 1904, the Carnegie Foundation established a eugenics research center that was dominated by racist, anti-Semitic, and anti-immigrant ideology. Such ideology led to calls from some circles for ethnic segregation and the sterilization of “less fit” ethnic groups.

Though many social reformers interested in social control focused on the traditional targets of morality and temperance, some reformers advocated more extreme measures such as immigration restriction and the use of eugenics to eliminate what they saw as undesirable racial elements.

Black Rights

During the Progressive Era, those fighting for the rights of black Americans were torn between two charismatic and intelligent leaders. **Booker T. Washington** advocated patience, arguing that blacks must first acquire vocational skills and prove their economic worth before hoping to be treated equally. In 1881, Washington had founded what would become Tuskegee University in his efforts to implement this plan. Many northern blacks, however, rejected Washington’s philosophy in favor of the more radical ideas presented by **W.E.B. Du Bois**, who demanded immediate equal treatment for blacks and their equal access to *all* intellectual opportunities, not just vocational training.

The two main black leaders of the Progressive Era were Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois. The former advocated patience and the development of vocational skills. The latter demanded immediate change in the treatment of American blacks.

In 1909, a group of blacks led by W.E.B. Du Bois joined with a group of white reformers to form the **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People** (NAACP), which called for an end to racial discrimination. The NAACP, along with groups like the National Urban League, attacked **Jim Crow laws** in the South and the 1896 Supreme Court decision in **Plessy v. Ferguson**. These organized efforts led to few actual political or social gains, but they did begin laying the foundation for the future.

Feminism

Female suffrage, the granting of the right to vote to women, was the primary feminist cause of the Progressive Era. In its early stages, this movement was led by **Susan B. Anthony**, who retired as president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) in 1900. During the early 1900s, the NAWSA served as the point of central control for nationwide grassroots groups that lobbied legislators, held small rallies, and distributed literature. Other suffragists were more aggressive, staging demonstrations and picketing the White House. Nevertheless, women would have to wait until after World War I for the Nineteenth Amendment, which granted them suffrage in 1920.

Women were active beyond the suffrage movement, supporting campaigns for building playgrounds and nurseries, improving conditions for women workers, equalizing women's wages with those of men, and banning child labor. Feminists also actively pushed for women's education and birth control.

Theodore Roosevelt's Square Deal

Theodore Roosevelt became president in September 1901 after the assassination of William McKinley. Although he had been vice president under McKinley, Roosevelt did not share McKinley's conservative, pro-business policies. Instead, as president, Roosevelt advanced aggressive political reforms, including the heavy regulation of business. Known as the "trust-buster," Roosevelt was the first president to successfully invoke the **Sherman Antitrust Act** against monopolies and continued to restrict businesses throughout his presidency. His reforms greatly influenced economic, environmental, and international affairs as well. Roosevelt's platform became known as the "**Square Deal**" because he vowed not to favor any group of Americans but to be fair to all.

Relations with Labor and Corporations

Roosevelt was committed to addressing the problems of labor and corporate activity. Unlike his predecessors, Roosevelt defended the right of labor to organize, and eschewed the use of federal troops to put down strikes. In 1902, he intervened in a United Mine Workers Strike and helped labor get management to agree to binding arbitration. The arbitrators awarded the miners a wage increase and a shortened workday.

Roosevelt also worked to restrict the power of big business by breaking up a monopoly. In his administration's first trust-busting case, his attorney general filed suit against the Northern Securities Company, a railroad holding company, for violating the Sherman Antitrust Act, which had not been successfully used against monopolies since its passage in 1890. After this case, though, the Act became an extremely important tool for government regulation of corporations. In 1904, the Supreme Court ordered that the Northern Securities Company be dissolved, a decision that launched a series of antitrust suits. In all, the Roosevelt administration filed forty-three trust-busting suits.

After winning reelection in 1904, Roosevelt traded sporadic bursts of trust-busting for more permanent regulation. He successfully negotiated the passage of the Hepburn Act in 1906, which empowered the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC), a previously weak agency, to set maximum railroad rates and inspect railroad companies' financial records.

Roosevelt, unlike his Republican predecessors in office, was not pro-business. He aggressively enforced the Sherman Antitrust Act and empowered the Interstate Commerce Commission, both key elements in his "Square Deal."

Protecting Consumers and Conserving the Environment

Responding to the muckrakers' exposés on the unsanitary conditions in food plants and the dangerous ingredients in foods and medicines, Roosevelt endorsed the **Pure Food and Drug Act** and the **Meat Inspection Act**, both passed in 1906. The first act prohibited the sale of adulterated or inaccurately labeled foods and medicines, and the second established federal regulations for meatpackers and a

system of inspection.

The early twentieth century also saw a rise in concern for the environment. Those who supported conservation and protection of wilderness sites were called preservationists. Preservationists were often in conflict with business interests who saw the wilderness in terms of resources and space for commercial and residential development. Roosevelt was at heart a preservationist, but understood the need for compromise. He achieved this compromise through his conservation program, which provided for the regulated use of the nation's wilderness. Roosevelt designated 200 million acres as national forests, mineral reserves, and potential waterpower sites, and added five national parks and eighteen national monuments to the list of protected lands. In 1908 Roosevelt created the **National Conservation Commission** to inventory the nation's resources and manage their use more efficiently.

Conservationism was a hallmark of Roosevelt's presidency. He protected land through the creation of national parks and monuments, and advocated the responsible use of the nation's resources by establishing the National Conservation Commission.

Aggressive Foreign Policy: "Big Stick" Diplomacy

Roosevelt summed up his approach to foreign policy in a single sentence: "Speak softly and carry a big stick." Having become president shortly after the American victory in the Spanish-American War, Roosevelt was confident in America's status as a major international power. His goal to maintain that status through aggressive tactics was dubbed "**big stick**" diplomacy.

Roosevelt's most notable achievement in foreign policy was the building of the **Panama Canal**, an artificial waterway stretching through the isthmus of Panama, which was then part of Colombia. Since the canal connected the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and vastly shortened shipping routes, Roosevelt saw its creation as vitally important to American economic and maritime interests. When the Colombian government first rejected America's offer to lease the land and build the canal for over \$10 million, Roosevelt helped engineer a revolution on the isthmus. The revolution erupted in 1903, and the new Panamanian government that took power proved to be much more cooperative with the United States. The new government granted the U.S. permanent possession of the ten-mile-wide strip of land across Panama on the same financial terms rejected earlier by Colombia. Construction on the canal began in 1906, and it opened in 1914.

Roosevelt's intervention in Panama was indicative of his entire attitude toward Latin America, where he asserted the **Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine**. In 1904, with several European nations poised to invade the Dominican Republic, Roosevelt declared that the United States, not Europe, should dominate Latin America, and that although the U.S. had no expansionist intentions, any "chronic wrongdoing" by a Latin American nation would justify U.S. intervention as a global policeman. (Remember that the Monroe Doctrine had warned Europeans not to intervene in Latin America; the Roosevelt Corollary maintained this warning, and asserted that the U.S. alone could intervene.) During Roosevelt's presidency, the U.S. invoked the Roosevelt Corollary repeatedly as justification for its involvement in the affairs of the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Cuba.

The Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine asserted the right of the U.S. government to intervene in the affairs of Latin American countries while maintaining that European powers should stay out of Latin America.

Roosevelt also involved himself in the affairs of Asia after the **Russo-Japanese War** broke out in 1904. Concerned about maintaining the balance of power between nations, Roosevelt invited delegates from Russia and Japan to the U.S. for a peace conference in 1905 that resulted in the signing of a treaty. Roosevelt received the Nobel Peace Prize for his actions. In an effort to discourage further trouble in Asia, Roosevelt sent sixteen new, gleaming white battleships, dubbed "the Great White Fleet," to Asian ports and elsewhere around the world.

Taft in the White House

In the election of 1908, Roosevelt's hand-picked successor, **William Howard Taft**, won by a large margin on a conservative platform. Taft, however, could not match Roosevelt's popularity or legislative success. Although he continued Roosevelt's progressive reform programs, his pace was more gradual, and he even lent his support to some conservative pro-business policies. His policies divided the

Republican Party into progressive and conservative factions.

Reform Under Taft

Taft supported corporate regulation, and even strengthened the Interstate Commerce Commission's powers and extended its authority to the telephone and telegraph industries. He surpassed the Roosevelt administration in trust-busting. Taft prosecuted ninety cases compared to Roosevelt's forty-three. These cases, however, did not achieve the same level of publicity or impact as those under Roosevelt, and so Taft was generally considered a less aggressive trust-buster.

Additional reform under Taft centered on two amendments to the Constitution, both ratified after he exited office. In 1913, the **Sixteenth Amendment** granted Congress the authority to tax income. After the amendment passed, Congress quickly established a graduated income tax with a maximum tax rate of 7 percent. The **Seventeenth Amendment**, also ratified in 1913, provided for direct election of U.S. senators by the people rather than their selection by state legislatures. This amendment was one part of a general movement for government reform, under which the public took an increasingly powerful and direct role in electing officials.

“Dollar Diplomacy”

In foreign affairs, Taft moved away from Roosevelt's “big stick” policies toward what became known as “**dollar diplomacy**.” Aiming to avoid military intervention, Taft argued that the influx of American investment abroad, as well as the advancement of American economic interests, would promote stability. Dollar diplomacy failed in China, where European and Japanese economic interests squeezed American businesses out, and it proved only marginally more successful elsewhere. In 1912, Taft finally resorted to military intervention in Nicaragua when he sent marines in to suppress a revolt.

Republicans Divided

Taft alienated the progressive members of his party by supporting the Payne-Aldrich Act, which raised protective tariff rates—a move supported by conservative pro-business interests. He further outraged progressives by supporting the ultra-conservative speaker of the house, Joseph Cannon, and the ultra-conservative secretary of the interior, Richard A. Ballinger, who reversed Roosevelt's conservation efforts by, among other things, selling off several million acres of public land in Alaska to bankers interested in mining the land for coal. Angered by Taft's lack of enthusiasm for reform, Roosevelt himself campaigned for progressive candidates in the 1910 midterm election. Roosevelt advocated increasing regulation for business and even went so far as to suggest that the popular vote be used to overturn Supreme Court decisions. Roosevelt's defection split the Republican Party in half entering the election of 1912.

Taft's support for the Payne-Aldrich Act and other conservative moves precipitated a split within the Republican Party approaching the election of 1912.

The Election of 1912

In 1912, Roosevelt declared his intention to run against Taft for the Republican nomination. When Taft supporters blocked Roosevelt's nomination at the Republican Convention, Roosevelt and his supporters broke with the Republican Party and formed the Progressive Party, nicknamed the **Bull Moose Party**. Roosevelt and Taft entered the election against Socialist Eugene Debs and Democrat **Woodrow Wilson**. The Bull Moose Party proved to be the most successful third party in American history, with Roosevelt winning over 27 percent of the popular vote to Taft's 23 percent. Yet with the Republican vote split, Democrat Wilson captured the presidency, winning 42 percent of the vote.

Woodrow Wilson won the election of 1912 partially owing to the split in the Republican Party, which ruined both Roosevelt and Taft's chances for the presidency.

Wilson in Office: The Revival of Progressivism

Once in office, Wilson pushed a more aggressive progressive agenda than either of his two predecessors. He lowered tariffs and championed corporate regulation and banking reform, among other policies.

Lowering Tariffs

Wilson's first legislative action was to lower the tariff. In 1913, he sponsored the **Underwood Tariff**, which cut tariffs substantially. It was the nation's first reduction in tariffs since before the civil war. Also in 1913, Wilson helped launch an investigation into the possibly corrupt relations between pro-tariff lobbyists and certain senators.

The Federal Reserve System

Wilson and his supporters sought to create a centralized bank system under public control, which would be able to stabilize the economy in times of panic. After months of bargaining, Congress passed the **Federal Reserve Act** in 1913. This act established a network of regional Federal Reserve banks under partially private and partially public control. The Federal Reserve Board was created to oversee the entire network and national fiscal policy. Initially weak, the "Fed" would become a powerful force in American economics.

Wilson's most notable legislative achievement was the 1913 passage of the Federal Reserve Act, establishing the system of Federal Reserve banks still in use today.

Business Regulation

Wilson pushed two important regulatory measures through Congress in 1914. First, the **Federal Trade Commission Act** created a five-member agency to investigate suspected violations of interstate trade regulations and to issue "cease and desist" orders should it find corporations guilty of unfair practices. Secondly, the **Clayton Antitrust Act** improved upon the vague **Sherman Antitrust Act** by enumerating a series of illegal business practices. The Wilson administration initiated antitrust suits against almost one hundred corporations.

Labor and Farm Reform

Wilson strongly supported worker's rights. Under his administration, Congress passed a series of labor laws designed to ban child labor, shorten workdays, and, in the Workmen's Compensation Act, provide injury protection to federal employees. Wilson also supported reforms benefiting farmers, such as low-interest loan programs.

"New Freedom" in Foreign Policy

Wilson rejected the big stick and dollar diplomacy approaches to foreign policy in favor of "**new freedom**," an idealistic foreign policy aimed at morality in international affairs. He pledged never to seek territorial expansion by conquest, and instead focused on advancing capitalism and democracy throughout the world. To signal his rejection of the old methods, Wilson withdrew American partnership from a loan consortium in China in 1913. Between 1913 and 1917, he tried with varying success to help foster democracy and stability in Mexico.

In 1914, war erupted across Europe. Soon after the war's outbreak, Wilson issued a statement of neutrality designed to keep the U.S. out of the conflict. In 1916, Wilson was reelected in large part on the slogan, "He kept us out of war."

Proclaimed Neutrality

World War I pitted the **Allies** (Great Britain, Russia, France, and, later, Italy) against the **Central Powers** (Germany and Austria-Hungary). In August 1914, Wilson proclaimed U.S. neutrality, and urged the public to remain neutral in opinion as well. The American public, however, was partial to the Allies: though most Americans were glad to be remote from the war, strong emotional, historic, and economic ties to Great Britain and France meant great public sympathy for the Allied cause. While American investment in the Central Powers nations dwindled between 1914 and 1917, it surged in the Allied nations. American sources provided weapons, food, and funding to the Allies equal to nearly one hundred times that provided to the Central Powers. Wilson himself seemed to favor an Allied victory, in part because he saw a victory by Germany and its autocratic ruler, Kaiser Wilhelm, as antagonistic to his vision of a world order based on liberalism, democracy, and capitalism. Nonetheless, he clung to neutrality.

After 1914, it became increasingly clear that American neutrality would be difficult to maintain. British naval vessels seized American ships headed for German ports and filled the North Sea with mines, despite American protests. In 1915, Germany announced a **U-boat** blockade of the Allies' ports and, in

the ensuing months, killed a number of Americans in torpedo attacks on British vessels and one U.S. tanker. On May 7, 1915, a U-boat sank the British ocean liner *Lusitania*, killing close to 1,200 people, including 128 Americans. This event provoked an anti-German backlash in American public opinion, and, at Wilson's encouragement, Congress passed the **National Defense Act** in 1916, which called for the buildup of military forces in anticipation of war—a policy known as “preparedness.”

After the *Lusitania* incident, Germany stopped attacking passenger ships for a few months. But in August 1915, Germany resumed attacks, sinking both British and French vessels. In 1916, when Wilson threatened to break diplomatic relations after one such attack, Germany responded with the **Sussex Pledge**, promising not to attack merchant ships without warning. This pledge eased the strain on U.S. neutrality for the remainder of 1916.

In 1916, Wilson was reelected on the slogan “He kept us out of war,” a tribute to his maintenance of American neutrality. Wilson and the Democrats portrayed the Republican Party as the party of war and uncertainty.

The U.S. Enters the War

In early January 1917, Wilson called for “peace without victory,” meaning he wanted the European powers to end the war peaceably, without further military conflict. By late January, however, peace seemed impossible after Germany proclaimed the resumption of **unrestricted submarine warfare**: Germany vowed to sink all ships, belligerent or neutral, in a wide zone around the Allies. In response, Wilson cut diplomatic relations with Germany. In the next few months, five U.S. ships were sunk. In the meantime, British intelligence intercepted the **Zimmerman Telegram**. Sent from the German foreign secretary to the German ambassador to Mexico, the Zimmerman Telegram suggested that Mexico enter the war against the U.S. in return for a German pledge to aid in the restoration of Mexico's former territories of Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico. Germany also promised to help Japan if Japan went to war against the U.S. The telegram and the continued aggression towards U.S. ships convinced Wilson to break U.S. neutrality and call for war.

Germany's resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare and the interception of the Zimmerman Telegram convinced Wilson to abandon neutrality and call for war.

In April 1917, the U.S. declared war on Germany. Wilson, who had been elected six months earlier on the slogan, “He kept us out of war,” now charged into the war, proclaiming it necessary “to make the world safe for democracy.”

Raising an Army

At the time the U.S. passed the declaration of war against Germany, the U.S. Army included 120,000 enlisted men and 80,000 National Guardsmen. In 1917, Congress passed the **Selective Service Act**, which required all men from age 21 to 30 to register for military duty. By November 1918, some three million men had been drafted. About 11,000 women served in the Navy, and a few hundred more joined the Marines. Women were invaluable in the noncombat positions open to them during the war. More than 250,000 black Americans served in the war, but racism was strong in the military, and black troops were segregated from white troops, given menial positions, and excluded from the marines altogether.

