PART 4

Overlapping Revolutions

1800–1860

"The procession was nearly a mile long . . . [and] the democrats marched in good order to the glare of torches," a French visitor remarked in amazement during the U.S. presidential election of 1832. "These scenes belong to history . . . the wondrous epic of the coming of democracy." As Part 4 shows, Americans were making history in many ways between 1800 and 1860. Indeed, these decades constitute a distinct period precisely because the pace of historical change accelerated, especially between 1820 and 1860, as overlapping revolutions transformed American life. One revolution was political: the creation of a genuinely democratic polity. A second was economic: in 1800, the United States was predominantly an agricultural nation; by 1860, the northern states boasted one of the world's foremost industrial economies. Third, these years witnessed far-reaching cultural changes. Beginning about 1800, the Second Great Awakening swept across the nation, sparking great movements of social reform and intellectual ferment that revolutionized the culture of the North and Midwest. Finally, sectionalism increased in intensity, as the South extended its slave-labor system and the North developed a free-labor society. The overall result by 1860 was striking and alarming: now more politically democratic, economically prosperous, and deeply religious, the United States stood divided into antagonistic sections. Here, in brief, are the key aspects of those transformations.

Transforming the Economy, Society, and Culture

Impressive advances in industrial production, transportation, and commerce transformed the nation's economy. Factory owners used water- and steam-powered machines and a new system of labor discipline to boost the output of goods. Manufacturers produced 5 percent of the country's wealth in 1820 but nearly 25 percent by 1860. As enterprising merchants, entrepreneurs, and government officials developed a network of canals and markets, manufacturers sold these products throughout an expanding nation. The new economy created a class-based, urban society in the North and Midwest. A wealthy elite of merchants, manufacturers, bankers, and entrepreneurs rose to the top of the society. To preserve social stability, this elite embraced benevolent reform, preaching the gospel of temperance, Sunday observance, and universal elementary education. Simultaneously, an expanding urban middle class created a distinct material and religious culture and promoted its ideology of individual responsibility and social mobility. Some middle-class Americans advocated radical causes: joining utopian socialist communities and demanding equal rights for women and the immediate end of racial slavery. A mass of propertyless wage-earning workers, including poor immigrants from Germany and Ireland, devised a vibrant popular culture of their own. This complex story of economic change and social fragmentation is the focus of Chapter 9 and Chapter 11.

Creating a Democratic Polity

Beginning in the 1810s, the rapid expansion of white male suffrage and political parties created a competitive and responsive democratic polity. Pressure came from ordinary citizens who organized political movements, such as the Anti-Masonic, Working Men's, and Liberty parties, to advance their interests and beliefs. Farmers, workers, and entrepreneurs persuaded state legislatures to improve transportation, shorten workdays, and award valuable charters to banks and business corporations. Catholic immigrants from Ireland and Germany entered the political arena to protect their cultural habits and religious institutions from restrictive legislation advocated by Protestant nativists and reformers. Then, during the 1830s, Andrew Jackson and the Democratic Party led a political and constitutional revolution that cut federal and state government aid to financiers, merchants, and corporations. To contend with the Democrats, the Whig Party devised a competing program that stressed state-sponsored economic development, moral reform, and individual social mobility. This party competition engaged the energies of the electorate, helped to unify a fragmented social order, and, during the 1830s and 1840s, lessened sectional tensions. Chapters 10 and 12 analyze this story of political change and party politics.

Growing Sectional Divisions

However, the party system could not overcome the increasingly sharp sectional divisions. As the North developed into an urban industrial society based on free labor, the South increasingly defended white supremacy and slavery as a "positive good" and expanded its plantation-based agricultural society. Beginning in the 1820s, the two sections had differed over economic issues and Indian policy. Georgia and other southeastern states demanded and won—over the objections of northeastern reformers—the Indian Removal Act of 1830, which resettled native peoples west of the Mississippi River. Concurrently, between 1816 and 1832, northern manufacturers, workers, and farmers won high protective tariffs, which southern planters bitterly opposed. Eventually, party politicians negotiated a compromise, with the North accepting tariff reductions. The sections had clashed again over the expansion of slavery, into Missouri and the Louisiana Purchase in the 1820s and into Texas and the Southwest in the 1840s, and political leaders again devised compromises. However, by the 1850s, slavery—and the social system it symbolized—increasingly divided the nation. Moreover, because the democratic political revolution had engaged the passions of millions of ordinary Americans, the political system had become more volatile and resistant to compromise. Chapters 10 and 12 explain how national expansion led to increasing sectional struggle.

Overlapping Revolutions 1800–1860

Thematic Understanding

This timeline arranges some of the important events of this period into themes. Look at the entries under "Identity": what identities emerged in this period, and which issues shaped these developments? In the "Work, Exchange, and Technology" theme, how did industrial output and the transportation system change over time? >

	WORK, EXCHANGE, & TECHNOLOGY	PEOPLING	POLITICS & POWER	IDEAS, BELIEFS, & CULTURE	IDENTITY
1810	• Congress approves funds for a National Road (1806) • First American textile factory opens in Waltham, Massachusetts (1814)	• Congress outlaws Atlantic slave trade (1776–1809) • Andrew Jackson forces Creeks to relinquish millions of acres during War of 1812	• Struggle to expand the suffrage begins with Maryland reformers • Martin Van Buren creates first statewide political machine (1817–1821) • Missouri crisis (1819–1821) over slavery	• In rural areas, people of different ranks share a common culture • Upper-class women sponsor charitable organizations	• American Colonization Society (1817) • Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography* (1818) spreads notion of the self-made man
1820	• New England shoe industry expands • Erie Canal completed (1825) • Henry Clay's "American System" of government-assisted development • Market economy expands nationwide	• Slave trade moves African Americans west • Rural women take factory work, alter gender roles	• Rise of Andrew Jackson and Democratic Party • Anti-Masonic Party and Working Men's Party rise and decline	• Benevolent reform movements • Emerson champions transcendentalism • Charles Finney and others advance revivalist religion • Industrialism fragments society into more distinct classes and cultures	• David Walker's *Appeal . . . to the Colored Citizens* (1829) attacks slavery • Rise of southern sectionalism
1830	• U.S. textiles compete with British goods • Canal systems expand trade in eastern U.S. • Financial panic of 1837 begins six-year depression • Boom in cotton output • Increase in waged work sparks conflict between labor and capital	• Indian Removal Act (1830) forces native peoples west • Cherokees' "Trail of Tears" (1838)	• Tariff battles (1828, 1832) and nullification • Whig Party forms (1834) • Jackson destroys Second Bank, expands executive power	• Temperance crusade expands • Joseph Smith and Mormonism • Middle-class culture spreads • Slavery defended as a "positive good" • Urban popular culture (sex trade and minstrelsy)	• W. L. Garrison's American Anti-Slavery Society (1833) • Female Moral Reform Society (1834) defines gender identity • Texas gains independence (1836)
1840	• American machine tool industry expands • Walker Tariff moves U.S. toward "free trade" system and principles of "classical liberalism"	• Working-class districts emerge in cities • German and Irish immigrants spark nativist movement • Mormons resettle in Utah	• Log cabin campaign (1840) • Second Party System flourishes • Lawyers emerge as political leaders	• Fourierist and other communal settlements • Seneca Falls Convention (1848) calls for women's rights	• Antislavery Liberty Party (1840) • New African American culture develops in Mississippi Valley
1850	• Severe recession cuts industrial jobs (1858) • Railroads connect Midwest and eastern ports • Cotton production and prices rise, as does the cost of enslaved laborers	• Immigrants replace native-born women in textile mills • White farm families settle trans-Mississippi west	• Reform becomes political: states enact Maine-style temperance laws (1851 on) • "Mormon War" over polygamy (1858)	• American Renaissance: Melville, Whitman, and Hawthorne • Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852)	• Black and white preachers promote Christianity among slaves • Free blacks in North become politically active

CHAPTER 9

Transforming the Economy 1800–1860

IDENTIFY THE BIG IDEA

What were the causes and consequences of the Industrial and Market revolutions, and how did they change the way ordinary Americans lived?

In 1804, life turned grim for eleven-year-old Chauncey Jerome. His father died suddenly, and Jerome became an indentured servant on a Connecticut farm. Quickly learning that few farmers "would treat a poor boy like a human being," Jerome bought out his indenture by making dials for clocks and then found a job with clockmaker Eli Terry. A manufacturing wizard, Terry used water power to drive precision saws and woodworking lathes. Soon his shop, and dozens of outworkers, were turning out thousands of tall clocks with wooden works. Then, in 1816, Terry patented an enormously popular desk clock with brass parts, an innovation that turned Waterbury, Connecticut, into the clockmaking center of the United States.

In 1822, Chauncey Jerome set up his own clock factory. By organizing work more efficiently and using new machines that stamped out interchangeable metal parts, he drove down the price of a simple clock from $20 to $5 and then to less than $2. By the 1840s, Jerome was selling his clocks in England, the hub of the Industrial Revolution; a decade later, his workers were turning out 400,000 clocks a year, clear testimony to American industrial enterprise. By 1860, the United States was not only the world's leading exporter of cotton and wheat but also the third-ranked manufacturing nation behind Britain and France.

"Business is the very soul of an American: the fountain of all human felicity," author Francis Grund observed shortly after arriving from Europe. "It is as if all America were but one gigantic workshop, over the entrance of which there is the blazing inscription, 'No admission here, except on business.' " Stimulated by the entrepreneurial culture of early-nineteenth-century America, thousands of artisan-inventors like Chauncey Jerome propelled the country into the Industrial Revolution, a new system of production based on water and steam power and machine technology. Simultaneously, thousands of traders fashioned a second great economic advance, a Market Revolution that exploited advances in transportation and business organization to expand trade in farm products and manufactured goods.

Not all Americans embraced the new business-dominated society, and many failed to share in the new prosperity. Moreover, the increase in manufacturing, commerce, and finance created class divisions that challenged the founders' vision of an agricultural republic with few distinctions of wealth. As the philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson warned in 1839: "The invasion of Nature by Trade with its Money, its Credit, its Steam, [and] its Railroad threatens to . . . establish a new, universal Monarchy."

Women Weavers from Maine, c. 1860 Nineteenth-century workers were proud of their skills and, like these textiles operatives from Winthrop, Maine, often posed for photographs with the tools of their craft. This small tintype, 3 by 4 inches and printed on thin metal, dates from the mid-nineteenth century. Beginning in the 1830s, cotton textile entrepreneurs built factories in rural Maine, attracted by its abundant water power and the inexpensive labor of young farm women. The women wear striped dresses of cotton fabric, which they probably helped to manufacture. American Textile History Museum.

The American Industrial Revolution

The **Industrial Revolution** came to the United States between 1790 and 1860, as merchants and manufacturers reorganized work routines, built factories, and exploited a wide range of natural resources. As output increased, goods that once had been luxury items became part of everyday life (Figure 9.1). The rapid construction of turnpikes, canals, and railroads by state governments and private entrepreneurs, working together in the Commonwealth System (Chapter 8), distributed manufactures throughout the nation.

The Division of Labor and the Factory

Increased output stemmed initially from changes in the organization of work that turned independent artisans into wage laborers. Traditionally, New England shoemakers had turned leather hides into finished shoes and boots in small wooden shacks called "ten-footers," where they worked at their own pace. During the 1820s and 1830s, merchants in Lynn, Massachusetts, destroyed the businesses of these artisans by introducing an outwork system and a **division of labor**. The merchants hired semiskilled journeymen and set them up in large shops cutting leather into soles and uppers. They sent out the upper sections to rural Massachusetts towns, where women binders sewed in fabric linings. The manufacturers then had other journeymen attach the uppers to the soles and return the shoes to the central shop for inspection, packing, and sale. This more efficient system increased output and cut the price of shoes and boots, even as it turned employers into powerful "shoe bosses" and eroded workers' wages and independence.

IDENTIFY CAUSES
How did the division of labor increase output, and what was its impact on workers?

For products not suited to the outwork system, manufacturers created the modern factory, which concentrated production under one roof. For example, in the 1830s, Cincinnati merchants built large slaughterhouses that processed thousands of hogs every month. The technology remained simple, but a division of labor increased output. As a system of overhead rails moved the hog carcasses along a "disassembly" line, one worker split the animals, another removed the organs, and others trimmed the carcasses into pieces. Packers then stuffed the pork into barrels and salted it to prevent spoilage. Reported landscape architect and journalist Frederick Law Olmsted:

> We entered an immense low-ceiling room and followed a vista of dead swine, upon their backs, their paws stretching mutely toward heaven. Walking down to the vanishing point, we found there a sort of human chopping-machine where the hogs were

Item	Value added by manufacture (in millions)	Product value (millions)	Number of workers	Value added per worker
Cotton textiles	1. $54.7	$107.3	115,000	8. $475
Lumber	2. $53.8	$104.9	75,600	6. $710
Boots and shoes	3. $49.2	$91.9	123,000	9. $400
Flour and meal	4. $40.1	$248.6	27,700	2. $1,450
Men's clothing	5. $36.7	$80.8	114,800	10. $320
Iron (cast, forged, etc.)	6. $35.7	$73.1	49,000	5. $730
Machinery	7. $32.5	$52.0	41,200	4. $790
Woolen goods	8. $25.0	$60.7	40,600	7. $615
Leather	9. $22.8	$67.3	22,700	3. $1,005
Liquors	10. $22.5	$56.6	12,700	1. $1,770

FIGURE 9.1
Leading Branches of Manufacture, 1860

This chart shows clearly that in 1860, three industries—boots and shoes, cotton textiles, and men's clothing—each employed more than 100,000 workers. However, the workers in three other industries had the highest productivity, with each worker adding more than $1,000 in value to the finished goods. What were these industries? Why were their workers more productive? Adapted from Douglass C. North, *Growth and Welfare in the American Past*, Second Edition. Copyright © 1974. Reprinted with permission of the author.

> converted into commercial pork. . . . Plump falls the hog upon the table, chop, chop; chop, chop; chop, chop, fall the cleavers. . . . We took out our watches and counted thirty-five seconds, from the moment when one hog touched the table until the next occupied its place.

The Cincinnati system was so efficient — processing sixty hogs an hour — that by the 1840s the city was known as "Porkopolis." By 1850, factories were slaughtering 334,000 hogs a year, and 400,000 by 1860.

Other factories boasted impressive new technology. In 1782, Oliver Evans, a prolific Delaware inventor, built a highly automated flour mill driven by water power. His machinery lifted the wheat to the top of the mill, cleaned the grain as it fell into hoppers, ground it into flour, and then cooled the flour as it was funneled into barrels. Evans's factory, remarked one observer, "was as full of machinery as the case of a watch." It needed only six men to mill 100,000 bushels of wheat a year — perhaps ten times as much as they could grind in a traditional mill.

By the 1830s, a new "**mineral-based economy**" of coal and metal began to emerge. Manufacturers increasingly ran their machinery with coal-burning stationary steam engines rather than with water power. And they now fabricated metal products — iron, brass, copper, and tinplate (tin-coated rolled iron) — as well as pork, leather, wool, cotton, and other agricultural goods. In Chicago, Cyrus McCormick used steam-driven machines to make parts for farm reapers, which workers assembled on a conveyor belt. In Hartford, Connecticut, Samuel Colt built an assembly line to produce his invention, the six-shooter revolver. Other New England artisans designed machines that fabricated tinplate into pails, pans, pots, and dozens of other inexpensive and useful household items. These advances in technology and factory organization alarmed British observers: "The contriving and making of machinery has become so common in this country . . . [that] it is to be feared that American manufacturers will become exporters not only to foreign countries, but even to England."

The Textile Industry and British Competition

To protect the British textile industry from American competition, the British government prohibited the export of textile machinery and the emigration of **mechanics** (skilled craftsmen who invented and improved tools for industry). Lured by the prospect of higher wages, though, thousands of British mechanics disguised themselves as laborers and sailed to the United States. By 1812, at least three hundred British mechanics worked in the Philadelphia area alone.

Samuel Slater, the most important émigré mechanic, came to America in 1789 after working for Richard Arkwright, who had invented the most advanced British machinery for spinning cotton. A year later, Slater reproduced Arkwright's innovations in merchant Moses Brown's cotton mill in Providence, Rhode Island.

In competing with British mills, American manufacturers had the advantage of an abundance of natural resources. The nation's farmers produced huge amounts of cotton and wool, and the fast-flowing rivers that cascaded down from the Appalachian foothills to the Atlantic coastal plain provided a cheap source of energy. From Massachusetts to Delaware, these waterways were soon lined with industrial villages and textile mills as large as 150 feet long, 40 feet wide, and four stories high (Map 9.1).

American and British Advantages Still, British producers easily undersold their American competitors. Thanks to cheap transatlantic shipping and low interest rates in Britain, they could import raw cotton from the United States, manufacture it into cloth, and sell it in America at a bargain price. (As they did in India; see America Compared p. 289.) The most important British advantage was cheap labor: Britain had a larger population — about 12.6 million in 1810 compared to 7.3 million Americans — and thousands of landless laborers prepared to accept low-paying factory jobs. To offset these advantages, American entrepreneurs relied on help from the federal government: in 1816, 1824, and 1828, Congress passed tariff bills that taxed imported cotton and woolen cloth. However, in the 1830s, Congress reduced tariffs because southern planters, western farmers, and urban consumers demanded inexpensive imports.

Better Machines, Cheaper Workers American producers used two other strategies to compete with their British rivals. First, they improved on British technology. In 1811, Francis Cabot Lowell, a wealthy Boston merchant, toured British textile mills, secretly making detailed drawings of their power machinery. Paul Moody, an experienced American mechanic, then copied the machines and improved their design. In 1814, Lowell joined with merchants Nathan Appleton and Patrick

COMPARE AND CONTRAST
What were the advantages and strategies of British and American textile manufacturers?

MAP 9.1

New England's Dominance in Cotton Spinning, 1840

Although the South grew the nation's cotton, it did not process it. Prior to the Civil War, entrepreneurs in Massachusetts and Rhode Island built most of the factories that spun and wove raw cotton into cloth. Their factories made use of the abundant water power available in New England and the region's surplus labor force. Initially, factory managers hired young farm women to work the machines; later, they relied on immigrants from Ireland and the French-speaking Canadian province of Quebec.

Tracy Jackson to form the Boston Manufacturing Company. Having raised the staggering sum of $400,000, they built a textile plant in Waltham, Massachusetts — the first American factory to perform all clothmaking operations under one roof. Thanks to Moody's improvements, Waltham's power looms operated at higher speeds than British looms and needed fewer workers.

The second strategy was to tap a cheaper source of labor. In the 1820s, the Boston Manufacturing Company recruited thousands of young women from farm families, providing them with rooms in boardinghouses and with evening lectures and other cultural activities. To reassure parents about their daughters' moral welfare, the mill owners enforced strict curfews, prohibited alcoholic beverages, and required regular church attendance. At Lowell (1822), Chicopee (1823), and other sites in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, the company built new factories that used this labor system, known as the **Waltham-Lowell System**.

By the early 1830s, more than 40,000 New England women were working in textile mills. As an observer noted, the wages were "more than could be obtained by the hitherto ordinary occupation of housework," the living conditions were better than those in crowded farmhouses, and the women had greater independence. Lucy Larcom became a Lowell textile operative at age eleven to avoid being "a trouble or burden or expense" to her widowed mother. Other women operatives used wages to pay off their father's farm mortgages, send brothers to school, or accumulate a marriage dowry for themselves.

To see a longer excerpt of the Lucy Larcom document, along with other primary sources from this period, see ***Sources for America's History***.

