

11 Society and Politics in the “Age of the Common Man,” 1819–1832

How do we account for an American political vocabulary that evokes a rough-hewn, woodsman quality? Why do candidates hit the campaign *trail* and give *stump* speeches? Why do they support their party’s platform with its *planks* (positions on the issues), and then, when elected, vote for *pork-barrel* projects that benefit their constituents at home?

Those terms had their origins in the third decade of the nineteenth century, when western settlers boasted of their rural roots and attacked what they considered centralized, eastern-based institutions of wealth and privilege. Representative of this boisterous political age was Tennessee politician David Crockett. As a candidate for office, Crockett was an unrivaled campaigner. He ran successfully for several offices, including local justice of the peace in 1818, state legislator in 1821 and 1823, and U.S. congressman in 1837, 1829, and 1833. The plainspoken Crockett knew how to play to a crowd and rattle a rival. He bragged about his skill as a bear hunter and ridiculed the fancy dress of his opponents. He condemned closed-door political caucuses (small groups of party insiders who hand-picked candidates) and praised grassroots democracy.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

11.1



How did western expansion affect the nation’s politics and economy in the 1820s? p. 11–3

11.2



What were President Andrew Jackson’s controversial views on the role of the federal government and the role of the Chief Executive? p. 11–12

11.3



How did the work of Indians, free and enslaved African Americans, and women change during the “Age of the Common Man”? p. 11–16

11.4



In what ways did Americans maintain a sense of community in the face of unprecedented migration and population growth? p. 11–22



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Learn about some key topics related to this chapter with the *MyHistoryLab Video Series: Key Topics in U. S History*

1

Expanding Democracy, 1819–1832 This video introduces the primary themes of the Age of Andrew Jackson, focusing especially on the topic of expanding democracy. Jackson's legacy still excites debate, especially his handling of such crucial issues as Indian Removal and the war against the National Bank.



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Andrew Jackson's Rise to Power This video discusses the path taken by Andrew Jackson from his early childhood to winning the presidency of the United States. Jackson represented the popular image of "everyman" to his contemporaries, though there is much more to the real Jackson than just the popular image.

2

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3

The Indian Removal Act This video explores Andrew Jackson's controversial order to remove Native American tribes from East of the Mississippi River to the Oklahoma Territory. An action that Jackson would have characterized as for the good of the Cherokee and which met with little popular resistance at the time, Indian Removal has become one of the most controversial aspects of the Jackson legacy.



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The "Monster Bank" This video expands the examination of Andrew Jackson by explaining the nature of his dislike for the Bank of the United States, his efforts to destroy the bank, and the outcomes of that struggle. The Bank War remains one of the defining elements of Jackson's tenure in office and his reputation as a representative of the interests of the common man.

4

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Crockett claimed he could out-shoot, out-drink, and out-debate anyone who opposed him. If his opponent lied about him, why, then he would lie about himself: "Yes, fellow citizens, I can run faster, walk longer, leap higher, speak better, and tell more and bigger lies than my competitor, and all his friends, any day of his life." Crockett's blend of political theater and folksy backwoods banter earned him the allegiance of voters like him—men who, though having little formal education, understood the challenges of carving a homestead out of the dense thickets of Tennessee.

During the 1820s, European American settlers in the trans-Appalachian West transformed the style and substance of American politics. In 1790, 100,000 Americans (not including Indians) lived west of the Appalachians; half a century later that number had increased to 7 million, or about 4 out of 10 Americans. In some respects "the common man" gained more influence and opportunity—through the move toward universal manhood suffrage (that is, removing restrictions on the right to vote) and a broad system of tax-supported public schools, for example. At the same time, African Americans found their access to these institutions closed, sometimes through violent means.

David Crockett preferred the nickname "Davy." He and other western voters believed that, in their ability to run and defend the country, they were the equals of any Easterner, no matter how well-born, well-educated, or wealthy. Yet democracy had its limits during this period. While voter participation in elections soared, from 25 percent of eligible voters in 1824 to 50 percent in 1828, even most free people could not vote, including Native Americans, women, and people of color.



John Gadsby Chapman painted this portrait of Davy Crockett in his artist's studio. How does Chapman convey Crockett's political ideas and his role in American politics in the 1820s and 1830s? What do the two dogs signify? Consider Crockett's nickname Davy in relation to the names of other early American political leaders. Can you think of other leaders (then or since) who chose to retain their nicknames, even when they ascended to the presidency?

Further complicating this age was the rise of distinct social classes, a class system that seemed to mock the idea of equality. Together, these tensions shaped American society and politics in the third decade of the nineteenth century.

The Politics Behind Western Expansion

11.1

How did western expansion affect the nation's politics and economy in the 1820s?

As the United States gained new territory through negotiation and conquest and people moved west, the nation felt the impact. President Monroe warned Europeans not to intervene any longer in the Western hemisphere. Americans



MAP 11.1 THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE Missouri applied for statehood in 1819, threatening the balance between 11 free states and 11 slave states. According to a compromise hammered out in Congress, Missouri was admitted as a slave state, and Maine, formerly part of Massachusetts, was admitted as a free state. Slavery was banned above the 36°30' parallel.

settling west of the Appalachian mountains rejoiced with the 1828 election of Andrew Jackson as president; here, they claimed, was man who would battle eastern financiers and at the same time support white settlers' claims to Indian lands in the West. Jackson held out promise that ordinary people would have a political voice and access to expanding economic opportunities.

However, once in the West, settlers faced the same kinds of conflicts that increasingly preoccupied Easterners, especially those between masters and slaves and debtors and creditors. The West, then, duplicated fundamental kinds of inequality found in the East; moreover, with the growth of western land speculation and the institution of slavery, such inequality spread and expanded. In the process, issues related to racial and class differences in the West became matters of national and not just regional concern. Congressional debates over whether Missouri should be admitted to the Union as a slave state or as a free state sent shock waves throughout the country. Of the political conflict over the fate of slavery in the territories, the elderly Thomas Jefferson wrote, "This momentous question, like a firebell in the night, awakened and filled me with terror. I considered it at once as the death knell of the Union."

The Missouri Compromise

In 1819, the United States consisted of twenty-two states. Slavery was legal in half of them. In February of that year the House of Representatives considered a bill to allow the people of Missouri Territory to write a constitution and form a government. These



MAP 11.2 PRINCIPAL CANALS BUILT BY 1860 Many canals were expensive ventures and, in some cases, engineering nightmares. The Erie Canal had a competitive advantage because it snaked through the Mohawk Valley, the only major level pass through the mountain chain that stretched from Canada to Georgia. In contrast, the Pennsylvania Main Line Canal, which ran from Harrisburg to Pittsburgh, used a combination of inclined planes and steam engines in ten separate locations to haul boats up and down the Allegheny Mountains.

measures were steps necessary to the territory becoming a state. A representative from New York, James Tallmadge, offered an amendment (which would bear his name) to forbid the importation of slaves into the new state, and to free all slaves who had been born there when they reached the age of twenty-five. The Senate refused to agree, and the bill died. The following January, the House considered a similar bill, this one with an amendment proposed by another New York representative, John W. Taylor, that would admit Missouri as a slave state. This bill passed.

In the Senate, Rufus King of New York claimed that Congress had the ultimate authority to set laws governing slavery. However, his colleague William Pinckney of Maryland retorted that new states possessed the same rights as the original thirteen; that is, they could choose whether to allow slavery. Maine's application for admission to the Union suggested a way out of the impasse. Speaker of the House of Representatives Henry Clay of Kentucky successfully proposed a plan. Missouri would join the Union as a slave state at the same time that Maine, originally part of Massachusetts, would become the twenty-fourth state and be designated a free one. In the future, slavery would be prohibited from all Louisiana Purchase lands north of latitude 36°30', an area that included all territory north of present-day Missouri and Kansas. The House and Senate finally approved the compromise, which maintained the balance between the number of slave and free states.

The day Congress sealed the compromise, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams of Massachusetts walked home from the Capitol with Senator John C. Calhoun of South Carolina. The two men engaged in a muted but intense debate over slavery. Calhoun claimed that the institution "was the best guarantee to equality among the whites." Slavery, he asserted, demonstrated that all white men were equal to one another and superior to all blacks. Unnerved by Calhoun's comments, Adams concluded that the debate over Missouri had "betrayed the secret of [Southerners'] souls." By reserving

Explore the Missouri Compromise on MyHistoryLab

WHY DID CONGRESS ADOPT THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE?