Fighting the War

American involvement in World War I lasted from the summer of 1917 to the armistice that ended the war in November 1918—just over one year. American involvement helped to secure Allied victory: American troops overran heavily fortified German trenches and reinvigorated the British and French war efforts. At the war's end, the American death toll exceeded 110,000. At home, the outbreak of the Spanish influenza claimed over 500,000 lives in 1918—the worst single U.S. epidemic in history.

Making Peace

Even before the armistice (or truce) in November 1918, complex negotiations for peace had begun. Achieving international peace was an arduous and complex process.

Wilson's Fourteen Points

From the beginning of World War I, Wilson had hoped for a peace settlement promoting America's democratic ideals. He saw the Allied victory as a victory over autocratic government (Germany was an autocracy), and therefore as an opportunity to advance democracy and liberalism worldwide. In a 1918 speech to Congress, Wilson summarized American goals for the terms of peace after the war in what became known as the **Fourteen Points**:

- Eight points dealt with the territorial reorganization of Europe, aimed at granting self-determination to nations formerly under the control of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires.
- One point advocated the settlement of colonial disputes with due consideration given to the colonized peoples, as well as to the colonial powers.
- Five points broadly laid out Wilson's plan for a new world order. Wilson proposed unrestricted sea travel, free trade, arms reductions, an end to secret treaties, and, most importantly, "a general association of nations" to protect peace and resolve conflicts.

Republicans in Congress opposed the plan, and no Allies fully endorsed it—some lent cautious support, others opposed it outright. Many Americans, however, agreed with Wilson, and the Fourteen Points became a rallying issue for the U.S. war effort.

Wilson's Fourteen Points, enumerated in January 1918, set forth U.S. aims in World War I. The most important point called for "a general association of nations" to preserve international peace.

The Treaty of Versailles

Wilson decided to head the negotiation team himself at the Versailles Peace Conference, and offended Republicans by appointing just one Republican to the peace commission. The commission arrived in Europe in 1918 full of optimism, but this optimism faded quickly after the conference began. The delegates from the Allied Powers (France, Britain, and Italy) fiercely resisted Wilson's attempts at a liberal settlement. They represented bitter, war-torn nations bent on retribution. Instead of negotiating a peace with the Central Powers, they aimed to impose penalties, and made vindictive demands.

The **Treaty of Versailles**, signed in June 1919, required Germany to disarm, admit sole blame for the war, and pay massive reparations to the Allies. Land reorganization ceded one-eighth of Germany's territory to other nations, and set the stage for French occupation of the west bank of the Rhine (which lasted 15 years). Wilson did succeed in achieving autonomy for Poland, the Baltic states, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, but overall did little to salvage his liberal aims. The harsh terms of the treaty made many Germans resentful, feelings which would resurface and play a part in World War II. The treaty also offended Russia, since portions were clearly designed to weaken Russian influence.

Wilson's one clear victory at Versailles was the acceptance of his plan for a **League of Nations**. The League of Nations was the embodiment of Wilson's dream of a supra-national organization whose purpose was to preserve peace and resolve conflicts. It soon became clear, however, that though the League was the brainchild of the U.S. president, even U.S. membership in the League was uncertain.

Major elements of the Treaty of Versailles: Germany assumed blame for war, required to pay massive reparations; German territory distributed; League of Nations formed.

Battle over the League of Nations

In 1919, Wilson presented the Treaty of Versailles to the Senate for ratification. Wilson had already alienated many in the predominantly Republican Senate by failing to take a leading Republican with him on his negotiation team to Versailles. Given this political antagonism, the Senate opposed many of Wilson's peace efforts. Thirty-nine senators signed a letter rejecting the League of Nations, primarily because of its requirement that members protect the "territorial integrity" and "political independence" of other member states. Ten to fifteen senators, known as "irreconcilables," refused to consider joining the League altogether, while a group of about thirty-five "reservationists," led by **Henry Cabot Lodge**, pledged to ratify the treaty only with major revisions. Wilson, however, refused to compromise, and the treaty was rejected. The U.S. would not enter the League of Nations.

The opposition of "irreconcilables" to joining the League of Nations and Wilson and the Democrats' refusal to compromise with "reservationists" ensured that the Treaty of Versailles would not be ratified and the U.S. would not join the League of Nations.

The U.S. After the War

World War I stimulated growth in the U.S. economy. The entrance of women and blacks into the workforce added more than one million to the ranks of working Americans, and factory output increased tremendously. After the war, the boom continued, in part because there was great demand for American goods from war-torn European countries.

The war also affected the demographics of the country. It is estimated that 500,000 southern blacks moved north during the war, most of them settling in cities to work industrial jobs. As urban black populations increased, so did racial strife. In 1917, a white mob in Illinois lit black homes on fire and shot the fleeing inhabitants, killing nearly forty. Weeks later, the NAACP organized a silent march down Fifth Avenue in New York to protest racial violence. The end of the war did not mean the end of racial tension. In 1919, eighty-three blacks were victims of lynching. That year, race riots exploded in twenty-five cities, most notably Chicago, where a thirteen-day riot in July left fifteen whites and twenty-three blacks dead, hundreds injured, and more than a thousand homeless.

Red Scare

After World War I, anti-German hysteria turned into anti-Russian hysteria in response to the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, which brought a communist regime to power. Although fewer than 100,000 Americans were members of the nation's communist parties, many Americans feared that communist influence went deeper, and had infiltrated the working class, immigrant communities, and labor unions.

In 1919, Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer assigned **J. Edgar Hoover** to head a new Intelligence Division to root out subversives. Hoover arrested hundreds of suspected radicals and deported many "undesirable" aliens, especially those of Eastern European background. In 1920, in a coordinated operation, police and federal marshals raided the homes of suspected radicals and the headquarters of radical organizations in thirty-two cities. These **Palmer Raids** resulted in more than 4,000 arrests, 550 deportations, and uncountable violations of civil rights.

The central event of the postwar Red Scare, the Palmer Raids of January 2, 1920, resulted in more than 4,000 arrests and more than 550 deportations of suspected radicals.

The End of the Progressive Agenda

World War I slowed the advance of progressive reform but did not stop it. Progressive forces continued to operate during the war, pressing for further domestic reform. One prominent movement was the drive for prohibition. During the war, prohibition forces pointed to the German names of America's breweries and argued that German beer would undermine American morality. Prohibitionists therefore presented the **Eighteenth Amendment**, which prohibited the manufacture, transport, or sale of alcohol, as a war measure. This Amendment was passed in 1917 and ratified in 1919.

The women's suffrage movement made great strides during the war, largely because of the important role women played on the home front, filling men's jobs and promoting the war effort. Congress passed the **Nineteenth Amendment**, which granted women the vote, in 1919, and the states ratified the Amendment in 1920. Despite this major advance, however, women were forced to vacate their jobs and resume their traditional roles when men returned from war. Women would have to wait for advances in social status to catch up to the legal advances they made in 1920.

Opposition to the War

Many American citizens of widely differing backgrounds refused to support the war. Some were German immigrants, some were members of pacifist religions, and others simply objected to the war on moral and intellectual grounds. Antiwar writings increased as journalists dissected and criticized pro-war reasoning. Intellectuals condemned the war in political magazines, while socialist publications denounced the war as a contest for global market dominance. As the war began, the government did all it could to counter and quiet these criticisms.

Concerned by the antiwar campaigns, Wilson and his advisers worked hard to promote the war. His administration enlisted the help of famous movie stars to urge Americans to aid the war effort and conducted government bond drives to finance the war. In 1917, the federal government established the Committee on Public Information. This committee functioned primarily as a propaganda agency that

discredited all critics of the government and set up guidelines for self-censorship. The committee also enlisted the help of artists, journalists, and authors to publicize the war through speeches, posters, articles, and films. These pro-war efforts helped generate and intensify the public's mistrust and hatred of Germany and the Central Powers.

The patriotic—but often intolerant—sentiments inspired by such propaganda spilled over into public policy as well. The **Espionage Act**, passed in 1917, enumerated a vague list of anti-war activities warranting fines or imprisonment. The 1918 **Sedition Amendment** to the Espionage Act provided for punishment of anyone using “disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language” in regard to the government, flag, or military. Government officials invoked these measures to suppress dissent and justify the arrest of roughly 1,500 people during the war. **Eugene Debs**, a prominent socialist and five-time presidential candidate, was imprisoned in 1918 for denouncing the government's aggressive tactics under the Sedition Amendment (he was released in 1921). The Espionage Act was also used to bar a number of periodicals from circulation by mail. The Supreme Court upheld these laws when they were challenged until well after the war had ended, most notably in *Schenk v. U.S.* (1919), in which the Court ruled that speech could be restricted when free speech presented a “clear and present danger.”

The Espionage Act and the Sedition Amendment were used to stamp out anti-war ideology and activism during World War I.

Republicans and a “Return to Normalcy”

In the early 1920s, weary from fighting a world war and disillusioned by the failure of Wilson's plans to create a new world order, Americans sought stability. Popular support for Republicans grew, since Republicans promised a “return to normalcy.” Republicans ceased to promise progressive reforms and instead aimed to settle into traditional patterns of government. In 1920, after eight years under a progressive Democrat, Americans elected a conservative Republican as president, the first of the decade's three Republican presidents. Big business and advocates of isolationism reaped the benefits of Republican rule.

Warren G. Harding won the election of 1920 by a landslide on the promise of a “return to normalcy”—which, for Republicans in the 1920s, meant a return to big business. In addition to its pro-business stance, Harding's administration was known primarily for its corruption, exposed fully after Harding's death in office in 1923. Many officials were forced from office, and some narrowly escaped prison time. The most prominent scandal, the **Teapot Dome scandal**, involved Secretary of the Interior Albert B. Fall secretly leasing government oil reserves to two businessmen and accepting about \$400,000 in return.

Harding's vice president, **Calvin Coolidge**, became president upon Harding's death in 1923 and was then elected himself in 1924. In contrast to his predecessor, Coolidge ran a relatively scandal-free White House. Staunchly pro-business, Coolidge opposed government regulation of, or interference with, the economy.

Herbert Hoover, the third Republican president of the decade, rode the tide of economic prosperity to victory in 1928. He took a slightly different stance toward big business than had his predecessors. Hoover thought that capitalism produced social obligations but believed in voluntarism rather than government coercion as the method of fulfilling these obligations. Hoover urged and persuaded industry reform, but refused to institutionalize reform in law. This reliance on voluntarism would hurt him as prosperity began to fade.

Pro-Business Policies

The Republican presidents of the 1920s—Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover—reversed the Progressive Era trend of regulating big business and lowering tariffs. Instead, Republican policies generally gave corporations free rein, raised protective tariffs, and cut taxes for the rich. Big business and wealthy businessmen especially benefited from the following policies:

- The Supreme Court overturned a number of measures designed to regulate the activities of big business. The Court declared boycotts by labor unconstitutional and authorized the use of antitrust laws against unions.
- The Fordney-McCumber Tariff of 1922 and the **Smoot-Hawley Tariff** of 1930 were two of six major tariffs passed that hiked importation rates to all-time highs. These tariffs protected American companies from international competition.

- Andrew Mellon, treasury secretary from 1921 to 1932, persuaded Congress to lower income tax rates for the wealthy.

The Republican presidents of the 1920s reversed the Progressive Era trend of corporate regulation. Progressive trust-busting gave way to an era of big business.

A Decade of Prosperity

Following a postwar recession from mid-1920 to the end of 1921, the economy picked up again and remained strong until the end of the decade. This prosperity, combined with tax cuts for the rich, led to a rising consumer culture.

The very nature of consumerism changed during this period, as new products filled the market. The automobile first became popular outside wealthy circles in the 1920s. Electrical appliances grew rapidly in popularity as electricity reached almost two-thirds of American homes by the mid-1920s. Refrigerators, washing machines, and vacuum cleaners flew off the shelves. The vast reach of the newly invented radio created a national market and spurred advertising to unprecedented levels.

One effect of prosperity was the consolidation of big business and banks. By the decade's end, more than 1,000 companies per year were being swallowed up by mergers. A few corporations—such as Ford, Chrysler, and General Electric—dominated major industries. Industry leaders became immensely popular public figures.

Rising Productivity

New technologies allowed corporations to meet public demand by increasing productivity. Henry Ford installed the **assembly line** process in his automobile plants, maximizing outputs by allowing workers to stay in one place and master one repeated task. New developments in management methods increased efficiency by departmentalizing varied business concerns and creating a class of professional managers. Installment buying and credit programs allowed consumers to buy expensive goods they could not afford to purchase with one payment.

During the 1920s, industry benefited from the consolidation of large firms, assembly line manufacturing, professional management, and installment buying and credit programs.

Labor and Agriculture

The 1920s ushered in a new era for workers. To increase productivity, some employers raised the wages of skilled workers without the prodding of labor unions. Partially in response, union membership declined during the 1920s. Manufacturers' associations praised the non-union workplace, and companies made concessions to workers in attempts to stave off union formations.

This industrial boom left agriculture largely behind. Crop prices fell rapidly between 1919 and 1921 and remained low during the 1920s. Republicans, who did not believe in government intervention in the economy, were reluctant to help.

Isolationism

The Republican-dominated government of the 1920s advocated a spirit of isolationism, which meant retreating from global affairs. The U.S. refused to join both the League of Nations and the World Court established by the League. In 1928, the U.S. and France (and later, sixty other nations) signed the Kellogg-Briand Pact, which called for the outlawing of war and an end to aggression. This pact, however strong in theory, provided no enforcement mechanism.

Despite its isolationism, the U.S. did become involved in international affairs over the issue of war debts and reparations. The Allies had borrowed significantly from the U.S. during World War I and could not pay back this debt. Meanwhile, Germany owed reparations to the Allies but also could not pay. The **Dawes Plan**, devised by American banker Charles G. Dawes in 1924, scaled back U.S. demands for debt payments and reparations and established a cycle of U.S. loans that provided Germany with funds for reparations to the Allies, thus funding Allied debt payments to the U.S.

Immigration in the 1920s

A prominent expression of American isolationism was immigration restriction. Not only did isolationists oppose U.S. involvement in European affairs, they also opposed the flood of European

immigrants coming to the U.S. Between 1900 and 1915, more than 13 million immigrants came to the U.S., many of them from eastern and southern Europe and many either Catholic or Jewish, to the general dismay of the Protestant American public. Many Americans viewed these immigrants as a threat to American religious and social values, as well as to economic opportunities (because immigrants competed for jobs). In 1921, Congress set a quota of 350,000 for annual immigration. In 1924, the **National Origins Act** cut that number to 164,000 and restricted immigration from any one nation to 2 percent of the number of people in the U.S. of that national origin in 1890. This standard curtailed immigration from southern and eastern Europe and excluded Asians entirely.

Anti-immigrant sentiment peaked in the **Sacco-Vanzetti case** of 1921. Sacco and Vanzetti were two Italian immigrants charged with an April 1920 murder in Massachusetts. They were anarchists as well as immigrants, arousing frank hatred from the media and the judge in their case, who sentenced them to death. The case against Sacco and Vanzetti was circumstantial and poorly argued (although evidence now suggests that they were in fact guilty). The case was significant for its demonstration of nativist and conservative forces in America.

Culture in the 1920s: Loosening Social Structure

According to one journalist in 1920, Americans were “weary of being noble” after a decade of intense progressive reform, morality, and self-righteousness. The 1920s saw a restless culture, spearheaded by America’s youth rebelling against the moral restrictions of past generations.

The Sexual Revolution

During the 1920s, some Americans—especially young college students—challenged traditional notions of proper behavior. Buoyed by the decade’s prosperity, young people threw raucous parties, drank illegal liquor, and danced new, sexually suggestive steps at jazz clubs. One of the symbols of this decade was the **flapper**, a name given to the fashionable, pleasure-seeking young women of the time. The archetypal flapper look was tomboyish and flamboyant: short bobbed hair; knee-length, fringed skirts; long, draping necklaces; and rolled stockings. Although few women actually fit this image, it was used widely in journalism and advertising to represent the rebelliousness of the period. The traditional bastions of American morality lamented these developments, and especially criticized the new dances and college students’ proclivity for drinking and smoking. These critics, however, soon found themselves facing much larger opposition as the older generations began to adopt some of the socially liberated practices of their children.

With new social thinking and activities came new social conventions. Most prominently among the youth of the 1920s, sex became far less taboo than it had been previously. Sex was more openly discussed and premarital sex more common. Such activity led naturally to the promotion of birth control, though it was still widely illegal. The **sexual revolution** brought with it changing ideas about women. Female sexuality was less suppressed, skirt hems were worn higher, and makeup became more common.

It is important to note that although the Roaring ’20s and its attendant characters and events came to symbolize the decade, these stereotypes fit only a small segment of society. Traditional values, especially outside the cities, were not discarded completely, or even much changed.

Prohibition

The **Eighteenth Amendment**, which made it illegal to manufacture, sell, or transport alcoholic beverages, went into effect in January 1920. Enforcement of prohibition, however, was sporadic and underfunded and faced opposition in many states and cities, especially northern cities, where many prohibition laws were repealed. Given this lax enforcement, many Americans viewed prohibition as something of a joke. **Bootleggers** smuggled liquor from the West Indies and Canada, while **speakeasies** in every city provided alcohol illegally. Organized crime controlled the distribution of alcohol in major American cities, and gangsters such as Al Capone made a fortune while law enforcement officials often looked the other way. Capone’s income in 1927 was reportedly over \$1 million, while the average American’s income was below \$2,500. Prohibition fueled much debate within the United States until its repeal in 1933.

