

Period 3: 1754–1800

In a Nutshell

British imperial attempts to reassert control over its colonies and the colonial reaction to these attempts produced a new American republic, along with struggles over the new nation's social, political, and economic identity.

Key Concepts

Part 1

- A. British attempts to assert tighter control over its North American colonies and the colonial resolve to pursue self-government led to a colonial independence movement and the Revolutionary War.
- B. The competition among the British, French, and American Indians for economic and political advantage in North America culminated in the Seven years' War (the French and Indian War), in which Britain defeated France and allied American Indians.
- C. The desire of many colonists to assert ideals of self-government in the face of renewed British imperial efforts led to a colonial independence movement and war with Britain.

Part 2

- D. The American Revolution's democratic and republican ideals inspired new experiments with different forms of government.
- E. The ideals that inspired the revolutionary cause reflected new beliefs about politics, religion, and society that had been developing over the course of the 18th century.
- F. After declaring independence, American political leaders created new constitutions and declarations of rights that articulated the role of the state and federal governments while protecting individual liberties and limiting both centralized power and excessive popular influence.
- G. New forms of national culture and political institutions developed in the United States alongside continued regional variations and differences over economic, political, social, and foreign policy issues.

Part 3

- H. Migration within North America and competition over resources, boundaries, and trade intensified conflicts among peoples and nations.
- I. In the decades after American independence, interactions among different groups resulted in competition for resources, shifting alliances, and cultural blending.
- J. The continued presence of European powers in North America challenged the United States to find ways to safeguard its borders, maintain neutral trading rights, and promote its economic interests.

Significant Topics

1. **French and Indian War, 1754-1763 (Seven Years' War, 1756-1763)**

Colonial rivalry intensified between Britain and France in the mid-18th century, as the growing population of the British colonies expanded into the interior of North America, threatening French Indian trade networks and American Indian autonomy. Britain achieved a major expansion of its territorial holdings by defeating the French, but at tremendous expense, setting the stage for imperial efforts to raise revenue and consolidate control over the colonies.

a. Scotch-Irish

b. French and Indian War (Seven Years' War)

c. British defeat of the French, 1763

2. **Effects of the French and Indian War on American Indians**

After the British victory, imperial officials' attempts to prevent colonists from moving westward generated colonial opposition, while native groups sought to both continue trading with Europeans and resist the encroachments of colonists on tribal lands.

a. Pontiac's Rebellion, 1763

b. Proclamation Line of 1763

c. The Paxton Boys, 1764

3. **American Independence from Great Britain**

The imperial struggles of the mid-18th century, as well as new British efforts to collect taxes without direct colonial representation or consent and to assert imperial authority in the colonies, began to unite the colonists against perceived and real constraints on their economic activities and political rights.

a. Sugar Act, 1764

- b. Stamp Act, 1765

- c. Sons of Liberty

- d. Declaratory Act, 1766

- e. Townshend Acts, 1767

- f. John Dickinson, *Letters from a Pennsylvania Farmer*, 1767

- g. Boston Massacre, 1770

- h. Boston Tea Party, 1773

- i. First Continental Congress, 1774

- j. Battle of Lexington and Concord, 1775

- k. Second Continental Congress, 1775

4. **Leaders of the Movement for American Independence**

The effort for American independence was energized by colonial leaders such as Benjamin Franklin, as well as by popular movements that included the political activism of laborers, artisans, and women. In the face of economic shortages and the British military occupation of some regions, men and women mobilized in large numbers to provide financial and material support to the Patriot movement.

- a. Ben Franklin

5. **Philosophy of the American Independence Movement**

Colonial leaders based their calls for resistance to Britain on arguments about the rights of British subjects, the rights of the individual, local traditions of self-rule, and the ideas of the Enlightenment. Enlightenment ideas and philosophy inspired many American political thinkers to emphasize individual talent over hereditary privilege, while religion strengthened Americans' view of themselves as a people blessed with liberty. The colonists' belief in the superiority of republican forms of government based on the natural rights of the people found expression in Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* and the Declaration of Independence. The ideas in these documents resonated throughout American history, shaping Americans' understanding of the ideals on which the nation was based.

- a. John Locke

- b. The Enlightenment (Age of Reason)

- c. republican form of government

- d. Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, 1776

- e. Declaration of Independence, 1776

- f. Adam Smith

6. **Reasons for American Success in the War for Independence**

Despite considerable loyalist opposition, as well as Great Britain's apparently overwhelming military and financial advantages, the Patriot cause succeeded because of the actions of colonial militias and the Continental Army, George Washington's military leadership, the colonists' ideological commitment and resilience, and assistance sent by European allies.

- a. George Washington

- b. Battle of Saratoga, 1777

- c. Treaty of Alliance, 1778

- d. Battle of Yorktown, 1781

- e. Treaty of Paris, 1783

7. **Effects of the American Revolution on Ideas of Liberty and Equality**

During and after the American Revolution, an increased awareness of inequalities in society motivated some individuals and groups to call for the abolition of slavery and greater political democracy in the new state and national governments. In response to women's participation in the American Revolution, Enlightenment ideas, and women's appeals for expanded roles, an ideal of "republican motherhood" gained popularity. It called on women to teach republican values within the family and granted women a new importance in American political culture. The American Revolution and the ideals set forth in the Declaration of Independence reverberated in France, Haiti, and Latin America, inspiring future independence movements.