Some operatives just had a good time. Susan Brown, who worked as a Lowell weaver for eight months, spent half her earnings on food and lodging and the rest on plays, concerts, lectures, and a two-day excursion to Boston. Like most textile workers, Brown soon tired of the rigors of factory work and the never-ceasing clatter of the machinery, which ran twelve hours a day, six days a week. After she quit, she lived at home for a time and then moved to another mill. Whatever the hardships, waged work gave young women a sense of freedom. "Don't I feel independent!" a woman mill worker wrote to her sister. "The thought that I am living on no one is a happy one indeed to me." The owners of the Boston Manufacturing Company were even happier. By combining tariff protection with improved technology

The Fate of the American and Indian Textile Industries

In 1776, the United States declared its independence from the British Empire. About the same time, Britain began to create in India what historians call the Second British Empire. By 1860, Britain had become the world's leading industrial economy and dominated the princely states and peoples of the Indian subcontinent. The following tables trace the impact of political decisions on the American and Indian textile industries. As the legislature of an independent republic, the U.S. Congress could impose tariffs (taxes on imported goods) on British textiles; as colonies, Indian governments could not do so.

TABLE 9.1

Cotton Textile Production and Consumption in India

Year	Population (millions)	Imports from Britain (mill. yds.)	Production for Domestic Consumption (mill. yds.)	Exports to Britain (pieces, ave./year)
1751	190	0	1,598	632,000 (1750–1754)
1801	207	0	1,741	1,355,304 (1800–1804)
1821	205	20	1,704	542,117 (1820–1824)
1841	212	141	1,642	192,965 (1830–1834)
1861	242	514	1,538	Data not available

TABLE 9.2

Textile Production in the United States

Year	Number of Cotton Mill Workers	Number of Spindles (ave./decade)[1]	Imports from Britain (mill. yds.)	Average U.S. Tariff (as % of item's value)
1810		215,000		
1815			70.81	25.0%
1820	12,000	936,000		
1827			52.86	53.8%
1830	55,000	1,038,000		
1835			74.96	40.4%
1840	72,000	1,243,000		
1850	92,000	1,709,000	104.23	27.1%
1859			225.15	19.6%
1860	122,000			

[1]Entries in Spindle column are the average per year across the decade; i.e., there were perhaps 100,000 spindles in 1810 and 350,000 in 1820, yielding an average of 215,000 between 1810 and 1819.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Compare changes in Indian production ("Production for Domestic Consumption" and "Exports to Britain") with changes in American production ("Number of Cotton Mill Workers" and "Number of Spindles") between 1800 and 1861. Which country is "industrializing," and which is "deindustrializing"?
2. How do American tariffs change over time? (Chapter 10 will explain the reasons for these changes.) What is the impact of American tariff rates on the import of British textiles?
3. What insights does this material provide into the political and economic aspects of American industrialization?

and cheap female labor, they could undersell their British rivals. Their textiles were also cheaper than those made in New York and Pennsylvania, where farmworkers were paid more than in New England and textile wages consequently were higher. Manufacturers in those states garnered profits by using advanced technology to produce higher-quality cloth. Even Thomas Jefferson, the great champion of yeoman farming, was impressed. "Our manufacturers are now very nearly on a footing with those of England," he boasted in 1825.

American Mechanics and Technological Innovation

By the 1820s, American-born artisans had replaced British immigrants at the cutting edge of technological innovation. Though few mechanics had a formal education, they commanded respect as "men professing an ingenious art." In the Philadelphia region, the remarkable Sellars family produced the most important inventors. Samuel Sellars Jr. invented a machine for twisting worsted woolen yarn to give it an especially smooth surface. His son John improved the efficiency of the waterwheels powering the family's sawmills and built a machine to weave wire sieves. John's sons and grandsons ran machine shops that turned out riveted leather fire hoses, papermaking equipment, and eventually locomotives. In 1824, the Sellars and other mechanics founded the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia. Named after Benjamin Franklin, whom the mechanics admired for his work ethic and scientific accomplishments, the institute published a journal; provided high-school-level instruction in chemistry, mathematics, and mechanical design; and organized exhibits of new products. Craftsmen in Ohio and other states established similar institutes to disseminate technical knowledge and encourage innovation. Between 1820 and 1860, the number of patents issued by the U.S. Patent Office rose from two hundred to four thousand a year.

American craftsmen pioneered the development of **machine tools** — machines that made parts for other machines. A key innovator was Eli Whitney (1765–1825), the son of a middling New England farm family. At the age of fourteen, Whitney began fashioning nails and knife blades; later, he made women's hatpins. Aspiring to wealth and status, Whitney won admission to Yale College and subsequently worked as a tutor on a Georgia cotton plantation. Using his expertise in making hatpins, he built a simple machine in 1793 that separated the seeds in a cotton boll from the delicate fibers, work previously done slowly by hand. Although Whitney patented his cotton engine (or "gin," as it became known), other manufacturers improved on his design and captured the market.

TRACE CHANGE OVER TIME
What new types of products came out of American factories by the 1840s and 1850s?

Eli Whitney
Eli Whitney posed for this portrait in the 1820s, when he had achieved prosperity and social standing as the inventor of the cotton gin and other machines. Whitney's success prompted the artist — his young New Haven, Connecticut, neighbor Samuel F. B. Morse — to turn his creative energies from painting to industrial technology. By the 1840s, Morse had devised the hardware for the first successful commercial telegraph and the software — the "Morse Code" — that it transmitted. Yale University Art Gallery/Art Resource, NY.

Still seeking his fortune, Whitney decided in 1798 to manufacture military weapons. He eventually designed and built machine tools that could rapidly produce interchangeable musket parts, bringing him the wealth and fame he had long craved. After Whitney's death in 1825, his partner John H. Hall built an array of metalworking machine tools, such as turret lathes, milling machines, and precision grinders.

Technological innovation now swept through American manufacturing. Mechanics in the textile industry invented lathes, planers, and boring machines that turned out standardized parts for new spinning jennies and weaving looms. Despite being mass-produced, these jennies and looms were precisely made and operated at higher speeds than British equipment.

The leading inventor was Richard Garsed: he nearly doubled the speed of the power looms in his father's Delaware factory and patented a cam-and-harness device that allowed damask and other elaborately designed fabrics to be machine-woven. Meanwhile, the mechanics employed by Samuel W. Collins built a machine for pressing and hammering hot metal into dies (cutting forms). Using this machine, a worker could make three hundred ax heads a day — compared to twelve using traditional methods. In Richmond, Virginia, Welsh- and American-born mechanics at the Tredegar Iron Works produced great quantities of low-cost parts for complicated manufacturing equipment. As a group of British observers noted admiringly, many American products were made "with machinery applied to almost every process . . . all reduced to an almost perfect system of manufacture."

As mass production spread, the American Industrial Revolution came of age. Reasonably priced products such as Remington rifles, Singer sewing machines, and Yale locks became household names in the United States and abroad. After winning praise at the Crystal Palace Exhibition in London in 1851 — the first major international display of industrial goods — Remington, Singer, and other American firms became multinational businesses, building factories in Great Britain and selling goods throughout Europe. By 1877, the Singer Manufacturing Company controlled 75 percent of the world market for sewing machines.

Wageworkers and the Labor Movement

As the Industrial Revolution gathered momentum, it changed the nature of workers' lives. Following the American Revolution, many craft workers espoused **artisan republicanism**, an ideology of production based on liberty and equality. They saw themselves as small-scale producers, equal to one another and free to work for themselves. The poet Walt Whitman summed up their outlook: "Men must be masters, under themselves."

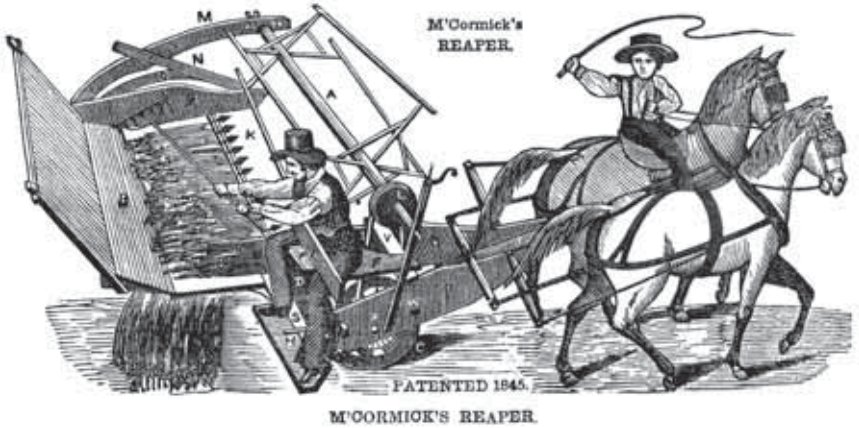
Free Workers Form Unions However, as the outwork and factory systems spread, more and more workers became wage earners who labored under the control of an employer. Unlike young women, who embraced factory work because it freed them from parental control and domestic service, men bridled at their status as supervised wageworkers. To assert their independent status, male wageworkers rejected the traditional terms of *master* and *servant* and used the Dutch word *boss* to refer to their employer. Likewise, lowly apprentices refused to allow masters to control their private (nonwork) lives and joined their mates in building a robust plebeian culture. Still, as hired hands, they received meager wages and had little job security. The artisan-republican ideal of "self-ownership" confronted the harsh reality of waged work in an industrializing capitalist society. Labor had become a commodity, to be bought and sold.

UNDERSTAND POINTS OF VIEW
How did the capitalist-run industrial economy conflict with artisan republicanism, and how did workers respond?

Some wage earners worked in carpentry, stonecutting, masonry, and cabinetmaking — traditional crafts that required specialized skills. Their strong sense of identity, or trade consciousness, enabled these workers to form **unions** and bargain with their master-artisan employers. They resented low wages and long hours, which restricted their family life and educational opportunities. In Boston, six hundred carpenters went on strike in 1825. That protest failed, but in 1840, craft

Diagram of McCormick's Reaper

The economic revolution was the result, in part, of increased output created by power-driven machinery used in factories. However, machines also increased farm productivity. Using McCormick's Reaper and a horse, a farmer and his son could cut as much grain in a day as seven men with scythes. They could now plant more acres and not worry about the wheat sprouting (and becoming worthless) before it could be harvested. Moreover, as this advertisement from the May 1846 issue of the *Cultivator* indicates, farmers could easily repair their new reapers by providing McCormick with the letter denoting a broken part. Wisconsin Historical Society.



M'CORMICK'S REAPER.

Woodworker, c. 1850

Skilled makers took great pride in their furniture, which was often intricately designed and beautifully executed. To underline the dignity of his occupation, this woodworker poses in formal dress and proudly displays the tools of his craft. A belief in the value of their labor was an important ingredient of the artisan-republican ideology held by many workers. Library of Congress.

workers in St. Louis secured a ten-hour day, and President Van Buren issued an executive order setting a similar workday for federal workers.

Artisans in other occupations were less successful in preserving their pay and working conditions. As aggressive entrepreneurs and machine technology took command, shoemakers, hatters, printers, furniture makers, and weavers faced the regimentation of low-paid factory work. In response, some artisans in these trades moved to small towns, while in New York City, 800 highly skilled cabinetmakers made fashionable furniture. In status and income, these cabinetmakers outranked a group of 3,200 semitrained, wage-earning workers — disparagingly called "botches" — who made cheaper tables and chairs in factories. Thus the new industrial system split the traditional artisan class into self-employed craftsmen and wage-earning workers.

When wage earners banded together to form unions, they faced a legal hurdle: English and American common law branded such groups as illegal "combinations." As a Philadelphia judge put it, unions were "a government unto themselves" and unlawfully interfered with a "master's" authority over his "servant." Other lawsuits accused unions of "conspiring" to raise wages and thereby injure employers. "It is important to the best interests of society that the price of labor be left to regulate itself," the New York Supreme Court declared in 1835, while excluding employers from this rule. Clothing manufacturers in New York City collectively agreed to set wage rates and to dismiss members of the Society of Journeymen Tailors.

Labor Ideology Despite such obstacles, during the 1830s journeymen shoemakers founded mutual benefit societies in Lynn, Massachusetts, and other shoemaking centers. As the workers explained, "The capitalist has no other interest in us, than to get as much labor out of us as possible. We are hired men, and hired men, like hired horses, have no souls." To exert more pressure on their employers, in 1834 local unions from Boston to Philadelphia formed the National Trades Union, the first regional union of different trades.

Workers found considerable popular support for their cause. When a New York City court upheld a conspiracy verdict against their union, tailors warned that the "Freemen of the North are now on a level with the slaves of the South," and organized a mass meeting of 27,000 people to denounce the decision. In 1836, local juries hearing conspiracy cases acquitted shoemakers in Hudson, New York; carpet makers in Thompsonville, Connecticut; and plasterers in Philadelphia. Even when juries convicted workers, judges imposed only light fines, so labor organizers were not deterred. Then, in *Commonwealth v. Hunt* (1842), Chief Justice Lemuel Shaw of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court overturned common-law precedents and upheld the right of workers to form unions and call strikes to enforce closed-shop agreements that limited employment to union members. But many judges continued to resist unions by issuing injunctions forbidding strikes.

Union leaders expanded artisan republicanism to include wageworkers. Arguing that wage earners were becoming "slaves to a monied aristocracy," they condemned the new factory system in which "capital and labor stand opposed." To create a just society in which workers could "live as comfortably as others," they advanced a **labor theory of value**. Under this theory, the price of goods should reflect the labor required to make them, and the income from their sale should go primarily to the producers, not to factory owners, middlemen, or storekeepers. "The poor who perform the work, ought to receive at least half of that sum which is charged" to the consumer, declared minister

Ezra Stiles Ely. Union activists agreed, organizing nearly fifty strikes for higher wages in 1836. Appealing to the spirit of the American Revolution, which had destroyed the aristocracy of birth, they called for a new revolution to demolish the aristocracy of capital.

Women textile operatives were equally active. Competition in the woolen and cotton textile industries was fierce because mechanization caused output to grow faster than consumer demand. As textile prices fell, manufacturers' revenues declined. To maintain profits, employers reduced workers' wages and imposed tougher work rules. In 1828 and again in 1834, women mill workers in Dover, New Hampshire, went on strike and won some relief. In Lowell, two thousand women operatives backed a strike by withdrawing their savings from an employer-owned bank. "One of the leaders mounted a pump," the *Boston Transcript* reported, "and made a flaming . . . speech on the rights of women and the iniquities of the 'monied aristocracy.'" Increasingly, young New England women refused to enter the mills, and impoverished Irish (and later French Canadian) immigrants took their places.

In 1857, the new economic system faltered, as overproduction and a financial panic sparked by the bankruptcies of several railroads pushed the economy into a recession. Urban unemployment soared to 10 percent and reminded Americans of the social costs of industrial production.

The Market Revolution

As American factories and farms churned out more goods, legislators and businessmen created faster and cheaper ways to get those products to consumers. Around 1820, they began constructing a massive system of canals and roads linking states along the Atlantic coast with new states in the trans-Appalachian west. This transportation system set in motion both a crucial **Market Revolution** and a massive migration of people to the Greater Mississippi River basin. This huge area, drained by six river systems (the Missouri, Arkansas, Red, Ohio, Tennessee, and Mississippi), contains the largest and most productive contiguous acreage of arable land in the world. By 1860, nearly one-third of the nation's citizens lived in eight of its states — the "Midwest," consisting of the five states carved out of the Northwest Territory (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin) along with Missouri, Iowa, and Minnesota. There they created a rich agricultural economy and an industrializing society similar to that of the Northeast.

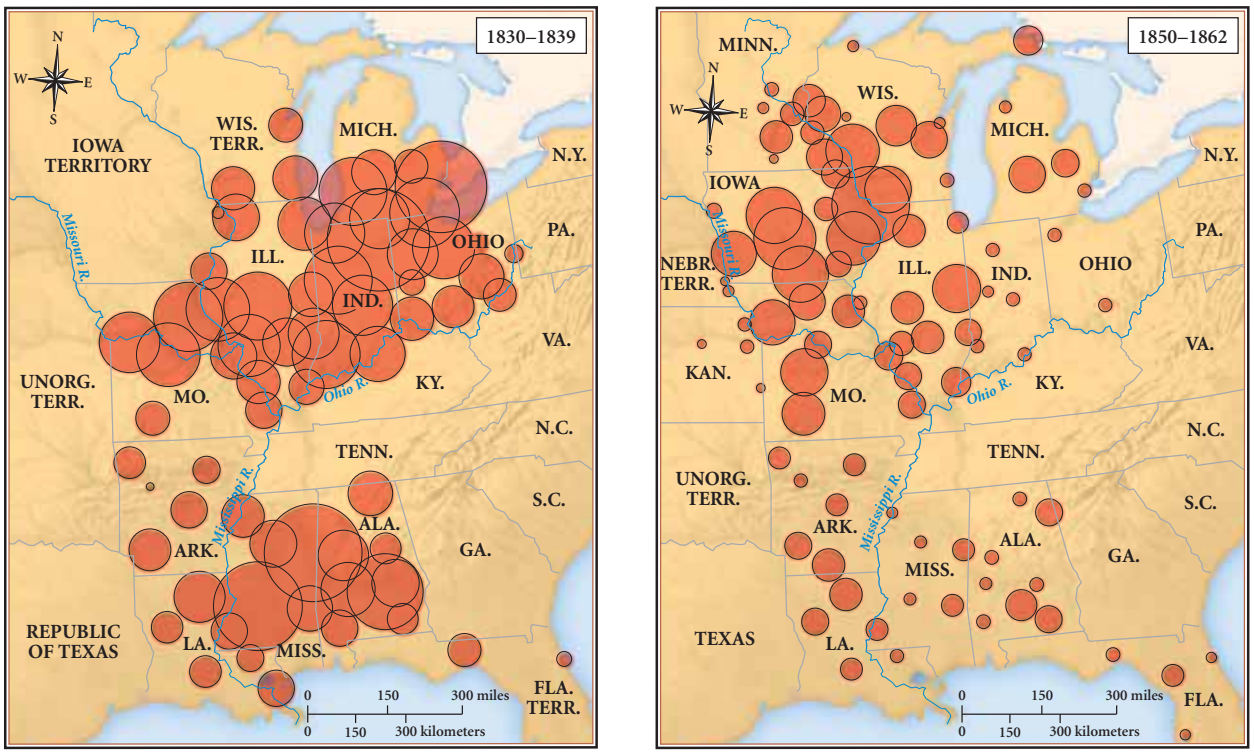
The Transportation Revolution Forges Regional Ties

With the Indian peoples in retreat, slave-owning planters from the Lower South settled in Missouri (admitted to the Union in 1821) and pushed on to Arkansas (admitted in 1836). Simultaneously, yeomen families from the Upper South joined migrants from New England and New York in farming the fertile lands near the Great Lakes. Once Indiana and Illinois were settled, land-hungry farmers poured into Michigan (1837), Iowa (1846), and Wisconsin (1848) — where they resided among tens of thousands of hardworking immigrants from Germany. To meet the demand for cheap farmsteads, Congress in 1820 reduced the price of federal land from $2.00 an acre to $1.25. For $100, a farmer could buy 80 acres, the minimum required under federal law. By the 1840s, this generous policy had enticed about 5 million people to states and territories west of the Appalachians (Map 9.2).

To link the midwestern settlers to the seaboard states, Congress approved funds for a National Road constructed of compacted gravel. The project began in 1811 at Cumberland in western Maryland, at the head of navigation of the Potomac River; reached Wheeling, Virginia (now West Virginia), on the Ohio River in 1818; and ended in Vandalia, Illinois, in 1839. The National Road and other interregional highways carried migrants and their heavily loaded wagons westward; these migrants passed livestock herds heading in the opposite direction, destined for eastern markets. To link the settler communities with each other, state legislatures chartered private companies to build toll roads, or turnpikes.