The Jazz Age and the Harlem Renaissance

The 1920s saw the flowering of African American culture in the arts. In music, black culture expressed

itself through jazz, an improvisational and spontaneous musical form derived in part from slave songs and African spirituals. Jazz first emerged in the early 1900s in New Orleans then spread to Chicago, New York City, and elsewhere. The 1920s is often called the **Jazz Age** because jazz flourished and gained widespread appeal during the decade. The improvisational character of the music was often associated with the “loose” morals and relaxed social codes of the time. Among the famous jazz performers of the period were Louis Armstrong, Bessie Smith, and Duke Ellington.

The flowering of black literature in the Northeast, especially in Harlem in New York City, was known as the **Harlem Renaissance**. Black artists explored the African American perspective through poetry and novels. One of the most famous authors of the time was the poet Langston Hughes, who published “The Weary Blues,” in 1926. Harlem was the site of social activity as well as intellectual activity, as prominent and wealthy blacks hosted extravagant gatherings for Harlem Renaissance figures.

The “Lost Generation”

One reason it is difficult to separate stereotypes about the 1920s from reality is the attention paid to these stereotypes by American authors and the media. The author who best represented this trend was **F. Scott Fitzgerald**, who wrote extensively about the rebellious youth of the Jazz Age in stories and novels such as *This Side of Paradise*, published in 1920, and *The Great Gatsby*, published in 1925. In *The Great Gatsby*, his most famous novel, Fitzgerald criticized the superficiality and material excess of America’s post-war culture, portraying prosperity gone wrong in wealthy New York society.

Many other literary figures rose alongside Fitzgerald to dissect American postwar society. Several notables, including Sinclair Lewis, attacked America’s prevalent Protestant, middle-class, conformist morality. Lewis’s satirical critique, *Babbitt*, was published in 1922. **H.L. Mencken** was the journalistic counterpart to the alienated novelists, using political satire in his magazine, *American Mercury*, to attack the political leaders of the day and the American “booboisie,” as he called the middle class.

Disgusted with the American life they saw as overly material and spiritually void, many writers during this period lived in Europe, including Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein, and **Ernest Hemingway**. Hemingway, the most famous expatriate, wrote *The Sun Also Rises* in 1926 and *A Farewell to Arms* in 1929, both reflecting the horror and futility of World War I. The self-imposed exile of these writers from America is one reason they were nicknamed the “lost generation.”

Entertainment and Popular Culture

The 1920s saw the growth of popular recreation, in part because of higher wages and increased leisure time. Just as automobiles were mass-produced, so was recreation during the 1920s. Mass-circulation magazines like *Reader’s Digest* and *Time* (established 1923) enjoyed enormous success. Radio also rose to prominence as a source of news and entertainment during the 1920s: NBC was founded in 1926 and CBS a year later. Movies were the most popular leisure attraction of the times, making stars out of Charlie Chaplin, Rudolph Valentino, Gloria Swanson, and Mary Pickford. In 1927, with *The Jazz Singer*, movies began to include sound, and 1928 saw the first animated sound film, *Steamboat Willy*. Professional sports gained a new popularity, as well. Baseball star Babe Ruth enjoyed massive fame, as did boxers such as Jack Dempsey. College sports rose to national attention, as demonstrated by the fame of the Notre Dame football team’s “four horsemen.” The 1920s also saw the emergence of nonsporting national heroes like Charles Lindbergh, who made the first solo nonstop flight across the Atlantic in May 1927.

Social Tension in a Decade of Prosperity

The prosperity and leisure of the 1920s hid serious social tensions. In the political realm, such tensions exposed themselves in isolationism and anti-immigration policies. Elsewhere in American society, social tensions centered on questions of race, religion, and fundamentalism.

The Garvey Movement and African Americans

Many blacks, unhappy with the continued slow pace of social advancement, in the 1920s turned to **Marcus Garvey** and the **United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA)**, which Garvey had moved from Jamaica to the U.S. in 1916. Garvey glorified black culture and founded a chain of UNIA businesses to promote black economic cooperation. Garvey urged American blacks to return to Africa and establish an independent nation. The Garvey movement attracted many followers, with the UNIA claiming 80,000 members, but was sharply criticized by the **National Association for the**

Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) for being too radical. In 1923, Marcus Garvey was found guilty of fraud, and in 1927 he was deported to Jamaica. The UNIA could not survive without his leadership, but it left an important legacy as a prominent African American mass movement.

The NAACP was a more conservative force for social reform. Led by **W.E.B. Du Bois**, the NAACP called for integration and equal treatment for blacks. In part because of the migration of blacks northward during World War I, membership in the NAACP grew markedly during the early 1920s. Still, lynchings continued in the South, and racist Americans gained influence through organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan.

The Ku Klux Klan

Nativism and intolerance during the 1920s was seen most prominently in the resurgence of the **Ku Klux Klan** (KKK) in 1915. The Klan organized a wildly successful membership drive in 1920, with estimates of new recruits as high as five million. Instead of just targeting blacks for attack, as the earlier Klan had done, the new Klan expanded its target to include all non-Protestants. By calling for “100 percent Americanism,” the Klan capitalized on middle-class Protestant dismay at changing social and economic conditions in America. The Klan took root throughout the South, where it mostly targeted blacks, and in parts of the West and Midwest, where Catholics and Jews bore the brunt of Klan intimidation and murder. In some states, the Klan even exerted dominant political, as well as social, force. The Klan collapsed in 1925 after the widespread corruption of Klan leadership was exposed. Membership faded quickly, but the Klan would return after World War II as a significant force.

The Scopes Monkey Trial

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, science challenged the infallibility of religious doctrine. Liberal Protestants accepted the majority of scientific findings and sought to integrate these findings into their religion, but more conservative Protestants refused this strategy. This refusal was known as **fundamentalism**. Fundamentalists insisted on the divine inspiration and truth of every word in the Bible, and focused in the early 1920s on refuting the theory of evolution. Articulated by Charles Darwin in 1859, evolution contradicted biblical accounts of the creation of man. **William Jennings Bryan**, former presidential candidate and secretary of state, led a movement to ban schools from teaching evolution. In 1925, the Tennessee legislature did just that, prompting the **American Civil Liberties Union** (ACLU) to offer to defend any teacher willing to challenge this law. John T. Scopes accepted this offer, broke the law, and was arrested, bringing the issue to court. In the famed **Scopes Monkey Trial**, Bryan aided the prosecution, and Chicago lawyer **Clarence Darrow** defended Scopes. The judge would not allow expert testimony, leaving the matter basically up to debate between Darrow and Bryan. In cross-examination, Darrow made a fool of Bryan, exposing the latter’s lack of scientific knowledge. Although Scopes was found guilty, the nation at large, paying close attention to the trial, generally considered the anti-fundamentalist forces to have won the argument.

The Crash

During the Roaring Twenties, the United States basked in unprecedented prosperity. Levels of investment, often speculative investments, grew to new heights. The economy, however, could not support such unchecked growth. On Thursday, October 24, 1929, dubbed **Black Thursday**, the stock market crashed. When trading closed, the Dow Jones Industrial Average had fallen 9 percent. Despite the crash, reports remained optimistic. New York banks united to buy up \$30 million worth of stock in efforts to stabilize the market, and President **Herbert Hoover** announced that recovery was expected. But the situation only became bleaker during the next week. On October 29, known as “Black Tuesday,” the Dow dropped over 17 percent, confirming the permanency of the crash. By mid-November, market losses topped \$30 billion.

Results of the Crash

As a result of the crash, the national economy fell into the worst depression in its history. Banks closed their doors in record numbers, and more than 30,000 businesses failed in 1932 alone. Unemployment reached an unheard of high of 25 percent in 1933, and hovered between 15 and 20 percent for most of the 1930s. Small towns and villages were hit the hardest, as were unskilled workers and minorities. Abject poverty spread. Children suffered from inadequate nutrition and healthcare, and starvation became an everyday occurrence. The refrain of a popular song during the period was, “Brother, can you spare a dime?”

Hoover's Response

During the first few months of the Depression, Herbert Hoover was optimistic about the prospects of recovery, believing that the economy would rebound by itself. But, as the Depression continued into 1930, he was forced to take action.

Hoover's most notable foray into trade regulation was his advocacy of the **Smoot-Hawley Tariff** in 1930. The tariff was designed to protect the nation's farmers but did not have its intended effect: it hurt farmers more than it helped them and further intensified the national depression. Other steps that Hoover took to help farmers included overseeing the activity of the Federal Farm Board, which administered loans to farmers, and creating the Grain Stabilization Corporation, which bought wheat at high prices in attempts to drive prices up.

Hoover's principal attempts to address the Depression's effects on agriculture included the Smoot-Hawley Tariff and the Grain Stabilization Corporation.

To help businesses, Hoover authorized \$2 billion in funding for the creation of the **Reconstruction Finance Corporation** (RFC). The RFC was intended to loan money to large, stable institutions such as banks, railroads, and insurance firms. The RFC authorized almost \$2 billion in loans in 1932. In July 1932, Hoover authorized the RFC to spend an additional \$2 billion on state and local public works projects. These actions, however, were largely ineffective at countering the Depression.

To spur business recovery, Hoover created the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, which loaned money to companies attempting to rebuild after the market crash. It did little to help the market recover.

The onset of the Great Depression left many Americans without jobs, without homes, and without hope. In an effort to address these problems, Hoover established the **Emergency Committee for Employment** in 1930 to coordinate the efforts of private agencies to provide unemployment relief but granted the committee limited resources. He remained firmly opposed to the use of federal funds for public works programs, preferring private charity to public relief.

But Hoover's efforts did little to spur the economy or redress unemployment. The consummate symbol of Hoover's failure was the **Hooverville**. Hoovervilles, or communities of homeless Americans living in shanties and makeshift shacks, sprang up around many U.S. cities and served as stark reminders of the Depression's terrible toll.

The Election of 1932

As the Depression worsened, public calls for aggressive government intervention intensified. The people wanted their president to be a hero and representative of the people rather than an aloof bureaucrat—a departure from the do-nothing presidents of the 1920s and from Hoover's restrained approach in the early 1930s. **Franklin Delano Roosevelt** promised to answer this call. In 1932, FDR won the election against Hoover, who many believed had done too little, too late in fighting the Depression.

Roosevelt's New Deal

FDR came to office convinced of the economic theories of John Maynard Keynes, who argued that government spending could revive a faltering economy. FDR's New Deal embodied this strategy.

The First Hundred Days and the First New Deal

In his inauguration speech of 1933, FDR pledged to devote his presidency to helping the poor and promoting recovery, claiming, "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself." During the **first hundred days** of his presidency, FDR set forth his plan for national recovery, known as the **New Deal**. The New Deal ushered in an unprecedented era of government intervention in the economy.

The first problem FDR faced during the early months of 1933 was a rash of bank closures in thirty-eight states. In response, he called for a bank holiday, during which he met with the heads of many suffering banks and developed the **Emergency Banking Relief Act**, passed March 9. This act provided a framework under which banks could reopen with federal support. Other important reforms of the "first hundred days" include:

- On March 31, Congress passed the Unemployment Relief Act, which created the **Civilian**

Conservation Corps (CCC), a program to employ the destitute in conservation and other productive work.

- May 12 saw the passage of the Agricultural Adjustment Act, creating the **Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA)** to manage federal aid to farmers and control production. The AAA controlled the production of crops, and thus prices, by offering subsidies to farmers who produced under set quotas. The same day, the **Federal Emergency Relief Act (FERA)** was passed, appropriating \$500 million to support state and local treasuries that had run dry.
- On May 18 a bill was passed creating the **Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)**, a plan to develop energy production sites and conserve resources in the Tennessee Valley.
- On May 27, the **Federal Securities Act** was passed in efforts to improve corporate honesty about stocks and other securities, prefacing the creation of the Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) in 1934.
- On June 16, the National Industrial Recovery Act was passed, creating the **National Recovery Administration (NRA)** to manage the recovery of industry and finance. The NRA established regulations for fair competition that bound industry during the entire New Deal. The National Industrial Recovery Act also created the **Public Works Administration (PWA)**, which spent over \$4 million on projects designed to employ the jobless and infuse the economy with money.
- June 16 also saw the passage of the Banking Act of 1933, creating the **Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)** to back individuals' bank deposits with federal funds.

After June 16, Congress recessed, officially ending the “first hundred days” of reform which created the framework for heavy government involvement to help bring the U.S. out of the Depression.

FDR's first hundred days in office saw unprecedented government intervention in the economy, industry, and agriculture. Democrats in Congress, at FDR's behest, passed measures creating a massive structure of agencies under executive control.

Legislation and Agencies of the First New Deal	
Emergency Banking Relief Act	ended the bank panic, provided banks with federal support
Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)	employed more than two million young men from 1933 to 1941
Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA)	regulated farm production, helped raise farm income
Federal Emergency Relief Act (FERA)	funded state and local treasuries
Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)	helped develop and preserve the resources of the Tennessee Valley
Federal Securities Act	regulated the stock market
Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)	backed individuals' bank deposits with federal funds
National Recovery Administration (NRA)	regulated business by establishing fair codes of competition
Public Works Administration (PWA)	employed jobless men and women from all fields (industrial workers, artists, teachers)
Civil Works Administration (CWA)	provided short-term projects for the unemployed

Challenges to the New Deal

After the first hundred days, continued economic distress and mounting opposition to FDR's programs cast doubt upon the New Deal. The first sign that the New Deal was in danger was trouble with the NRA. Opposition to the NRA came to a head in 1935, when the conservative Supreme Court declared the agency unconstitutional, claiming the NRA gave the executive branch regulatory powers that belonged exclusively to Congress. This decision began a series of court decisions that overturned key elements of the New Deal.

The efforts of the AAA, combined with a severe drought in the American heartland, effected a drop in farm production, prompting a rise in farm prices. However, while the AAA did much to help large landowners and commercial farmers, it did little for landless laborers and tenant farmers who populated the rural Midwest. This large group of dispossessed farmers made up the majority of those who participated in the western migration from the **dust bowl** to California in search of land and employment. As the plight of the dust bowl poor became more widely recognized, questions arose about the effectiveness of the AAA. In 1936, the Supreme Court ruled the AAA unconstitutional, claiming it enforced illegal taxation.

Another source of criticism was the conservative American Liberty League, composed of elites who claimed that the New Deal restricted democratically guaranteed freedoms to earn and save money and acquire property. Other challenges to the New Deal arose from those appealing to the discontented lower and middle classes, including Father Charles Coughlin and **Huey Long**, who argued that the New Deal was not going far enough in alleviating poverty. The most famous political opposition movement of the Great Depression years, Long's Share Our Wealth program pressed for far greater income redistribution and benefits for the poor.

These challenges passed, at least in part, with the midterm elections of 1934. Despite a vocal minority of dissenters, FDR remained a popular president because of his efforts at relief, his charismatic leadership, and his connection with the citizens symbolized by his frequent **fireside chats**—radio broadcasts that he used to rally the support of the people and to offer assurances of economic recovery. FDR's popularity and public confidence in the New Deal resulted in a resounding approval of the Democratic program in the elections of 1934. Democrats gained seats in both the House and Senate.

The Second New Deal

Reassured by the overwhelming Democratic victory in the midterm elections of 1934, FDR laid out his plans for the **Second New Deal** in the January 1935 State of The Union Address. He outlined six ways in which the administration would renew and intensify the efforts begun under the first New Deal. These plans included an enlarged unemployment relief program, assistance to the rural poor, support for organized labor, social welfare benefits for the elderly and disadvantaged, strict regulation of business and finance, and heavier taxes on the wealthy.

In April 1935, Congress passed the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act. This act granted FDR \$5 billion to use on whatever programs he chose. The majority of that funding went to the **Works Progress Administration** (WPA). Over eight years, the WPA pumped \$11 billion into the economy and supported the unemployed of all backgrounds, from industrial engineers to authors and artists. The unemployment rate fell over 5 percent from 1935 to 1937, partially due to the WPA's efforts.

To regulate the economy, FDR empowered the **Federal Reserve Board** to exert tighter control over the money supply, and called for strict enforcement of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, which required that a detailed and truthful prospectus be publicized for each company issuing stock on the U.S. market.

One of the most lasting achievements of the Second New Deal was the creation of **Social Security** benefits for the elderly through the Social Security Act of 1935. This act, passed largely in response to the elderly rights movement, exemplified the New Deal focus on social services.

The best known achievement of the Second New Deal is the passage of the Social Security Act of 1935, which created the modern Social Security program.

Support for organized labor was another major feature of the Second New Deal. The government supported unionization and collective bargaining with the 1935 **National Labor Relations Act**, popularly known as the **Wagner Act**, which provided a framework for collective bargaining. The Wagner Act granted workers the right to join unions and engage in bargaining, and forbid employers from interfering with, or discriminating against, union rights.

Under the government's favorable treatment of labor, unions gained membership, power, and political influence, often lending their support to the Democratic Party—an alliance that remains in place today. Strikes were a common occurrence throughout the 1930s, and workers increasingly won concessions. In 1935, the Committee for Industrial Organization formed within the American Federation of Labor (AFL), eventually becoming the independent **Congress of Industrial Organizations** (CIO) in 1938. In less than two years, the CIO claimed more than four million members. The AFL and CIO were the nation's most dominant and successful unions throughout the late 1930s and 1940s, and in 1955 merged to form the AFL-CIO.