In 1787, disagreements between Northern and Southern delegates over the role of slavery in the new American Republic had almost derailed the framing of a new Constitution. As U.S. settlement expanded westward at the turn of the nineteenth century and new states began to join the Union, this regional divide over slavery only deepened. Many Northerners hoped to see the institution gradually eliminated in the U.S. Meanwhile, Southerners worried that eliminating slavery would destroy their economy. Because the North's larger population gave it an advantage in the House of Representatives, Southern slave states depended on their equal representation in the Senate to block any attempts at abolition. Under such political conditions, anything that tipped the balance of power in the Senate threatened to tear the nation apart. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 maintained this balance by admitting the slave state



Disappointed with the failures of Reconstruction and fearful of the violence that surrounded them, southern blacks migrated to Kansas in the 1870s and 1880s. Comparing their trek to the biblical story of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt, they became known as Exodusters.

SOURCE: Accessed at <http://www.whitehouse.gov>

of Missouri to the Union alongside the free state of Maine. The Compromise also attempted to prevent future conflict by drawing a line at 36°30' N latitude; prohibiting slavery north of line former unorganized Louisiana Territory, but permitting the admission of new slave states to the line's south.

BALANCE OF FREE AND SLAVE STATES PRIOR TO THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE OF 1820

	Free States	Slave States
Number of States in U.S.	11	11
U.S. Representatives	105	81
U.S. Senators	22	22

KEY QUESTIONS

Use **MyHistoryLab Explorer** to answer these questions:



Cause ▶▶▶ *What political factors triggered the Missouri Compromise?*

Map the regional spread and decline of slavery in the U.S. from 1790-1830.

Consequence ▶▶▶ *Why was the Missouri Compromise viewed as only a temporary solution?*

Map the spread of non-Indian settlement in the U.S. from 1790-1830.

Analysis ▶▶▶ *Why would slavery continue to be a divisive political issue in the United States?*

Map the economic and social differences that separated the North from South in 1820.

backbreaking toil for blacks, wealthy planters fancied themselves aristocratic lords of the manor. Adams confided in his diary that night, “They look down upon the simplicity of a Yankee’s manners, because he has no habits of overbearing like theirs and cannot treat negroes like dogs.” Adams feared that North-South conflicts might someday imperil the nation itself.

Ways West

Missouri was just one of the territories west of the Mississippi River where the population had increased during this period. Some Americans moved west by choice, while others were forced to move. When whites moved, they often claimed that they were furthering the ideals of American equality; yet when they brought slaves with them, they were also expanding the boundaries of the slave economy. The federal government played an active part in the settlement of the West.

Through land grants and government financing of new methods of transportation, Congress encouraged European American migrants to push their way west and south. The Land Act of 1820 enabled westerners to buy a minimum 80 acres at a price of \$1.25 an acre in cash—even in those days, a bargain homestead. Built with the help of government legal and financial aid, new roads and canals, steamboats, and, after the early 1830s, railroads facilitated migration. Between 1820 and 1860, the number of steamboats plying the Mississippi River jumped from 60 to more than 1,000. Canals



The rich bottomlands of the Mississippi Delta proved ideal for growing cotton. After the forced removal of the Five Civilized Tribes from the Old Southwest, slave owners established expansive plantations in the delta. This scene, painted in 1842 by artist William Henry Brown, shows a group of slaves bringing in “the whole weeks picking” of cotton on the Vick plantation near Vicksburg, Mississippi. What is the significance of the group of people on the right? Does it suggest his equality of hardship among enslaved workers, regardless of age, gender, or family relationships?



MAP 11.3 MEXICO'S FAR NORTHERN FRONTIER IN 1822 This map shows Mexico's far northern frontier in 1822. When Moses Austin died suddenly in 1821, the task of supervising the settlement of in-migrants from the United States fell to his son Stephen. The Mexican government authorized the younger Austin to act as impresario of the settlement. He was responsible for the legal and economic regulations governing the settlements clustered at the lower reaches of the Colorado and Brazos rivers.

linked western producers to eastern consumers of grains and cattle and connected western consumers to eastern producers of manufactured goods. Shipping costs and times between Buffalo and New York shrank. Cities such as Rochester and Syracuse, New York; and Cincinnati, Ohio, flourished because of their geographic positions along key waterways.

Among the most significant of these waterways was the **Erie Canal**. Completed in 1825, this engineering marvel used eighty-three canal locks to link the Great Lakes directly to the East Coast by way of the Hudson River. Public acclaim was thunderous. Upstate New York's economy thrived. And New York City, at the mouth of the Hudson, emerged as the most important port and financial center in the country.

Americans took a variety of routes west. In the 1820s, desperate planters moved out of the exhausted lands of the upper South (the states of Virginia and Maryland), the Carolinas, and Georgia, proceeding westward into Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi. This migration across the Appalachian Mountains furthered the nationalist idea of the "expansion of liberty and freedom," a view held by many white men regardless of political affiliation. Yet it also spread slavery. The sight of slave coffles—groups of men, women, and children bound together in chains, hobbling down a city street or a country road—became increasingly common in this western region. In 1821, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia had produced two-thirds of the nation's cotton crop; the rest came from recently settled areas. Just a dozen years later the proportions shifted: Tennessee, Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida together produced two-thirds of all cotton, and the remaining one-third came from older areas.

Erie Canal Waterway linking the New York cities of Troy and Albany, on the Hudson River, with Buffalo, on the eastern tip of Lake Erie; in the 1820s, the opening of the Erie Canal revolutionized trading between the Midwest and East Coast and established New York City as the most important financial center in the United States.

European Americans also migrated across the border into Mexican territory. In 1821, Spain approved the application of a U.S. citizen, Moses Austin, to settle 300 American families on 200,000 fertile acres along the Colorado and Brazos river bottoms in southeastern Texas. Austin died soon after, but his son Stephen carried on his legacy. Within two years, the younger Austin had received permission (now from the government of newly independent Mexico) to bring in another 100 families. These settlers, together with squatters, numbered about 1,500 people. Although the Mexican constitution prohibited slavery, some of the newcomers brought their slaves with them, and some free people of color came on their own. All these migrants from the United States called themselves **Texians** to distinguish themselves from the **Tejanos**, or Spanish-speaking residents of the region. These newly arrived Texians agreed to adopt the Roman Catholic faith and become citizens of Mexico. During the rest of the decade, 900 additional families sponsored by Austin arrived in Texas. They were followed by 3,000 more squatters. Mexican officials feared that they would lose authority over the mass of American newcomers within their borders.

Texians The name used by U.S.-born citizens who lived in the Mexican state of Texas.

Tejanos Spanish-speaking residents of the Mexican (and later, U.S.) state of Texas.

The Panic of 1819 and the Plight of Western Debtors

In 1819, a financial panic swept across the nation, followed by an economic depression that hit western states and territories particularly hard. The Second Bank of the United States played a major role in triggering this economic downturn, which came to be called the Panic of 1819. Granted a 20-year charter by Congress in 1816, the Second Bank resembled its predecessor, seeking to regulate the national economy through loans to state and local banks. In 1819, the bank clamped down on small, local **wildcat banks**, which had extended credit to many people who could not repay their loans. Many homesteaders were not self-sufficient farmers but producers of staple crops or proprietors of small enterprises. They relied on credit from banks and local private lenders. As a result, the bank's crackdown on wildcat banks had a devastating impact on western households. Debtors unable to meet their obligations had their mortgages foreclosed, their homes seized, and their crops and equipment confiscated.

Wildcat banks Small banks that make loans unsupervised by the state or other financial institutions.

Ruined by the Panic of 1819, many western farmers developed an abiding hatred of the Bank of the United States and a deep resentment of eastern financiers. These Westerners believed that the federal government had actually increased levels of economic inequality among Americans by favoring the Second Bank of the United States (with a Congressional charter) over local institutions. When the central bank cracked down on the wildcats, eastern creditors profited and western homesteaders lost their property. To western farmers, it seemed as if a financial system that was supposed to guarantee widespread access to credit among small farmers was instead further enriching the wealthiest Americans.