Canals and Steamboats Shrink Distance

Even on well-built gravel roads, overland travel was slow and expensive. To carry people, crops, and manufactures to and from the great Mississippi River basin, public money and private businesses developed a water-borne transportation system of unprecedented size, complexity, and cost. The key event was the New York legislature's 1817 financing of the **Erie Canal**, a 364-mile waterway connecting the Hudson River and Lake Erie. Previously, the longest canal in the United States was just 28 miles long — reflecting the huge capital cost of canals and the lack of American engineering expertise. New York's ambitious project had three things working in its favor: the vigorous support of New York City's merchants, who wanted access to western markets; the backing of New York's governor, De Witt Clinton, who proposed to finance the waterway from tax revenues,



MAP 9.2

Western Land Sales, 1830–1839 and 1850–1862

The federal government set up local offices to sell land in the national domain to settlers. During the 1830s, the offices sold huge amounts of land in the corn and wheat belt of the Midwest (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan) and the cotton belt to the south (especially Alabama and Mississippi). As settlers moved westward in the 1850s, most sales were in the Upper Mississippi River Valley (particularly Iowa and Wisconsin). Each circle indicates the relative amount of land sold at a local office.

tolls, and bond sales to foreign investors; and the relatively gentle terrain west of Albany. Even so, the task was enormous. Workers — many of them Irish immigrants — dug out millions of cubic yards of soil, quarried thousands of tons of rock for the huge locks that raised and lowered the boats, and constructed vast reservoirs to ensure a steady supply of water.

The first great engineering project in American history, the Erie Canal altered the ecology of an entire region. As farming communities and market towns sprang up along the waterway, settlers cut down millions of trees to provide wood for houses and barns and to open the land for growing crops and grazing animals. Cows and sheep foraged in pastures that had recently been forests occupied by deer and bears, and spring rains caused massive erosion of the denuded landscape.

IDENTIFY CAUSES

Which was more important in the Market Revolution, government support for transportation or technological innovations, and why was that the case?

Whatever its environmental consequences, the Erie Canal was an instant economic success. The first 75-mile section opened in 1819 and quickly yielded enough revenue to repay its construction cost. When workers finished the canal in 1825, a 40-foot-wide ribbon of water stretched from Buffalo, on the eastern shore of Lake Erie, to Albany, where it joined the Hudson River for the 150-mile trip to New York City. The canal's water "must be the most fertilizing of all fluids," suggested novelist Nathaniel Hawthorne, "for it causes towns with their masses of brick and stone, their churches and theaters, their business and hubbub, their luxury and refinement, their gay dames and polished citizens, to spring up."

The Erie Canal brought prosperity to the farmers of central and western New York and the entire Great Lakes region. Northeastern manufacturers shipped clothing, boots, and agricultural equipment to farm families; in return, farmers sent grain, cattle, and hogs as well as raw materials (leather, wool, and hemp, for example) to eastern cities and foreign markets. One-hundred-ton freight barges, each pulled by two horses,

View of the Erie Canal

This pastoral view of the Erie Canal near Lockport, New York, painted by artist John William Hill, hints at this waterway's profound impact on American life. Without the canal, the town in the background would not exist and farmers such as the man in the foreground would not have a regional market for their cattle and grain. The success of the Erie Canal had led to the construction of a vast system of canals by 1860. This infrastructure was as important to the nation as the railroad network of the late nineteenth century and the interstate highway and airport transportation systems of the late twentieth century. © Bettmann/Corbis.

moved along the canal at a steady 30 miles a day, cutting transportation costs and accelerating the flow of goods. In 1818, the mills in Rochester, New York, processed 26,000 barrels of flour for export east (and north to Montreal, for sale as "Canadian" produce to the West Indies); ten years later, their output soared to 200,000 barrels; and by 1840, it was at 500,000 barrels.

The spectacular benefits of the Erie Canal prompted a national canal boom. Civic and business leaders in Philadelphia and Baltimore proposed waterways to link their cities to the Midwest. Copying New York's fiscal innovations, they persuaded their state legislatures to invest directly in canal companies or to force state-chartered banks to do so. They also won state guarantees that encouraged British and Dutch investors; as one observer noted in 1844, "The prosperity of America, her railroads, canals, steam navigation, and banks, are the fruit of English capital." Soon, artificial waterways connected Philadelphia and Baltimore, via the Pennsylvania Canal and the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, to the Great Lakes region.

Equally important was the vast network of navigable rivers that drained into the Mississippi. Every year, 25,000 farmer-built flatboats used these waterways to carry produce to New Orleans. In 1848, the completion of the Michigan and Illinois Canal, which linked Chicago to the Mississippi River, completed an inland all-water route from New York City to New Orleans, the two most important port cities in North America (Map 9.3).

The steamboat, another product of the industrial age, added crucial flexibility to the Mississippi basin's river-based transportation system. In 1807, engineer-inventor Robert Fulton built the first American steamboat, the *Clermont*, which he piloted up the Hudson River. To navigate shallow western rivers, engineers broadened steamboats' hulls to reduce their draft and enlarge their cargo capacity. These improved vessels halved the cost of upstream river transport along the Mississippi River and its tributaries and dramatically increased the flow of goods, people, and news. In 1830, a traveler or a letter from New York could reach Buffalo or Pittsburgh by water in less than a week and Detroit, Chicago, or St. Louis in two weeks. In 1800, the same journeys had taken twice as long.

The state and national governments played key roles in developing this interregional network of trade and travel. State legislatures subsidized canals, while the national government created a vast postal system, the first network for the exchange of information. Thanks to the Post Office Act of 1792, there were more than eight thousand post offices by 1830, and they safely delivered thousands of letters and banknotes worth millions of dollars. The U.S. Supreme Court, headed by John Marshall, likewise encouraged interstate trade by firmly establishing federal authority over

MAP 9.3

The Transportation Revolution: Roads and Canals, 1820–1850

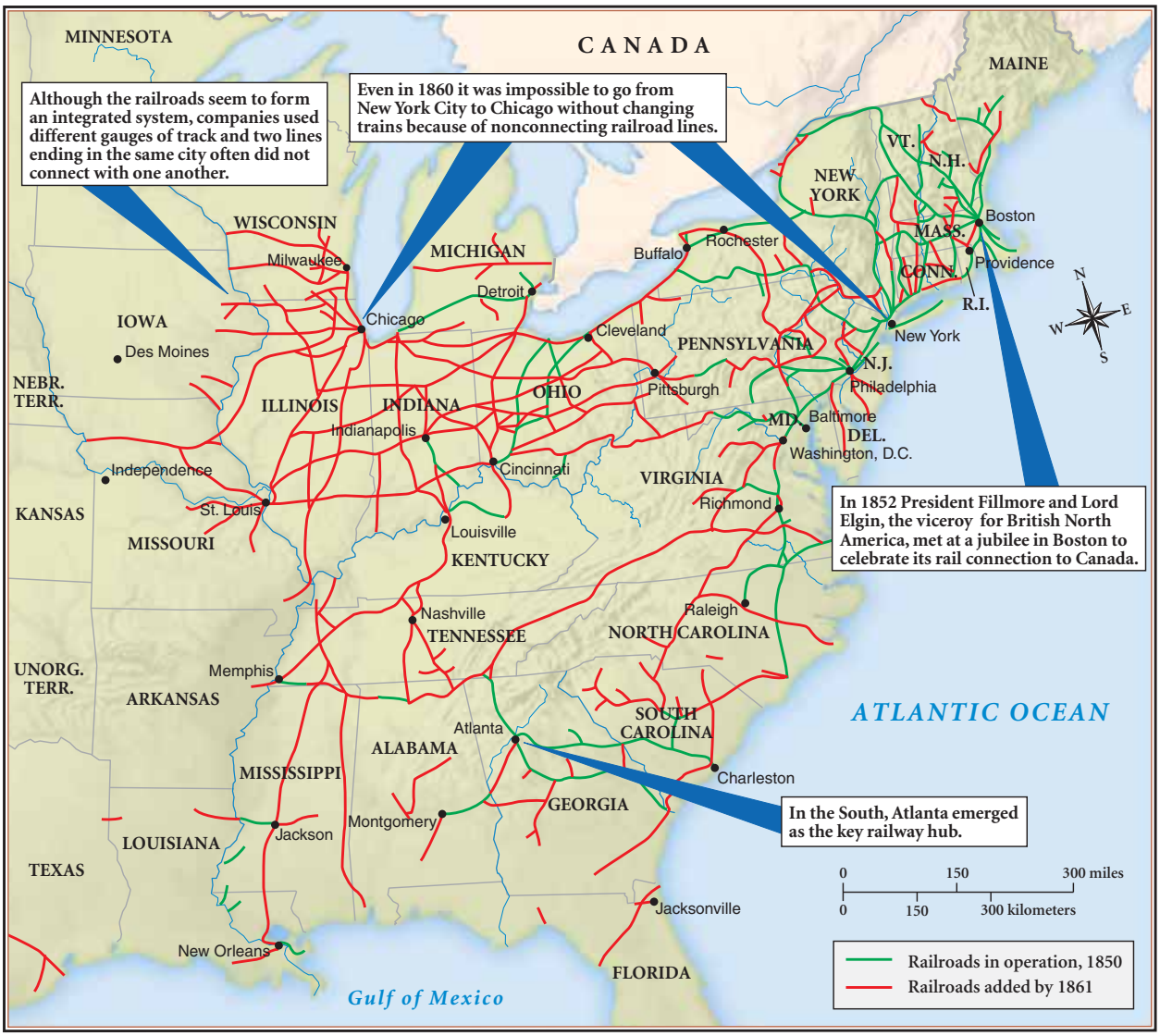
By 1850, the United States had an efficient system of water-borne transportation with three distinct parts. Short canals and navigable rivers carried cotton, tobacco, and other products from the countryside of the southern seaboard states into the Atlantic commercial system. A second system, centered on the Erie, Chesapeake and Ohio, and Pennsylvania Mainline canals, linked northeastern seaports to the vast trans-Appalachian region. Finally, a set of regional canals in the Midwest connected most of the Great Lakes region to the Ohio and Mississippi rivers and the port of New Orleans.

interstate commerce (Chapter 7). In *Gibbons v. Ogden* (1824), the Court voided a New York law that created a monopoly on steamboat travel into New York City. That decision prevented local or state monopolies — or tariffs — from impeding the flow of goods, people, and news across the nation.

Railroads Link the North and Midwest In the 1850s, railroads, another technological innovation, joined canals as the core of the national transportation system (Map 9.4). In 1852, canals carried twice the tonnage transported by railroads. Then, capitalists in Boston, New York, and London secured state charters for railroads and invested heavily in new lines, which by 1860 had become the main carriers of wheat and freight from the Midwest to the Northeast. Serviced by a vast network of locomotive and freight-car repair shops, the Erie, Pennsylvania, New York Central, and the Baltimore and Ohio railroads connected the Atlantic ports — New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore — with the rapidly expanding Great Lakes cities of Cleveland and Chicago (Thinking Like a Historian, p. 298).

The railroad boom also linked these western cities to adjacent states. Chicago-based railroads carried huge quantities of lumber from Michigan to the treeless prairies of Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri, where settlers built 250,000 new farms (covering 19 million acres) and hundreds of small towns. On their return journey, the trains moved millions of bushels of wheat to Chicago for transport to eastern markets. Increasingly, they also carried livestock to Chicago's slaughterhouses. In Jacksonville, Illinois, a farmer decided to feed his entire corn crop of 1,500 bushels "to hogs & cattle, as we think it is more profitable than to sell the corn." A Chicago newspaper boasted, "In ancient times all roads led to Rome; in modern times all roads lead to Chicago."

Initially, midwestern settlers relied on manufactured goods imported from the Northeast. They bought high-quality shovels and spades fabricated at the Delaware Iron Works and the Oliver Ames Company in Easton, Massachusetts; axes forged in Connecticut factories; and steel horseshoes manufactured in Troy, New York. However, by the 1840s, midwestern entrepreneurs were also producing machine tools, hardware, furniture, and especially agricultural implements. Working as a blacksmith in Grand Detour, Illinois, John Deere made his first steel plow out of old saws in 1837; ten years later, he opened a factory in Moline, Illinois, that mass-produced the plows. Stronger than the existing cast-iron models built in New York, Deere's steel plows allowed farmers to cut through the thick sod of the prairies. Other midwestern companies — such as McCormick and Hussey — mass-produced self-raking reapers that harvested 12 acres of grain a day (rather than the 2 acres that an adult worker could



MAP 9.4

Railroads of the North and South, 1850 and 1861

In the decade before the Civil War, entrepreneurs in the Northeast and the Midwest financed thousands of miles of new railroad lines, creating an extensive and dense transportation system that stimulated economic development. The South built a more limited railroad system. In all regions, railroad companies used different track gauges, which prevented the efficient flow of traffic.

cut by hand). With the harvest bottleneck removed, farmers planted more acres and grew even more wheat. Flour soon accounted for 10 percent of all American exports to foreign markets.

Interregional trade also linked southern cotton planters to northeastern textile plants and foreign markets. This commerce in raw cotton bolstered the wealth of white southerners but did not transform their economic and social order as it did in the Midwest. With the exception of Richmond, Virginia, and a few other places, southern planters did not invest their profits in manufacturing. Lacking cities, factories, and highly trained workers, the South remained tied to agriculture, even as the commerce in wheat, corn, and livestock promoted diversified economies in the Northeast and Midwest.

The Growth of Cities and Towns

The expansion of industry and trade dramatically increased America's urban population. In 1820, there were 58 towns with more than 2,500 inhabitants; by

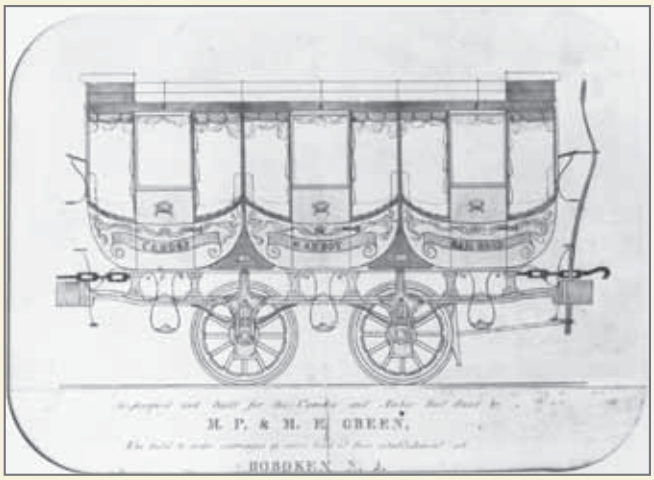
The Risks and Rewards of Technological Innovation

The nineteenth century was the Age of Progress, and improved transportation was one of its hallmarks. Between the 1830s and the 1860s, American capitalists and workers, aided by state governments, built steam-powered railroads that stretched across the nation and reduced the cost of moving goods and people by more than 90 percent. Yet, like all major technological changes, the railroad revolution was controversial, expensive, and politically explosive.

1. Speech by John B. Morris, a director of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, July 4, 1828, at the dedication of the first steam railway in the United States.

Fellow-Citizens. . . . We have met to celebrate the laying of the first stone of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. . . . The result of our labors will be felt, not only by ourselves, but also by posterity, — not only by Baltimore, but also by Maryland and by the United States. We are about opening the channel through which the commerce of the mighty country beyond the Alleghany must seek the [Atlantic] ocean. . . . We are in fact commencing a new era in our history; for there are none present who even doubt the beneficial influence which the intended Road will have in promoting the Agriculture, Manufactures and Inland Commerce of our country.

2. Illustration of a passenger car built by M. P. & M. E. Green of Hoboken, New Jersey, for the Camden and Amboy Railway, linking New York City and Philadelphia, 1831.



Source: Division of Work & Industry, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution.

3. Poster protesting the laying of tracks through the "most Beautiful Streets" of Philadelphia, 1839.


MOTHERS LOOK OUT FOR YOUR CHILDREN!

ARTISANS, MECHANICS, CITIZENS!

When you leave your family in health, must you be hurried home to mourn a

DREADFUL CASUALITY!

PHILADELPHIANS, your RIGHTS are being invaded! regardless of your interests, or the LIVES OF YOUR LITTLE ONES. THE CAMDEN AND AMBOY, with the assistance of other companies without a Charter, and in VIOLATION OF LAW, as decreed by your Courts, are laying a

LOCOMOTIVE RAIL ROAD!

Through your most Beautiful Streets, to the RUIN of your TRADE, annihilation of your RIGHTS, and regardless of your PROSPERITY and COMFORT. Will you permit this? or do you consent to be

SUBURB OF NEW YORK!!

Rails are now being laid on BROAD STREET to CONNECT the TRENTON RAIL ROAD with the WILMINGTON and BALTIMORE ROAD, under the pretence of constructing a City Passenger Railway from the Navy Yard to Fairmount!!! This is done under the auspices of the CAMDEN AND AMBOY MONOPOLY!

RALLY PEOPLE in the Majesty of your Strength and forbid THIS

OUTRAGE!

Source: National Archives.

4. Opposition to the state financing of railroads from the *Republican Compiler*, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, October 6, 1851. *As American track mileage grew from 3,000 miles in 1840 to 30,000 miles by 1860, entrepreneurs in Pennsylvania, assisted by the state legislature, led the nation in laying rail.*

The Governor's organ [newspaper] is still harping about the Governor having paid off the State debt, and reducing the taxes. If the taxes have been reduced, why is it that every farmer finds that he has paid MORE TAXES the last year than he has ever paid in a single year

before? . . . The true issue is that Gov. Johnston and his friends created the [huge state] debt. . . .

The people remember that Gov. Johnston voted $405,000 to the Gettysburg railroad. . . .

They remember that he voted $150,000 to the Danville and Pottsville railroad.

They remember that he voted $140,000 to the Laughlintown and Pittsburg railroad, that never was incorporated.

They remember that he voted $120,000 to the Norristown railroad.

They remember that he voted for a bill appropriating over THREE MILLIONS OF DOLLARS to State and company improvements in one year, and that Gov. Ritner said that such appropriations would increase the State debt, in four years, to $45,000,000.

5. Lyrics to "The Waggoner's Curse," c. 1850.

Come all ye bold wagoners turn out man by man
That's opposed to the railroad or any such a plan;
'Tis once I made money by driving my team
But the goods are now hauled on the railroad by steam. . . .

If we go to Philadelphia, inquiring for a load,
They'll tell us quite directly it's gone out on the railroad.
The rich folks, the plan they may justly admire,
But it ruins us poor wag'ners and it makes our taxes higher . . .

It ruins wheelwrights, blacksmiths, and every other trade,
So damned be all the railroads that ever was made.
It ruins our mechanics, what think you of it, then?
And it fills our country full of just a lot of great rich men.

The ships they will be coming with Irishmen by loads,
All with their picks and shovels, to work on the railroads;
When they get on the railroad, it is then that they are fixed
They'll fight just like the devil with their cudgels and their sticks.

The American with safety can scarcely ever pass,
For they will blacken both his eyes for one word of his sass
If it wasn't for the torment I as life would be in hell,
As upon the cursed railroad, or upon the canal.

6. Henry David Thoreau, *Walden, or, Life in the Woods*, 1854. *The workers who built and ran the railroads suffered high rates of injury and death—facts noted by Henry David Thoreau, a critic of the market, transportation, and industrial revolutions of his day.*

We do not ride on the railroad; it rides upon us. Did you ever think what those sleepers are that underlie the railroad? Each one is a man. . . . The rails are laid on them, and they are covered with sand, and the cars run smoothly over them . . . ; so that, if some have the pleasure of riding on a rail, others have the misfortune to be ridden upon.

7. Senator L. J. Rose, from *Testimony Taken by the United States Pacific Railway Commission*, 1887.

The railroads have made Southern California what it is to-day. Before the completion of the . . . Union and Central Pacific roads the southern half of California, which is now famous the world over as the most favored quarter in America in point of climate and soil conditions, was no more nor less than a barren sheep pasture. . . . Our redemption came in 1869, when the railroad people completed that gigantic and wonderful work . . . , giving California a direct rail connection with the East. The effect was marvelous and immediate. . . . We beheld ourselves in a day, as it were, surrounded by possibilities which made us a new and different people, in a new and completely changed land.

Sources: (1) Eli Bowen, *Rambles in the Path of the Steam-Horse* (Philadelphia: Wm. Bromwell and Wm. White Smith, 1855), 37; (4) Adapted from ExplorePAhistory.com; (5) George Korson, ed., *Pennsylvania Songs and Legends* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1949), 255–257; (6) Henry David Thoreau, *Walden, or, Life in the Woods,* 1854 (Boston, 1910), 102; (7) *Testimony Taken by the United States Pacific Railway Commission*, Vol. 5 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1887), 2505.