The New Deal Changes Party Alignments

FDR's landslide victory in the 1936 election confirmed his and his party's success in becoming the representatives of the downtrodden and disadvantaged. Farmers appreciated FDR's consistent efforts to forge an effective agricultural plan. Urban voters and organized labor, great sources of funding for FDR's 1936 campaign, valued his support of union rights and his efforts to cope with rampant unemployment. Many women recognized that FDR's programs attacked the concept of inequality and appreciated that he had appointed the first female cabinet member, Frances Perkins, as Secretary of

Labor. Black Americans, as the group most devastated by unemployment, had benefited extensively from New Deal measures. Black support gradually shifted toward FDR and the Democratic Party away from Republican Party, which had consistently won the black vote since the late 1800s (remember that Lincoln and those in Congress favoring emancipation had been Republican).

The election of 1936 saw the rise of a new Democratic coalition, including farmers, urban workers, women, and blacks. This coalition helped FDR win the 1936 election by a landslide.

FDR's presidency and the New Deal thus brought about a realignment of the Democratic and Republican parties. As Democrats won the support of blacks, urban workers, and farmers, they lost the support of the white South, a traditional Democratic stronghold. The Republican Party, meanwhile, lost its long-held black vote.

Legislation and Agencies of the Second New Deal	
Resettlement Administration	relocated and otherwise assisted the rural poor
Works Progress Administration (WPA)	employed workers of all fields, from industry to art (the PWA became a subdivision of the WPA)
National Labor Relations Act (Wagner Act)	guaranteed labor's right to organize in unions and collectively bargain
Social Security Act	created social security, or benefits for the elderly and the disabled
Revenue Act	raised personal income taxes for those in the highest tax bracket

New Deal Fades

The stage seemed set for FDR's continued success in pushing through the New Deal, but he faced a host of political challenges that hindered his efforts. The first element in the downturn was his involvement in the **Court Packing scheme**. Early in 1937, Roosevelt proposed a court-reform bill allowing the president to appoint an additional Supreme Court justice for each current justice over the age of seventy. FDR claimed that the bill addressed concerns about the justices' workload, but it was clear that the proposal was meant to dilute the power of the conservative justices of the Supreme Court who had been hostile to New Deal legislation (they had ruled that the AAA and NRA were unconstitutional, among other decisions). The Senate vetoed the scheme in July 1937. Several justices retired shortly after or announced their intention to do so, and the Supreme Court resisted less during the final years of the Second New Deal than it had during earlier years, but the Court Packing scheme was a blemish on Roosevelt's record.

A more direct factor in the decline of the Second New Deal was the inability of FDR's programs to revive the economy. In August of 1937, the nation plunged into the 1937 recession, also known as the "Roosevelt Depression." By early 1938 unemployment had again risen above 20 percent.

The final obstacle to the extension of the Second New Deal came from within Congress, where critics of FDR were growing in power. A conservative coalition legislated cuts in relief programs and blocked further legislation proposed by New Deal supporters. As a result, FDR proposed few new reform measures during his second term in office. That he proposed no new domestic programs in his January 1939 State of the Union address signaled the end of the New Deal.

The New Deal had effectively ended by 1939, owing, in part, to the embarrassing Court Packing scheme, the 1937 recession, and growing congressional opposition.

Popular Culture and Literature During the Depression

The 1930s saw the marked growth of mass culture as citizens sought diversion from their troubles. Most popular culture centered on escapist themes and/or humor. In film, comedies were the most highly attended of all genres. The Marx Brothers became huge stars, often appearing in farcical productions depicting get-rich-quick schemes. Radio shows also became immensely popular during this period, so much so that the 1930s is often called the Golden Age of Radio. Magazines similarly provided popular diversion. *Life* magazine began publication during the 1930s, filling its pages with pictures of spectacular scenes and glorified personalities.

Literary work of the 1930s focused on the rejection of the notion of progress and a desire to return to an earlier age of purity and simplicity. **John Steinbeck's** 1939 novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*, glorified a simple, rural way of life. Jack Conroy's *The Disinherited*, a 1933 chronicle of an average industrial worker's life in the Depression Era, conveyed disillusionment and cynicism. William Faulkner also

emerged as an important American writer, examining southern life in novels such as *A Light in August*, published in 1932, and *Absalom! Absalom!*, published in 1936.

Disillusioned with capitalism, many intellectuals and writers—including Langston Hughes, John Dos Passos, and **Ernest Hemingway**—formed allegiances, direct and indirect, to the Communist Party. Along with other intellectuals, these writers joined the **Popular Front**, a political group active in aiding the leftist forces in the Spanish Civil War against fascist powers. Hemingway's 1940 novel, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, portrays the life of an American soldier fighting in the Spanish Civil War against a fascist dictatorship.

The Great Depression in an International Context

It is important to note that the Great Depression was a worldwide phenomenon. Though struggling Americans mostly focused on domestic matters during this period, the U.S. did not exist in a vacuum and faced an array of international challenges.

By the early 1930s, nearly every nation in the world had sunk into depression. One of the most significant political responses in Europe was the rise of fascism, which advocated strict socioeconomic control. Fascism emerged most notably in Italy and Germany, under the leadership of **Benito Mussolini** and **Adolf Hitler**, respectively. Spain endured a civil war from 1936 to 1939, in which fascist forces under **Francisco Franco** defeated the leftist republicans, ushering in thirty-six years of fascist rule.

One international response to the Great Depression was the rise of fascism in Germany under Hitler, Italy under Mussolini, and Spain under Franco.

U.S. International Relations in a Depression Era

During the 1930s, FDR pursued a primarily isolationist course, concentrating on domestic programs. In 1933 he announced the “**Good Neighbor**” policy toward Latin America, in which he stated that no nation, including the U.S., had a right to interfere in the affairs of any other nation.

The Road to War in Europe

Many people of the 1920s and 1930s referred to World War I as the “war to end all wars.” But the vindictive terms of the Treaty of Versailles that ended World War I, in concert with the international depression of the 1930s, actually created the circumstances that led to World War II. In Germany, the harshly punitive Treaty of Versailles provoked intense bitterness and resentment. These feelings of anger and despair paved the way for the charismatic demagogue **Adolph Hitler** to take power in Germany and install a fascist regime in 1933. Eleven years earlier, a fascist regime had risen to power in Italy under **Benito Mussolini**. These two fascist governments combined their extreme nationalist rhetoric with an aggressive desire to expand.

In October 1935, Italian forces invaded Ethiopia, gaining control of the African nation by May 1936. Also in 1935, Hitler announced plans for German troops to re-occupy the Rhineland, which had been demilitarized by the Treaty of Versailles. Troops marched into the Rhineland unopposed in March 1936. Germany and Italy formed an alliance, the Rome-Berlin Axis, in October 1936. In March 1938, Austria joined this alliance when Hitler announced the *Anschluss*, a union between Germany and Austria, and German forces marched into Vienna. When Hitler declared his intention to take the Czech Sudetenland by force if necessary, British and French leaders acceded to his demands, signing the **Munich Pact** in September 1938, which granted the Sudetenland to Germany in an attempt to appease Hitler and avoid war.

During the 1930s, Britain and France responded to fascist aggression largely with inaction, hoping that Germany would cease its expansionary actions on its own. The two powers attempted to appease Hitler with the September 1938 Munich Pact.

Germany, however, did not cease its expansionary actions: German troops invaded Czechoslovakia in March 1939 and Poland in September 1939. Two days after the invasion of Poland, Britain and France declared war on Germany, honoring their treaty with Poland.

The United States and the War

In the mid-1930s, mired in the Depression, the U.S. focused on its own problems. Isolationism and

antiwar sentiments ran high. A series of **Neutrality Acts**, passed between 1935 and 1937, reflected these isolationist currents. The acts made arms sales to warring countries illegal and forbade American citizens to travel aboard the ships of belligerent nations. President **Franklin Delano Roosevelt** supported the neutrality acts only half-heartedly but found it impossible to fight the will of the majority and urge U.S. involvement in international affairs. FDR did succeed in helping to defeat the 1938 proposal for a constitutional amendment, the Ludlow Amendment, which would have required a national referendum on any declaration of war not sparked by a direct attack.

American isolationism before World War II led to the passage of a series of Neutrality Acts between 1935 and 1937, and to the proposal for a constitutional amendment requiring a national referendum on any declaration of war not provoked by direct attack.

In this atmosphere of isolationism, American response to the rise of fascist states in Germany and Italy was limited and weak. During most of the 1930s, few Americans saw Adolph Hitler and Benito Mussolini as dangerous. FDR urged negotiations with Hitler, but never openly advocated military action before the late 1930s. He suggested a plan to “quarantine” the aggressor nations in Europe in 1937, but the plan received little public support.

The only sign of wavering in America’s isolationism during the early and mid-1930s was its involvement in China. In 1931, Japan invaded the Chinese province of Manchuria and in 1937 began launching attacks on the remainder of China as part of its aim to build an Asian empire. Alarmed that Japan’s aggressive expansionism might threaten U.S. holdings in the Pacific, if not the U.S. itself, the U.S. refused to recognize the Japanese government in Manchuria. In 1937, the U.S. extended loans to China and urged a boycott of Japanese silk.

Waning Isolationism

American public opinion began to turn against the fascist powers during the late 1930s, mostly in response to the publicized brutality of Hitler’s Nazis toward German Jews and other groups. Nonetheless, many Americans continued to push for neutrality and for immigration restriction, in part because roughly 60,000 Jewish refugees fled to the U.S. between 1933 and 1938.

In early 1939, FDR asked Congress to appropriate funds for a military buildup and an increased production of military material. In September 1939, FDR succeeded in pushing Congress to revise the **Neutrality Acts** to allow warring nations to purchase arms from the U.S. as long as they paid in cash and carried the arms away on their own ships. This **cash-and-carry** provision appealed to a nation that was increasingly committed to aiding the **Allied** war effort but did not want to get directly involved.

Opposition to war continued to fade as Hitler’s troops invaded and conquered Denmark and Norway in April 1940, Belgium and the Netherlands in May, and France in June, followed by the **Battle of Britain** throughout the summer and fall, in which German planes bombed British cities.

Early support for the Allies could be seen in the cash-and-carry policy, which allowed warring nations to purchase American arms only if they paid in cash and carried the arms away on their own ships.

In this atmosphere of growing alarm, FDR decided to run for an unprecedented third term in office. (**George Washington** had established the convention that no president serve more than two terms in office, which every president until FDR had followed.) During his 1940 campaign, Roosevelt appointed a Council of National Defense to oversee defense production, appointed Republican Henry Stimson secretary of war, and approved a peacetime draft by signing the **Selective Service and Training Act**. Although he approved the draft, FDR pledged never to “send an American boy to fight in a European war.” Isolationists opposed to FDR’s reelection sponsored the **Committee to Defend America First**, urging neutrality and claiming that the U.S. could stand alone regardless of Hitler’s advances in Europe. FDR won reelection in spite of the committee’s efforts.

End to Isolationism and Entry into War

After winning reelection, FDR felt confident in stepping up American aid to the Allies. He pushed for passage of the **Lend-Lease Act** in March 1941, which allowed the president to lend or lease supplies to any nation deemed “vital to the defense of the United States,” such as Britain. FDR extended lend-lease aid to the Soviet Union after Germany invaded in November 1941. The U.S. also helped the Allies by

tracking German submarines and warning the British of their location, and by convoying British ships carrying lend-lease supplies—that is, surrounding British ships with U.S. Navy vessels ordered to attack any menacing vessel.

In August 1941, FDR met with British Prime Minister **Winston Churchill** on a British ship off Newfoundland. The two discussed military strategy and issued the **Atlantic Charter**, which outlined their ideal postwar world: among other provisions, it called for disarmament and freedom of the seas. In response to a German attack against a U.S. destroyer, Roosevelt issued the **shoot-on-sight order** in September 1941, which authorized American naval patrols to fire on all Axis ships found between the U.S. and Iceland. After American destroyers were twice attacked in October, Congress authorized the arming of merchant ships.

The final provocation for American entry into the war came from Japan, which had joined the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo **Axis** in September 1940 by signing the **Tripartite Pact**. Japan's desires to build an East Asian empire had alarmed the U.S. since Japan's invasion of China in 1931. In September 1940, Japanese forces continued their invasion into French Indochina. The U.S. responded to this invasion as it had to other invasions in the past: it added items to a lengthy list of embargoed Japanese goods, and eventually froze all trade with Japan. In 1941, U.S. intelligence became aware of plans for a Japanese attack and sent out warnings to commanders of U.S. bases in the Pacific, but most American officials did not believe that the threat was immediate. These officials were proved wrong on December 7, 1941, when, in an attempt to destroy American sea power in the Pacific, Japanese planes bombed the U.S. base at **Pearl Harbor**. The Japanese destroyed nearly 200 aircraft, eight battleships, three cruisers, and three destroyers. Almost 2,400 Americans died. On December 8, the Senate voted unanimously in favor of FDR's request for a declaration of war on Japan. The House passed the declaration over only one dissenting vote. On December 11, Germany and Italy joined Japan in war against the U.S.

The Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, and the U.S. declared war against Japan on December 8. On December 11, Germany and Italy declared war on the U.S., completing the entry of the U.S. into World War II.

On January 1, 1942, representatives of 26 nations signed the **Declaration of the United Nations**, pledging support for the Atlantic Charter and vowing not to make separate peace agreements with the Axis powers.

The War at Home

Although the U.S. had begun preparing for war during the summer of 1940, war production comprised only 15 percent of the nation's industrial output in 1941, and U.S. armed forces were seriously understaffed and undersupplied. During the next four years, war production on the home front churned into high gear.

Expanding the Military

In 1942, FDR created the **Joint Chiefs of Staff** to oversee America's rapidly expanding military. By the end of the war, more than 15 million men had served in the U.S. armed forces. About 350,000 women served as well, most in the Women's Army Corps (WAC) and Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service in the navy (WAVES). The air force, a minor corps at the outset of the war, grew substantially and gained a measure of autonomy during the war. The Joint Chiefs also established the **Office of Strategic Services** (OSS) to assess the enemy's assets and liabilities, conduct espionage, and gather information to be used in strategic planning.

Boosting Production

The U.S. mobilized industry to assist in the war effort. The **War Production Board**, created in 1942, oversaw the production of thousands of planes, tanks, and artillery pieces required for the war. The War Production Board allocated scarce resources and offered incentives for civilian firms to produce military goods. The last civilian car was produced in the U.S. in 1942, after which plants were redesigned to produce tanks, planes, weapons, and munitions. By the end of the war, the U.S. had built about 300,000 aircraft, 85,000 tanks, 375,000 artillery pieces, 2.5 million machine guns, and 90,000 sea ships—more war material than the four Axis powers, combined, had produced. This feat was accomplished through substantial investment of capital and the development of new, highly efficient manufacturing techniques.

During World War II, American industry shifted from producing civilian goods to military goods under the supervision of the War Production Board. Due to this shift in production, heavy

investment, and new, efficient techniques, the U.S. produced more war material than all of the Axis powers combined.

War Economy

The federal budget multiplied tenfold between 1940 and 1945. U.S. expenditures during World War II totaled nearly twice the amount spent by the U.S. government in its previous 150 years of existence. Spending on war production precipitated a shift in American income distribution, with the share of national income allocated to the richest Americans decreasing and that allocated to the middle class doubling. The **Revenue Act of 1942**, passed to help pay for the war, increased taxes for the wealthiest Americans.

War spending, accompanied by the draft, ended the high rate of unemployment which had not rebounded from the Great Depression. Organized labor grew strong and wealthy during World War II, with union membership growing by about 60 percent. Although most unions abided by a no-strike policy, unions secured new benefits (such as fewer hours and better health plans) for their members, partially as a concession from the **National War Labor Board**, which limited wage increases to avoid inflation. Union power suffered a setback when a series of coal miners' strikes provoked Congress to pass the **Smith-Connolly War Labor Disputes Act** in June 1943, which limited the right to strike in key industries and allowed the president to take control of any firm beset by strikes.

The Office of Price Administration waged a battle against inflation and the over-use of resources. The OPA oversaw a rationing program designed to curb new purchases and conserve materials, in particular gas, sugar, coffee, butter, and meat. The American people largely complied with these efforts by forsaking many goods—for example, implementing “meatless Tuesdays”—and by planting “victory gardens” and conducting collection drives to gather materials for recycling. Another tactic aimed at financing the war was the sale of war bonds.

The Office of Price Administration oversaw a rationing program with which most Americans cooperated, giving up many goods and otherwise doing their part to support the war effort.

Controlling Information and Advertising the War

FDR relied on the **Office of Censorship** and the **Office of War Information** to regulate the communications of American citizens. The former, created shortly after the U.S. entry into the war, examined all letters sent overseas and worked with media firms to control information broadcast to the people. The latter, formed in June 1942, employed artists, writers, and advertisers to shape public opinion by explaining the reasons for U.S. entry in the war and by portraying the enemy as barbaric and cruel.

War advertising encouraged women to actively participate in the war effort. During World War II, even more so than in World War I, women entered the workforce to fill the vacancies left by men at war and aid in the production of war materials. The image of **Rosie the Riveter**, a muscle-bound woman with a rivet gun, was pervasive and effective. Increasing numbers of women entered the workforce to perform all sorts of jobs. The roles women played in the armed forces helped create new respect for the working woman. Women, however, were paid far less than working men, and traditional notions of gender roles prevailed throughout the war.