Davy Crockett's own family history suggests the plight of families dependent on bank credit to create homesteads out of western territory. The son of a propertyless squatter, Crockett had an intense fear of debt. Although he campaigned as a hunter and a farmer, he had built several enterprises on land he leased or owned on Shoal Creek in south-central Tennessee: a water-powered grist mill, a gunpowder factory (worked by slaves), an iron-ore mine, and a liquor distillery. For each venture, he had to borrow money from local creditors. Spending much of his time away from home, Crockett relied on his wife, Elizabeth, and his children to manage these businesses. (He had three children by his first wife, Polly, who died in 1815, and eventually would have a total of nine by Elizabeth.)

The depression of 1819 cut off Crockett's sources of credit, and in 1822 a flash flood swept away his grist mill and powder factory. Without milled grain, the distillery could no longer operate. Creditors immediately set upon the family, demanding payment of their debts. The Crocketts were fortunate enough to own land they could sell, using the proceeds to repay their debts and then moving farther west in Tennessee.

TABLE 11.1 THE ELECTION OF 1820

Candidate	Political Party	Electoral Vote
James Monroe	Democratic-Republican	231
John Quincy Adams	Democratic-Republican	1

Others were not so lucky. Small farmers who lost their land through foreclosure in the Panic of 1819 could not produce crops for the eastern market, contributing to the rise in the price of food. Deprived of credit, small shopkeepers also felt the effects of the depression. With rising unemployment, consumers could not afford to buy cloth, and as the demand for cotton fell, southern plantation owners, too, felt the contraction. Within a few years, Andrew Jackson would capitalize on the fears and resentments of working men, farmers, planters, and tradesmen, as he championed the “common man” in opposition to what debtors called the “eastern monied interests.” In doing so he would transform the two-party system.

The Monroe Doctrine

Despite the troubled economy, James Monroe won reelection easily in 1820. On the international front, his second term opened on a tense note. Foreign nations had started claiming land or promoting their own interests near U.S. borders. The United States remained especially wary of the Spanish presence on its southern and western borders. In 1818, President Monroe had authorized General Andrew Jackson to broaden his assault on the Seminole Indians—a group composed of Native Americans and runaway slaves—in Florida. For the past two years, U.S. troops had pursued fugitive slaves into Spanish-held Florida. Now Jackson and his men seized the Spanish fort at Pensacola and claimed all of western Florida for the United States. The United States demanded that Spain either suppress the Seminole population or sell all of east Florida to the United States. With the Transcontinental Treaty of 1819, Spain gave up its right to both Florida and Oregon (although Britain and Russia still claimed land in Oregon). In 1822, General Jackson became the first governor of Florida Territory.

Farther north, in 1821 the emperor of Russia, Czar Alexander I, forbade non-Russians from entering the territory north of the fifty-first parallel and the open sea 100 miles off the coast of what is now Canada and Alaska. The Russians had established trading posts up and down that coast, some almost as far south as San Francisco Bay. Meanwhile, rumors circulated that European monarchs were planning new invasions of Latin America.

Fearful of an alliance among Russia, Prussia, Austria, Spain, and France, President Monroe and Secretary of State John Quincy Adams formulated a policy that became a landmark in American diplomatic history. Adams rejected a British proposal that Great Britain and the United States join forces to oppose a further Spanish encroachment in Latin America. He convinced Monroe that the United States must stand alone against the European powers—Spain in the south and Russia in the northwest—if it hoped to protect its own interests in the Western Hemisphere. In his annual message to Congress in December 1823, the president declared that the era of Europe’s colonization of the Americas had ceased. Henceforth, he said, foreign nations would not be allowed to intervene in the Western Hemisphere.

The United States conceived the **Monroe Doctrine** as a self-defense measure aimed specifically at Russia, Spain, and Britain. With the Russo-American Treaty of 1824, Russia agreed to pull back its claims to the area north of 54°40’, the southern tip of the present-day Alaska panhandle. However, the United States did not have the naval power to back up the Monroe Doctrine with force. The doctrine was at first more a statement of principle than a blueprint for action, intended to discourage European powers from political or military meddling in the Western Hemisphere. The doctrine would have greater international significance in the late nineteenth century, when the United States developed the military might to enforce it.

Monroe Doctrine Policy announced by President James Monroe in 1823 that the era of European colonization of the Americas had ceased; warned foreign powers, especially Russia, Spain, and Britain, that the United States would not allow them to intervene in the Western Hemisphere.

Andrew Jackson's Rise to Power

The election of 1824 provided a striking contrast to the bland affair four years earlier in which Monroe had been elected. In 1824, the field of presidential nominees was crowded, suggesting a party system in disarray. Although all the candidates called themselves “Democratic-Republicans,” the label meant little more than the fact that most politicians sought to distance themselves from the outmoded “Federalist” label, which hearkened back to the post-Revolutionary period rather than pointing forward to the nation’s new challenges. Nominees included Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, Representative Henry Clay of Kentucky, and Andrew Jackson, now a senator from Tennessee. Jackson received the highest number of electoral votes (ninety-nine), but no candidate achieved a majority. As a result, the election went to the House of Representatives.

Clay withdrew from the race. He had promised Jackson his support but then endorsed Adams, whom the House subsequently elected. When Adams named Clay secretary of state, Jackson’s supporters cried foul. The election, they charged, amounted to nothing more than a corrupt deal between two political insiders.

Haunted by these charges, Adams served his four-year term under a cloud of public distrust. A member of a respected New England family and the son of former president John Adams, the new chief executive had served with distinction in Monroe’s cabinet. Still, Adams proved ill suited to the rough-and-tumble world of what came to be called the New Democracy. Adams advocated a greater federal role in internal improvements and public education, a variation on Henry Clay’s “American System,” a set of policies which promoted a national bank, public funding of canals and turnpikes, and a high tariff to protect domestic manufactures.

Adams’s party, now calling itself the **National Republicans**, faced a formidable challenge in the election of 1828. Having seethed for four long years, Andrew Jackson’s supporters (the Democratic-Republicans) now urged “the people” to reclaim the White House. The campaign was a nasty one. Jackson’s opponents attacked his personal morality and that of his wife and his mother. Jackson’s supporters countered with the charge that Adams himself was corrupt and that he and his cronies must be swept from office.

Jackson won a stunning victory, with his supporters hailing the well-to-do slaveholder as the president of the “common” (meaning white) man. In office, Jackson tightened his party’s grip on power by introducing a national political spoils system. Through this process, successful candidates rewarded their supporters with jobs and tossed their rivals out of appointed offices. The spoils system let the Democratic-Republicans—now called the Democrats—build a nationwide political machine. Not surprisingly, it also provided fertile ground for corruption and fueled the debate over the use and limits of federal authority.

National Republicans A political party, led by John Adams in the 1820s, that favored a greater federal role in funding internal improvements and public education; forerunner of the Whigs, formed in opposition to President Andrew Jackson.

TABLE 11.2 THE ELECTION OF 1824

Candidate	Political Party	Popular Vote (%)	Electoral Vote
John Quincy Adams	Democratic-Republican	30.5	84
Andrew Jackson	Democratic-Republican	43.1	99
William H. Crawford	Democratic-Republican	13.1	41
Henry Clay	Democratic-Republican	13.2	37

TABLE 11.3 THE ELECTION OF 1828

Candidate	Political Party	Popular Vote (%)	Electoral Vote
Andrew Jackson	Democratic	56.0	178
John Quincy Adams	National Republican	44.0	83



Some commentators disapproved of what they considered the excessively lively inauguration gala for President Jackson in 1829. One described the affair this way: "On their arrival at the White House, the motley crowd clamored for refreshments and soon drained the barrels of punch, which had been prepared, in drinking to the health of the new Chief Magistrate. A great deal of glassware was broken, and the East Room was filled with a noisy mob." In contrast to the disapproval of some people, others hailed the inauguration gala as the dawning of a new era that promised people of modest means the same access to political influence and power previously enjoyed only by their social betters. What different groups of people are represented in the crowd outside the White House?

Federal Authority and Its Opponents

11.2

What were President Andrew Jackson's controversial views on the role of the federal government and the role of the Chief Executive?

When Americans defeated the British in the War of 1812, they ensured the physical security of the new nation. However, the war's end left a crucial question unanswered: what role would federal authority play in a republic of states? During Andrew Jackson's tenure, Congress, the chief executive, and the Supreme Court all jockeyed for influence over one another and over the states. Jackson claimed a broad popular mandate to increase the power of the presidency, and he used it to end the charter of the Second Bank of the United States.