ANALYZING THE EVIDENCE

1. What does source 1 tell us about the hopes of steam railroad pioneers? Do the other sources suggest their hopes were achieved?
2. What does source 2 suggest about early railroad design and marketing? How does this image contrast with source 3? What threats does source 3 highlight? What audiences were the targets of these illustrations, and how successful are their respective messages?
3. According to source 4, how did Pennsylvania raise the money for these subsidies? Who was left holding the bag? Why would governments fund such private enterprises?
4. What social tensions do the lyrics to source 5 reveal? What other conflicts are manifest in the documents presented here?
5. Who are the "sleepers" in source 6? How does Thoreau calculate the cost of progress? How are these costs similar to or different from the ones described by the author of source 5?

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

After re-reading the section in this chapter on the transportation revolution, answer the following questions: Why did the transportation revolution take place? What roles in the spread of the railway, canals, and turnpikes were played by entrepreneurs and capitalists? By governments, taxpayers, and various groups of workers? What were some of the unintended consequences? Who won? Lost? Using these documents and your answers, write an essay assessing the benefits and costs of the transition to new transportation technologies.

1840, there were 126 such towns, located mostly in the Northeast and Midwest. During those two decades, the total number of city dwellers grew more than fourfold, from 443,000 to 1,844,000.

The fastest growth occurred in the new industrial towns that sprouted along the "fall line," where rivers descended rapidly from the Appalachian Mountains to the coastal plain. In 1822, the Boston Manufacturing Company built a complex of mills in a sleepy Merrimack River village that quickly became the bustling textile factory town of Lowell, Massachusetts. The towns of Hartford, Connecticut; Trenton, New Jersey; and Wilmington, Delaware, also became urban centers as mill owners exploited the water power of their rivers and recruited workers from the countryside.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST
What different types of cities emerged between 1820 and 1860, and what caused their growth?

Western commercial cities such as Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, and New Orleans grew almost as rapidly. These cities expanded initially as transit centers, where workers transferred goods from farmers' rafts and wagons to steamboats or railroads. As the midwestern population grew during the 1830s and 1840s, St. Louis, Detroit, and especially Buffalo and Chicago also emerged as dynamic centers of commerce. "There can be no two places in the world," journalist Margaret Fuller wrote from Chicago in 1843, "more completely thoroughfares than this place and Buffalo. . . . The life-blood [of commerce] rushes from east to west, and back again from west to east." To a German visitor, Chicago seemed "for the most part to consist of shops . . . [as if] people came here merely to trade, to make money, and not to live." Chicago's merchants and bankers developed the marketing, provisioning, and financial services essential to farmers and small-town shopkeepers in its vast hinterland. "There can be no better [market] any where in the Union," declared a farmer in Paw Paw, Illinois.

These midwestern hubs quickly became manufacturing centers. Capitalizing on the cities' links to rivers, canals, and railroads, entrepreneurs built warehouses, flour mills, packing plants, and machine shops, creating work for hundreds of artisans and factory laborers. In 1846, Cyrus McCormick moved his reaper factory from western Virginia to Chicago to be closer to his midwestern customers. By 1860, St. Louis and Chicago had become the nation's eighth- and ninth-largest cities; by 1870, they were the fourth and fifth, behind New York, Philadelphia, and Brooklyn (Map 9.5).

The old Atlantic seaports — Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Charleston, and especially New York City —

MAP 9.5
The Nation's Major Cities, 1840
By 1840, the United States boasted three major conglomerations of cities. The long-settled ports on the Atlantic — from Boston to Baltimore — served as centers for import merchants, banks, insurance companies, and manufacturers of ready-made clothing, and their financial reach extended far into the interior — nationwide in the case of New York City. A second group of cities stretched along the Great Lakes and included the commercial hubs of Buffalo, Detroit, and Chicago, as well as the manufacturing center of Cleveland. A third urban system extended along the Ohio River, comprising the industrial cities of Pittsburgh and Cincinnati and the wholesale centers of Louisville and St. Louis.

remained important for their foreign commerce and, increasingly, as centers of finance and small-scale manufacturing. New York City and nearby Brooklyn grew at a phenomenal rate: between 1820 and 1860, their combined populations increased nearly tenfold to 1 million people, thanks to the arrival of hundreds of thousands of German and Irish immigrants. Drawing on these workers, New York became a center of the ready-made clothing industry, which relied on thousands of low-paid seamstresses. "The wholesale clothing establishments are . . . absorbing the business of the country," a "Country Tailor" complained to the *New York Tribune*, "casting many an honest and hard-working man out of employment [and helping] . . . the large cities to swallow up the small towns."

New York City's growth stemmed primarily from its dominant position in foreign and domestic trade. It had the best harbor in the United States and, thanks to the Erie Canal, was the best gateway to the Midwest and the best outlet for western grain. Recognizing the city's advantages, in 1818 four English Quaker merchants founded the Black Ball Line to carry cargo, people, and mail between New York and London, Liverpool, and Le Havre, establishing the first regularly scheduled transatlantic shipping service. By 1840, its port handled almost two-thirds of foreign imports into the United States, almost half of all foreign trade, and much of the immigrant traffic. New York likewise monopolized trade with the newly independent South American nations of Brazil, Peru, and Venezuela, and its merchants took over the trade in cotton by offering finance, insurance, and shipping to southern planters and merchants.

New Social Classes and Cultures

The Industrial Revolution and the Market Revolution improved the lives of many Americans, who now lived in larger houses, cooked on iron stoves, and wore better-made clothes. Yet in the booming cities, the new economic order spawned distinct social classes: a small but wealthy business elite, a substantial middle class, and a mass of propertyless wage earners. By creating a class-divided society, industrialization posed a momentous challenge to America's republican ideals.

The Business Elite

Before industrialization, white Americans thought of their society in terms of rank: "notable" families had higher status than those from the "lower orders." Yet in rural areas, people of different ranks often shared a common culture. Gentlemen farmers talked easily with yeomen about crop yields, while their wives conversed about the art of quilting. In the South, humble tenants and aristocratic slave owners enjoyed the same amusements: gambling, cockfighting, and horse racing. Rich and poor attended the same Quaker meetinghouse or Presbyterian church. "Almost everyone eats, drinks, and dresses in the same way," a European visitor to Hartford, Connecticut, reported in 1798, "and one can see the most obvious inequality only in the dwellings."

The Industrial Revolution shattered this agrarian social order and fragmented society into distinct classes and cultures. The urban economy made a few city residents — the merchants, manufacturers, bankers, and landlords who made up the business elite — very rich. In 1800, the richest 10 percent of the nation's families owned about 40 percent of the wealth; by 1860, they held nearly 70 percent. In New York, Chicago, Baltimore, and New Orleans, the superrich — the top 1 percent — owned more than 40 percent of the land, buildings, and other tangible property and an even higher share of intangible property, such as stocks and bonds.

Government tax policies facilitated the accumulation of wealth. There were no federal taxes on individual and corporate income. Rather, the U.S. Treasury raised most of its revenue from tariffs: regressive taxes on textiles and other imported goods purchased mostly by ordinary citizens. State and local governments also favored the wealthy. They taxed real estate (farms, city lots, and buildings) and tangible personal property (furniture, tools, and machinery), but almost never taxed stocks and bonds or the inheritances the rich passed on to their children.

As cities expanded in size and wealth, affluent families consciously set themselves apart. They dressed in well-tailored clothes, rode in fancy carriages, and bought expensively furnished houses tended by butlers, cooks, and other servants. The women no longer socialized with those of lesser wealth, and the men no longer labored side by side with their employees. Instead, they became managers and directors and relied on trusted subordinates to supervise hundreds of factory operatives. Increasingly, merchants, manufacturers, and bankers placed a premium on privacy and lived in separate neighborhoods, often in exclusive central areas or at the city's edge. The geographic isolation of privileged families and the massive flow of immigrants into separate districts

TRACE CHANGE OVER TIME
How and why did elite families change between 1800 and 1860?

Hartford Family

Completely at home in their elegant drawing room, this elite family in Hartford, Connecticut, enjoys the fruits of the father's business success. As the father lounges in his silk robe, his eldest son (and presumptive heir) adopts an air of studied nonchalance, and his daughter fingers a piano, signaling her musical accomplishments and the family's gentility. A diminutive African American servant (her size suggesting her status) serves fruit to the lavishly attired woman of the house. The sumptuously appointed drawing room reflects the owners' prosperity and their aesthetic and cultural interests.

divided cities spatially along lines of class, race, and ethnicity.

The Middle Class

Standing between wealthy owners and propertyless wage earners was a growing **middle class** — the social product of increased commerce. The "middling class," a Boston printer explained, was made up of "the farmers, the mechanics, the manufacturers, the traders, who carry on professionally the ordinary operations of buying, selling, and exchanging merchandize." Professionals with other skills — building contractors, lawyers, surveyors, and so on — were suddenly in great demand and well compensated, as were middling business owners and white-collar clerks. In the Northeast, men with these qualifications numbered about 30 percent of the population in the 1840s. But they also could be found in small towns of the agrarian Midwest and South. In 1854, the cotton boomtown of Oglethorpe, Georgia (population 2,500), boasted eighty "business houses" and eight hotels.

The emergence of the middle class reflected a dramatic rise in prosperity. Between 1830 and 1857, the per capita income of Americans increased by about 2.5 percent a year, a remarkable rate that has never since

The Social Dimensions of Whaling

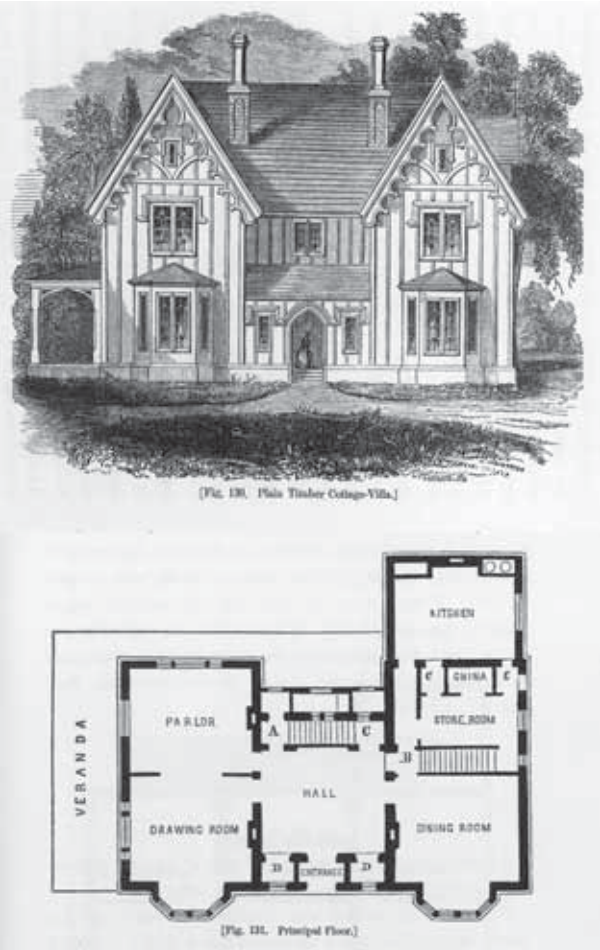
Whale oil fueled the lamps that illuminated the houses of well-to-do Americans in the early nineteenth century, and bright spermaceti candles made from the waxy substance in the heads of sperm whales graced their dining tables. To provide these luxuries, five hundred ships from New Bedford, Massachusetts, and the nearby island of Nantucket roamed the world on voyages lasting up to three years. Ten thousand workers—young men seeking adventure and veteran white and black sailors—manned the ships. As this painting, *Capturing a Sperm Whale* by William Page (1835, from a sketch by whaler C. B. Hulsart), suggests, whaling was a dangerous trade that took the lives of many men.

been matched. This surge in income, along with an abundance of inexpensive mass-produced goods, fostered a distinct middle-class urban culture. Middle-class husbands earned enough to save about 15 percent of their income, which they used to buy well-built houses in a "respectable part of town." They purchased handsome clothes and drove to work and play in smart carriages. Middle-class wives became purveyors of genteel culture, buying books, pianos, lithographs, and comfortable furniture for their front parlors. Upper-middle-class families hired Irish or African American domestic servants, while less prosperous folk enjoyed the comforts provided by new industrial goods. The middle class outfitted their residences with furnaces (to warm the entire house and heat water for bathing), cooking stoves with ovens, and Singer's treadle-operated sewing machines. Some urban families now kept their perishable food in iceboxes, which ice-company wagons periodically refilled, and bought many varieties of packaged goods. As early as 1825, the Underwood Company of Boston was marketing jars of well-preserved Atlantic salmon.

UNDERSTAND POINTS OF VIEW

What were the moral values and material culture of the urban middle class?

If material comfort was one distinguishing mark of the middle class, moral and mental discipline was another. Middle-class writers denounced raucous carnivals and festivals as a "chaos of sin and folly, of misery and fun" and, by the 1830s, had largely suppressed them. Ambitious parents were equally concerned with their children's moral and intellectual development. To help their offspring succeed in life, middle-class parents often provided them with a high school education (in an era when most white children received only five years of schooling) and stressed the importance of discipline and hard work. American Protestants had long



Architecture for the Emergent Middle Class

This dwelling was well suited for a "farmer of wealth" or a middle-class suburbanite, according to Andrew Downing, author of *The Architecture of Country Houses* (1850). The exterior of the house exhibited "a considerable degree of elegance," while the interior boasted a substantial drawing room and dining room, for the entertainment of guests, and a parlor for more intimate conversations among family and friends. Downing's books helped to define the culture of the growing middle class and diffuse it across the nation.
Andrew J. Downing, *The Architecture of Country Houses*, 1850.

believed that diligent work in an earthly "calling" was a duty owed to God. Now the business elite and the middle class gave this idea a secular twist by celebrating work as the key to individual social mobility and national prosperity.

PLACE EVENTS IN CONTEXT
How did the increasingly urban, capitalist economy of the northeastern states affect the lives of poor workers?

Benjamin Franklin gave the classic expression of this secular work ethic in his *Autobiography*, which was published in full in 1818 (thirty years after his death) and immediately found a huge audience. Heeding Franklin's suggestion that an industrious man would become a rich one, tens of thousands of young American men saved their money, adopted temperate habits, and aimed to rise in the world. There was an "almost universal ambition to get forward," observed Hezekiah Niles, editor of *Niles' Weekly Register*. Warner Myers, a Philadelphia housepainter, rose from poverty by saving his wages, borrowing from his family and friends, and becoming a builder, eventually constructing and selling sixty houses. Countless children's books, magazine stories, self-help manuals, and novels recounted the tales of similar individuals. The **self-made man** became a central theme of American popular culture and inspired many men (and a few women) to seek success. Just as the yeoman ethic had served as a unifying ideal in pre-1800 agrarian America, so the gospel of personal achievement linked the middle and business classes of the new industrializing society.

Urban Workers and the Poor

As thoughtful business leaders surveyed their society, they concluded that the yeoman farmer and artisan-republican ideal—a social order of independent producers—was no longer possible. "Entire independence ought not to be wished for," Ithamar A. Beard, the paymaster of the Hamilton Manufacturing Company (in Lowell, Massachusetts), told a mechanics' association in 1827. "In large manufacturing towns, many more must fill subordinate stations and must be under the immediate direction and control of a master or superintendent, than in the farming towns."

Beard had a point. In 1840, all of the nation's slaves, some 2.5 million people, and about half of its adult white workers, another 3 million, were laboring for others. The bottom 10 percent of white wage earners consisted of casual workers hired on a short-term basis for arduous jobs. Poor women washed clothes; their husbands and sons carried lumber and bricks for construction projects, loaded ships, and dug out dirt and stones to build canals. When they could find jobs, these men earned "their dollar per diem," a longtime resident told readers of the *Baltimore American*, but they could never save enough "to pay rent, buy fire wood and eatables" when the job market or the harbor froze up. During business depressions, casual laborers suffered and died; in good times, their jobs were temporary and dangerous.

Other laborers had greater security of employment, but few were prospering. In Massachusetts in 1825, an unskilled worker earned about two-thirds as much as a mechanic did; two decades later, it was less than half

as much. A journeyman carpenter in Philadelphia reported that he was about "even with the World" after several years of work but that many of his coworkers were in debt. The 18,000 women who sewed men's ready-made clothing in New York City in the 1850s earned just a few pennies a day, less than $100 a year (about $3,000 today). Such meager wages barely paid for food and rent, so poorer workers could not take advantage of the rapidly falling prices of manufactured goods. Only the most fortunate working-class families could afford to educate their children, buy apprenticeships for their sons, or accumulate small dowries for their daughters. Most families sent ten-year-old children out to work, and the death of a parent often threw the survivors into dire poverty. As a charity worker noted, "What can a bereaved widow do, with 5 or 6 little children, destitute of every means of support but what her own hands can furnish (which in a general way does not amount to more than 25 cents a day)?"

Impoverished workers congregated in dilapidated housing in bad neighborhoods. Single men and women lived in crowded boardinghouses, while families jammed themselves into tiny apartments in the basements and attics of small houses. As immigrants poured in after 1840, urban populations soared, and developers squeezed more and more dwellings and foul-smelling outhouses onto a single lot. Venturing into the New York City slums in the 1850s, shocked state legislators found gaunt, shivering people with "wild ghastly faces" living amid "hideous squalor and deadly effluvia, the dim, undrained courts oozing with pollution, the dark, narrow stairways, decayed with age, reeking with filth, overrun with vermin." Many wage earners sought solace in alcohol, leading to fistfights, brawls, and robberies. The urban police, mostly low-paid watchmen and untrained constables, were unable to contain the lawlessness.

The Benevolent Empire

The disorder among wage earners alarmed the rising middle classes, who wanted safe cities and a disciplined workforce. To improve the world around them, many upwardly mobile men and women embraced religious benevolence. Led by Congregational and Presbyterian ministers, they created organizations of conservative social reform that historians call the **Benevolent Empire**, which became prominent in the 1820s. The reformers' goal was to restore "the moral government of God" by reducing the consumption of alcohol and other vices that resulted in poverty, explained Presbyterian minister Lyman Beecher. Reform-minded individuals had regulated their own behavior; now they tried to control the lives of working people — by persuasion if possible, by law if necessary.

The Benevolent Empire targeted age-old evils such as drunkenness, adultery, prostitution, and crime, but its methods were new. Instead of relying on church sermons and admonitions from community leaders to combat evil, the reformers created large-scale organizations: the Prison Discipline Society and the American Society for the Promotion of Temperance, among many others. Each organization had a managing staff, a network of hundreds of chapters, thousands of volunteer members, and a newspaper.

IDENTIFY CAUSES
What was the Benevolent Empire, and why did it emerge at this specific historical moment?

Often acting in concert, these benevolent groups worked to improve society. First, they encouraged people to lead disciplined lives and acquire "regular habits." They persuaded local governments to ban carnivals of drink and dancing, such as Negro Election Day (festivities in which African Americans symbolically took control of the government), which had been enjoyed by whites as well as blacks. Second, they devised new institutions to help the needy and control the unruly. Reformers provided homes of refuge for abandoned children and asylums for the insane, who previously had been confined by their families in attics and cellars. They campaigned to end corporal punishment of criminals and to rehabilitate them in specially designed penitentiaries.

Women formed a crucial part of the Benevolent Empire. Since the 1790s, upper-class women had sponsored charitable organizations such as the Society for the Relief of Poor Widows with Small Children, founded in 1797 in New York by Isabella Graham, a devout Presbyterian widow. Her daughter Joanna Bethune set up other charitable institutions, including the Orphan Asylum Society and the Society for the Promotion of Industry, which found jobs for hundreds of poor women as spinners and seamstresses.