During World War II, women were encouraged to enter the workforce, and women aiding in the war effort were glorified. Although traditional notions about gender roles remained intact, female participation in the war was an important step toward greater respect for women in the U.S.

Japanese Internment

During World War II, the U.S. government rounded up more than 110,000 Japanese immigrants and U.S.-born Japanese-Americans and sent them to relocation centers guarded by military police. Military leaders, West Coast farmers, and others rationalized this policy as necessary to prevent acts of sabotage and espionage in support of Japan. In 1942, FDR authorized this relocation in Executive Order 9066, and in 1944 the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the order in **Korematsu v. U.S.** In 1988, Congress voted to pay reparations of \$20,000 to every internee still living.

Reelection and Succession

FDR ran for reelection once again in 1944, in the midst of World War II, with moderate Democrat **Harry S. Truman** as his running mate. FDR won an unprecedented fourth term, though by his

narrowest margin ever. Shortly after Roosevelt's fourth term began, he died of a cerebral hemorrhage in April 1945, leaving Truman to oversee the war effort.

Winning the War

While the home front buzzed busily in support of the war effort, U.S. armed forces faced a two-front battle, in Europe and the Pacific.

Drive to Victory in Europe

The Allies and the United States agreed to focus on victory in Europe before turning to Japan. European involvement for U.S. troops began in 1942 with Operation Torch, a North African campaign in which more than 100,000 Allied troops under American general **Dwight D. Eisenhower** forced a Vichy (or German-controlled) France surrender in Tunisia. In the summer of 1943, Allied troops conquered Sicily and forced Mussolini's overthrow. In 1944, Soviet troops, who had succeeded in pushing the Nazis out of the Soviet Union, advanced toward Germany and liberated Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia from German rule.

In 1944, the U.S. launched a front against the Germans in France in the form of **Operation Overlord**. This operation centered on the June 6, 1944 "D-Day" invasion of Normandy, in which American, British, and Canadian forces under Eisenhower (now the supreme allied commander in Europe) undertook a massive land, sea, and air assault. Despite heavy resistance and many casualties, the Allies pressed on. By the end of the summer they had liberated Belgium, Luxembourg, and most of France.

In December 1944, Hitler sent the last of his reserves to attack the oncoming Allied troops in Belgium and Luxembourg. The reserves penetrated the Allies' line but were forced back in late December and early January. Despite heavy Allied losses—55,000 Allied troops were killed and another 18,000 taken prisoner—the **Battle of the Bulge** ended with Allied victory in January 1945.

By the end of April, Berlin was encircled by American, British, and Soviet troops. Germany surrendered unconditionally on May 8, 1945. American citizens celebrated the Allied victory in Europe but mourned the loss of more than six million Jews and several million others who had died in the concentration camps discovered by Allied forces invading Germany. The Nazi-driven persecution and extermination of European Jews, which lasted from 1933 until the end of the war in 1945, is called the **Holocaust**.

War in the Pacific

In 1942, American and Japanese forces clashed at various strategic locations, including the Philippines, the Coral Sea (northeast of Australia), and the Solomon Islands. Late in 1943, Americans took a two-pronged offensive, as the army under General **Douglas MacArthur** "leapfrogged" from island to island on a path north from Australia, and the navy island-hopped toward Japan from the Central Pacific. Securing U.S. control of these Japanese islands put Tokyo, Japan's capital city, within range for U.S. bombers. In the summer of 1944, U.S. forces destroyed the imperial fleet, wiping out Japan's naval power. Even with their armies in shambles and Japanese cities being bombed daily, Japanese leaders still refused to surrender.

The Atomic Bombs

The final push to victory in Japan began in 1945, when American troops won long, bloody battles on the islands of Iwo Jima and Okinawa from February to June, losing about 65,000 men between the two battles. Despite these American victories and the daily bombing of Tokyo, Japanese officials refused to consider surrender.

In the U.S., a secret project to develop an atomic bomb had been in progress since 1941. In July 1945, the **Manhattan Project** and its director, **J. Robert Oppenheimer**, successfully detonated an atomic bomb in the desert in New Mexico. This was the first successful detonation of an atomic bomb in history.

While meeting with Soviet premier **Joseph Stalin** and British prime minister **Winston Churchill** at the **Potsdam Conference**, Truman issued a secret order to drop an atomic bomb if Japan did not surrender by August 3. In late July 1945, Truman warned Japan to surrender immediately or face "prompt and utter destruction." Japan ignored the threat, and on August 6, 1945, an American B-29 bomber, the *Enola Gay*, dropped an atomic bomb on the Japanese city of **Hiroshima**, killing more than 70,000 and injuring another 70,000, many fatally. Three days later, a bomb was dropped on

Nagasaki, killing 40,000 and injuring 60,000. On August 14, 1945, Japan surrendered.

Atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and August 9, 1945, killing more than 110,000 in the blasts and injuring many more who died soon thereafter. This destruction prompted Japan to surrender on August 14, ending World War II.

Although Truman claimed the use of the atomic bombs was necessary to end the war quickly with minimal loss of American life, his motives have been questioned. Some believe racism inspired the bombs' use, and some claim that Truman could have forced Japan's surrender simply by demonstrating the bombs' effect on an abandoned island. Others argue that the bombs were used mainly to intimidate Joseph Stalin and to prevent the Soviet Union, which declared war on Japan on August 8, 1945, from claiming a share in victory over Japan. Truman would thereby gain a diplomatic edge over the communist Soviets.

Negotiating a Postwar World Order

Even while the war was proceeding, the Allies met to settle the details of the postwar world order. Their diplomatic agreements, and disagreements, reached far beyond the war's end.

The Tehran Conference

FDR and Churchill arrived at Tehran, Iran, to meet Stalin at the **Tehran Conference** in 1943. At this first meeting of the Big Three, the Allies planned the 1944 assault on France and agreed to divide Germany into zones of occupation after the war. They also agreed to establish a new international peacekeeping organization, the **United Nations**.

The Yalta Conference

In February 1945, the Big Three met again in the Soviet city of Yalta. Stalin, whose troops had overrun Eastern Europe, had the most bargaining power at the **Yalta Conference**, leaving the other Allies with much to request but little leverage with which to force Stalin's hand. Stalin did agree to declare war against Japan soon after Germany surrendered and approved plans for a United Nations conference in San Francisco in April 1945. Discussion of reparations, large payments that Stalin demanded from Germany that Roosevelt and Churchill opposed, was postponed.

The Potsdam Conference

After FDR's death and the end of the war in Europe, Harry Truman, new British prime minister Clement Atlee, and Stalin met at the **Potsdam Conference** in Germany from July 17 to August 2, 1945. Little was accomplished diplomatically, as relations between the Americans and Soviets grew increasingly chilly, but the three leaders did agree to demilitarize Germany and agreed upon the concept of war crimes trials. The Potsdam Agreement divided Germany into four zones, administered by the Soviet Union, France, Britain, and the U.S., and established joint administration of Berlin, which lay well within the Soviet zone. This arrangement proved to be a recipe for conflict in later years.

War Crime Trials at Nuremberg

The **Nuremberg Trials** of Nazi war criminals began in Nuremberg, Germany, in 1945. Prosecutors charged twenty-four Germans with an assortment of crimes, including waging aggressive war, extermination of ethnic and religious groups, and murder and mistreatment of prisoners and inhabitants of occupied territories. The tribunal heard testimony and saw documentation chronicling the "crimes against humanity" perpetrated by the Nazis against European Jews and others. The Nuremberg Tribunal concluded that though not explicitly stated in international law, the instigation of aggressive war was a crime and that the defendants' claim that they were "just following orders" was unsound because the opportunity for moral choice always existed. Twelve defendants were sentenced to death and seven others to prison sentences of varying length. After this first trial, twelve more trials were held, with about 185 Germans indicted. Only thirty-five were acquitted. The rest were sentenced to prison terms or death.

The Postwar Settlement in Asia

After Japan surrendered on September 2, 1945, American forces under General **Douglas MacArthur** occupied the country. MacArthur rigidly suppressed Japanese nationalism, held war crimes trials, and imposed democratic norms on the Japanese government. Under MacArthur's supervision, which lasted until the end of occupation in 1952, Japan became an economically powerful democracy.

Another element of the postwar settlement in Asia was the division of Korea at the thirty-eighth parallel, an agreement reached between the Soviet Union and the U.S. shortly before the end of the war as part of the Japanese surrender. The Soviets occupied North Korea and the U.S. occupied South Korea, each supporting governments antagonistic toward each other. This antagonism would erupt in the Korean War in 1950.

The United Nations

In April 1945, the **United Nations** Conference on International Organization met in San Francisco. Delegates from fifty countries outlined their aims for global peace and collective security. In their charter, they created a General Assembly to make policy and a Security Council to settle disputes. In October 1945, the UN officially came into being, with fifty-one founding members.

The Cold War Begins

After the close of World War II, a new and very different conflict rose to the forefront of American national attention: the Cold War. The Cold War pitted the communist Soviet Union against the capitalist U.S. and its Western Allies. While there was little actual violence, both sides considered the conflict to be severe and threatening. President **Harry S. Truman**, who had succeeded Franklin Roosevelt as president after the latter's death in April 1945, found himself in an increasingly difficult and complex battle against communism. **Dwight D. Eisenhower**, who succeeded Truman as president in 1952, inherited the conflict.

Origins of the Cold War and the Iron Curtain

After Germany's defeat in World War II, the leaders of the Allied countries met at a series of conferences to reshape the postwar world. Crucial among these was the Potsdam Conference in 1945, at which the Allies divided Germany into four zones, controlled by France, Britain, the U.S., and the USSR. Berlin, deep in the Soviet zone, was also divided among the four countries. During Potsdam, Truman informed **Joseph Stalin** that U.S. scientists had successfully detonated an atomic bomb, sparking a highly competitive nuclear arms race between the two countries.

In the late 1940s, the U.S. and USSR emerged as supreme among the nations of the world. The former wartime allies soon became bitter enemies. Both superpowers rushed to establish **spheres of influence** in Europe. Stalin wished to establish a buffer region of pro-Soviet states in Eastern Europe in order to prevent the recurrence of invasions such as those undertaken by Germany during the war. The Red Army established **puppet governments** in Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania, adding to the ranks of independently established pro-Soviet governments in Albania and Yugoslavia. In 1945, Stalin disregarded the Yalta Declaration of Liberated Europe and disallowed free elections in Poland, which had served as a gateway to the Soviet Union for German invaders. In early March 1946, the former British prime minister **Winston Churchill** gave a speech at Westminster College in Missouri, coining the phrase the "**iron curtain**" to describe the USSR's division of Eastern Europe from the West.

The phrase "iron curtain" was coined by Winston Churchill to describe the division of Europe imposed by the USSR.

The United States and the Cold War

A combination of political, economic, and moral considerations led the U.S. government to oppose Soviet dominance of Eastern Europe. President Truman took a strong stance against the Soviet territorial advances, advocating a policy of **containment**. Under this policy, the U.S. would not attempt to change the post-World War II situation in Europe, but it would work to prevent further Soviet expansion through peaceful or military means.

Atomic Arms Race

Nuclear weapons played a central role in the possibility of military engagement between the U.S. and the USSR. In 1946, Truman proposed a plan to the United Nations to require the USSR to cease construction on any atomic weaponry, saying that only then would the U.S. destroy its growing arsenal. The Soviets rejected this plan and both sides rushed to develop weapons of mass destruction. In 1946, the federal government established the **Atomic Energy Commission** to oversee the development of nuclear energy and arms. The battle for nuclear dominance was characteristic of the Cold War, in which few battles were ever waged face to face.

In September 1949, the USSR detonated its first atomic bomb. This development, combined with the establishment of a communist regime in China, inspired a new and fiercer anticommunism in the U.S. government, expressed in its decision to more than triple the defense budget and to mount a furious campaign to develop a hydrogen bomb. The drive for the hydrogen bomb succeeded in the November 1952 detonation of an H-bomb in the Marshall Islands. But the American advantage was short-lived. In July 1953, the Russians detonated their own H-bomb.

The Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan

Early in 1947, allies in a fragile Western Europe asked the U.S. to help fund the effort to prevent the rise of communist governments in Greece and Turkey. The economies and governments of Western Europe were nearing collapse. In March 1947, Truman asked a joint session of Congress to authorize military assistance to Turkey and Greece, depicting the issue as one of liberty versus oppression, and proclaimed that the U.S. would support people anywhere in the world facing “attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.” This proclamation, known as the **Truman Doctrine**, committed the U.S. to the role of global policeman.

The economic counterpart to the Truman Doctrine was the **Marshall Plan**, under which the U.S. pledged a great deal of financial assistance to Europe, specifically to stimulate European postwar recovery and to provide relief for the hungry, homeless, and desperate. Truman and his secretary of state George C. Marshall hoped the plan would eliminate economic and political instability, and strengthen European states against possible communist influence. As expected, the USSR rejected aid because of the Marshall Plan’s accompanying conditions of U.S. influence and control. By 1952, Congress had provided some \$17 billion in aid, and the Western European economy had largely recovered.

The Truman Doctrine proclaimed that America would aid people anywhere in the world who were victims of “attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.” The Marshall Plan was the financial counterpart to this doctrine, providing for economic aid to rebuild an unstable Europe.

The Berlin Blockade

France, Britain, and the United States gradually united their three zones of occupation within Germany and in 1948 announced their intention to create a West German Republic. In opposition to the proposed republic—which would have included West Berlin, situated deep in the Soviet zone—Stalin established the **Berlin Blockade** in June 1948, cutting off all rail and highway access to Berlin from the west. Choosing not to abandon Berlin or use military force, Truman ordered an airlift, called “Operation Vittles,” to supply West Berlin. The airlift continued until May 1949, when the USSR lifted the blockade. Western forces immediately pulled out of Germany and approved the creation of the Federal Republic of Germany, or West Germany. The USSR responded by creating the German Democratic Republic, or East Germany.

NATO and the Warsaw Pact

The heightened fear of conflict produced by the Berlin Blockade helped convince Western Europe of the need for a security alliance. In April 1949, ten Western European nations, Canada, and the U.S. established the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization** (NATO), and declared that an attack against any member of the alliance would be seen as an attack against all—a policy known as collective security. In July, the U.S. officially joined NATO, and Congress authorized \$1.3 billion for military aid to NATO countries. The USSR responded by establishing a rival alliance, the **Warsaw Pact**, in 1955.

The Korean War: Containment in Asia

In Asia, as in Europe, Truman tried to contain the spread of communism. The U.S. denied the USSR any hand in the postwar reconstruction of Japan and occupied Japan until 1952, at which point the U.S. officially exited but left troops behind on American military bases. In China, the U.S. spent almost \$3 billion in a failed effort to support Chinese nationalists under Chiang Kai-shek against **Mao Zedong**’s communists. In 1949, the communists achieved victory and established the People’s Republic of China (PRC). The nationalists fled to Taiwan, where they established their own government to rival the PRC. Asia, much like Germany, became the site of division between contending camps, communist and noncommunist.

The Cold War conflict in Asia erupted into outright war in June 1950, when troops from Soviet-supported North Korea invaded South Korea. Without asking for a declaration of war, Truman committed U.S. troops as part of a United Nations “police action.” In actuality, the **Korean War** was carried out by predominantly American forces under the command of General **Douglas MacArthur**. By late September, MacArthur’s troops had forced the North Koreans back past the thirty-eighth parallel, the dividing line between North and South Korea. Truman authorized an offensive drive across this divide and toward China, but MacArthur was repelled by Chinese forces in November. Fighting stabilized around the previous border, and in the spring of 1951 Truman sought to scale back the war effort and negotiate peace, despite MacArthur’s proposals for bombing attacks north of the Yalu River in China. After a month of publicly denouncing the administration’s policy of restraint, MacArthur was relieved from duty in April 1951. Limited fighting would continue until June 1953, when an armistice restored the prewar border between North and South. U.S. forces had lost almost 55,000 lives.

Eisenhower and the Cold War

Even though the threat of direct confrontation seemed to be waning by the early 1950s, the Cold War was by no means near an end. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles committed the U.S. to mutual defense pacts with forty-three nations. World War II hero Eisenhower won the election of 1952. Convinced that a large nuclear arsenal would deter the Soviets from rash action, Eisenhower advocated cuts in the army and navy to provide funding for the construction of nuclear weapons and the planes that dropped them. This “**New Look**” emphasized massive retaliation rather than ground force involvement in countries threatened by Soviet influence. This form of retaliatory defense was articulated in the U.S. military doctrine **Mutual Assured Destruction** (MAD). Developed in the early 1960s, MAD promised that whoever launched a nuclear attack would be immediately counterattacked, resulting in total nuclear devastation on both sides.

The focus on massive retaliation, however, did not detract from interest in the extension of each superpower’s spheres of influence. The focus of the Cold War now turned toward the Third World, where proxy wars were waged by local groups backed by the two powers. The U.S. **Central Intelligence Agency** (CIA), which grew rapidly throughout Eisenhower’s time in office, spearheaded U.S. efforts in these proxy wars by providing covert assistance to those opposing Soviet-backed forces. In 1953, the CIA helped to restore the deposed Shah of Iran to power, securing an American ally along the Soviet border. Also in 1953, the CIA intervened in elections in the Philippines. In 1954, it backed a military coup in Guatemala. One marked example of the CIA’s failure came in early 1959, when Cuba became a communist state led by Fidel Castro.