At the same time, militant Southern sectionalists regarded the growth of federal executive and judicial power with alarm. If the president could impose a high tariff on the states and if the Supreme Court could deny the states the authority to govern Indians within their own borders, might not high-handed federal officials someday also threaten the South's system of slavery?

Judicial Federalism and the Limits of Law

In a series of notable cases, the Supreme Court, under the leadership of Chief Justice John Marshall, sought to limit states' power to control people and resources within their

own boundaries. In *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819), the Court supported Congress's decision to grant the Second Bank of the United States a 20-year charter. The state of Maryland had imposed a high tax on notes issued by the bank. Declaring that "the power to tax involves the power to destroy," the Supreme Court ruled the state's action unconstitutional. The court justices held that, although the original Constitution did not mention a national bank, Congress retained the authority to create such an institution. This fact implied that Congress also had the power to preserve it. This decision relied on what came to be called a "loose construction" of the Constitution to justify "implied powers" of the government, powers not explicitly stated in the Constitution.

In 1832, a case involving the rights of the Cherokee nation brought the Court head to head with President Jackson's own brand of federal muscle-flexing. With the expansion of cotton cultivation into upland Georgia in the early nineteenth century, white residents of that state increasingly resented the presence of their Cherokee neighbors. At the same time, some Cherokee worked and worshipped in ways similar to European Americans: they cultivated farmland, converted to Christianity, and established a formal legal code. On July 4, 1827, Cherokee leaders met in convention to devise a republican constitution. In the grand tradition of the Patriots of 1776, the group proclaimed the Cherokee a sovereign nation, responsible for its own affairs and free of the dictates of individual (U.S.) states.

In aiming to create an independent nation, these Cherokee leaders rejected the idea that they should aspire to U. S. citizenship—that they should become equal to white men in their ability to own property, vote, and run for office under the flag of the United States. Rather, they hoped to create their own nation that was equal to the United States, a sovereignty entity that could make its own laws and govern its own people free from outside influence. The Cherokee Nation would be neither subject to nor equal to the states, but equal to the United States itself.

By the late 1820s, however, many white people, including the president, were calling for the removal of the Cherokee from the Southeast. The 1829 discovery of gold in the Georgia hills brought 10,000 white miners to Cherokee territory in a gold rush that the Indians called the "Great Intrusion." President Jackson saw the very existence of the Cherokee nation as an affront to his authority and a hindrance to Georgia's economic well-being. He resented the fact that the Cherokee considered themselves a sovereign nation, independent of the U.S. president. Jackson, in fact, favored removing all Indians from the Southeast to make way for whites. He declared that Georgia should be rid of "a few thousand savages" so that "towns and prosperous farms" could develop there. In 1830, with the president's backing, Congress passed the Indian Removal Act. The act provided for "an exchange of lands with the Indians residing in any of the states or territories, and for their removal west of the river Mississippi."

Outraged by this naked land grab, the Cherokee nation refused to sign the removal treaties specified by Congress as part of the Indian Removal Act. In a petition to Congress in 1830, members of the group declared, "We wish to remain on the land of our fathers. We have a perfect and original right to claim this, without interruption or molestation." In an effort to protect their land titles, the Cherokee first tried to take their case to Georgia courts, but Georgia refused to allow them to press their claim. The Georgia legislature maintained that it had authority over all the Indians living within the state's borders and that the Cherokee nation lacked jurisdiction over its own people. The Cherokee nation appealed to the Supreme Court.

The Cherokee hoped that the Supreme Court would support their position that they were an independent entity, not bound by the laws of Georgia. In a set of cases—*Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* (1831) and *Worcester v. Georgia* (1832)—the Court agreed that Georgia's authority did not extend to the Cherokee nation. The Court proclaimed that Indian self-governing bodies were "domestic dependent nations" under the authority of the U.S. government, not the individual states. Under this ruling, Georgia lacked the authority to force Indians from their land. More generally, the states must defer to the federal government in issues related to the welfare and governance of the Indians. The governor of Georgia rejected these Supreme Court rulings, as did Jackson. Of the *Worcester* decision, Jackson declared, "John Marshall has made his decision. Now let him enforce it." In 1832, the president instead sent troops to Georgia to begin forcing the Indians out of their homeland.



MAP 11.4 THE CHEROKEE NATION AFTER 1820 This map shows the Cherokee nation on the eve of removal to Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma). The discovery of gold in the region sparked a constitutional battle over control of Cherokee land. In 1832, the Supreme Court ruled that the federal government had ultimate authority over Indian nations. The state of Georgia ignored the ruling and sought to enforce its own laws in Cherokee territory.

The “Tariff of Abominations”

Besides engineering the removal of the Cherokee, Jacksonian Democrats continued the post-War of 1812 policy of high tariffs. In 1828, they pushed through Congress legislation that raised fees on imported manufactured products and raw materials such as wool. Facing a disastrous decline in cotton prices after the Panic of 1819, Southerners protested: to survive, they had to both sell their cotton on the open world market and buy high-priced supplies from New England or Europe. In their view, the higher the tariff on English goods, the less likely the English were to continue to purchase their cotton from southern planters. Southerners dubbed the 1828 legislation the “Tariff of Abominations.”

A renewal of the tariff four years later moderated the 1828 rates. But by this time, South Carolina politicians were in no mood to sit back and accept what they saw as the arrogant wielding of federal power. They drew on past precedents in developing a theory called **nullification**—the idea that individual states had the authority to reject, or nullify, specific federal laws. The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions of 1798 and 1799 and the Hartford Convention of New England states during the War of 1812 had previously raised this issue of state sovereignty.

The nullification crisis began when politicians led by Senator John C. Calhoun met in a convention in 1832 and declared the tariff “null and void” in South Carolina. But Jackson struck back swiftly. In his Nullification Proclamation of December 10, 1832, he argued that states’ rights did not include nullification of federal laws or secession from

Nullification The doctrine that a state has the right to ignore or nullify certain federal laws with which it disagrees.

the Union. The president then sent a token military and naval force to South Carolina to intimidate the nullifiers. Henry Clay, now senator from Kentucky, brokered a compromise agreement: a 10 percent reduction in the Tariff of 1832 over a period of eight years. This compromise finally eased tensions, and the South Carolina nullifiers retreated for the time being. However, they continued to maintain “that each state of the Union has the right, whenever it may deem such a course necessary ... to secede peaceably from the Union.”

The “Monster Bank”

A similar struggle unfolded over the power of the federal government regarding a central bank. The repository of federal funds (\$10 million), the Bank of the United States in the 1830s had thirty branches and controlled the money supply by dictating how state banks should repay their loans: in paper notes or in currency. As a central (though privately held) institution, the bank also aided economic growth and development by extending loans to commercial enterprises.

In 1832 Jackson vetoed a bill that would have renewed the charter of the Second Bank of the United States, which was due to expire in 1836. Somewhat contradictorily, Jackson claimed to represent the interests of small borrowers such as farmers, but he also advocated hard money (currency in the form of gold or silver, not paper or credit extended by banks). Traditionally, small lenders objected to hard-money policies, which kept the supply of currency low and interest rates for borrowers high. Jackson also objected to the bank’s work as a large commercial institution. For example, he blamed the bank for precipitating the Panic and Depression of 1819 by withholding credit from small banks, causing them to recall their loans and, in some cases, fail.

Jackson condemned the bank as a “monster” intent on devouring working people and enriching a few eastern financiers and foreign creditors (a fourth of the bank’s holdings were owned by non-U. S. citizens). In his veto message he emphasized the theme that the bank sustained and even deepened insidious forms of inequality among white men. He declared, “It is to be regretted that the rich and powerful too often bend the acts of government to their selfish purposes. Distinctions in society will always exist under every just government. Equality of talents, of education, or of wealth can not be produced by human institutions.” He continued: “In the full enjoyment of the gifts of Heaven and the fruits of superior industry, economy, and virtue, every man is equally entitled to protection by law; but when the laws undertake to add to these natural and just advantages artificial distinctions, to grant titles, gratuities, and exclusive privileges, to make the rich richer and the potent more powerful, the humble members of society the farmers, mechanics, and laborers who have neither the time nor the means of securing like favors to themselves, have a right to complain of the injustice of their Government.” In other words, government existed to promote equality of opportunity—individual achievement accomplished through hard work and ambition. In fact, though, he charged, the bank was making the richer and the poor poorer.