Some reformers believed that declining observance by Christians of the Sabbath (Sunday) as a day devoted to religion was the greatest threat to the "moral government of God." As the Market Revolution spread, merchants and storekeepers conducted business on Sundays, and urban saloons provided drink and entertainment. To halt these profane activities, Lyman Beecher and other ministers founded the General Union for Promoting the Observance of the Christian Sabbath in 1828. General Union chapters, replete with women's auxiliaries, sprang up from Maine to

Cincinnati and beyond. The General Union demanded that Congress repeal an 1810 law allowing mail to be transported — though not delivered — on Sundays. Members boycotted shipping companies that did business on the Sabbath and campaigned for municipal laws forbidding games and festivals on the Lord's day.

The Benevolent Empire's efforts to impose its **Sabbatarian values** provoked opposition from workers and freethinkers. Men who labored twelve to fourteen hours a day, six days a week, wanted the freedom to spend their one day of leisure as they wished. To keep goods moving, shipping company managers demanded that the Erie Canal provide lockkeepers on Sundays; using laws to enforce a particular set of moral beliefs was "contrary to the free spirit of our institutions," they said. When evangelical reformers proposed teaching Christianity to slaves, they aroused hostility among white southerners. This popular resistance by workers and planters limited the success of the Benevolent Empire.

IDENTIFY CAUSES
Who opposed the work of the Benevolent Empire and why?

Charles Grandison Finney, Evangelist (1792–1875)
When an unknown artist painted this flattering portrait in 1834, Finney was forty-two years old and at the height of his career as an evangelist. Handsome and charismatic, Finney had just led a series of enormously successful revivals in Rochester, New York, and other cities along the Erie Canal. In 1835, he established a theology department at newly founded Oberlin College in Ohio, where he trained a generation of ministers and served as president from 1851 to 1866. Oberlin College Archives.

Charles Grandison Finney: Revivalism and Reform

Presbyterian minister Charles Grandison Finney found a new way to propagate religious values. Finney was not part of the traditional religious elite. Born into a poor farming family in Connecticut, he had planned to become a lawyer and rise into the middle class. But in 1823, Finney underwent an intense religious experience and chose the ministry as his career. Beginning in towns along the Erie Canal, the young minister conducted emotional revival meetings that stressed conversion rather than doctrine. Repudiating Calvinist beliefs, he preached that God would welcome any sinner who submitted to the Holy Spirit. Finney's ministry drew on — and greatly accelerated — the Second Great Awakening, the wave of Protestant revivalism that had begun after the Revolution (Chapter 8).

Evangelical Beliefs Finney's central message was that "God has made man a **moral free agent**" who could choose salvation. This doctrine of free will was particularly attractive to members of the new middle class, who had accepted personal responsibility for their lives, improved their material condition, and welcomed Finney's assurance that heaven was also within their grasp. But Finney also had great success in converting people at both ends of the social spectrum, from the haughty rich who had placed themselves above God, to the abject poor who seemed lost to drink and sloth. Finney celebrated their common fellowship in Christ and identified them spiritually with pious middle-class respectability.

Finney's most spectacular triumph came in 1830, when he moved his revivals from small towns to Rochester, New York, now a major milling and commercial city on the Erie Canal. Preaching every day for six months and promoting group prayer meetings in family homes, Finney won over the influential merchants and manufacturers of Rochester. They promised to attend church, give up intoxicating beverages, and work hard. To encourage their employees to do the same, wealthy businessmen founded a Free Presbyterian Church — "free" because members did not have to pay for pew space. Other evangelical Protestants founded churches to serve transient canal laborers, and pious businessmen set up a savings bank to encourage thrift among the working classes. Meanwhile, Finney's wife,

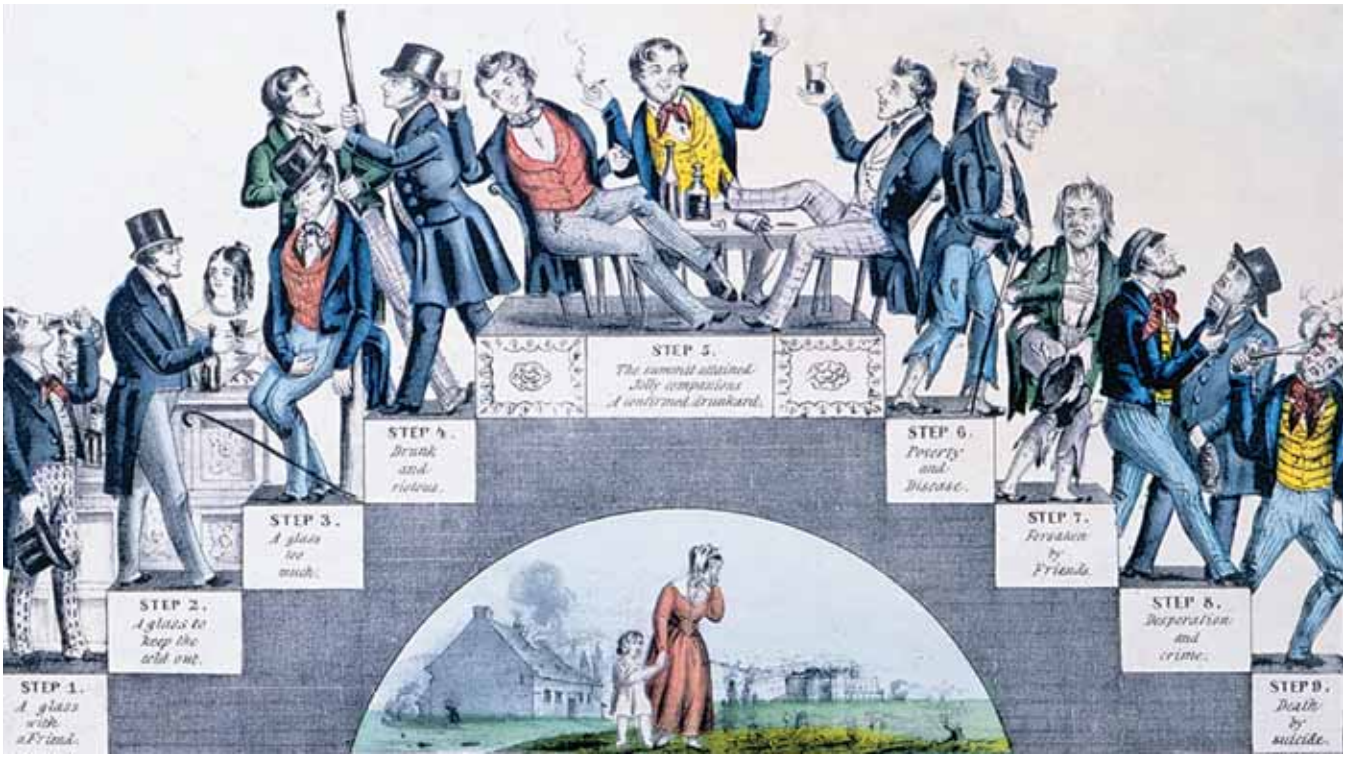
Lydia, and other middle-class women carried the Christian message to the wives of the unconverted, set up Sunday schools for poor children, and formed the Female Charitable Society to assist the unemployed.

Finney's efforts to create a spiritual Christian community were not completely successful. Skilled workers in strong craft organizations — boot makers, carpenters, stonemasons, and boatbuilders — protested that they needed higher wages and better schools more urgently than sermons and prayers. Poor people ignored Finney's revival, as did Irish Catholic immigrants, many of whom hated Protestants as religious heretics and political oppressors.

Nonetheless, revivalists from New England to the Midwest copied Finney's evangelical message and techniques. In New York City, wealthy silk merchants Arthur and Lewis Tappan founded a magazine, *The Christian Evangelist*, that promoted Finney's ideas. The revivals swept through Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Indiana, where, a convert reported, "you could not go upon the street and hear any conversation, except upon religion." The success of the revivals "has been so general and thorough," concluded a Presbyterian general assembly, "that the whole customs of society have changed."

EXPLAIN CONSEQUENCES
What was Finney's central message, and how did it influence the work of reform movements?

Temperance The temperance movement was the most successful social reform. Beer and rum had long been standard fare in American rituals: patriotic ceremonies, work breaks, barn raisings, and games. Long before the arrival of spirit-drinking Irish and beer-drinking German immigrants, grogshops dotted almost every block in working-class districts and were centers of disorder. During the 1820s and 1830s, alcohol consumption reached new heights, even among the elite; alcoholism killed Daniel Tompkins, vice president under James Monroe, and undermined Henry Clay's bid for the presidency. Heavy drinking was especially devastating for wage earners, who could ill afford its costs. Although Methodist artisans and ambitious



The Drunkard's Progress: From the First Glass to the Grave

This 1846 lithograph, published by N. Currier, suggests the inevitable fate of those who drink. The drunkard's descent into "Poverty and Disease" ends with "Death by suicide," leaving a grieving and destitute wife and child. Temperance reformers urged Americans to take "The Cold Water Cure" by drinking water instead of alcoholic beverages. To promote abstinence among the young, in 1836 revivalist preacher Reverend Thomas Poage Hunt founded the Cold Water Army, an organization that grew to embrace several hundred thousand children, all of whom pledged "perpetual hate to all that can Intoxicate." Library of Congress.

A Debate over Catholic Immigration

Between 1776 and 1830, few immigrants came to the United States. Then, increasing population and poverty in Europe prompted the migration of hundreds of thousands of Germans (both Catholics and Protestants) and Irish Catholics. The sudden arrival of foreign Catholics amidst the intense Protestantism of the Second Great Awakening led to religious riots, the formation of the nativist American Party, and sharp debates in the public press. Contemporary pamphlets and books offer historians access to the public rhetoric (and the private passions) of the time.

Lyman Beecher

Catholicism Is Incompatible with Republicanism

Lyman Beecher (1775–1863) was a leading Protestant minister and the father of a remarkable family: the influential minister Henry Ward Beecher and authors Harriet Beecher Stowe (*Uncle Tom's Cabin*) and Catharine Beecher (*A Treatise on Domestic Economy*). In *A Plea for the West* (1835), Lyman Beecher warned Protestants of the powerful priestly hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church and its opposition to republicanism. Papal encyclicals issued by Pope Gregory XVI (*Mirari Vos*, 1832) and Pope Pius IX (*Quanta Cura*, 1864) condemned republicanism, freedom of conscience, and the separation of church and state as false political ideologies.

Since the irruption of the northern barbarians, the world has never witnessed such a rush of dark-minded population from one country to another, as is now leaving Europe, and dashing upon our shores. . . . They come, also, not undirected. . . . [They] are led or followed quickly by a Catholic priesthood, who maintain over them in the land of strangers and unknown tongues an [absolute] ascendancy. . . .

The ministers of no Protestant sect could or would dare to attempt to regulate the votes of their people as the Catholic priests can do, who . . . have almost unlimited power over the conscience as it respects the performance of every civil or social duty.

There is another point of dissimilarity. . . . The opinions of the Protestant clergy are congenial with liberty — they are chosen by the people who have been educated as freemen, and they are dependent on them for patronage and support. The Catholic system is adverse to liberty, and the clergy to a great extent are dependent on foreigners [the pope and European bishops] opposed to the principles of our government.

Nor is this all. . . . How many mechanics, merchants, lawyers, physicians, in any political crisis, might [the priests] reach and render timid . . . ? A tenth part of the suffrage of the nation, thus condensed and wielded by the Catholic powers of Europe, might decide our elections, perplex our policy, inflame and divide the nation, break the bond of our union, and throw down our free institutions. . . .

[Catholicism is] a religion which never prospered but in alliance with despotic governments, has always been and still is the inflexible enemy of Liberty of conscience and free inquiry, and at this moment is the main stay of the battle against republican institutions.

Source: Lyman Beecher, *A Plea for the West* (Cincinnati: Truman & Smith, 1835), 72–73, 126, 59–63, 85–86, 59.

Orestes Brownson

Catholicism as a Necessity for Popular Government

Like Lyman Beecher, Orestes Brownson was born into the Presbyterian Church, but he quickly grew dissatisfied with its doctrines. After experimenting with Unitarianism, communalism, socialism, and transcendentalism, Brownson

converted to Catholicism in 1844. A zealous convert, Brownson defended Catholicism with rigorous, provocative arguments in this article, "Catholicity Necessary to Sustain Popular Liberty" (1845).

Without the Roman Catholic religion it is impossible to preserve a democratic government, and secure its free, orderly, and wholesome action. . . . The theory of democracy is, Construct your government and commit it to the people to be taken care of . . . as they shall think proper.

It is a beautiful theory, and would work admirably, if it were not for one little difficulty, namely, the people are fallible, both individually and collectively, and governed by their passions and interests, which not unfrequently lead them far astray, and produce much mischief.

We know of but one solution of the difficulty, and that is in RELIGION. There is no foundation for virtue but in religion, and it is only religion that can command the degree of popular virtue and intelligence requisite to insure to popular government the right direction. . . . But what religion? It must be a religion which is above the people and controls them, or it will not answer the purpose. It cannot be Protestantism, [because] . . . the faith and discipline of a [Protestant] sect take any and every direction the public opinion of that sect demands. All is loose, floating, — is here to-day, is there tomorrow, and, next day, may be nowhere . . . according to the prejudices, interests, or habits of the people. . . .

Here, then, is the reason why Protestantism, though it may institute, cannot sustain popular liberty. It is itself subject to popular control, and must follow in all things the popular will, passion, interest, ignorance, prejudice, or caprice.

If Protestantism will not answer the purpose, what religion will? The Roman Catholic, or none. The Roman Catholic religion assumes, as its point of departure, that it is instituted not to be taken care of by the people, but to take care of the people; not to be governed by them, but to govern them. The word is harsh in democratic ears, we admit; but it is not the office of religion to say soft or pleasing words. . . . The people need governing, and must be governed, or nothing but anarchy and destruction await them. They must have a master. . . .

Quote our expression, THE PEOPLE MUST HAVE A MASTER, as you doubtless will; hold it up in glaring capitals, to excite the unthinking and unreasoning multitude, and to doubly fortify their prejudices against Catholicity . . . [even as you] seek to bring the people into subjection to your banks or moneyed corporations. . . .

The Roman Catholic religion, then, is necessary to sustain popular liberty, because popular liberty can be sustained only by a religion free from popular control, above the people, speaking from above and able to command them.

Source: Orestes A. Brownson, *Essays and Reviews, Chiefly on Theology, Politics, and Socialism* (New York: D. & J. Sadlier, 1852), 368–370, 372–373, 376, 379–381.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. According to Beecher, what specific dangers does Catholicism pose to American republican institutions? Why do Protestant churches not pose the same dangers?
2. Compare and contrast Brownson's and Beecher's views of the social and political impact of Catholicism. How does Brownson defend the values and practices of the Catholic Church?
3. Given Brownson's statement that "the people must have a master," what would be his view of popular democratic government? Would the leaders of the Protestant Benevolent Empire agree with any aspects of Brownson's social and political philosophy?

craft workers swore off liquor to protect their work skills, health, and finances, other workers drank heavily on the job — and not just during the traditional 11 A.M. and 4 P.M. "refreshers." A baker recalled how "one man was stationed at the window to watch, while the rest drank."

The evangelical Protestants who took over the **American Temperance Society** in 1832 set out to curb the consumption of alcoholic beverages. The society grew quickly to two thousand chapters and more than 200,000 members. Its nationwide campaign employed revivalist methods — group confession and prayer, using women as spiritual guides, and sudden emotional conversion — and was a stunning success. On one day in New York City in 1841, more than 4,000 people took the temperance "pledge." The annual consumption of spirits fell dramatically, from an average of 5 gallons per person in 1830 to 2 gallons in 1845.

Evangelical reformers celebrated religion as the key to moral improvement. Laziness and drinking might be cured by self-discipline, as Benjamin Franklin had argued, but religious conversion would ensure a profound change of heart. Religious discipline and the ideology of social mobility thus served as powerful cements, bonding middle-class Americans and wage-earning citizens as they grappled with the economic divisions created by industrialization, market expansion, and increasing cultural diversity.

Immigration and Cultural Conflict

Cultural diversity was the result of a vast wave of immigration. Between 1840 and 1860, about 2 million Irish, 1.5 million Germans, and 750,000 Britons poured into the United States. The British migrants were primarily Protestants and relatively prosperous — trained professionals, propertied farmers, and skilled workers. Many German immigrants also came from propertied farming and artisan families and had sufficient resources to move to the midwestern states of Wisconsin, Iowa, and Missouri. Poorer Germans and most of the Irish settled in the Northeast, where by 1860 they numbered nearly one-third of white adults. Most immigrants avoided the South because they feared competition from enslaved workers.

UNDERSTAND POINTS OF VIEW
Why did the Catholic hierarchy consider republicanism a threat? Why did Morse think the same of Catholicism?

Irish Poverty The poorest migrants, Irish peasants and laborers, were fleeing a famine caused by severe overpopulation and a devastating blight that destroyed much of the Irish potato crop. They settled mostly in the cities of New England and New York. The men took low-paying jobs as factory hands, construction workers, and canal diggers, while the women became washerwomen and domestic servants. Irish families crowded into cheap tenement buildings with primitive sanitation systems and were the first to die when disease struck a city. In the summer of 1849, cholera epidemics took the lives of thousands of poor immigrants in St. Louis and New York City.

In times of hardship and sorrow, immigrants turned to their churches. Many Germans and virtually all the Irish were Catholics, and they fueled the growth of the American Catholic Church. In 1840, there were 16 Catholic dioceses and 700 churches; by 1860, there were 45 dioceses and 2,500 churches. Guided by their priests and bishops, Catholics built an impressive network of institutions — charitable societies, orphanages, militia companies, parochial schools, and political organizations — that maintained both their religion and their German or Irish identity.

Nativism Confronted by Catholic and German-speaking immigrants, some American-born citizens formed **nativist movements** that condemned immigration and asserted the superiority of Protestant religious and cultural values. In 1834, artist and inventor Samuel F. B. Morse published *Foreign Conspiracy Against the Liberties of the United States*, which warned of a Catholic threat to American republican institutions. Morse argued that Catholic immigrants would obey the dictates of Pope Gregory XVI (1831–1846), who urged Catholics to repudiate republicanism and acknowledge the "submission due to princes" and to the papacy. Republican-minded Protestants of many denominations shared Morse's fears of papal interference in American life and politics, and *Foreign Conspiracy* became their handbook (American Voices, p. 308).

The social tensions stemming from industrialization intensified nativist and anti-Catholic attitudes. Unemployed Protestant mechanics and factory workers joined mobs that attacked Catholic immigrants, accusing them of taking jobs and driving down wages. These cultural conflicts undercut trade unionism, because many Protestant wage earners sided more with their Protestant employers than with their Catholic coworkers. Benevolent-minded Protestants supported the anti-Catholic movement for reasons of public policy. As crusaders for public education, they opposed the use of tax resources for Catholic schools; as advocates of temperance and civilized manners, they condemned the rowdyism of drunken Irish men.

Religious and cultural tensions led to violence. In 1834, in Charlestown, Massachusetts, a quarrel between Catholic laborers repairing a convent and Protestant workers in a neighboring brickyard led to a full-scale riot and the convent's destruction. In 1844, in Philadelphia, riots erupted when the Catholic bishop persuaded public-school officials to use both Catholic and Protestant versions of the Bible. Anti-Irish violence incited by the city's nativist clubs eventually escalated into open warfare between Protestants and the Pennsylvania militia. Thus even as the American economic revolution attracted millions of European immigrants, it divided society along lines of ethnicity and religion as well as class.

SUMMARY

This chapter examined the causes of the economic transformation of the first half of the nineteenth century. That transformation had two facets: a major increase in production — the Industrial Revolution — and the expansion of commerce — the Market Revolution. Water, steam, and minerals such as coal and iron were crucial ingredients in both revolutions — driving factory machinery, carrying goods to market on canals and rivers, and propelling steamboats and railroad engines.

We also explored the consequences of that transformation: the rise of an urban society, the increasing similarity between the Northeast and Midwest and their growing difference from the South, and the creation of a society divided by class and ethnicity. To shape this emerging society, benevolent reformers and evangelical revivalists worked to instill moral discipline and Christian values. However, artisan republicans, unionized workers, and Irish and German immigrants had their own cultural values and economic interests. The result was a fragmented society. As the next chapter suggests, Americans looked to their political system, which was becoming increasingly democratic, to address these social divisions. In fact, the tensions among economic inequality, cultural diversity, and political democracy became a troubling — and enduring — part of American life.