During the 1950s, the Cold War’s focus turned to the Third World, where the U.S. and USSR often backed rival groups in civil conflicts. The CIA spearheaded U.S. activity, engaging in covert operations to aid U.S.-supported groups.

Threats to Stability: Vietnam and the Middle East

The CIA’s most important activities in the 1950s occurred in Vietnam. Truman (and later Eisenhower) provided American aid to the French, who battled the communist nationalist Vietminh for control of the former French colony. In May 1954, the French surrendered. At a conference in Geneva in July, Vietnam was divided at the seventeenth parallel, pending possible reunification through free elections. Eisenhower, however, refused to sign the Geneva Peace Accords on account of his “**domino theory**,” which stated that should Vietnam fall to Soviet control—as would likely happen if elections reunified the country because the communist forces were dominant—all of Asia would soon follow. The CIA thus helped to install Ngo Dinh Diem as president of South Vietnam and helped him block the elections that would have reunified Vietnam. But Diem’s control was tenuous at best, and in 1960 the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, backed by North Vietnam, formed in opposition to Diem. Eisenhower sent funds and advisers to aid Diem, committing the U.S. to involvement in a potentially volatile situation.

Perhaps the greatest crisis faced by the Eisenhower administration sprang up in the Middle East. In 1954, Gamal Abdel Nasser came to power in Egypt and nationalized the **Suez Canal**, which had previously been foreign-owned. Israel, Britain, and France subsequently attacked Egypt in October 1956. Eisenhower, enraged at his allies for acting without consulting him, condemned their actions and prepared for potential war. Finally, Britain, Israel, and France agreed to pull out of Egypt in November 1956. In January 1957, Eisenhower announced that the U.S. would increase its involvement in the Middle East to oppose Soviet aggression by sending military aid and troops if necessary. This “**Eisenhower Doctrine**” justified the deployment of 14,000 marines to Lebanon in July 1958 to

promote stability.

The Eisenhower Doctrine, elucidated after the Suez Canal crisis, committed the U.S. to military involvement in the Middle East when necessary to counter communist advances.

The Space Race

The struggle for nuclear dominance begot a battle between the superpowers to exhibit technological prowess in all fields. In October 1957 the USSR launched a space satellite, **Sputnik**. The U.S. countered, launching *Explorer I* in January 1958. Still, American concern over technological competitiveness lingered, spurring the 1958 creation of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

Fighting Communism at Home

While Truman and Eisenhower both sought to contain communism in Europe and Asia, their administrations also presided over efforts to rid the U.S. itself of communist elements.

Investigating Loyalty

The American Communist Party had peaked in strength during World War II and had been linked to covert operations designed to aid the Soviet Union. Such espionage was known to have involved individuals within the federal government. In March 1947, Truman issued an executive order establishing the Federal Employee Loyalty Program, which became so powerful that it often abridged the rights of officials in its search for disloyalty. Employees who criticized American policy were subject to humiliating investigations. By 1956, this program had led to more than 2,500 dismissals and 12,000 resignations from official posts.

As Cold War fears grew, much of the nation became convinced that communists within the country were working on a large scale to subvert the American government. Thirty-nine states passed antisubversion laws and loyalty programs. Any criticism of the government was likely to meet with investigation and denouncement. In 1947, the **House Un-American Activities Committee** (HUAC) led a series of highly publicized hearings, in which witnesses were forced into confessions, or, if they refused to confess, faced restrictions of their rights. HUAC attacked a number of prominent screenwriters and directors, prompting Hollywood to establish an unofficial blacklist that prevented any questionable individuals from getting work. During the presidential campaign of 1948, Truman sought to demonstrate his stance against communism by prosecuting eleven leaders of the Communist Party under the 1940 **Smith Act**, which prohibited any conspiracy from overthrowing the government. Unions shrank from public action lest they be labeled communist. The Communist Party itself began to fade in strength, with membership falling to about 25,000. But some government officials nevertheless asserted that the communist threat was everywhere.

The Hiss and Rosenberg Cases

In 1948, Whittaker Chambers, a senior editor at *Time* magazine and a former Soviet spy, named **Alger Hiss** as an underground member of the Communist Party. Hiss, a graduate of Harvard Law School who had worked within the federal government for years, denied Chambers's claims in court. In January 1950, Hiss was convicted of perjury and sentenced to five years imprisonment, emboldening conservatives and raising questions about the past activities of many Democrats in government.

In February 1950, Klaus Fuchs, a scientist involved in the Manhattan Project, was arrested for passing information on nuclear weapons development to the Soviets during World War II. This arrest led to the implication of Harry Gold, David Greenglass, and most notably, **the Rosenbergs**, Ethel and Julius. The Rosenbergs claimed they were the victims of anti-Semitism and were targeted for their leftist beliefs. In March 1951 they were convicted and sentenced to death. They were executed in June 1953.

McCarthyism

Anticommunism reached its peak in the U.S. with the rise of **McCarthyism**. In 1950, Senator Joseph McCarthy claimed to have a list of 205 people known to be members of the Communist Party who were still working in the State Department. McCarthy continued to make such speeches, though he reduced the number of names on his list and modified the allegations to merely "bad risks." Although a Senate committee called these accusations a hoax, McCarthy continued his rhetoric. Republicans in the Senate

soon came to support McCarthy, if only for the political benefits to be gained from attacks on liberals. McCarthy's appeal grew steadily throughout the nation, until the Democrats feared that to oppose him would mean certain humiliation and charges of disloyalty. In 1950, in the spirit of McCarthyism, Congress passed the McCarran Internal Security Act, which stated that organizations the attorney general deemed communist had to register with the Department of Justice and provide member lists and financial statements. The act also barred communists from working in defense plants, and allowed the government to deport any alien suspected of subversion.

The anticommunism of the late 1940s and early 1950s took its most radical form in McCarthyism. Joseph McCarthy led an anticommunist witch-hunt designed to root out subversive elements in American government and society.

In 1954, at the height of his powers, McCarthy accused the military of being a haven for spies. The army countered by accusing McCarthy of using his power to secure preferential treatment for a member of his staff who had been drafted. In televised congressional hearings on these matters, McCarthy behaved poorly—he appeared aggressive and bullying—and thereby turned public opinion against him. The Senate voted to censure McCarthy in December 1954, with support from Eisenhower. The fall of McCarthy lessened the fervor of anticommunism, though it did not wipe out fears of subversion.

Domestic Policies of Truman and Eisenhower

Inflation plagued America's postwar economy, as food prices rose over 15 percent in 1946. At the same time, American workers were demanding higher pay and strikes were rampant across the country. The railroad system shut down completely in the spring of 1946. Truman intervened in the strikes and, in so doing, alienated many working-class interest groups. As a result, Democrats fared badly in the midterm election of 1946, and Republicans gained control of Congress for the first time since 1928.

Truman struggled to push his liberal initiatives through a Republican-controlled Congress. In his aims to extend FDR's New Deal, Truman did gain passage of the Employment Act of 1946, which committed the government to stimulating economic growth, but only through significant compromise: Congress stripped the bill of many of its more important elements, such as the stated goal of providing full employment. This opposition set the tone for many of Truman's efforts to create a social safety net for Americans. Congress blocked Truman's attempts to provide for public housing, the expansion of Social Security, and a higher minimum wage, among other elements derived from the New Deal.

Truman's domestic policy attempted to extend FDR's New Deal. After Republicans gained control of Congress in 1946, Truman's policies were largely rejected.

The Election of 1948 and the Fair Deal

The Republican Congress passed tax cuts for the rich and kept the minimum wage down in attempts to dismantle the New Deal. Union activities were restricted, most prominently by the **Taft-Hartley Act** of 1947, which banned certain practices and allowed the president to call for an eighty-day cooling off period to delay strikes thought to pose risks to national safety. Truman vetoed the measure, and though his veto was overridden, his actions roused the support of organized labor, a group crucial to his election bid in 1948. In efforts to maintain the support of this and other groups central to FDR's New Deal coalition, Truman proposed many liberal reforms aimed at winning the labor, Catholic, Jewish, black, farm, and immigrant vote. He was moderately successful in this endeavor, and though many pundits assumed he would lose the election to Republican candidate Thomas Dewey, he pulled through with a narrow victory.

Truman saw this victory as a mandate for liberalism and unveiled a new program, which he called the **Fair Deal**, in 1949. Congress now proved more cooperative and passed bills to increase the minimum wage, expand Social Security, and construct low-income housing. But as America entered a period of postwar prosperity and became increasingly interested in international affairs, the Fair Deal lost steam.

The Election of 1952 and Eisenhower

Truman decided not to run again for president in 1952, so the Democrats nominated Adlai Stevenson to run against Republican candidate **Dwight D. Eisenhower**. A moderate and a World War II hero, Eisenhower chose as his running mate **Richard Nixon**, a more conservative Republican and a fervent anticommunist. Eisenhower's choice captured the period's spirit of the ultra-conservative anticommunism and helped push him to a decisive Republican victory in the election of 1952.

Eisenhower called his philosophy of government "**dynamic conservatism**." He set a moderate,

corporate-oriented course for his administration, staffing his cabinet largely with business executives. He was determined to work with the Democratic Party rather than against it and at times opposed proposals made by more conservative members of his own party. Ike, as Eisenhower was known, advocated a strong effort by the government to stimulate the economy. Faced with economic depressions in 1953 and 1957, he went against the tendency of his party by increasing spending rather than trying to maintain a balanced budget. He cooperated with the Democratic Congress in expanding Social Security benefits and raising the minimum wage. In 1956, Eisenhower supported the Interstate Highway Act, the most expensive public works program in American history. His success in boosting prosperity and pleasing many different factions while keeping the U.S. out of war resulted in his landslide victory in the election of 1956.

Civil Rights Under Truman and Eisenhower

As the Cold War raged during the late 1940s and 1950s, great changes occurred in American society, especially concerning civil rights. The civil rights movement gathered strength and momentum during the postwar years.

Truman and Civil Rights

In efforts to preserve the support of southern whites, Truman at first avoided issues of civil rights for blacks. But he could not stay removed for long. In 1947, the Presidential Committee on Civil Rights, created a year earlier, produced a report, **To Secure These Rights**, calling for the elimination of segregation. In 1948, Truman endorsed the findings of the report and called for an end to racial discrimination in federal hiring practices. He also issued an executive order to end segregation in the military, an initiative that would be completed by Eisenhower. Although these moves cost Truman the support of many southern whites, the increased support of black voters made up for the political loss.

Eisenhower and the Civil Rights Acts

Eisenhower backed the Civil Rights Act of 1957 and the Civil Rights Act of 1960. The former created a permanent Civil Rights Commission, as well as a Civil Rights Division within the Justice Department aimed at combating efforts to deny blacks the vote. The latter granted the federal courts the authority to register black voters.

Brown v. Board of Education

The fight for civil rights took a major leap forward in May 1954, when the Supreme Court, under the leadership of liberal Chief Justice **Earl Warren**, handed down one of the most famous decisions in American judicial history. In the case of **Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka**, the Court overturned the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision and ruled that segregation of schools was unconstitutional, arguing that separate schools are inherently unequal. The Court demanded that the states desegregate immediately. Eisenhower ordered the desegregation of Washington, D.C., schools but at first refused to force southern states to comply with the Court's ruling. Encouraged by this lack of federal backing, southern state governments engaged in "massive resistance" by choosing not to desegregate schools and by denying funding to districts that attempted desegregation. The resistance to integration was so fierce in Arkansas that Eisenhower dispatched federal troops to Little Rock to force desegregation of public schools there.

The Supreme Court's decision in Brown v. Board of Education overturned the "separate but equal" doctrine established by Plessy v. Ferguson in 1896. In 1957, federal troops were called into Little Rock, Arkansas, to enforce integration of public schools.

The Civil Rights Movement Takes Shape

Amid the conflict over *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, a strong civil rights movement began taking shape in the South. In December 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama, a black woman named **Rosa Parks** was arrested for refusing to give her bus seat to a white man. Led by a minister, **Martin Luther King Jr.**, Montgomery blacks organized a boycott of the bus system. Despite violent attacks on black leaders, the boycott continued, reducing bus revenue by over 60 percent. In 1956, the Supreme Court upheld a lower court's decision outlawing segregation on buses.

The success of the Montgomery bus boycott inspired civil rights leaders to adopt Martin Luther King Jr.'s philosophy of nonviolent civil disobedience. To direct his followers in a campaign against

segregation and discrimination, King and other black ministers established the **Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)** in 1957. The SCLC soon found an ally in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which formed after a number of sit-ins at businesses that discriminated against blacks.

The civil rights movement gained strength by employing the doctrine of nonviolent civil disobedience during the 1950s. Led by Martin Luther King Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, southern blacks staged direct acts of defiance against segregation

Social Trends of the 1950s

The decade following World War II was characterized by affluence in much of American society, giving rise to high levels of consumption and a boom in population. Beneath this widespread prosperity, however, lay deepening poverty for some Americans, and the gap between the rich and poor widened.

Automation and Consolidation

Eisenhower's support for government spending greatly stimulated economic growth during the 1950s. Defense spending, which accounted for half of the federal budget, spurred industrial growth and funded scientific and technological advances. The nation's first nuclear power plant opened in 1957, and the chemical and electronics industries both boomed. Industrial plants and American homes alike became automated, with electrical devices performing tasks formerly left to humans. Fossil fuel consumption skyrocketed as a result of increased electricity use. With gas prices low, the automobile industry upped production. The first electric computer was built in 1945, and computer production advanced rapidly throughout the 1950s.

Boosted by the production benefits of automation, big business flourished, until less than 0.5 percent of American corporations controlled more than half of the nation's corporate wealth. These massive corporations crushed and absorbed their competition and formed conglomerates to link companies in different industries. Agriculture mirrored big industry. Technology drastically cut the amount of work needed to successfully grow crops, and many farmers moved to the cities as rich farm companies consolidated family farms, fertilized them with new chemicals, and harvested crops with new machinery.

Advances in science and technology decreased the amount of labor necessary for industry and agriculture to be financially successful and led to consolidation of industry and agriculture into large corporations.

Unions responded to the consolidation of business by consolidating as well. In 1955, the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations merged to form the **AFL-CIO**. Prosperity meant high wages and few labor complaints, depriving unions of the high-profile status they enjoyed in 1930s and 1940s. Also weakening unions was the decrease in blue-collar workers because of the rise of automation and the accompanying increase in white-collar jobs—office employees, managers, salespersons. This loss of blue-collar workers stripped the labor movement of its core influence and contributed to the sharp decline in union membership during the 1950s.

Results of Prosperity: Suburbanization, the Baby Boom, Religion, and Conservatism

Prosperous American consumers went on a spending spree in the 1950s. The automobile industry benefited markedly from this surge in spending: Americans bought nearly 60 million cars during the 1950s. The resulting increase in mobility contributed to the rise of motels, fast-food restaurants, gas stations, and, most notably, suburbs. Areas once considered too far from jobs in urban centers were now accessible and desirable, and middle-class and wealthy Americans began to flee the poverty and congestion of the cities for outlying areas. Suburbs offered a clean, homogeneous, child-friendly, and safe environment. The American suburban population nearly doubled during the 1950s.

Prosperity and mobility provided by the automobile during the 1950s led middle-class and wealthy Americans to move to suburbs around the nation's great cities.

Prosperity led Americans to start families earlier and have more children. The birth rate grew steadily from 1950 to its peak in 1957; at the same time, advances in science and medicine led to lower infant mortality rates and longer life expectancy. The U.S. population accordingly grew from about 150 million

to about 180 million during the 1950s. The **baby boom**, as this explosion was called, was a product of and a cause for conservative family values—especially about the place of women in American society. Dr. Benjamin Spock, author of the wildly successful *Baby and Child Care* (1946), suggested that mothers devote themselves to the full-time care of their children. Popular culture depicted marriage and feminine domesticity as a primary goal for American women, and the education system reinforced this portrayal. This revival of domesticity as a social value was accompanied by a revival of religion. Religious messages began to creep into popular culture as religious leaders became famous faces. It was during the 1950s that Congress added the words “under God” to the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Less Fortunate

Though 1950s prosperity benefited many Americans, it also obscured widespread poverty. More than one-fifth of the nation lived below the poverty line: some in desolate rural conditions as migrant workers, others in the crowded and dirty slums of American cities. As wealthy whites moved to the suburbs, cities exhausted their funds attempting to provide social services to an increasing number of poor urbanites. Historically black and immigrant in population, the urban poor now included an increasing number of Hispanic-Americans and Native Americans, who migrated to the cities when unable to find work in rural areas. The needs of these disadvantaged groups went largely unanswered, and the condition of cities rapidly deteriorated.

American Culture: Television, Rock-and-Roll, and the Beats

Television grew rapidly as the entertainment medium of choice. By the 1960s, more than 90 percent of American households owned at least one television. Television brought a message of conformity and consumerism to the American people. Programs fed Americans a steady diet of cookie-cutter idealizations of American life filled with racial and gender stereotypes. Commercials became pervasive, at times dominating the programs themselves. Television produced many of the period’s heroes and fads, such as the Davy Crockett coonskin cap and the hula hoop.