By vetoing the bank bill, Jackson angered members of Congress and his own cabinet. They had urged him to recharter the bank because they believed the credit system was necessary for economic progress and expansion. Convinced that Jackson had over-extended his reach, his opponents seized on the issue as a sign of the chief executive’s political vulnerability. However, Congress upheld Jackson’s veto of the Second Bank

TABLE 11.4 THE ELECTION OF 1832

Candidate	Political Party	Popular Vote (%)	Electoral Vote
Andrew Jackson	Democratic	55.0	219
Henry Clay	National Republican	42.4	49
John Floyd	Independent	—	11
William Wirt	Anti-Masonic	2.6	7

Whigs A national political party formed in 1834 in opposition to the presidency of Andrew Jackson and his policy of expanding the power of the president. The Whigs favored congressional funding for internal improvements and other forms of federal support for economic development.

(the bank closed when its charter expired in 1836). Nominated for president by the National Republicans in 1832, Henry Clay drew support from merchants who had benefited from Bank of the United States loans and from the sizable contingent of Jackson haters. But Jackson won in a landslide, carrying not only his stronghold, the West, but also the South and substantial parts of New York, Pennsylvania, and New England.

While in office, Jackson used his veto power a total of twelve times. All his predecessors *combined* had used it just ten times. When his opponents finally formed a political party in 1834, they called themselves **Whigs**, after the English antimonarchist party. In choosing this name, their intention was to ridicule “King Andrew.” The Whigs opposed the man who had built up the power of the presidency in defiance of Congress and the Supreme Court.

Americans in the “Age of the Common Man”

11.3

How did the work of Indians, free and enslaved African Americans, and women change during the “Age of the Common Man”?

In the early 1830s, a wealthy Frenchman named Alexis de Tocqueville visited the United States and wrote about the contradictions he saw. In his book *Democracy in America* (published in 1835), Tocqueville noted that the United States lacked the rigid hierarchy of class privilege that characterized European nations. With universal white manhood suffrage, white men could vote and run for office regardless of their class or religion. However, Tocqueville also noted some sore spots in American democratic values and practices. He commented on the plight of groups deprived of the right to vote; their lack of freedom stood out starkly in the otherwise egalitarian society of the United States. He sympathized with the southeastern Indians uprooted from their homelands. He raised the possibility that conflicts between blacks and whites might eventually lead to bloodshed. He even contrasted the situation of young unmarried white women, who seemed so free-spirited, with that of wives, who appeared cautious and dull. He concluded, “In America a woman loses her independence forever in the bonds of matrimony.” Tocqueville saw America for what it was: a blend of freedom and slavery, of independence and dependence.

Wards, Workers, and Warriors: Native Americans

Population growth in the United States—and on the borderlands between the United States and Mexican territory—put pressure on Indian societies. Yet different cultural groups responded in different ways to this pressure. Some, like the Cherokee, conformed to European American ways and became sedentary farmers. Others were forced to work for whites. Still others either waged war on white settlements and military forces or retreated farther and farther from European American settlements in the hope of avoiding clashes with the intruders.

Nevertheless, prominent whites continued to denigrate the humanity of all Indians. In the 1820s, Henry Clay claimed that Indians were “essentially inferior to the Anglo-Saxon race ... and their disappearance from the human family will be no great loss to the world.” In 1828, the House of Representatives Committee on Indian Affairs surveyed the Indians of the South and concluded that “an Indian cannot work” and that all Indians were lazy and notable for their “thirst for spirituous liquours.” According to the committee, when European settlers depleted reserves of wildlife, Indians as a group would cease to exist.

Members of the Cherokee nation bitterly denounced these assertions. “The Cherokees do not live upon the chase [for game],” they pointed out. Neither did the Creek,



Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859) employed the perspective of an outsider to contrast patterns of European social and economic inequality with Americans' widespread belief in equality; one of his observations: "Among a democratic people, where there is no hereditary wealth, every man works to earn a living...Labor is held in honor; the prejudice is not against but in its favor." At the same time, Tocqueville believed that a commitment to radical equality could breed materialism and selfish individualism. How did many white Americans reconcile their belief in equality—that "labor is held in honor"—with their support for the institution of slavery?

Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole—the other members of the Five Civilized Tribes, so called for their varying degrees of conformity to white people's ways.

In parts of California, Spanish missionaries conquered Indian groups, converted them to Christianity, and then forced them to work in the missions. In missions up and down the California coast, Indians worked as weavers, tanners, shoemakers, bricklayers, carpenters, blacksmiths, and other artisans. Some herded cattle and raised horses. Indian women cooked for the mission, cleaned, and spun wool. They wove cloth and sewed garments.

But even Indians living in or near missions resisted the cultural change imposed by the intruders. Catholic missionaries complained that Indian women such as those of the Chumash refused to learn Spanish. The refusal among some Indians to completely assimilate signaled persistent, deep-seated conflicts between native groups and incoming settlers. In 1824, a revolt among hundreds of newly converted Indians at the mission La Purísima Concepción north of Santa Barbara revealed a rising militancy among native peoples.

After the War of 1812, the U.S. government had rewarded some military veterans with land grants in the Old Northwest. Federal agents tried to clear the way for these new settlers by ousting Indians from the area. Overwhelmed by the number of whites, some Indian groups such as the Peoria and Kaskaskia gave up their lands to the interlopers. Others took a stand against the white intrusion. In 1826 and 1827, the Winnebago attacked white families and boat pilots living near Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. Two years later, the Sauk chief Black Hawk (known to Indians as Ma-ka-tai-me-she-kia-kiak) assembled a coalition of Fox, Winnebago, Kickapoo, and Potawatomi. Emboldened by the prospect of aid from British Canada, they clashed with federal troops and raided farmers' homesteads and miners' camps.

In August 1832, a force of 1,300 U.S. soldiers and volunteers struck back, killing 300 Indian men, women, and children encamped on the Bad Axe River in western Wisconsin. The massacre, the decisive point of what came to be called the Black Hawk War, marked the end of armed Indian resistance north of the Ohio River and east of the Mississippi.

Slaves and Free People of Color

In the 1820s, the small proportion of free blacks within the Southern population declined further. Southern whites perceived free blacks, like Indians, as an unwelcome and dangerous presence, especially given the possibility that they would conspire with enslaved people to spark a rebellion. For these reasons some states began to outlaw



Artist Charles Bird King painted this portrait of Sequoyah while the Indian leader was in Washington, D.C., in 1828. Government officials honored him for developing a written form of the Cherokee language. He is wearing a medal presented to him by the Cherokee nation in 1825. He later settled permanently in Sallisaw, in what is today Sequoyah County, Oklahoma. What was the political and cultural significance of this new, written form of the Cherokee language? What was the difference between the goal of Cherokee sovereignty on the one hand, and the ideal of full, equal American citizenship for the Cherokee people on the other?

private manumissions (the practice of individual owners freeing their slaves) and to force free blacks to leave the state altogether.

One free black who inspired such fears was Denmark Vesey. Born on the Danish-controlled Caribbean island of St. Thomas in 1767, Vesey was a literate carpenter as well as a religious leader. In 1799 he won \$1,500 in a Charleston, South Carolina, lottery and used some of the money to buy his freedom. In the summer of 1822, a Charleston court claimed to have unearthed evidence of a “diabolical plot” hatched by Vesey together with plantation slaves from the surrounding area.

Yet the historical record strongly suggests that no plot ever existed. Black “witnesses” who feared for their own lives provided inconsistent and contradictory testimony to a panel of judges. Authorities never located any material evidence of a planned uprising, such as stockpiles of weapons. Under fire from other Charleston elites for rushing to judgment, the judges redoubled their efforts to embellish vague rumors of black discontent into a tale of a well-orchestrated uprising and to implicate growing numbers of black people. As a result of the testimony of several slaves, thirty-five black men were hanged and another eighteen were exiled outside the United States. Of those executed, Vesey and twenty-three other men said nothing to support even the vaguest charges of the court.

In the North, some blacks were granted the right to vote after emancipation in the late eighteenth century; however, many of those voting rights were lost in the early nineteenth century. New Jersey (in 1807), Connecticut (1818), New York (1821), and Pennsylvania (1838) all revoked the legislation that had let black men cast ballots. Free Northern blacks continued to suffer under a number of legal restrictions. Most were not citizens and therefore perceived themselves as oppressed like the slaves in the South.