CHAPTER REVIEW

MAKE IT STICK Go to **LearningCurve** to retain what you've read.

TERMS TO KNOW

Identify and explain the significance of each term below.

Key Concepts & Events

Industrial Revolution (p. 286)
division of labor (p. 286)
mineral-based economy (p. 287)
mechanics (p. 287)
Waltham-Lowell System (p. 288)
machine tools (p. 290)
artisan republicanism (p. 291)
unions (p. 291)
labor theory of value (p. 292)
Market Revolution (p. 293)
Erie Canal (p. 293)
middle class (p. 302)
self-made man (p. 304)
Benevolent Empire (p. 305)
Sabbatarian values (p. 306)
moral free agency (p. 306)
American Temperance Society (p. 310)
nativist movements (p. 310)

Key People

Samuel Slater (p. 287)
Francis Cabot Lowell (p. 287)
Sellars Family (p. 290)
Eli Whitney (p. 290)
Cyrus McCormick (p. 300)
Lyman Beecher (p. 305)
Charles Grandison Finney and Lydia Finney (p. 305)

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Answer these questions to demonstrate your understanding of the chapter's main ideas.

1. What was the impact of the economic revolution on the various social groups and classes?
2. What different types of reform movements arose during this period, and what types of change did they advocate? What strategies did they use, and how successful were they in their efforts?
3. Did the Industrial and Market revolutions make America a more "republican" society? Or did they undermine republicanism? Defend your interpretation by reference to specific events and developments.
4. **THEMATIC UNDERSTANDING** Review the events listed under "Work, Exchange, and Technology" on the thematic timeline on page 283. In what ways was the economy different in 1860 from what it had been in 1800? Which factors listed in the thematic timeline best explain the changes?

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Recognize the larger developments and continuities within and across chapters by answering these questions.

1. **ACROSS TIME AND PLACE** How did the economic revolution described in Chapter 9 affect the lives of women in various social groups, and how did it make their experiences different from those of their mothers, whose political and social lives were explored in Chapter 6 on the American Revolution, and their grandmothers, whose work lives and cultural experiences were considered in Chapter 4?
2. **VISUAL EVIDENCE** Look again at three images, the women weavers from Maine (p. 285), the woodworker (p. 292), and the Hartford family (p. 302). Taken together, what insights do they provide into the different aspects and social consequences of the Economic Revolution?

MORE TO EXPLORE

Start here to learn more about the events discussed in this chapter.

Stuart M. Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class* (1989). Discusses urban class formation during the nineteenth century.

Stephen P. Rice, *Minding the Machine* (2004). Analyzes the ways in which language reflects and undergirds changing social and cultural relationships.

Scott A. Sandage, *Born Losers: A History of Failure in America* (2005). Focuses on failed entrepreneurs and the changing cultural meaning of failure.

Charles G. Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815–1846* (1991). Explores the social impact of economic change.

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *The Age of Homespun* (2001). Uses objects of early craft production to tell absorbing stories that reveal broad historical developments.

For a textile operative's account of mill life, see **fordham.edu/halsall/mod/robinson-lowell.html**. For religion and benevolent societies, consult **loc.gov/exhibits/religion/rel07.html**.

TIMELINE

Ask yourself why this chapter begins and ends with these dates and then identify the links among related events.

1782	• Oliver Evans builds automated flour mill
1790	• Samuel Slater opens spinning mill in Providence, Rhode Island
1792	• Congress passes Post Office Act
1793	• Eli Whitney devises cotton gin
1814	• Boston Manufacturing Company opens factory in Waltham, Massachusetts
1816–1828	• Congress levies protective tariffs
1817	• Erie Canal begun (completed in 1825)
1820–1840	• Urban population surges in Northeast and Midwest; shoe entrepreneurs adopt division of labor
1820s	• New England women take textile jobs • Rise of Benevolent Empire spurs conservative social reforms
1824	• *Gibbons v. Ogden* promotes interstate trade
1830s	• Emergence of western commercial cities • Labor movement gains strength • Middle-class culture emerges • Growth of temperance movement
1830	• Charles G. Finney begins Rochester revivals
1840s	• Irish and German immigration sparks ethnic riots • Maturation of machine-tool industry
1842	• *Commonwealth v. Hunt* legitimizes trade unions
1850s	• Expansion of railroads in Northeast and Midwest
1857	• Overproduction and speculation trigger a business recession

KEY TURNING POINT: Many of the early timeline entries concern economic matters, while later entries refer to other subjects. Based on your reading of the chapter, when and why does this change in emphasis occur?

CHAPTER 10

A Democratic Revolution 1800–1844

IDENTIFY THE BIG IDEA

What were the main features of the Democratic Revolution, and what role did Andrew Jackson play in its outcome?

Europeans who visited the United States in the 1830s mostly praised its republican society but not its political parties and politicians. "The gentlemen spit, talk of elections and the price of produce, and spit again," Frances Trollope reported in *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (1832). In her view, American politics was the sport of self-serving party politicians who reeked of "whiskey and onions." Other Europeans lamented the low intellectual level of American political debate. The "clap-trap of praise and pathos" from a Massachusetts politician "deeply disgusted" Harriet Martineau, while the shallow arguments advanced by the inept "farmers, shopkeepers, and country lawyers" who sat in the New York assembly astonished Basil Hall.

The negative verdict was nearly unanimous. "The most able men in the United States are very rarely placed at the head of affairs," French aristocrat Alexis de Tocqueville concluded in *Democracy in America* (1835). The reason, said Tocqueville, lay in the character of democracy itself. Most citizens ignored important policy issues, jealously refused to elect their intellectual superiors, and listened in awe to "the clamor of a mountebank [a charismatic fraud] who knows the secret of stimulating their tastes."

These Europeans were witnessing the American Democratic Revolution. Before 1815, men of ability had sat in the seats of government, and the prevailing ideology had been republicanism, or rule by "men of TALENTS and VIRTUE," as a newspaper put it. Many of those leaders feared popular rule, so they wrote constitutions with Bills of Rights, bicameral legislatures, and independent judiciaries, and they censured overambitious men who campaigned for public office. But history took a different course. By the 1820s and 1830s, the watchwords were *democracy* and *party politics*, a system run by men who avidly sought office and rallied supporters through newspapers, broadsides, and great public processions. Politics became a sport—a competitive contest for the votes of ordinary men. "That the majority should govern was a fundamental maxim in all free governments," declared Martin Van Buren, the most talented of the new breed of professional politicians. A republican-minded Virginian condemned Van Buren as "too great an intriguer," but by encouraging ordinary Americans to burn with "election fever" and support party principles, he and other politicians redefined the meaning of democratic government and made it work.

The Politics of Democracy As ordinary American men asserted a claim to a voice in government affairs, politicians catered to their preferences and prejudices. Aspiring candidates took their messages to voters, in rural hamlets as well as large towns. This detail from George Caleb Bingham's *Stump Speaking* (1855) shows a swanky, tail-coated politician on an improvised stage seeking the votes of an audience of well-dressed gentlemen and local farmers—identified by their broad-brimmed hats and casual attire.
Private Collection/The Bridgeman Art Library.

The Rise of Popular Politics, 1810–1828

Expansion of the **franchise** (the right to vote) dramatically symbolized the Democratic Revolution. By the 1830s, most states allowed nearly all white men to vote. Nowhere else in the world did ordinary farmers and wage earners exercise such political influence; in England, the Reform Bill of 1832 extended the vote to only 600,000 out of 6 million men — a mere 10 percent. Equally important, political parties provided voters with the means to express their preferences.

The Decline of the Notables and the Rise of Parties

The American Revolution weakened the elite-run society of the colonial era but did not overthrow it. Only two states — Pennsylvania and Vermont — gave the vote to all male taxpayers, and many families of low rank continued to defer to their social "betters." Consequently, wealthy **notables** — northern landlords, slave-owning planters, and seaport merchants — dominated the political system in the new republic. And rightly so, said John Jay, the first chief justice of the Supreme Court: "Those who own the country are the most fit persons to participate in the government of it." Jay and other notables managed local elections by building up an "interest": lending money to small farmers, giving business to storekeepers, and treating their tenants to rum. An outlay of $20 for refreshments, remarked one poll watcher, "may produce about 100 votes." This gentry-dominated system kept men who lacked wealth and powerful family connections from seeking office.

The Rise of Democracy To expand the suffrage, Maryland reformers in the 1810s invoked the equal-rights rhetoric of republicanism. They charged that property qualifications for voting were a "tyranny" because they endowed "one class of men with privileges which are denied to another." To defuse such arguments and deter migration to the West, legislators in Maryland and other seaboard states grudgingly accepted a broader franchise and its democratic results. The new voters often rejected candidates who wore "top boots, breeches, and shoe buckles," their hair in "powder and queues." Instead, they elected men who dressed simply and endorsed popular rule.

IDENTIFY CAUSES
What was the relationship between the growth of democracy and the emergence of political parties?

Smallholding farmers and ambitious laborers in the Midwest and Southwest likewise challenged the old hierarchical order. In Ohio, a traveler reported, "no white man or woman will bear being called a servant." The constitutions of the new states of Indiana (1816), Illinois (1818), and Alabama (1819) prescribed a broad male franchise, and voters usually elected middling men to local and state offices. A well-to-do migrant in Illinois was surprised to learn that the man who plowed his fields "was a colonel of militia, and a member of the legislature." Once in public office, men from modest backgrounds restricted imprisonment for debt, kept taxes low, and allowed farmers to claim squatters' rights to unoccupied land.

By the mid-1820s, many state legislatures had given the vote to all white men or to all men who paid taxes or served in the militia. Only a few — North Carolina, Virginia, and Rhode Island — still required the possession of freehold property. Equally significant, between 1818 and 1821, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New York wrote more democratic constitutions that reapportioned legislative districts on the basis of population and mandated the popular election (rather than the appointment) of judges and justices of the peace.

Democratic politics was contentious and, because it attracted ambitious men, often corrupt. Powerful entrepreneurs and speculators — both notables and self-made men — demanded government assistance and paid bribes to get it. Speculators won land grants by paying off the members of important committees, and bankers distributed shares of stock to key legislators. When the Seventh Ward Bank of New York City received a legislative charter in 1833, the bank's officials set aside one-third of the 3,700 shares of stock for themselves and their friends and almost two-thirds for state legislators and bureaucrats, leaving just 40 shares for public sale (America Compared, p. 317).

More political disputes broke out when religious reformers sought laws to enforce the cultural agenda of the Benevolent Empire. In Utica, New York, evangelical Presbyterians insisted upon a town ordinance restricting Sunday entertainment. In response, a member of the local Universalist church — a freethinking Protestant denomination — denounced the measure as coercive and called for "Religious Liberty."

Parties Take Command The appearance of political parties encouraged such debates over government policy. Revolutionary-era Americans had condemned political "factions" as antirepublican, and the new state

AMERICA COMPARED

Alexis de Tocqueville

Letter to Louis de Kergorlay, June 29, 1831

In 1831, the French aristocrat Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–1859) came to the United States to report on its innovative penal system. Instead, he produced a brilliant analysis of the new republican society and politics, *Democracy in America* (1835, 1840). This letter to a French friend reveals his thinking and insights.

Do you know what, in this country's political realm, makes the most vivid impression on me? The effect of laws governing inheritance. . . . The English had exported their laws of primogeniture, according to which the eldest acquired three-quarters of the father's fortune. This resulted in a host of vast territorial domains passing from father to son and wealth remaining in families. My American informants tell me that there was no aristocracy but, instead, a class of great landowners leading a simple, rather intellectual life characterized by its air of good breeding, its manners, and a strong sense of family pride. . . . Since then, inheritance laws have been revised.

Primogeniture gave way to equal division, with almost magical results. Domains split up, passing into other hands. Family spirit disappeared. The aristocratic bias that marked the republic's early years was replaced by a democratic thrust of irresistible force. . . . I've seen several members of these old families. . . . They regret the loss of everything aristocratic: patronage, family pride, high tone. . . .

There can be no doubt that the inheritance law is responsible in some considerable measure for this complete triumph of democratic principles. The Americans . . . agree that "it has made us what we are, it is the foundation of our republic." . . .

When I apply these ideas to France, I cannot resist the thought that Louis XVIII's charter [of 1814 sought to restore the pre-Revolutionary regime by creating] . . . aristocratic institutions in political law, but [by mandating equality before the law and retaining the Revolutionary-era inheritance laws giving all children, irrespective of sex, an equal share of the parental estate] within the domain of civil law gave shelter to a democratic principle so vigorous that it was bound before long to destroy the foundations of the edifice it raised. . . . We are moving toward an unrestricted democracy . . . that . . . would not suit France at all. . . . [However,] there is no human power capable of changing the law of inheritance, and with this change our families will disappear, possessions will pass into other hands, wealth will be increasingly equalized, the upper class will melt into the middle, the latter will become immense and shape everything to its level. . . .

What I see in America leaves me doubting that government by the multitude, even under the most favorable circumstances — and they exist here — is a good thing. There is general agreement that in the early days of the republic, statesmen and members of the two legislative houses were much more distinguished than they are today. They almost all belonged to that class of landowners I mentioned above. The populace no longer chooses with such a sure hand. It generally favors those who flatter its passions and descend to its level.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. According to Tocqueville, what is the legal basis of American social equality and political democracy? What is the comparable situation in France?
2. Why does Tocqueville doubt that democratic rule is a good thing, even in the United States, and "would not suit France at all"?

and national constitutions made no mention of political parties. However, as the power of notables waned in the 1820s, disciplined political parties appeared in a number of states. Usually they were run by professional politicians, often middle-class lawyers and journalists. One observer called the new parties **political machines** because, like the new power-driven textile looms, they efficiently wove together the interests of diverse social and economic groups.

Martin Van Buren of New York was the chief architect of the emerging system of party government. The ambitious son of a Jeffersonian tavern keeper, Van Buren grew up in the landlord-dominated society of the Hudson River Valley. To get training as a lawyer, he

Martin Van Buren

Martin Van Buren's skills as a lawyer and a politician won him many admirers, as did his personal charm, sharp intellect, and imperturbable composure. "Little Van"—a mere 5 feet 6 inches in height—had almost as many detractors. Davy Crockett, Kentucky frontiersman, land speculator, and congressman, labeled him "an artful, cunning, intriguing, selfish lawyer," concerned only with "office and money." In truth, Van Buren was a complex man, a middle-class lawyer with republican values and aristocratic tastes who nonetheless created a democratic political party. National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution/Art Resource, NY.

relied on the Van Ness clan, a powerful local gentry family. Then, determined not to become their dependent "tool," Van Buren repudiated their tutelage and set out to create a political order based on party identity, not family connections. In justifying party governments, Van Buren rejected the traditional republican belief that political factions were dangerous and claimed that the opposite was true: "All men of sense know that political parties are inseparable from free government," because they checked an elected official's inherent "disposition to abuse power."

To see a longer excerpt of Martin Van Buren's autobiography, along with other primary sources from this period, see ***Sources for America's History.***

Between 1817 and 1821 in New York, Van Buren turned his "Bucktail" supporters (who wore a deer's tail on their hats) into the first statewide political machine. He purchased a newspaper, the *Albany Argus*, and used it to promote his policies and get out the vote. Patronage was an even more important tool. When Van Buren's Bucktails won control of the New York legislature in 1821, they acquired the power to appoint some six thousand of their friends to positions in New York's legal bureaucracy of judges, justices of the peace, sheriffs, deed commissioners, and coroners. Critics called this ruthless distribution of offices a **spoils system**, but Van Buren argued it was fair, operating "sometimes in favour of one party, and sometimes of another." Party government was thoroughly republican, he added, because it reflected the preferences of a majority of the citizenry. To ensure the passage of the party's legislative program, Van Buren insisted on disciplined voting as determined by a **caucus**, a meeting of party leaders. On one crucial occasion, the "Little Magician"—a nickname reflecting Van Buren's short stature and political dexterity—honored seventeen New York legislators for sacrificing "individual preferences for the general good" of the party.

The Election of 1824

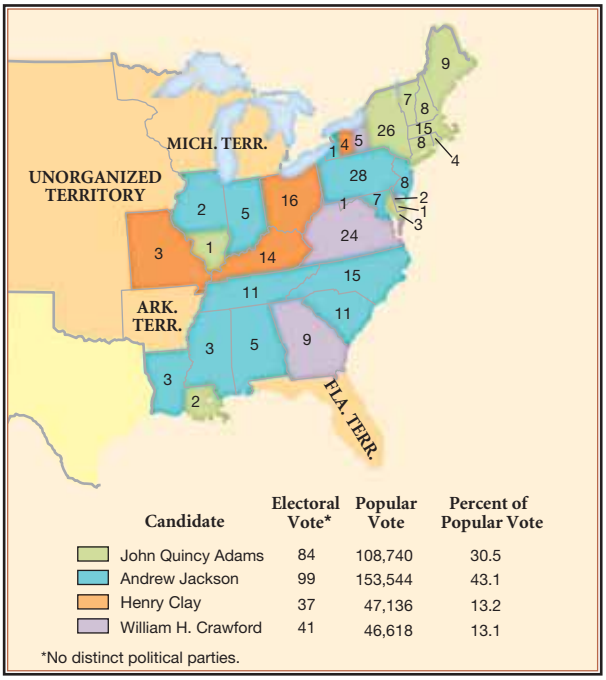
The advance of political democracy in the states undermined the traditional notable-dominated system of national politics. After the War of 1812, the aristocratic Federalist Party virtually disappeared, and the Republican Party splintered into competing factions (Chapter 7). As the election of 1824 approached, five Republican candidates campaigned for the presidency. Three were veterans of President James Monroe's cabinet: Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, the son of former president John Adams; Secretary of War John C. Calhoun; and Secretary of the Treasury William H. Crawford. The other candidates were Henry Clay of Kentucky, the hard-drinking, dynamic Speaker of the House of Representatives; and General Andrew Jackson, now a senator from Tennessee. When the Republican caucus in Congress selected Crawford as the party's official nominee, the other candidates took their case to the voters. Thanks to democratic reforms, eighteen of the twenty-four states required popular elections (rather than a vote of the state legislature) to choose their representatives to the electoral college.

Each candidate had strengths. Thanks to his diplomatic successes as secretary of state, John Quincy

Adams enjoyed national recognition; and his family's prestige in Massachusetts ensured him the electoral votes of New England. Henry Clay based his candidacy on the **American System**, his integrated mercantilist program of national economic development similar to the Commonwealth System of the state governments. Clay wanted to strengthen the Second Bank of the United States, raise tariffs, and use tariff revenues to finance **internal improvements**, that is, public works such as roads and canals. His nationalistic program won praise in the West, which needed better transportation, but elicited sharp criticism in the South, which relied on rivers to market its cotton and had few manufacturing industries to protect. William Crawford of Georgia, an ideological heir of Thomas Jefferson, denounced Clay's American System as a scheme to "consolidate" political power in Washington. Recognizing Crawford's appeal in the South, John C. Calhoun of South Carolina withdrew from the race and endorsed Andrew Jackson.

As the hero of the Battle of New Orleans, Jackson benefitted from the surge of patriotism after the War of 1812. Born in the Carolina backcountry, Jackson settled in Nashville, Tennessee, where he formed ties to influential families through marriage and a career as an attorney and a slave-owning cotton planter. His rise from common origins symbolized the new democratic age, and his reputation as a "plain solid republican" attracted voters in all regions. Still, Jackson's strong showing in the electoral college surprised most political leaders. The Tennessee senator received 99 electoral votes; Adams garnered 84 votes; Crawford, struck down by a stroke during the campaign, won 41; and Clay finished with 37 (Map 10.1).