Television dominated American culture during the 1950s, presenting a cookie-cutter, stereotyped image of the happy, prosperous American family.

Despite the widespread conformity of the period, some elements of culture rebelled. One source of rebellion was rock-and-roll, which rose to prominence in the 1950s. No one epitomized rock-and-roll during the 1950s more than **Elvis Presley**, who produced 14 consecutive records between 1956 and 1958 that each sold over a million copies. Elvis’s sexual innuendo and hip gyrations shocked many middle-class parents but captured the attention of their children. Abstract Expressionist artists like Jackson Pollock eschewed traditional painting techniques for more passionate methods, flinging paint across huge canvases.

In the realm of literature, the spirit of rebellion was embodied in **the Beats**, a group of nonconformists led by writers such as Allan Ginsberg, the author of the long poem *Howl* (1956), and Jack Kerouac, the author of *On the Road* (1957). These authors rejected uniform middle-class culture and sought to overturn the sexual and social conservatism of the period. The Beats eventually won favor among college-age Americans, who joined together in protests against the death penalty, nuclear weaponry, racial segregation, and other facets of American life that went largely unquestioned throughout the 1950s. This burgeoning youth movement would explode in the 1960s.

Domestic Politics in the 1960s

In 1961, Democrats gained control of the White House and kept it until 1969. Democratic leadership meant that domestic politics revolved around liberal reforms. John F. Kennedy grappled with congressional opposition to his plan for a New Frontier until his assassination in 1963, when Lyndon B. Johnson took office and pushed his predecessor’s proposed reforms through Congress under the umbrella of what he called the Great Society.

The JFK Administration and the New Frontier at Home

John F. Kennedy, who won the presidency over Richard Nixon in 1960, promised a “**New Frontier**” for America, encompassing reform at home and victory in the Cold War. To accomplish these goals, he assembled a group of young technocrats and politically savvy advisers, termed “the best and the brightest” by historian David Halberstam. Robert McNamara, the president of Ford Motor Company, served as secretary of defense. McGeorge Bundy, a dean of Harvard University, was special assistant for

national security affairs, and the president's brother Robert Kennedy filled the post of attorney general. JFK carefully crafted his image as a young, intelligent, and vibrant leader.

Despite JFK's reputation, he was unable to push much reform through Congress, where he faced an opposing coalition of Republicans and southern Democrats. After a string of early legislative failures, Kennedy backed off from his reform program. His plans for increased federal aid to education, urban renewal, and government-provided medical care went unrealized. Kennedy's primary achievements at home were the raising of the minimum wage and the 1961 establishment of the **Peace Corps**, a program created to send volunteer teachers, health workers, and engineers to Third World countries.

Despite JFK's image as a dynamic and successful leader, he was unable to push his plans for social welfare reform through Congress, where he faced an opposing coalition of Republicans and southern Democrats.

An important aspect of JFK's domestic record arose near the end of his time as president. Rachel Carson's publication of ***Silent Spring*** in 1962, which exposed the environmental hazards of the pesticide DDT, touched off a broad movement to push environmental measures through Congress. In 1963, this effort spurred the passage of the Clean Air Act to regulate factory and automobile emissions. This act, along with the 1960 Clean Water Act, marked the beginning of a period during which the federal government became increasingly invested in environmental matters.

On November 22, 1963, JFK's presidency abruptly ended when he was assassinated by Lee Harvey Oswald in Dallas, Texas. Kennedy's vice president, **Lyndon B. Johnson**, was sworn in as president aboard Air Force One.

LBJ and the Great Society

Following the death of JFK, Lyndon B. Johnson backed his predecessor's failed program of reform, calling for the passage of tax cuts and civil rights bills as a memorial to the slain president. In 1964, Johnson's skillful backroom bargaining achieved just that: the passage of both a tax cut and the **Civil Rights Act**, which outlawed segregation in public accommodations, gave the government broader powers to enforce desegregation in schools, and established the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to prevent job discrimination. A year later, Johnson pushed through the **Voting Rights Act**, which authorized federal examiners to register qualified voters and to suspend literacy tests in voting districts where fewer than half of the minority population of voting age was registered. The bill's passage resulted in an explosion in black enfranchisement. The number of registered black voters doubled in many areas.

Along with furthering civil rights, Johnson mounted a "war on poverty" by pushing for a wide array of social legislation. In 1964, Congress passed the **Economic Opportunity Act**, which provided young Americans with job training and created a volunteer network devoted to social work and education in poor areas. The 1965 **Medical Care Act** created Medicare and Medicaid, providing senior citizens with medical insurance and welfare recipients with free health care.

These reform programs became a part of what Johnson called the **Great Society**, a vision of the future that included an end to poverty, improvements in healthcare, protection of the environment, and racial equality. The Great Society, however, never fully emerged. The program's failure was due partially to poor design and partially to the enormity of the task LBJ had set for himself. Primarily, though, the Great Society was undermined by a shift in the federal government's focus from domestic to foreign policy in response to the worsening situation in Vietnam.

LBJ's Great Society program sought to end poverty, provide health care to all, increase spending on education, and achieve racial equality. However, as foreign relations became increasingly pressing, the Great Society was left unattained.

The Supreme Court Under Warren

During the 1960s, the Supreme Court, under the liberal chief justice **Earl Warren**, delivered a number of significant decisions that earned the admiration of many and the enmity of many others. In 1962, *Baker v. Carr* granted federal courts jurisdiction over state apportionment systems to assure that all citizens' votes were granted equal weight. The decision in *Engel v. Vitale* that same year prohibited prayer in public schools. The 1963 decision in *Gideon v. Wainwright* obliged the states to provide indigent defendants in felony cases with public defenders. The 1966 decision in *Miranda v. Arizona* required police to make suspects aware of their rights to remain silent and to have an attorney present during questioning, the so-called Miranda rights. In 1967, *Loving v. Virginia* declared laws against

interracial marriage unconstitutional. That same year, **Thurgood Marshall** was appointed to the Supreme Court, making him the first African American to receive such an honor.

Civil Rights in a Turbulent Decade

During the 1960s, the civil rights movement built upon its achievements of the previous decade. Activists worked to counter discrimination, segregation, inequality of opportunity, and social problems particular to blacks.

Civil Rights in the Kennedy Years

JFK came to office wary of becoming entangled in the complex issue of civil rights. He did not stay removed for long, however. In the spring of 1961, the Congress of Racial Equality held a **freedom ride** through the Deep South to protest illegal segregation in interstate transportation. After whites in Alabama assaulted the freedom riders, Kennedy sent federal marshals to protect them. In the fall of 1962, Kennedy again sent federal marshals to the South to enforce civil rights, when students and angry white citizens attempted to prevent a black man, James Meredith, from attending the University of Mississippi.

In 1963, **Martin Luther King Jr.** led a series of peaceful demonstrations in Alabama that police nonetheless attacked. These attacks, along with other high-profile abuses of civil rights, prompted Kennedy to propose a comprehensive civil rights bill to Congress. In support of this legislation, a quarter of a million Americans gathered in Washington, D.C., in August 1963. It was at this “March on Washington” that King gave his famous “I have a dream” speech, outlining an idealistic view of what America could be. Despite this demonstration and King’s eloquence, Republicans in Congress blocked the civil rights bill.

In support of JFK’s civil rights bill, some 250,000 Americans converged on Washington, D.C., in August 1963, where they listened to Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I have a dream” speech.

Civil Rights Under Johnson

Civil rights advocates had cause for optimism during Lyndon B. Johnson’s early years as president, since Johnson’s Great Society program aimed to achieve racial equality. In 1964, Johnson pushed the Civil Rights Act through Congress, which outlawed discrimination in public facilities. Civil rights activists, however, demanded more—in particular, an end to black disenfranchisement. In 1965, Martin Luther King Jr. and the **Southern Christian Leadership Conference** organized a mass protest against black disenfranchisement. The demonstration, which took place in Birmingham, Alabama, elicited a violent police reaction. The police attacks were caught on television and cemented national sympathies behind the civil rights movement. This national response culminated in the Voting Rights Act, signed in August 1965, which protected and encouraged black enfranchisement. By 1968, one million blacks were registered in the Deep South, and many black representatives had been elected to office.

The Voting Rights Act was a major achievement of the civil rights movement in the 1960s. It authorized the federal government to institute measures designed to encourage black enfranchisement.

The Black Power Movement

Martin Luther King Jr. and his nonviolent strategies of resistance were supported by the majority of civil rights activists, both black and white. But not all supporters of the rights of blacks in the United States believed in nonviolence. The **Black Power** movement expressed the outrage felt by many African Americans. The movement began with the teachings of **Malcolm X**, who became a prominent spokesman for black rights after joining the Nation of Islam. Rejecting the goal of integration, Malcolm X taught American blacks that they should be proud of their blackness and remain separate from white society. Instead of nonviolence, he favored armed self-defense. In 1965, amid signs that he might be softening his stance and just after publicly breaking from the Nation of Islam, Malcolm X was assassinated. Nonetheless, he remained a powerful voice among African Americans, his influence preserved through his teachings and his autobiography, published the year of his death.

Malcolm X preached violent resistance and separation from white society to African Americans until his death in 1965.

After Malcolm X's death, the mantle of Black Power was carried on by **Stokely Carmichael**, the leader of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee who came to reject nonviolence in favor of violent resistance. In 1966, Carmichael's influence led to the founding of the **Black Panthers** by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale. The Panthers carried firearms and at times engaged in violent confrontations with police.

The slogan "Black Power," however, did not apply exclusively to radical groups such as the Black Panthers; it also applied to more moderate groups who worked to reaffirm black culture as distinct from white culture and equally valuable. Off-shoots of the Black Power movement included "Native American Power" and "Chicano Power," movements that sought to assert the value of ethnic heritage and to counter oppression from mainstream white society.

Assassination

On April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King Jr., the most prominent black leader of his era, was shot and killed in Memphis, Tennessee, by white racist James Earl Ray. Blacks responded by taking to the streets in anger in more than 100 U.S. cities, causing enormous property damage and social chaos. The riots led to 46 deaths, over 3,000 injuries, and 27,000 arrests. The effect of King's death on the civil rights movement and on America cannot be measured.

The Cold War Continues

During Kennedy's and Johnson's presidencies, tensions remained high with the USSR. These tensions peaked most notably in Berlin, Cuba, and Vietnam.

The Berlin Wall

In 1961, the USSR completed construction of the **Berlin Wall**, which physically separated East and West Berlin and was patrolled by East German guards. The wall was meant to prevent the exodus of talented and intelligent East Germans to West Germany, but it also came to symbolize the division of the entire world into two carefully guarded Cold War spheres.

The Cold War in Cuba

After **Fidel Castro** and the Cuban communists overthrew the Cuban government in 1959, the island nation became a subject of much anxiety to the U.S., since it represented an extension of the Soviet sphere of influence close to American territory. In 1961, JFK authorized a plan, drawn up by the Eisenhower administration, to send 1,500 Cuban exiles, trained and armed by the U.S., back to Cuba to spark an insurrection. The **Bay of Pigs Invasion**, as this operation was known, took place in April 1961, and resulted in an embarrassing defeat for the returning exiles and the United States.

The focus of the Cold War turned toward Cuba once again in 1962, when Americans discovered Soviet missile bases under construction in Cuba. In what became known as the **Cuban Missile Crisis**, JFK vowed to quarantine Cuba with a naval blockade to prevent the shipment of more missiles and to dismantle the existing missile bases by force if the USSR did not do so. Some 250,000 troops gathered in Florida to prepare to invade Cuba, and U.S. naval forces readied themselves to intercept Russian freighters en route. U.S.-USSR relations became tenser than ever. Nuclear war seemed very possible: U.S. B-52s carrying nuclear weapons remained constantly airborne, ready to strike. After several days, Soviet Premier Khrushchev recalled the Russian freighters and sent Kennedy a message that he would dismantle the Cuban missiles in exchange for a U.S. promise never to invade Cuba. Kennedy accepted the compromise. The Cuban Missile Crisis has been viewed as the defining moment of JFK's presidency.

The discovery of Soviet missile sites in Cuba in 1962 led to a standoff between the U.S. and the USSR. The Cuban Missile Crisis brought the world's two superpowers closer to nuclear war than any other Cold War episode.

In July 1963, the U.S. and USSR signed the **Limited Test-Ban Treaty**, which prohibited undersea and atmospheric testing of nuclear weaponry. This effort at easing tensions would later be known as **détente**.

Vietnam and the Vietnam War

Vietnam, divided at the seventeenth parallel between communist North Vietnam and U.S.-dominated

South Vietnam, concerned Kennedy from the very beginning of his presidency. He believed in Eisenhower's "**domino theory**," which held that when one nation fell under Soviet domination, others in the region would soon follow. In efforts to stave off communist advances, Kennedy boosted the number of U.S. forces in South Vietnam to 16,000 by 1963. These forces aimed to protect the South Vietnamese from the pro-communist National Liberation Front, called the **Vietcong**.

Less than a month later, JFK was assassinated and Lyndon Johnson took over the presidency and the oversight of American operations in Vietnam. In August 1964, two American destroyers allegedly clashed with North Vietnamese patrol boats in the Gulf of Tonkin, off North Vietnam. Johnson announced that Americans had been attacked without cause and ordered air strikes. Congress passed the **Gulf of Tonkin Resolution** in August 1964, which authorized the escalation of American troops' involvement in Vietnam. Nearly equivalent to a declaration of war, this resolution allowed Johnson to act as he saw fit in Vietnam. In 1965, Johnson ordered "Operation Rolling Thunder," which launched continuous bombing of North Vietnam. This plan, however, failed to force North Vietnam to negotiate, and did not stop the flow of soldiers and supplies to communist forces in the South.

Since bombing was ineffective, Johnson decided in March 1965 to commit ground forces to the struggle. By the end of 1967, nearly 500,000 U.S. troops were stationed in Vietnam. The enemy these soldiers faced—the North Vietnamese Army and the Vietcong—used guerrilla tactics and were well supplied, well reinforced, and determined to fight until U.S. forces left Vietnam.

The haphazard guerrilla warfare provided little measurable indication of failure or success, and the American public gauged victories from casualty rates. In January 1968, the North Vietnamese Army and the Vietcong launched a massive offensive, known as the **Tet Offensive**. Though American troops repelled the offensive after about a month of fighting, many thousands of Americans were killed, and the enemy managed to breach many areas thought to be secure. The American public began to believe that victory in Vietnam was impossible. The growing antiwar movement gained immense strength and support, and Johnson's approval ratings plummeted. During the 1968 presidential campaign, Johnson halted the sustained bombing of North Vietnam and announced that he would not seek reelection. The increasingly unpopular war would be placed in the hands of his successor.

The Tet Offensive was a major turning point in the Vietnam War. Though a tactical defeat for the pro-communist forces, thousands of American deaths and the scope of the offensive convinced many Americans of the impossibility of victory.

Protesting the Vietnam War

Opposition to the Vietnam War began on college campuses around the nation. In 1965, the first "teach-in" was held at the University of Michigan to discuss U.S. actions. In 1966, after a wave of military draft calls, mass protests erupted on college campuses. Many clergy, intellectuals, politicians, and others joined students in voicing opposition to the war. These critics denounced American involvement in an essentially Vietnamese war, claiming there was no way to win without great cost and loss of life, and noted that the war was fought predominantly by poor Americans. Television coverage of the war further intensified antiwar sentiments, as Americans saw firsthand the brutal devastation involved.

Although a majority of Americans still supported the war, those who opposed it did so fervently, and the nation polarized along the two sides. At times, violence erupted, as when antiwar protesters clashed with police outside the Democratic National Convention in 1968.

The Vietnam War sharply divided the American people into antagonistic pro-war and antiwar camps. Student movements, criticism from respected American luminaries, and televised atrocities all contributed to antiwar sentiments.

Further Social Activism in the 1960s

Encouraged by the success of the antiwar and civil rights movements during the 1960s, many groups launched their own movements to redress perceived wrongs in American government and society.

The Youth Movement

Many reform movements during the 1960s sprang from the college-age population. College attendance soared during the decade, and college campuses became centers for protest movements. While it must be noted that the majority of college students did not engage in such protests, the minority that did was both significant and vocal. Leading the youth movement was the **Students for a Democratic**

Society (SDS), a group founded in 1962. The SDS aimed to create a “New Left” in the U.S. in order to mobilize support for leftist goals throughout the nation. Students sat-in, marched, and rallied to end mandatory ROTC programs, halt military research, address racism, and, most prominently, to express their disgust with the Vietnam War. The antiwar cause inspired huge rallies, draft-card burning, and harassment of anyone connected to the military.

Notable student protests included a mass demonstration at Columbia University in the spring of 1968, which resulted in a temporary shutdown of the school, and the fall 1969 **March Against Death**, in which about 300,000 people marched in a long, circling path through Washington, D.C., for 40 hours straight, each holding a candle and the name of a soldier killed or a village destroyed in Vietnam.

The youth movement began to fade following a series of violent crackdowns on protesters. In the most infamous, on May 4, 1970, students at Kent State University in Ohio who were protesting **Richard Nixon**’s expansion of the Vietnam War into Cambodia were met by armed National Guardsmen and inundated with tear gas. Then a panicking troop of guardsmen fired into the crowd, killing four and wounding nine; two of the dead had not even been a part of the demonstration. Events like this sapped the student movement of its zeal, and college campuses grew steadily quieter.