A new group of black leaders in the urban North began to link their fate to that of their enslaved brothers and sisters in the South. In Boston, North Carolina-born David Walker published his fiery *Walker’s Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World* in 1829. Walker called for all blacks to integrate fully into American society, shunning racial segregation whether initiated by whites or by blacks themselves. Reminding his listeners of the horrors of the slave trade, he declared that black people were ready to die for freedom: “I give it as a fact, let twelve black men get well armed for battle, and they will kill and put to flight fifty whites.”

Northern black leaders disagreed among themselves on the issues of integration and black separatism—for example, whether blacks should create their own schools or press for inclusion in the public educational system. A few leaders favored leaving the country altogether, believing that black people would never find peace and freedom in the United States. Founded by whites in New Jersey in 1817, the American Colonization Society (ACS) paid for a small number of black Americans to settle Monrovia, later named Liberia, on the west coast of Africa. The ACS drew support from a variety of groups, including whites in the upper South who wanted to free their slaves but believed that blacks and whites could not live in the same country, as well as some slaves and free people of color convinced that colonization would give them a fresh start. A small number of American-born blacks settled in Liberia. However, most black activists rejected colonization. They had been born on American soil, and their forebears had been buried there. Maria Stewart, a black abolitionist and public speaker in Boston declared, “Before I go [to Africa] the bayonet shall pierce me through.”

Northern whites sought to control black people and their movements. Outspoken black men and women such as Walker and Stewart alarmed Northern whites who feared that if blacks could claim decent jobs, white people would lose their own jobs. African Americans who worked outdoors as wagon drivers, peddlers, and street sweepers were taunted and in some cases attacked by whites who demanded deference from blacks in public. In October 1824, a mob of white men invaded a black neighborhood in Providence, Rhode Island. They terrorized its residents, destroyed buildings, and left the place “almost entirely in ruins.” The catalyst for the riot had come the previous day, when a group of blacks had refused to yield the inside of the sidewalk—a cleaner place to walk—to white passersby.

In the South, whites in 1831 took steps to reinforce the institution of slavery, using both violent and legal means. That year Nat Turner, an enslaved preacher and mystic,

Interpreting History

Eulalia Pérez Describes HER WORK IN A CALIFORNIA MISSION, 1823

The **duties** of the **housekeeper** were **many**

Born to Spanish parents in Baja California, Eulalia Pérez was a widow with five daughters when she became the chief housekeeper for the San Gabriel Mission in the early 1820s. She secured her position by winning a cooking competition between herself and two other Spanish women. Here she gives an account of her many duties in the mission.

I made several kinds of soup, a variety of meat dishes and whatever else happened to pop into my head that I knew how to prepare....

Because of all this, employment was provided for me at the mission. At first they assigned me two Indians so that I could show them how to cook....

The missionaries were very satisfied; this made them think more highly of me. I spent about a year teaching those two Indians. I did not have to do the work, only direct them, because they already had learned a few of the fundamentals.

After this, the missionaries conferred among themselves and agreed to hand over the mission keys to me. This was in 1821, if I remember correctly....

The duties of the housekeeper were many. In the first place, every day she handed out the rations for the mess hut. To do this she had to count the unmarried women, bachelors, day-laborers, vaqueros [cowboys].... Besides that, she had to hand out daily rations to the heads of households. In short, she was responsible for the distribution of supplies to the Indian population and to the missionaries' kitchen. She was in charge of the key to the clothing storehouse where materials were given out for dresses for the unmarried and married women and children. Then she also had to take care of cutting and making clothes for the men.

Furthermore, she was in charge of cutting and making the vaqueros' outfits, from head to foot—that is, for the vaqueros who

rode in saddles. Those who rode bareback received nothing more than their cotton blanket and loin-cloth, while those who rode in saddles were dressed the same way as the Spanish-speaking inhabitants; that is, they were given shirt, vest, jacket, trousers, hat, cowboy boots, shoes and spurs; and a saddle, bridle and lariat for the horse. Besides, each vaquero was given a big silk or cotton handkerchief, and a sash of Chinese silk or Canton crepe, or whatever there happened to be in the storehouse.

They put under my charge everything having to do with clothing. I cut and fitted, and my five daughters sewed up the pieces. When they could not handle everything, the father was told, and then women from the town of Los Angeles were employed, and the father paid them.

Besides this, I had to attend to the soap-house, ... to the wine-presses, and to the olive-crushers that produced oil, which I worked in myself....

I handled the distribution of leather, calf-skin, chamois, sheep-skin, Morocco leather, fine scarlet cloth, nails, thread, silk, etc.—everything having to do with the making of saddles, shoes and what was needed for the belt- and shoe-making shops.

Every week I delivered supplies for the troops and Spanish-speaking servants. These consisted of beans, corn, garbanzos, lentils, candles, soap and lard. To carry out this distribution, they placed at my disposal an Indian servant named Lucio, who was trusted completely by the missionaries.

When it was necessary, some of my daughters did what I could not find the time to do.

Questions for Discussion

1. What were some of the things produced at the mission?
2. Why did the position of housekeeper confer such high status?
3. What other kinds of workers in the mission does Pérez mention?
4. How does this account reveal some of the larger purposes of Spanish missions? In what ways were these missions colonial as well as religious enterprises?

SOURCE: Eileen Boris and Nelson Lichtenstein, eds., *Major Problems in the History of American Workers*, 2nd ed. (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2002), 93–95.



San Carlos Borromeo de Carmelo Mission, in Carmel, California, was established in 1770. The mission engaged in a number of enterprises and used Indian laborers as agricultural field workers, herders of cattle and sheep, carpenters, and brick makers. What social hierarchies did this and other missions reinforce?

led a slave revolt in Southampton, Virginia. In the 1820s, the young Turner had looked skyward and had seen visions of “white spirits and black spirits engaged in battle ... and blood flowed in streams.” Turner believed that he had received divine instructions to lead other slaves to freedom, to “arise and prepare myself, and slay my enemies with their own weapons.” In August, he and a group of followers that eventually numbered eighty moved

through the countryside, killing whites wherever they could find them. Ultimately, nearly sixty whites died at the hands of Turner's rebels. Turner himself managed to evade capture for more than two months. After he was captured, he was tried, convicted, and executed.

In the wake of the Turner revolt, a wave of white hysteria swept the South. In Virginia, near where the killings had occurred, whites assaulted blacks with unbridled fury. The Virginia legislature seized the occasion to defeat various antislavery proposals. Thereafter, all the slave states moved to strengthen the institution of slavery. For all practical purposes, public debate over slavery ceased throughout the American South.

Legal and Economic Dependence: The Status of Women

Regardless of where they lived, enslaved women and Indian women had almost no rights under either U.S. or Spanish law. However, legal systems in the United States and the Spanish borderlands differed in their treatment of women. In the United States, most of the constraints that white married women had experienced in the colonial period still applied in the 1820s. A husband controlled the property that his wife brought to the marriage, and he had legal authority over their children. Indeed, the wife was considered her husband's possession. She had no right to make a contract, keep money she earned, vote, run for office, or serve on a jury. In contrast, in the Spanish Southwest, married women could own land and conduct business on their own. At the same time, however, husbands, fathers, and local priests continued to exert much influence over the lives of these women.

European-American women's economic subordination served as a rationale for their political inferiority. The "common man" concept rested on the assumption that men had the largest stake in society because only they owned property. That stake made them responsible citizens.

Yet women contributed to the economy in myriad ways. For example, almost all adult women worked. In the colonial period, society had highly valued women's labor in the fields, the garden, and the kitchen. However, in the early nineteenth century, work was becoming increasingly identified as labor that earned cash wages. This attitude proved particularly common in the Northeast, where increasing numbers of workers labored under the supervision of a boss. As this belief took root, men began valuing women's contributions to the household economy less and less. If women did not earn money, many men asked, did they really work at all?

In these years, well-off women in the northeastern and mid-Atlantic states began to think of themselves as consumers and not producers of goods. They relied more and more on store-bought cloth and household supplies. Some could also afford to hire servants to perform housework for them. Privileged women gradually stopped thinking of their responsibilities as making goods or processing and preparing food. Rather, their main tasks were to manage servants and create a comfortable home for their husbands and children.