Because no candidate received an absolute majority, the Twelfth Amendment to the Constitution (ratified in 1804) set the rules: the House of Representatives would choose the president from among the three highest vote-getters. This procedure hurt Jackson because many congressmen feared that the rough-hewn "military chieftain" might become a tyrant. Excluded from the race, Henry Clay used his influence as Speaker to thwart Jackson's election. Clay assembled a coalition of representatives from New England and the Ohio River Valley that voted Adams into the presidency in 1825. Adams showed his gratitude by appointing Clay his secretary of state, the traditional stepping-stone to the presidency. Clay's appointment was politically fatal for both men: Jackson's supporters accused Clay and Adams of making a **corrupt bargain**, and they vowed to oppose Adams's policies and to prevent Clay's rise to the presidency.



Candidate	Electoral Vote*	Popular Vote	Percent of Popular Vote
John Quincy Adams	84	108,740	30.5
Andrew Jackson	99	153,544	43.1
Henry Clay	37	47,136	13.2
William H. Crawford	41	46,618	13.1

*No distinct political parties.

MAP 10.1
The Presidential Election of 1824

Regional voting was the dominant pattern in 1824. John Quincy Adams captured every electoral vote in New England and most of those in New York; Henry Clay carried Ohio and Kentucky, the most populous trans-Appalachian states; and William Crawford took the southern states of Virginia and Georgia. Only Andrew Jackson claimed a national constituency, winning Pennsylvania and New Jersey in the East, Indiana and most of Illinois in the Midwest, and much of the South. Only 356,000 Americans voted, about 27 percent of the eligible electorate.

The Last Notable President: John Quincy Adams

As president, Adams called for bold national action. "The moral purpose of the Creator," he told Congress, was to use the president to "improve the conditions of himself and his fellow men." Adams called for the establishment of a national university in Washington, scientific explorations in the Far West, and a uniform standard of weights and measures. Most important, he endorsed Henry Clay's American System and its three key elements: protective tariffs to stimulate manufacturing, federally subsidized roads and canals to facilitate commerce, and a national bank to control credit and provide a uniform currency.

UNDERSTAND POINTS OF VIEW
Why did Jacksonians consider the political deal between Adams and Clay "corrupt"?

The Fate of Adams's Policies Manufacturers, entrepreneurs, and farmers in the Northeast and Midwest welcomed Adams's proposals. However, his policies won little support in the South, where planters opposed protective tariffs because these taxes raised the price of manufactures. Southern smallholders also feared powerful banks that could force them into bankruptcy. From his deathbed, Thomas Jefferson condemned Adams for promoting "a single and splendid government of [a monied] aristocracy . . . riding and ruling over the plundered ploughman and beggared yeomanry."

EXPLAIN CAUSES
What were the successes and failures of John Adams's presidency, and what accounted for those outcomes?

Other politicians objected to the American System on constitutional grounds. In 1817, President Madison had vetoed the Bonus Bill, which proposed using the national government's income from the Second Bank of the United States to fund improvement projects in the states. Such projects, Madison argued, were the sole responsibility of the states, a sentiment shared by the Republican followers of Thomas Jefferson. In 1824, Martin Van Buren likewise declared his allegiance to the constitutional "doctrines of the Jefferson School" and his opposition to **"consolidated government,"** a powerful and potentially oppressive national administration. Now a member of the U.S. Senate, Van Buren helped to defeat most of Adams's proposed subsidies for roads and canals.

The Tariff Battle The major battle of the Adams administration came over tariffs. The Tariff of 1816 had placed relatively high duties on imports of cheap English cotton cloth, allowing New England textile producers to control that segment of the market. In 1824, Adams and Clay secured a new tariff that protected New England and Pennsylvania manufacturers from more expensive woolen and cotton textiles and also English iron goods. Without these tariffs, British imports would have dominated the market and significantly inhibited American industrial development (Chapter 9, America Compared, p. 289).

Recognizing the appeal of tariffs, Van Buren and his Jacksonian allies hopped on the bandwagon. By increasing duties on wool, hemp, and other imported raw materials, they hoped to win the support of farmers in New York, Ohio, and Kentucky for Jackson's presidential candidacy in 1828. The tariff had become a political weapon. "I fear this tariff thing," remarked Thomas Cooper, the president of the College of South Carolina and an advocate of free trade. "[B]y some strange mechanical contrivance [it has become] . . . a machine for manufacturing Presidents, instead of broadcloths, and bed blankets." Disregarding southern protests, northern Jacksonians joined with supporters of Adams and Clay to enact the Tariff of 1828, which raised duties significantly on raw materials, textiles, and iron goods.

The new tariff enraged the South, which produced the world's cheapest raw cotton and did not need to protect its main industry. Moreover, the tariff cost southern planters about $100 million a year. Planters had to buy either higher-cost American textiles and iron goods, thus enriching northeastern businesses and workers, or highly dutied British imports, thus paying the expenses of the national government. The new tariff was "little less than legalized pillage," an Alabama legislator declared, calling it a **Tariff of Abominations**. Ignoring the Jacksonians' support for the Tariff of 1828, most southerners heaped blame on President Adams.

Southern governments also criticized Adams's Indian policy. A deeply moral man, the president supported the treaty-guaranteed land rights of Native

A CARTOON COMPARING CONDITIONS UNDER FREE TRADE AND PROTECTIVE TARIFF
From "The United States Weekly Telegram," November 5, 1832.

The "Tariff of Abominations"

Political cartoons enjoyed wide use in eighteenth-century England and became popular in the United States during the political battles of the First Party System (1794–1815). By the 1820s, American newspapers, the mouthpiece of political parties, published cartoons daily. This cartoon attacks the tariffs of 1828 and 1832 as hostile to the prosperity of the South. The gaunt figure on the left represents a southern planter, starved by high tariff duties, while the northern textile manufacturer has grown stout feasting on the bounty of protectionism.

Americans against expansion-minded whites. In 1825, U.S. commissioners had secured a treaty from one faction of Creeks ceding its lands in Georgia to the United States for eventual sale to the state's citizens. When the Creek National Council repudiated the treaty, claiming that it was fraudulent, Adams called for new negotiations. In response, Georgia governor George M. Troup attacked the president as a "public enemy . . . the unblushing ally of the savages." Mobilizing Georgia's congressional delegation, Troup persuaded Congress to extinguish the Creeks' land titles, forcing most Creeks to leave the state.

Elsewhere, Adams's primary weakness was his out-of-date political style. The last notable to serve in the White House, he acted the part: aloof, inflexible, and paternalistic. When Congress rejected his activist economic policies, Adams accused its members of following the whims of public opinion and told them not to be enfeebled "by the will of our constituents." Ignoring his waning popularity, the president refused to dismiss hostile federal bureaucrats or to award offices to his supporters. Rather than "run" for reelection in 1828, Adams "stood" for it, telling friends, "If my country wants my services, she must ask for them."

"The Democracy" and the Election of 1828

Martin Van Buren and the politicians handling Andrew Jackson's campaign for the presidency had no reservations about running for office. To put Jackson in the White House, Van Buren revived the political coalition created by Thomas Jefferson, championing policies that appealed to both southern planters and northern farmers and artisans, the "plain Republicans of the North." John C. Calhoun, Jackson's running mate, brought his South Carolina allies into Van Buren's party, and Jackson's close friends in Tennessee rallied voters throughout the Old Southwest. The Little Magician hoped that a national party would reconcile the diverse "interests" that, as James Madison suggested in "Federalist No. 10" (Chapter 6), inevitably existed in a large republic. Equally important, added Jackson's ally Duff Green, it would put the "anti-slave party in the North . . . to sleep for twenty years to come."

At Van Buren's direction, the Jacksonians orchestrated a massive publicity campaign. In New York, fifty Democrat-funded newspapers declared their support for Jackson. Elsewhere, Jacksonians used mass meetings, torchlight parades, and barbecues to celebrate the candidate's frontier origin and rise to fame. They praised "Old Hickory" as a "natural" aristocrat, a self-made man.

The Jacksonians called themselves Democrats or "the Democracy" to convey their egalitarian message. As Thomas Morris told the Ohio legislature, Democrats were fighting for equality: the republic had been corrupted by legislative charters that gave "a few individuals rights and privileges not enjoyed by the citizens at large." Morris promised that the Democracy would destroy such "artificial distinction." Jackson himself declared that "equality among the people in the rights conferred by government" was the "great radical principle of freedom."

Jackson's message appealed to many social groups. His hostility to corporations and to Clay's American System won support from northeastern artisans and workers who felt threatened by industrialization. Jackson also captured the votes of Pennsylvania ironworkers and New York farmers who had benefitted from the controversial Tariff of Abominations. Yet, by astutely declaring his support for a "judicious" tariff that would balance regional interests, Jackson remained popular in the South. Old Hickory likewise garnered votes in the Southeast and Midwest, where his well-known hostility toward Native Americans reassured white farmers seeking Indian removal.

TRACE CHANGE OVER TIME

Jackson lost the presidential election of 1824 and won in 1828: what changes explain these different outcomes?

The Democrats' celebration of popular rule carried Jackson into office. In 1824, about one-quarter of the electorate had voted; in 1828, more than one-half went to the polls, and 56 percent voted for the Tennessee senator (Figure 10.1 and Map 10.2). The first president from a trans-Appalachian state, Jackson cut a dignified figure as he traveled to Washington. He "wore his hair carelessly but not ungracefully arranged," an English observer noted, "and in spite of his harsh, gaunt features looked like a gentleman and a soldier." Still, Jackson's popularity and sharp temper frightened men of wealth. Senator Daniel Webster of Massachusetts, a former Federalist and now a corporate lawyer, warned his clients that the new president would "bring a breeze with him. Which way it will blow, I cannot tell [but] . . . my fear is stronger than my hope." Supreme Court justice Joseph Story shared Webster's apprehensions. Watching an unruly Inauguration Day crowd climb over the elegant White House furniture to congratulate Jackson, Story lamented that "the reign of King 'Mob' seemed triumphant."

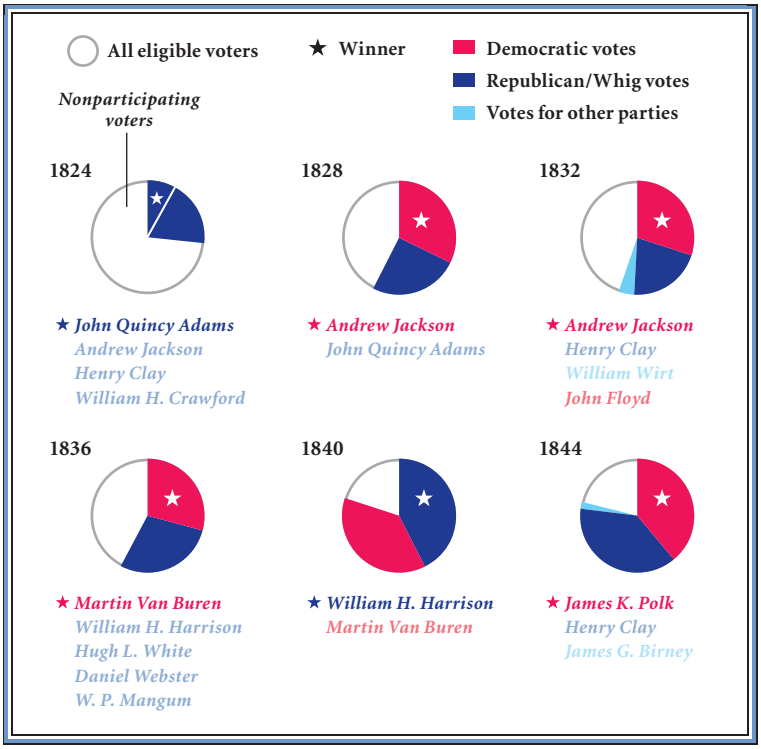
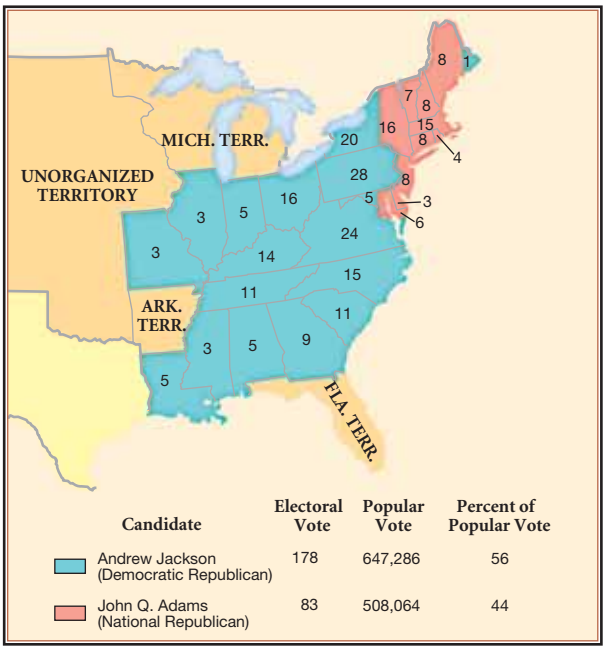


FIGURE 10.1
The Rise of Voter Turnout, 1824–1844

As the shrinking white sections of these pie graphs indicate, the proportion of eligible voters who cast ballots in presidential elections increased dramatically over time. In 1824, 27 percent voted; in 1840 and thereafter, about 80 percent went to the polls. Voter participation soared first in 1828, when Andrew Jackson and John Quincy Adams contested for the White House, and again in 1840, as competition heated up between Democrats and Whigs, who advocated different policies and philosophies of government. Democrats won most of these contests because their policies had greater appeal to ordinary citizens.



MAP 10.2
The Presidential Election of 1828

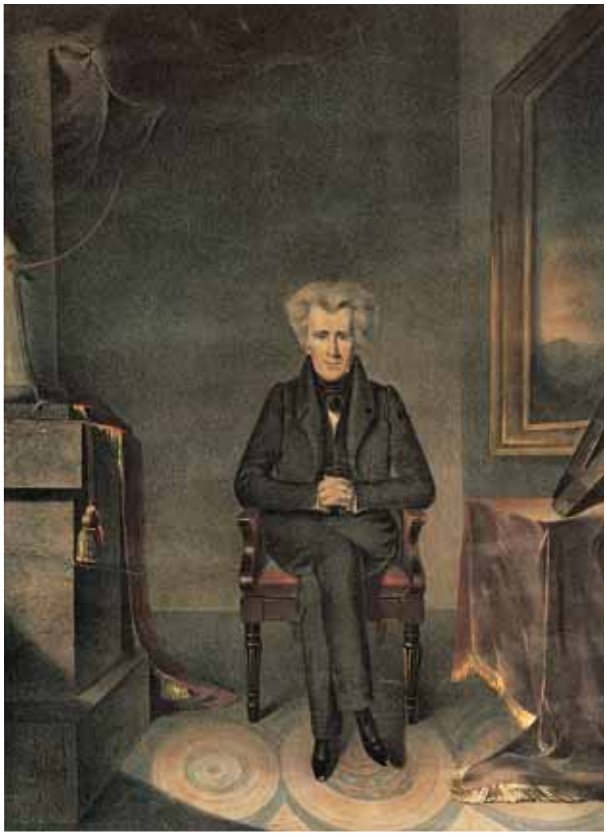
As in 1824, John Quincy Adams carried all of New England and some of the Mid-Atlantic states. However, Andrew Jackson swept the rest of the nation and won a resounding victory in the electoral college. Over 1.1 million American men cast ballots in 1828, more than three times the number who voted in 1824.

The Jacksonian Presidency, 1829–1837

American-style political democracy—a broad franchise, a disciplined political party, and policies favoring specific interests—ushered Andrew Jackson into office. Jackson used his popular mandate to transform the policies of the national government and the definition of the presidency. During his two terms, he enhanced presidential authority, destroyed the mercantilist and nationalist American System, and established a new ideology of limited government. An Ohio supporter summed up Jackson's vision: "the Sovereignty of the People, the Rights of the States, and a Light and Simple Government."

Jackson's Agenda: Rotation and Decentralization

To make policy, Jackson relied primarily on his so-called Kitchen Cabinet. Its most influential members were two Kentuckians, Francis Preston Blair, who edited the *Washington Globe*, and Amos Kendall, who wrote Jackson's speeches; Roger B. Taney of Maryland, who became attorney general, treasury secretary, and



President Andrew Jackson, 1830

The new president came to Washington with a well-deserved reputation as an aggressive Indian fighter and unpredictable military leader. In this official portrait, Jackson looks "presidential"—his dress and posture, and the artist's composition, conveyed an image of a calm, deliberate statesman. Subsequent events would show that Jackson had not lost his hard-edged authoritarian personality. Library of Congress.

then chief justice of the Supreme Court; and Martin Van Buren, whom Jackson named secretary of state.

Following Van Buren's example in New York, Jackson used patronage to create a disciplined national party. He rejected the idea of "property in office" (that a qualified official held a position permanently) and insisted on a rotation of officeholders when a new administration took power. Rotation would not lessen expertise, Jackson insisted, because public duties were "so plain and simple that men of intelligence may readily qualify themselves for their performance." William L. Marcy, a New York Jacksonian, offered a more realistic explanation for rotation: government jobs were like the spoils of war, and "to the victor belong the spoils of the enemy." Jackson used those spoils to reward his allies and win backing for his policies.

Jackson's highest priority was to destroy the American System. He believed that Henry Clay's system—and all government-sponsored plans for national economic development—were contrary to the Constitution, encouraged "consolidated government," and, through higher tariffs, increased the burden of taxation. As Clay noted apprehensively, the new president wanted "to cry down old [expansive, Hamiltonian] constructions of the Constitution . . . to make all Jefferson's opinions the articles of faith of the new Church." Declaring that the "voice of the people" called for "economy in the expenditures of the Government," Jackson rejected national subsidies for transportation projects. Invoking constitutional arguments, he vetoed four internal improvement bills in 1830, including an extension of the National Road, arguing that they infringed on "the reserved powers of states." By eliminating potential expenditures by the federal government, these vetoes also undermined the case for protective tariffs. As Jacksonian senator William Smith of South Carolina pointed out, "[D]estroy internal improvements and you leave no motive for the tariff."

IDENTIFY CAUSES

Jackson cut the national budget and the national debt but increased the number of federal employees. How do you explain this paradox?

The Tariff and Nullification

The Tariff of 1828 had helped Jackson win the presidency, but it saddled him with a major political crisis. There was fierce opposition to high tariffs throughout the South and especially in South Carolina. That state was the only one with an African American majority—56 percent of the population in 1830—and its slave owners, like the white sugar planters in the West Indies, feared a black rebellion. Even more, they worried about the legal abolition of slavery. The British Parliament had declared that slavery in its West Indian colonies would end in 1833; South Carolina planters, vividly recalling northern efforts to end slavery in Missouri (Chapter 8), worried that the U.S. Congress would follow the British lead. So they attacked the tariff, both to lower rates and to discourage the use of federal power to attack slavery.

The crisis began in 1832, when high-tariff congressmen ignored southern warnings that they were "endangering the Union" and reenacted the Tariff of Abominations. In response, leading South Carolinians called a state convention, which in November boldly adopted an Ordinance of Nullification declaring the tariffs of 1828 and 1832 to be null and void. The ordinance

Who Will Be Jackson's Heir?

Elected vice president in 1828, John C. Calhoun hoped to succeed Jackson in the White House. He failed to account for the ambition of Martin Van Buren, who managed Jackson's campaign and claimed the prized office of secretary of state. When Van Buren resigned as secretary in 1831 and Jackson nominated him as minister to Britain, Calhoun sought to destroy his rival by blocking his confirmation in the Senate. The "Little Magician" pounced on this miscalculation, persuading Jackson, already disillusioned by Calhoun's support for nullification, to oust him from the ticket. Van Buren took his place as vice president in 1832, carried into the office—as the cartoonist tells the tale—on Jackson's back, and succeeded to the presidency in 1836. © Collection of the New-York Historical Society.