Women’s Liberation

The feminist movement, which had grown somewhat dormant in the 1950s, reawakened in the U.S. during the 1960s. The most prominent symbol of this resurgence was the 1963 publication of Betty Friedan’s *The Feminine Mystique*, which urged women to break free from the domestic role and seek “something more.” JFK created the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women, which issued a report in 1963 detailing the inequalities between men and women in the American workforce. The **Civil Rights Act** of 1964 prohibited sexual as well as racial discrimination in hiring practices. The **National Organization for Women** (NOW) formed in 1966 to lobby Congress, file lawsuits, and publicize the feminist cause. By 1970, more than 40 percent of all women worked outside the home.

Spurred on by the publication of Betty Friedan’s The Feminist Mystique, the feminist movement reawakened in the 1960s. Organizations like NOW pushed for change at the national level to promote equality.

Many women involved in the liberation movement had gained experience in the antiwar or civil rights movements and dedicated the same tactics to the feminist cause. They encouraged women to meet in small groups to discuss their problems and met in larger groups to burn bras and beauty items seen as demeaning. They founded health centers geared toward women and advocated abortion education. In 1970, the **Women’s Strike for Equality** saw tens of thousands of women nationwide hold demonstrations to demand the right to equal employment and legal abortions. Pro-choice activists gained a major success in 1973, when the Supreme Court legalized abortion in the landmark decision **Roe v. Wade**.

Richard Nixon in Office

Richard Nixon was elected president in 1968. His conservatism appealed to a nation weary from a tumultuous decade of social activism and political reform. Nixon opposed racial integration, denounced the liberal Supreme Court, and promised a return to order, stability, and decency in America. In office, he scaled back progressive reforms, eventually pulled U.S. troops out of Vietnam, and focused on **détente** between the U.S. and its Cold War enemies. Despite all these activities, Nixon is best remembered for the **Watergate** scandal that ended his presidency.

In the election of 1968, Nixon portrayed himself as the representative of the “**silent majority**,” a label he used to designate American citizens who had grown tired of progressive reforms, student protests, and racial integration of schools. However, to the Republicans’ dismay, Democrats in Congress blocked many of Nixon’s conservative efforts and succeeded in pushing through progressive reforms, including bills to extend social welfare programs and protect the environment. One of the most telling signs that the 1960s’ spirit of liberalism and youth activism still held strong was the Woodstock Festival, a three-day music festival attended by thousands of young liberal Americans in August 1969.

Although many of Nixon’s conservative initiatives failed in Congress, including his attempt to hold off the integration of Mississippi schools and his opposition to the extension of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, his efforts did succeed in winning the support of the white South. This support proved key to Nixon’s crushing defeat of ultra-liberal Democrat George McGovern in the election of 1972.

Vietnamization of the Vietnam War and Détente

The Vietnam War was perhaps the most pressing issue Nixon faced upon coming to office. The war, now widely opposed by the American public, was sapping the nation of military strength and economic resources. Nixon and his top adviser on foreign affairs, National Security Adviser and later Secretary of State, **Henry Kissinger**, devised three main strategies to “Vietnamize” (or “de-Americanize”) the Vietnam War. First, he gradually pulled American ground troops out of Vietnam, reducing the U.S. forces from about 500,000 in 1968 to about 30,000 in 1972. As a corollary to these efforts, he announced the **Nixon Doctrine**, which pledged a change in the U.S. role in the Third World from military protector to helpful partner. His second tactic to Vietnamize the war was to send Kissinger to North Vietnam to negotiate a treaty. Third, he authorized a massive bombing campaign in March 1969, which targeted North Vietnamese supply routes throughout Cambodia and Laos. (The Kent State protests covered in the last chapter were in response to the bombing in Cambodia.)

The **Paris Accords**, signed in January 1973, finally settled the terms of U.S. withdrawal, ending the war between the U.S. and North Vietnam but leaving the conflict between North and South Vietnam unresolved. The last American troops left South Vietnam in March 1973. By the time U.S. involvement ended, 58,000 Americans had died, 300,000 had been wounded, and conditions in Vietnam were as unstable and war-torn as ever. The war in Vietnam continued until 1975, when North Vietnam won control of the entire country.

U.S. participation in the Vietnam War effectively ended in January 1973 with the signing of the Paris Accords.

The gradual reduction of U.S. troops in Vietnam was an integral part of Nixon’s plan to achieve **détente**, an easing of tensions between the U.S. and its Cold War enemies. In April 1971, the communist People’s Republic of China hosted the U.S. table-tennis team, and in February 1972 Nixon visited China for a highly publicized tour and meetings with **Mao Zedong**, China’s leader. Though official diplomatic relations between the two nations were not established until 1979, this visit resulted in greatly improved communication between the two nations.

In May 1972, Nixon went to Moscow, where he signed the first **Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty** (SALT I). SALT I limited each of the superpowers to 200 antiballistic missiles and set quotas for intercontinental and submarine missiles. Though largely symbolic, the agreement sparked hope for cooperation between the two powers.

Watergate

Nixon’s presidency ended with the **Watergate** scandal. During the 1972 presidential campaign, Nixon created the Committee to Re-elect the President (CREEP). In June 1972, burglars—later found to be employed by CREEP—were caught breaking into Democratic National Committee headquarters in the Watergate office complex in Washington, D.C., to plant bugs. A massive cover-up effort began, with Nixon vowing that no one in his administration was involved in the break-in. Attempts to destroy paperwork and bribe key individuals were gradually exposed, most prominently in a series of articles in the *Washington Post*. Reporters Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward unmasked the Nixon administration’s corruption and attempted cover-up, having received much of their information from an unnamed informant known as **Deep Throat**. Top officials from Nixon’s administration resigned, including Vice President Spiro Agnew.

In July 1974, the House Judiciary Committee adopted an article of impeachment charging Nixon with obstructing justice. In August, Nixon turned over tapes of conversations proving his involvement in the cover-up and resigned as president before impeachment proceedings began. **Gerald Ford** assumed the presidency (Ford had been appointed vice president following Agnew’s resignation). Coming on the heels of the Vietnam War, the Watergate scandal inflamed the American public’s mistrust of the national government.

Facing impeachment because of his involvement in the Watergate scandal cover-up, Nixon resigned as president on August 9, 1974.

Gerald Ford as President

Gerald Ford served as little more than a caretaker in the White House until the election of 1976. Though he received bad press after pardoning Nixon in September 1974, Ford’s presidency was

unblemished by scandal. However, economic crisis tarnished his time in office.

Ford proved more conservative than Nixon in his domestic politics. He vetoed measures aimed at social welfare, environmental protection, and civil rights. A Democratic Congress overrode most of these vetoes. Ford's woes increased with the Arab **oil embargo**, in effect from October 1973 to March 1974, which devastated the U.S. economy. Rising oil prices sparked enormous inflation, which hit 12 percent in 1974. In October of that year, Ford initiated the "Whip Inflation Now" program (WIN), but instead of reversing inflation and stabilizing the economy, his efforts threw the economy into a recession, with unemployment reaching 11 percent in 1975.

In 1975, Ford and Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev, along with the leaders of thirty-one other states, signed the **Helsinki Accords**, which solidified European boundaries and promised to respect human rights and the freedom to travel.

Jimmy Carter: Washington Outsider in the White House

Jimmy Carter, a Democrat, was elected president in a narrow victory over Gerald Ford in 1976. A former governor of Georgia, Carter presented himself as a political outsider, uncorrupted by Washington. His presidency was favorably marked by a commitment to morality, but scarred by economic crisis, incomplete domestic programs, and some foreign policy crises.

Carter successfully supported a tax cut and the creation of a public works program, which helped reduce unemployment to 5 percent by late 1978. However, Carter failed to push many of his other economic programs through Congress. By the end of Carter's term, unemployment was again over 7 percent, and inflation hovered around 12 percent.

In efforts to promote conservation and responsible energy use, Carter created the Department of Energy in 1977, proposed taxes on fossil-fuel use, and supported research on alternative energy sources. The most substantive result of these actions was a weak energy bill passed in 1978. The following year, the economy was further hurt by the decade's second energy shortage, provoked by OPEC's (the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) hike in oil prices.

Foreign Affairs: A Mixed Record

Carter is best known for his foreign relations dealings. He supported human rights around the world, working to unveil and halt abuses. Carter also worked to improve relations with nations previously hostile toward the U.S. In 1977, he negotiated a treaty with Panama to transfer the Panama Canal back to the Panamanians in 1999, and officially recognized the People's Republic of China in 1979.

In June 1979, Carter and Leonid Brezhnev signed SALT II (Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty), but the Senate was hesitant to ratify the treaty. Hopes for ratification were dashed completely in January 1980 when Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan. Carter reacted with a series of anti-Soviet measures, including a boycott of the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow. Growing increasingly hostile toward the USSR, Carter effectively destroyed détente.

Carter's biggest success and biggest challenge in foreign affairs arose from the Middle East. In September 1978, Carter invited Israel's leader, Menachem Begin, and Egypt's leader, Anwar el-Sadat, to Camp David, where they worked out a draft of a treaty between the two warring countries. The **Camp David Accords** were signed by the two leaders at the White House in March 1979, but quickly fell apart when Sadat was assassinated by Islamic fundamentalists in 1981.

Adding to this tension, in January 1979 the Shah of Iran, a U.S. ally, fled his country to escape a revolution. In November 1979, when Carter admitted the shah to the U.S., Iranian students stormed the U.S. embassy in Tehran, taking more than fifty Americans hostage. A risky rescue effort in April 1980 failed, and the crisis continued through the end of Carter's presidency. Carter's inability to resolve the Iran hostage crisis was a major blemish on his presidency.

Conservatism Resurgent: Ronald Reagan and the 1980s

Ronald Reagan, a Republican, won the election of 1980 by promising to end the "tax and spend" policies of his liberal predecessors and to revive the patriotism needed to win the Cold War. These two goals would dominate his presidency.

Reaganomics

Ronald Reagan's economic program, dubbed **Reaganomics**, was founded on the belief that a capitalist system free from taxation and government involvement would be most productive, and that the prosperity of a rich upper class would "trickle down" to the poor. He pushed a three-year, 25 percent tax cut through Congress in 1981, as well as a \$40 billion cut in federal spending on school lunches, student loans, and public transportation, among other services.

To curb inflation, the Federal Reserve Board hiked interest rates in 1981, plunging the country into a severe recession. Unemployment soared to 10 percent, and because of Reagan's cut in social spending the impoverished found themselves without social programs. Along with unemployment, trade and federal deficits skyrocketed (the federal deficit rose because the government offset its cuts in social spending with huge increases in military spending). Recession, however, gave way to a rebound in early 1983, when inflation stabilized and consumers began to spend in great amounts.

From 1983 to 1987, the economy boomed, spurred by speculation in the stock market. The bubble burst, however, on October 19, 1987, when 20 percent of the stock market's value was lost, the largest single-day decline in history. The crash exposed the economic problems concealed by the four boom years: a high trade deficit and the widening gap between rich and poor. These problems were still unresolved when the economy began to recover in 1988.

The "Evil Empire"

Reagan began issuing anti-Soviet statements soon after coming to the White House, referring to the USSR as the "evil empire." His administration's central Cold War strategy was military buildup. The Pentagon's budget nearly doubled during Reagan's first term in office, paralleling an increase in nuclear weapons and alarming the nation about a seeming increase in the likelihood of nuclear war. In March 1983, responding to vast domestic protest of nuclear weapons proliferation, Reagan proposed an antiballistic missile defense system known as the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), or "Star Wars." Though "Star Wars" never came close to completion, because technology lagged behind the program's defensive aims, some historians argue that the massive arms buildup proved to be the ultimate Cold War defense system by forcing the USSR to spend itself into demise in the late 1980s. Other historians counter that internal elements had more to do with the Soviet Union's eventual collapse.

The Reagan administration's enmity for the Soviets and all Soviet allies led it into a scandal known as the **Iran-Contra affair**. In 1982, the CIA organized a force of 10,000 men in Nicaragua, who called themselves "Contras," to fight against the Sandinista regime, which had military ties to the Soviet Union and Cuba. Reagan hoped to establish a democratic government in Nicaragua friendly to the United States, but Congress voted to ban aid to the Contras. The administration, however, maintained secret support, organized from within the White House by **Oliver North**, a member of the National Security Council. A series of 1987 investigations uncovered the government's machinations: the U.S. had been selling arms to the anti-American government in Iran and using profits from these sales to secretly finance the Contras in Nicaragua. Although there was no evidence that Reagan himself had known of the plan, the Iran-Contra scandal rekindled the American public's distrust of the U.S. government.

In 1987, investigations revealed that the Reagan administration had been selling arms to anti-American forces in Iran and using the profits to finance the Contras in Nicaragua, an act specifically prohibited by Congress

The Bush Administration

George Bush, Reagan's vice president, won the presidency in 1988. Bush faced a crumbling Soviet Union, extreme tension in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf, and a huge budget deficit. In addition, a recession began in 1990 and lasted until 1992, sapping tax income for the government and leading to a cut in social programs.

The End of the Cold War

Under **Mikhail Gorbachev**, the Soviet leader who assumed power in 1985, the USSR became a less aggressive world power and more amenable to reform. On November 9, 1989, the **Berlin Wall** was torn down amid much euphoria, signifying the end of the Cold War. In August 1991, Bush and Gorbachev agreed to reduce their nuclear arsenals by one quarter. With the USSR tottering on the

brink of economic collapse, hard-line Communists attempted to oust Mikhail Gorbachev to prevent the collapse of the Soviet Union. Their efforts, however, were blocked by **Boris Yeltsin**, the president of the new Russian federation, who led the drive to dissolve the USSR. Yeltsin and the leaders of the other Soviet republics soon declared an end to the USSR, forcing Gorbachev to resign.

In November 1989, the Berlin Wall was torn down, symbolizing an end to the Cold War.

After the fall of the USSR, U.S. foreign relations radically transformed around the globe as the Bush administration extended economic support to the former Soviet republics and revoked its support from governments favored only for their opposition to leftist forces. China remained staunchly communist, however, and relations with China soured in 1989 when the Chinese army violently crushed a pro-democracy protest in **Tiananmen Square**.

The Gulf War

Led by **Saddam Hussein**, Iraq invaded its tiny neighbor, Kuwait, in August 1990. President Bush rallied the U.S. Congress and people, as well as the United Nations, in support of a counterattack to force the Iraqis out. In January 1991, the **Gulf War** began with an air assault on Iraqi troops, supply lines, and communications bases in Baghdad. The military campaign, led by Army General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, was called "Operation Desert Storm." The American people watched the attacks on TV in carefully edited clips. In late February, U.S. ground troops began an attack on Kuwait City, driving out the Iraqis stationed there in under a week. Victory was achieved with only 148 American deaths. More than 100,000 Iraqis, military and civilian, died.

The Environment

One important area of George Bush's domestic policy was the environment. In March 1989, the *Exxon Valdez* oil tanker ran aground, spilling over 10 million gallons of crude oil into the waters of Alaska's Prince William Sound. The spill galvanized environmentalists and provoked a worldwide initiative to clean up the environment. Bush cooperated with the Democratic Congress to pass the Clean Air Act in 1990. At other times, though, the Bush administration clashed with environmentalists, advocating fossil-fuel extraction in Alaska, avoiding international environmental treaties, and even ridiculing environmentalists.

The 1990s and President Clinton

Bill Clinton won the presidency in 1992 in a three-way campaign with Bush and **Ross Perot**, who ran on the Independent ticket. Clinton's presidency included some notable successes, despite Congressional gridlock and scandals calling his morality into question.

Legislative Struggles

Bill Clinton struggled to push his domestic reform package through an antagonistic Congress, which was controlled by conservatives after the midterm elections of 1994. His most notable failure came in the realm of healthcare, when Congress blocked his efforts to create a national healthcare system. Clinton did manage to push an anti-crime bill and a welfare reform bill through Congress, but both were modified from his proposals and represented exceptions to the trend of his administration's legislative defeats. Political divisiveness over the budget peaked in late 1995, when the Republican Congress twice shut down the government because it could not agree on a budget. The shutdown hurt the Republicans' public image, however, and boosted Clinton's. In this newly supportive atmosphere, Clinton was able to revise the welfare system and increase the minimum wage.

Economic and Foreign Policy

Perhaps the most important achievements of Bill Clinton's presidency were the balancing of the federal budget and a return to economic prosperity. Clinton's economic policies at home were mirrored by efforts to strengthen the U.S. economy through integration in the global economy. In November 1993, the House passed the **North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)**, eliminating most trade barriers with Mexico and Canada. During Clinton's eight years in office, the United States experienced the most powerful economic expansion in the history of the United States.

Impeachment

Clinton was harangued throughout his first campaign for president and his time in office by accusations and rumors of sexual misconduct. The accusations came to a head in August 1998, when

Clinton testified in front of a grand jury that he had not engaged in inappropriate sexual relations with Monica Lewinsky, a White House intern. Later, he was forced to admit that he had. In December 1998, the House of Representatives approved articles of impeachment for perjury and obstruction of justice. Clinton became only the second president to be impeached, the first being Andrew Johnson in 1868. In February 1999, the Senate defeated both articles of impeachment. Clinton remained in office, but the scandal overshadowed the rest of his presidency. Many pundits believe that Clinton's scandals helped pave the way for the victory of Republican George W. Bush in the heavily disputed 2000 presidential election.