In contrast, women in other parts of the country continued to engage in the same forms of household industry that had characterized the colonial period. In Spanish settlements, women played a central role in household production. They made all of their family's clothes by carding, spinning, and weaving the wool from sheep. They tanned cowhides and ground blue corn to make tortillas, or *atole*. They produced their own candles and soap, and they plastered the walls of the home. In the Spanish mission of San Gabriel, California, the widow Eulalia Pérez cooked, sewed, ministered to the ill, and instructed children in reading and writing. At Mission San Diego, Apolonaria Lorenzana worked as a healer and cared for the church sacristy and priestly vestments.

Indian women also engaged in a variety of essential tasks. Sioux and Mandan women, though of a social rank inferior to men, performed a great deal of manual labor in their own villages. They dressed buffalo skins that the men later sold to traders. They collected water and wood, cooked, dried meat and fruit, and cultivated maize (corn), pumpkins, and squash with hoes made from the shoulder blades of elk. These women worked collectively within a network of households, rather than individually within nuclear families.

Some women worked for cash wages during this era. New England women and children, for example, were the vanguard of factory wage-earners in the early manufacturing system. In Massachusetts in 1820, women and children constituted almost a third of all manufacturing workers. In the largest textile factories, they made up fully 80 percent of the workforce.

The business of textile manufacturing took the tasks of spinning thread and weaving cloth out of the home and relocated those tasks in factories. The famous “Lowell mill girls” are an apt example. Young, unmarried white women from New Hampshire, Vermont, and Massachusetts, these workers moved to the new company town of Lowell, Massachusetts, to take jobs as textile machine operatives. In New England, thousands of young men had migrated west, tipping the sex ratio in favor of women and creating a reserve of female laborers. But to attract young women to factory work, mill owners had to reassure them (and their parents) that they would be safe and well cared for away from home. To that end, they established boarding houses where employees could live together under the supervision of a matron—an older woman who served as their mother-away-from-home. Many young women valued the friendships they made with their co-workers and the money they made in the mills. Some of these women sent their wages back home so that their fathers could pay off the mortgage or their brothers could attend school.

Most ordinary women received little in the way of formal education. Yet elite young women had expanded educational opportunities, beginning in the early nineteenth century. Emma Willard founded a female academy in Troy, New York, in 1821, and Catharine Beecher established the Hartford (Connecticut) Female Seminary two years later. For the most part, such schools catered to the daughters of wealthy families, young women who would never have to work in a factory to survive. Hailed as a means to prepare young women to serve as wives and mothers, the schools taught geography, foreign languages, mathematics, science, and philosophy, as well as the “female” pursuits of embroidery and music.

Out of this curriculum designed especially for women emerged women’s rights activists, women who keenly felt both the potential of their own intelligence and the degrading nature of their social situation. Elizabeth Cady, an 1832 graduate of the Troy Female Seminary, later went on to marry Henry B. Stanton and bear seven children. But by the 1840s, she strode onto the national stage as a tireless advocate of women’s political and economic rights.

Ties That Bound a Growing Population

11.4

In what ways did Americans maintain a sense of community in the face of unprecedented migration and population growth?

As the nation expanded westward, population growth and migration patterns disrupted old bonds of community. When people left their place of birth, they often severed ties with their family and original community. New forms of social cohesion arose to replace these traditional ties. New religions sought to make sense of the changing political and economic landscape. High literacy rates among the population created a new community of readers—a dispersed audience for periodicals as well as for a new, uniquely American literature. Finally, opinion makers used the printed word to spread new ideas and values across regional boundaries. These ideas, such as glorification of male ambition, helped knit together far-flung segments of the population, men and women who began to speak of an “American character.”

New Visions of Religious Faith

New forms of religious faith arose in response to turbulent times. During the Indian Wars in the Old Northwest, a Winnebago prophet named White Cloud helped Black Hawk create a **coalition** of Winnebago, Potawatomi, Kickapoo, Sauk, and Fox Indians. A mystic and medicine man, White Cloud preached against white people and exhorted

Coalition An alliance of parties, factions, or nations.

his followers to defend their way of life, an Indian way that knew no tribal boundaries. White Cloud, the religious leader, and Black Hawk, the military leader, surrendered together to federal troops on August 27, 1832, their alliance signifying the spiritual component in the Indians' militant resistance to whites. Through the rest of the nineteenth century, a number of Indian groups found inspiration, and in some cases common ground, in the teachings of Indian religious leaders.

New religious enthusiasms took hold in other parts of the country as well. In the late 1820s and early 1830s, the **Second Great Awakening** swept western New York. The fervor of religious revivals so heated the region that people began to call it "the Burned-Over District." Huge crowds of people of various Protestant denominations attended week-long prayer meetings, sat together on the "anxious bench" for sinners, and listened, transfixed, as new converts told of their path to righteousness.

What explains this wave of religious enthusiasm? A major factor was a clergyman named Charles Grandison Finney, who managed to tap into the wellspring of hope and anxiety of the time. A former lawyer, Finney preached that people were moral free agents, fully capable of deciding between right and wrong and doing good in the world. Finney's message had great appeal during this period of rapid social, economic, and technological change. In New England and New York, for example, canals were bringing new kinds of goods to rural areas and longtime residents were departing for the Midwest. Traditional social relationships seemed threatened.

Throughout the country, religious institutions also grappled with questions about slavery. As the fear of possible black uprisings spread, white clergy in the South began to turn away from their former willingness to convert anyone. Instead, they began seeking respectability in the eyes of the well-to-do, slave-owning class. Incorporating masculine imagery into their sermons, they strove to reinforce the power of husband over wife, parent over child, and master over slave, relations that defined the typical plantation household. Nevertheless, even Southern denominations had to acknowledge a core tension in their beliefs—the Christian idea that all people were equal in the eyes of God seemed at odds with the persistent subordination of enslaved men and women. The Reverend Charles Colcock Jones, a Presbyterian minister in Liberty, advocated missionary work among Southern slaves but ran into opposition from his fellow slaveholders, who worried that Christianizing black people would inspire among them dangerous views of equality and freedom. Jones acknowledged, "The feelings of men being excited, those who had undertaken the religious instruction of the Negroes were looked upon with suspicion and some of them were obliged to quit the field. It was not considered that a separation might be made between the *religious* and the *civil* condition and interests of a people; and that a minister could confine himself to the one without interfering at all with the other."

Elsewhere, some church leaders sought to purge Christianity of what they saw as its too-worldly nature and to revive the early, simple church that Jesus and his disciples had established. On April 6, 1830, a young farmer named Joseph Smith founded the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (also called the Mormons) in Fayette, New York. Smith said that, in a vision, an angel named Moroni presented him with the text of a holy book originally written by a Native American historian more than 1,400 years earlier. The text was called the *Book of Mormon*. Together with the Old and New Testaments, it formed the basis of a new faith. Over the next few years, the Mormon Church grew rapidly, claiming 8,000 members by the mid-1830s. However, the young church also aroused intense hostility among mainstream Protestant denominations that regarded the new group's theology and textual inspiration with suspicion. It was almost impossible for religious institutions to escape the worldly realm of politics and social fragmentation.

Second Great Awakening A series of Protestant religious revivals that began in the 1790s and continued through the 1820s. Prominent revivalists such as Charles Grandison Finney sought to link the life of the spirit with political action and reform efforts.

Literate and Literary America

Around the same time, a young widow named Sarah Hale broke new ground for women. In 1821, she became the first woman to edit an American periodical when she accepted responsibility for editing the Boston-based *Ladies Magazine*, later renamed *Godey's Lady's Book*. Once a hat maker but now a published poet and novelist, Hale

portrayed women as especially devout and thus powerful: men might claim as their domain “the government and the glory of the world,” she wrote in 1832, “but nevertheless, what man shall become depends upon the secret, silent influence of women.” That influence, Hale and other men and women like her believed, derived from women’s roles as nurturers and caretakers. Thousands of similar magazines—most short-lived—appeared between 1825 and 1850.

Just as sentimental fiction and poetry attracted a large readership among women, a number of male writers staked their claim to emerging American literature. Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, and William Cullen Bryant all explored regional histories and landscapes in their works. In *Rip Van Winkle* (1819) and the *Legend of Sleepy Hollow* (1820), Irving wrote about the legends of upstate New York. Cooper explored the western New York middle ground contested by the British, Americans, French, and Indians in the late eighteenth century in such works as *The Spy* (1821) and *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826). Bryant, inspired by the sight of the Illinois plains in 1832, penned “The Prairies,” a praise-song to the vast plains as beautiful and “quick with life.”