- a. republican motherhood

- b. Mercy Otis Warren

- c. Abigail Adams

- d. French Revolution, 1789

- e. Toussaint L'Ouverture

- f. Latin American Wars of Independence

8. The Articles of Confederation

Many new state constitutions placed power in the hands of the legislative branch and maintained property qualifications for voting and citizenship. The Articles of Confederation unified the newly independent states, creating a central government with limited power. After the Revolution, difficulties over international trade, finances, interstate commerce, foreign relations, and internal unrest led to calls for a stronger central government.

- a. Articles of Confederation, 1781-1789

- b. tariff and currency disputes under the Articles of Confederation

9. Creation of the U.S. Constitution

Delegates from the states participated in a Constitutional Convention and through negotiation, collaboration, and compromise proposed a constitution that created a limited but dynamic central government embodying federalism and providing for a separation of powers between its three branches. The Constitutional Convention compromised over the representation of slave states in Congress and the role of the federal government in regulating both slavery and the slave trade, allowing the prohibition of the international slave trade after 1808. In the debate over ratifying the Constitution, Anti-Federalists opposing ratification battled with Federalists, whose principles were articulated in the Federalist Papers (primarily written by Alexander Hamilton and James Madison). Federalists ensured the ratification of the Constitution by promising the addition of a Bill of Rights that enumerated individual rights and explicitly restricted the powers of the federal government.

- a. Shays' Rebellion, 1786-1787

- b. Constitutional Convention, 1787

- c. Great Compromise

- d. Anti-Federalists

- e. *Federalist Papers*, 1787-1788

- f. Ratification of the U.S. Constitution and the Creation of a New Government, 1788-1789

10. **Creation of the U.S. Government under the New Constitution**

During the presidential administrations of George Washington and John Adams, political leaders created institutions and precedents that put the principles of the Constitution into practice. George Washington's Farewell Address encouraged national unity, as he cautioned against political factions and warned about the danger of permanent foreign alliances.

- a. George Washington

- b. Judiciary Act of 1789

- c. Bill of Rights, 1791

- d. John Adams

- e. Alexander Hamilton's Financial Plan

- f. First Bank of the United States, 1791

- g. Whiskey Rebellion, 1794

- h. Alien and Sedition Acts, 1798

- i. Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions, 1798

11. U.S. Foreign Policy, 1783-1800

The United States government forged diplomatic initiatives aimed at dealing with the continued British and Spanish presence in North America, as U.S. settlers migrated beyond the Appalachians and sought free navigation of the Mississippi River. War between France and Britain resulting from the French Revolution presented challenges to the United States over issues of free trade and foreign policy and fostered political disagreement.

- a. Proclamation of Neutrality, 1793

- b. Pinckney's Treaty, 1795

- c. Jay's Treaty, 1795

- d. XYZ Affair, 1797

12. Formation of Political Parties

Political leaders in the 1790s took a variety of positions on issues such as the relationship between the national government and the states, economic policy, foreign policy, and the balance between liberty and order. This led to the formation of political parties — most significantly the Federalists, led by Alexander Hamilton, and the Democratic-Republican Party, led by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison.

- a. Washington's Farewell Address, 1796

- b. Federalist Party

- c. Democratic-Republican Party

- d. Thomas Jefferson

- e. James Madison

- f. Alexander Hamilton

13. Slavery and the New Nation

The expansion of slavery in the deep South and adjacent western lands and rising antislavery sentiment began to create distinctive regional attitudes toward the institution.

- a. Pennsylvania Gradual Emancipation Law, 1780

14. American Indians and the New Nation

Various American Indian groups repeatedly evaluated and adjusted their alliances with Europeans, other tribes, and the U.S., seeking to limit migration of white settlers and maintain control of tribal lands and natural resources. British alliances with American Indians contributed to tensions between the U.S. and Britain. Ambiguous relationship between the federal government and American Indian tribes contributed to problems regarding treaties and American Indian legal claims relating to the seizure of their lands.

a. Iroquois Confederation

b. Chief Little Turtle

c. Battle of Fallen Timbers, 1794

d. Treaty of Greenville, 1795

15. The Westward Movement before 1800

As increasing numbers of migrants from North America and other parts of the world continued to move westward, frontier cultures that had emerged in the colonial period continued to grow, fueling social, political, and ethnic tensions. As settlers moved westward during the 1780s, Congress enacted the Northwest Ordinance for admitting new states; the ordinance promoted public education, the protection of private property, and a ban on slavery in the Northwest Territory.

a. Northwest Ordinances

16. Spanish Colonization before 1800

The Spanish, supported by the bonded labor of the local American Indians, expanded their mission settlements into California; these provided opportunities for social mobility among soldiers and led to new cultural blending.

17. The American Identity

Ideas about national identity increasingly found expression in works of art, literature, and architecture.