Along with this new American literary tradition, small towns across the nation began publishing newspapers to educate, inform, and entertain readers. News stories about national elections and legislation, about foreign monarchs and conflicts, reached log cabins in the West as well as elegant townhouses in Boston and Philadelphia. Wrote Washington Irving in 1820, “Over no nation does the press hold a more absolute control than over the people of America, for the universal education of the poorest classes makes every individual a reader.” Widely distributed newspapers, books, and magazines promoted a set of values that writers claimed described an enduring American character. The ideal American supposedly was ambitious—ready to seize opportunity wherever it could be found—and at the same time devoted to home and family. In fact, these values strongly resembled those adopted by the British middle classes during this period. Indeed, the United States spawned its own brand of middle-class sensibility called Victorianism, after the English queen who reigned from 1837 to 1901.

Five core values defined early American Victorianism. First, the Victorians believed in the significance of the individual. People should be judged on the basis of their character, not on the circumstances of their birth. This belief, however, generally applied only to white men. Second, individuals should have the freedom to advance as far as their talents and ambition took them; no person should claim advantages over others by virtue of a noble title or aristocratic lineage. Third, work was intrinsically noble, whether performed by a canal digger wielding a pick-axe or a merchant using a quill pen. All people, regardless of their trade, deserved to reap the fruits of their labor. Fourth, everyone should exercise self-control and restraint in activities such as drinking and engaging in sexual relations. Finally, men and women occupied separate but complementary spheres. American society could be orderly and stable only if men could find a haven from the heartless world of work in their own homes. There, wives tended the hearth and infused the household with their love, self-sacrifice, and religious devotion.

These core values of American Victorianism had far-reaching implications, and in certain respects unanticipated consequences, for the way middle-class people thought and talked about equality. The notion that individuals must be judged on their merits alone and not on the circumstances of their birth challenged the legal and subordination of whole groups of people, including women, blacks, and Indians. The inherent nobility of productive labor seemed to suggest that the job a person did was less important than the pride and skill with which he or she performed it: Why then should the conscientious domestic servant be deemed inferior to the careless factory foreman? Too, the conscience served as an equalizing force within each person—the emotional force that pulled everyone in the same direction—toward righteous behavior. And finally, complementary spheres between men and women highlighted their different roles in society but also revealed that neither gender was better than the other; men and women were equally worthy of respect, equally necessary to a well-functioning family and well-ordered society. In the coming years, the ironies and contradictions of Victorian ideology would cause seismic shocks through all of the United States.



In this portrait of the Rev. John Atwood and his family, painted by the artist Henry F. Darby in 1845, family members are reading the Bible. What do the parlor furnishings tell us about this family? How many Bibles are in evidence? In some households, no doubt, the father read from the Bible to assembled family members. Here both parents have their own Bible, and six of the three children are sharing three of the books. What does this scene tell us about relations among family members? What can we infer about the family's religious practices? Does this family portrait reveal competing ideals about equality in antebellum (pre-Civil War) America?

Henry F. Darby, *The Reverend John Atwood and His Family*, 1845. Gift of Maxim Karolik for the M. and M. Karolik Collection of American Paintings, 1815–1865, 62.269. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Reproduced with permission. Copyright 2003 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. All Rights Reserved

Conclusion

Western settlement infused American politics with raw energy in the 1820s. Andrew Jackson was the first in a long line of presidents who boasted of their humble origins and furthered their careers by denouncing what they called the privileges enjoyed by wealthy Easterners. The challenges faced by western settlers in establishing homesteads and paying their debts emerged as national, not purely local, issues. Through the sheer force of his personality, Andrew Jackson exemplified these dramatic changes in the political landscape. Almost single-handedly, he extended the limits of executive power and remade the American party system in the process.

At the same time, the contradictions in Jacksonian politics became ever more glaring. As the nation expanded its borders and diversified its economy, distinctions between social classes sharpened. The country also staked its claim to foreign territory, using violence to advance democratic values. Meanwhile, the North and South eyed each other with increasing distrust. And the contrast between those who moved from place to place voluntarily and those who were forced to move became even more striking.

Chapter Review

The Politics Behind Western Expansion

11.1 How did western expansion affect the nation's politics and economy in the 1820s? p. 11–3

Westward expansion provoked a national debate over the spread of slavery. New turnpikes and canals facilitated migration, which in turn spurred trade, the growth of the cotton economy, land speculation, and indebtedness among homesteaders. The U. S. sought to protect and expand its territory in opposition to European powers.

Federal Authority and Its Opponents

11.2 What were President Andrew Jackson's controversial views on the role of the federal government and the role of the Chief Executive? p. 11–12

Defying the Supreme Court, Jackson supported the forcible removal of southeastern Indians to western territory. Defying South Carolina politicians, he took a strong stand against the idea of nullification. Defying Congress, he vetoed the renewal of the charter of the Second Bank of the U. S.

Americans in the "Age of the Common Man"

11.3 How did the work of Indians, free and enslaved African Americans, and women change during the "Age of the Common Man"? p. 11–16

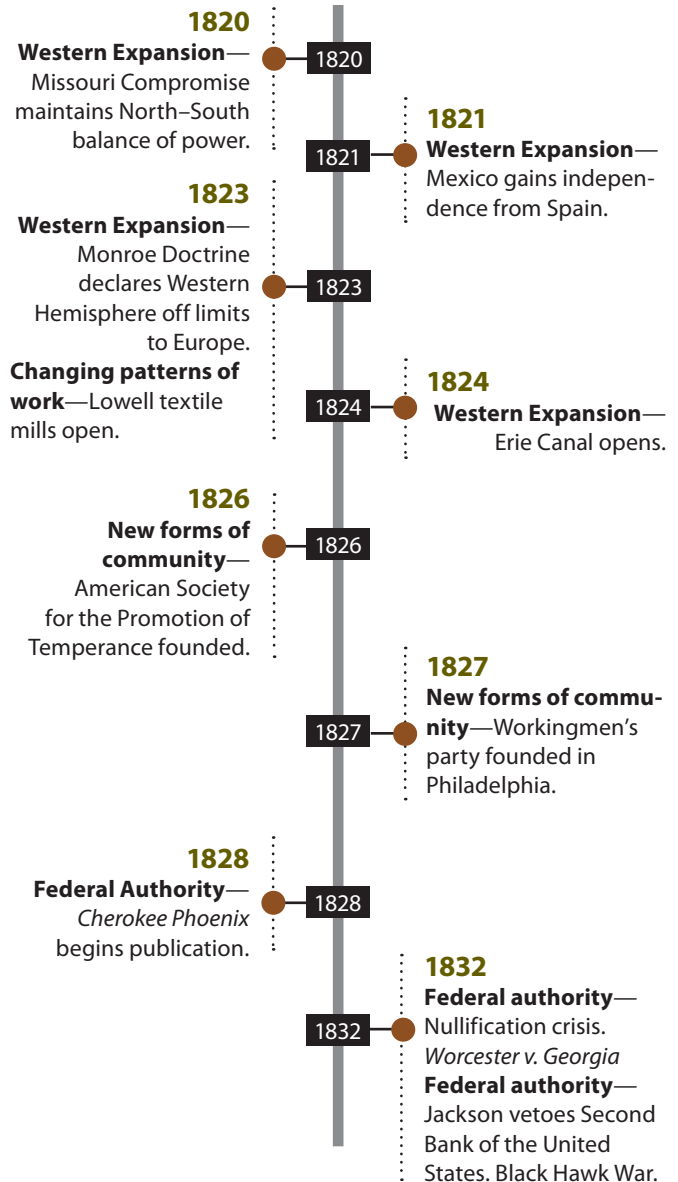
The disappearance of Native hunting grounds forced Indian groups to alter their traditional patterns of work. African Americans suffered as a result of the expansion of the cotton economy and whites' fears of possible slave rebellions. As the vanguard of the Industrial Revolution, some white women took jobs as factory workers.

Ties That Bound a Growing Population

11.4 In what ways did Americans maintain a sense of community in the face of unprecedented migration and population growth? p. 11–22

New reform associations and new religions emerged to create new communities. High literacy rates produced readers of newspapers, books, magazines, and a national literature that extolled "the American character." Groups of men and women in various parts of the country were bound together by Victorian values.

Timeline



you can also **watch** the
video review of Chapter 11
on MyHistoryLab