UNDERSTAND POINTS OF VIEW

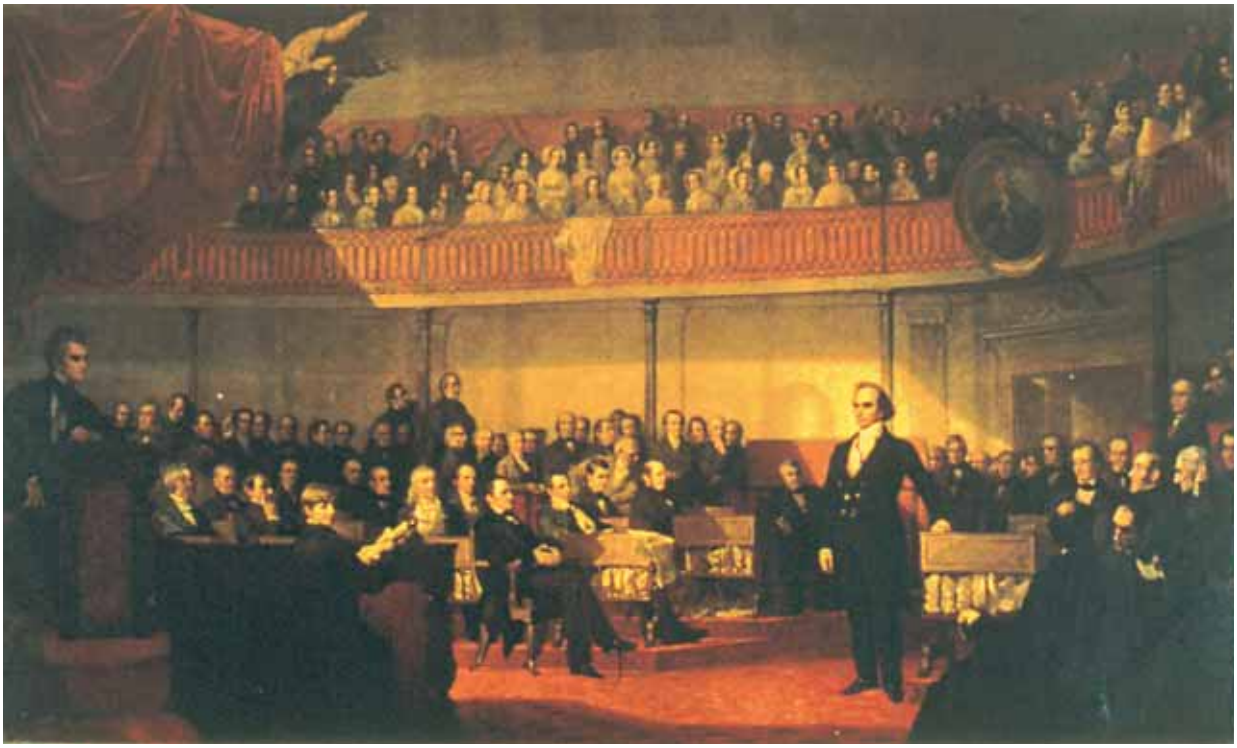
How did South Carolina justify nullification on constitutional grounds?

prohibited the collection of those duties in South Carolina after February 1, 1833, and threatened secession if federal officials tried to collect them.

South Carolina's act of **nullification**—the argument that a state has the right to void, within its borders, a law passed by Congress—rested on the constitutional arguments developed in *The South Carolina Exposition and Protest* (1828). Written anonymously by Vice President John C. Calhoun, the *Exposition* gave a localist (or sectional) interpretation to the federal union. Because each state or geographic region had distinct interests, localists argued, protective tariffs and other national legislation that operated unequally on the various states lacked fairness and legitimacy—in fact, they were unconstitutional. An obsessive defender of the interests of southern slave owners, Calhoun exaggerated the frequency and severity of such legislation, declaring, "Constitutional government and the government of a majority are utterly incompatible."

Calhoun's constitutional doctrines reflected the arguments advanced by Jefferson and Madison in the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions of 1798. Those resolutions asserted that, because state-based conventions had ratified the Constitution, sovereignty lay in the states, not in the people. Beginning from this premise, Calhoun argued that a state convention could declare a congressional law to be void within the state's borders. Replying to this **states' rights** interpretation of the Constitution, which had little support in the text of the document, Senator Daniel Webster of Massachusetts presented a nationalist interpretation that celebrated popular sovereignty and Congress's responsibility to secure the "general welfare."

Jackson hoped to find a middle path between Webster's strident nationalism and Calhoun's radical doctrine of localist federalism. The Constitution clearly gave the federal government the authority to establish tariffs, and Jackson vowed to enforce it. He declared that South Carolina's Ordinance of Nullification violated the letter of the Constitution and was "destructive of the great object for which it was formed." More pointedly, he warned, "Disunion by armed force is treason." At Jackson's request, Congress in early 1833 passed a military Force Bill, authorizing the president to compel South Carolina's obedience to national laws. Simultaneously, Jackson addressed the South's objections to high import duties with a new tariff act that,



The Great Webster-Hayne Debate, 1830

The "Tariff of Abominations" sparked one of the great debates in American history. When Senator Robert Y. Hayne of South Carolina (seated in the middle of the picture, with his legs crossed) opposed the federal tariffs by invoking the doctrines of states' rights and nullification, Daniel Webster rose to the defense of the Union. Speaking for two days to a spellbound Senate, Webster delivered an impassioned oration that celebrated the unity of the American people as the key to their freedom. His parting words — "Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable!" — quickly became part of the national memory. "Webster's Reply to Haynes," by G.P.A. Healy, City of Boston Art Commission.

over the course of a decade, reduced rates to the modest levels of 1816. Subsequently, export-hungry midwestern wheat farmers joined southern planters in advocating low duties to avoid retaliatory tariffs by foreign nations. "Illinois wants a market for her agricultural products," declared Senator Sidney Breese in 1846. "[S]he wants the market of the world."

Having won the political battle by securing a tariff reduction, the South Carolina convention did not press its constitutional stance on nullification. Jackson was satisfied. He had assisted the South economically while upholding the constitutional principle of national authority — a principle that Abraham Lincoln would embrace to defend the Union during the secession crisis of 1861.

The Bank War

In the midst of the tariff crisis, Jackson faced a major challenge from politicians who supported the **Second Bank of the United States**. Founded in Philadelphia in 1816 (Chapter 7), the bank was privately managed and operated under a twenty-year charter from the federal government, which owned 20 percent of its stock. The bank's most important role was to stabilize the nation's money supply, which consisted primarily of notes and bills of credit — in effect, paper money — issued by state-chartered banks. Those banks promised to redeem the notes on demand with "hard" money (or "specie") — that is, gold or silver coins minted by the U.S. or foreign governments — but there were few coins in circulation. By collecting those notes and regularly demanding specie, the Second Bank kept the state banks from issuing too much paper money and depreciating its value.

This cautious monetary policy pleased creditors — the bankers and entrepreneurs in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, whose capital investments were underwriting economic development. However, expansion-minded bankers, including friends of Jackson's in Nashville, demanded an end to central oversight. Moreover, many ordinary Americans worried that the

Second Bank would force weak banks to close, leaving them holding worthless paper notes. Many politicians resented the arrogance of the bank's president, Nicholas Biddle. "As to mere power," Biddle boasted, "I have been for years in the daily exercise of more personal authority than any President habitually enjoys."

Jackson's Bank Veto Although the Second Bank had many enemies, a political miscalculation by its friends brought its downfall. In 1832, Henry Clay and Daniel Webster persuaded Biddle to seek an early extension of the bank's charter (which still had four years to run). They had the votes in Congress to enact the required legislation and hoped to lure Jackson into a veto that would split the Democrats just before the 1832 elections.

Jackson turned the tables on Clay and Webster. He vetoed the rechartering bill with a masterful message that blended constitutional arguments with class rhetoric and patriotic fervor. Adopting the position taken by Thomas Jefferson in 1793, Jackson declared that Congress had no constitutional authority to charter a national bank. He condemned the bank as "subversive of the rights of the States," "dangerous to the liberties of the people," and a privileged monopoly that promoted "the advancement of the few at the expense of . . . farmers, mechanics, and laborers." Finally, the president noted that British aristocrats owned much of the bank's stock. Such a powerful institution should be "purely American," Jackson declared with patriotic zeal.

Jackson's attack on the bank carried him to victory in 1832. Old Hickory and Martin Van Buren, his new running mate, overwhelmed Henry Clay, who headed the National Republican ticket, by 219 to 49 electoral votes. Jackson's most fervent supporters were eastern workers and western farmers, who blamed the Second Bank for high urban prices and stagnant farm income. "All the flourishing cities of the West are mortgaged to this money power," charged Senator Thomas Hart Benton, a Jacksonian from Missouri. Still, many of Jackson's supporters had prospered during a decade of strong economic growth. Thousands of middle-class Americans — lawyers, clerks, shopkeepers, and artisans — had used the opportunity to rise in the world and cheered Jackson's attack on privileged corporations.

PLACE EVENTS IN CONTEXT
Why — and how — did Jackson destroy the Second National Bank?

The Bank Destroyed Early in 1833, Jackson met their wishes by appointing Roger B. Taney, a strong opponent of corporate privilege, as head of the Treasury Department. Taney promptly transferred the federal government's gold and silver from the Second Bank to various state banks, which critics labeled Jackson's "pet banks." To justify this abrupt (and probably illegal) transfer, Jackson declared that his reelection represented "the decision of the people against the bank" and gave him a mandate to destroy it. This sweeping claim of presidential power was new and radical. Never before had a president claimed that victory at the polls allowed him to pursue a controversial policy or to act independently of Congress (American Voices, p. 328).

The "bank war" escalated into an all-out political battle. In March 1834, Jackson's opponents in the Senate passed a resolution composed by Henry Clay that censured the president and warned of executive tyranny: "We are in the midst of a revolution, hitherto bloodless, but rapidly descending towards a total change of the pure republican character of the Government, and the concentration of all power in the hands of one man." Clay's charges and Congress's censure did not deter Jackson. "The Bank is trying to kill me but I will kill it," he vowed to Van Buren. And so he did. When the Second Bank's national charter expired in 1836, Jackson prevented its renewal.

Jackson had destroyed both national banking — the handiwork of Alexander Hamilton — and the American System of protective tariffs and public works created by Henry Clay and John Quincy Adams. The result was a profound check on economic activism and innovative policymaking by the national government. "All is gone," observed a Washington newspaper correspondent. "All is gone, which the General Government was instituted to create and preserve."

Indian Removal

The status of Native American peoples posed an equally complex political problem. By the late 1820s, white voices throughout the South and Midwest demanded the resettlement of Indian peoples west of the Mississippi River. Many whites who were sympathetic to Native Americans also favored resettlement. Removal to the West seemed the only way to protect Indians from alcoholism, financial exploitation, and cultural decline.

However, most Indians did not want to leave their ancestral lands. For centuries, Cherokees and Creeks had lived in Georgia, Tennessee, and Alabama; Chickasaws and Choctaws in Mississippi and Alabama; and Seminoles in Florida. During the War of 1812, Andrew Jackson had forced the Creeks to relinquish millions of

acres, but Indian tribes still controlled vast tracts and wanted to keep them.

Cherokee Resistance But on what terms? Some Indians had adopted white ways. An 1825 census revealed that various Cherokees owned 33 gristmills, 13 sawmills, 2,400 spinning wheels, 760 looms, and 2,900 plows. Many of these owners were mixed-race, the offspring of white traders and Indian women. They had grown up in a bicultural world, knew the political and economic ways of whites, and often favored assimilation into white society. Indeed, some of these mixed-race people were indistinguishable from southern planters. At his death in 1809, Georgia Cherokee James Vann owned one hundred black slaves, two trading posts, and a gristmill. Three decades later, forty other mixed-blood Cherokee families each owned ten or more African American workers.

Prominent mixed-race Cherokees believed that integration into American life was the best way to protect their property and the lands of their people. In 1821, Sequoyah, a part-Cherokee silversmith, perfected a system of writing for the Cherokee language; six years later, mixed-race Cherokees devised a new charter of Cherokee government modeled directly on the U.S. Constitution. "You asked us to throw off the hunter and warrior state," Cherokee John Ridge told a Philadelphia audience in 1832. "We did so. You asked us to form a republican government: We did so. . . . You asked us to learn to read: We did so. You asked us to cast away our idols, and worship your God: We did so." Full-blood Cherokees, who made up 90 percent of the population, resisted many of these cultural and political innovations but were equally determined to retain their ancestral lands. "We would not receive money for land in which our fathers and friends are buried," one full-blood chief declared. "We love our land; it is our mother."

What the Cherokees did or wanted carried no weight with the Georgia legislature. In 1802, Georgia had given up its western land claims in return for a federal promise to extinguish Indian landholdings in the state. Now it demanded fulfillment of that pledge. Having spent his military career fighting Indians and seizing their lands, Andrew Jackson gave full support to Georgia. On assuming the presidency, he withdrew the federal troops that had protected Indian enclaves there and in Alabama and Mississippi. The states, he declared, were sovereign within their borders.

The Removal Act and Its Aftermath Jackson then pushed the **Indian Removal Act of 1830** through Congress over the determined opposition of evangelical Protestant men — and women. To block removal, Catharine Beecher and Lydia Sigourney composed a Ladies Circular, which urged "benevolent ladies" to use "prayers and exertions to avert the calamity of removal." Women from across the nation flooded Congress with petitions. Nonetheless, Jackson's bill squeaked through the House of Representatives by a vote of 102 to 97.

The Removal Act created the Indian Territory on national lands acquired in the Louisiana Purchase and located in present-day Oklahoma and Kansas. It promised money and reserved land to Native American peoples who would give up their ancestral holdings east of the Mississippi River. Government officials promised the Indians that they could live on their new land, "they and all their children, as long as grass grows and water runs." However, as one Indian leader noted, on the Great Plains "water and timber are scarcely to be seen." When Chief Black Hawk and his Sauk and Fox

Blackhawk

This portrait of Black Hawk (1767–1838), by George Catlin, shows the Indian leader holding his namesake, a black hawk and its feathers. When Congress approved Andrew Jackson's Indian Removal Act in 1830, Black Hawk mobilized Sauk and Fox warriors to protect their ancestral lands in Illinois. "It was here, that I was born — and here lie the bones of many friends and relatives," the aging chief declared. "I . . . never could consent to leave it." Courtesy Warner Collection of Gulf States Paper Corporation, Tuscaloosa, AL.

The Character and Goals of Andrew Jackson

From the start of his career, Andrew Jackson was a controversial figure. "Hot-tempered," "Indian-hater," "military despot," said his critics, while his friends praised him as a forthright statesman. His contemporary biographer, the journalist James Parton, found him a man of many faces, an enigma. Others thought they understood his personality and policies: James Hamilton, a loyal Jacksonian congressman, recalled Jackson's volatile temper. Henry Clay, his archrival, warned that Jackson's quest for power threatened American republicanism, while wealthy New York Whig Philip Hone accused him of inciting class warfare. After talking with dozens of Americans, Frenchman Alexis de Tocqueville offered a balanced interpretation of the man and his goals.

James Parton

Preface to *The Life of Andrew Jackson* (1860)

If any one . . . had asked what I had yet discovered respecting General Jackson, I might have answered thus: "Andrew Jackson, I am given to understand, was a patriot and a traitor. He was one of the greatest of generals, and wholly ignorant of the art of war. . . . The first of statesmen, he never devised, he never framed a measure. He was the most candid of men, and was capable of the profoundest dissimulation. A most law-defying, law-obeying citizen. A stickler for discipline, he never hesitated to disobey his superior. A democratic autocrat. An urbane savage. An atrocious saint."

James Hamilton Jr.

Recalling an Event in 1827, as Jackson Campaigns for the Presidency

The steamer Pocahontas was chartered by citizens of New Orleans to convey the General and his party from Nashville to that city. She was fitted out in the most sumptuous manner. The party was General and Mrs. Jackson, . . . Governor Samuel Houston, Wm. B. Lewis, Robert Armstrong, and others. . . . The only freight was the General's cotton-crop. . . .

In the course of the voyage an event occurred, which I repeat, as it is suggestive of [his] character. A steamer of greater speed than ours, going in the same direction, passed us, crossed our bow; then stopped and let us pass her and then passed us again in triumph. This was repeated again and again, until the General, being excited by the offensive course, ordered a rifle to be brought to him; hailed the pilot of the other steamer, and swore that if he did the same thing again he would shoot him.

Philip Hone

Ruminating in His Diary on the Jacksonians' Victory in the New York Elections of 1834

I apprehend that Mr. Van Buren [Jackson's vice president] and his friends have no permanent cause of triumph in their victory. They . . . have mounted a vicious horse, who, taking the bit in his mouth, will run away with [them]. . . . This battle had been fought upon the ground of the poor against the rich, and this unworthy prejudice, this dangerous delusion, has been encouraged by the leaders of the triumphant party, and fanned into a flame by the polluted breath of the hireling press in their employ. . . .

The cry of "Down with the aristocracy!" mingled with the shouts of victory. . . . They have succeeded in raising this dangerous spirit [of the mob], and have gladly availed themselves of its support to accomplish a temporary object; but can they allay it at pleasure? . . . Eighteen thousand men in New York have voted for the high-priest of the party whose professed design is to bring down the property, the talents, the industry, the steady habits of that class which constituted the real strength of the Commonwealth, to the common level of the idle, the worthless, and the unenlightened. Look to it, ye men of respectability in the Jackson party, are ye not afraid of the weapons ye have used in this warfare?

Henry Clay

Introducing a Senate Resolution Censuring Jackson, December 26, 1833

We are in the midst of a revolution, hitherto bloodless, but rapidly tending toward a total change of the pure republican character of the government, and to the

concentration of all power in the hands of one man. The powers of Congress are paralyzed, except when exerted in conformity with his will, by frequent and an extraordinary exercise of the executive veto, not anticipated by the founders of our Constitution, and not practiced by any of the predecessors of the present chief magistrate. . . .

The judiciary has not been exempt from the prevailing rage for innovation. Decisions of the tribunals, deliberately pronounced, have been contemptuously disregarded. . . . Our Indian relations, coeval with the existence of the government, and recognized and established by numerous laws and treaties, have been subverted. . . . The system of protection of improvement lies crushed beneath the veto. The system of protection of American industry [will soon meet a similar fate]. . . . In a term of eight years, a little more than equal to that which was required to establish our liberties [as an independent republic between 1776 and 1783], the government will have been transformed into an elective monarchy — the worst of all forms of government.

Alexis de Tocqueville

Analysis of Jackson in *Democracy in America* (1835)

We have been told that General Jackson has won battles; that he is an energetic man, prone by nature and habit to the use of force, covetous of power and a despot by inclination.

All this may be true; but the inferences which have been drawn from these truths are very erroneous. It has been imagined that General Jackson is bent on establishing a dictatorship in America, introducing a military spirit, and giving a degree of influence to the central authority that cannot but be dangerous to provincial [state] liberties. . . .

Far from wishing to extend the Federal power, the President belongs to the party which is desirous of limiting that power to the clear and precise letter of the Constitution and which never puts a construction upon that act favorable to the government of the Union; far from standing forth as the champion of centralization, General Jackson is the agent of the state jealousies; and he was placed in his lofty station by the passions that are most opposed to the central government.

Sources: James Parton, *The Life of Andrew Jackson. In Three Volumes* (New York: Mason Brothers, 1860), vol. 1, vii–viii; Sean Wilentz, ed., *Major Problems in the Early Republic, 1787–1848* (Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath, 1991), 374 (Hamilton) and 392–393 (Hone); Calvin Colton, ed., *The Life . . . of Henry Clay*, 6 vols. (New York: A. Barnes, 1857), 576–580; Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, abr. by Thomas Bender (New York: Modern Library, 1981), 271–273.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Was Jackson a "democratic autocrat," as Parton puts it? Would the authors of the other excerpts agree? Did Jackson instigate class warfare, as Hone suggests?
2. In your judgment, which writer, Clay or Tocqueville, offers the more accurate assessment of Jackson and his policies?
3. Do you agree with Philip Hone's view that the Jacksonian Democrats mobilized "poor against the rich"? What evidence would support or contradict Hone's assertion?

COMPARE AND CONTRAST
How did the views of Jackson and John Marshall differ regarding the status and rights of Indian peoples?

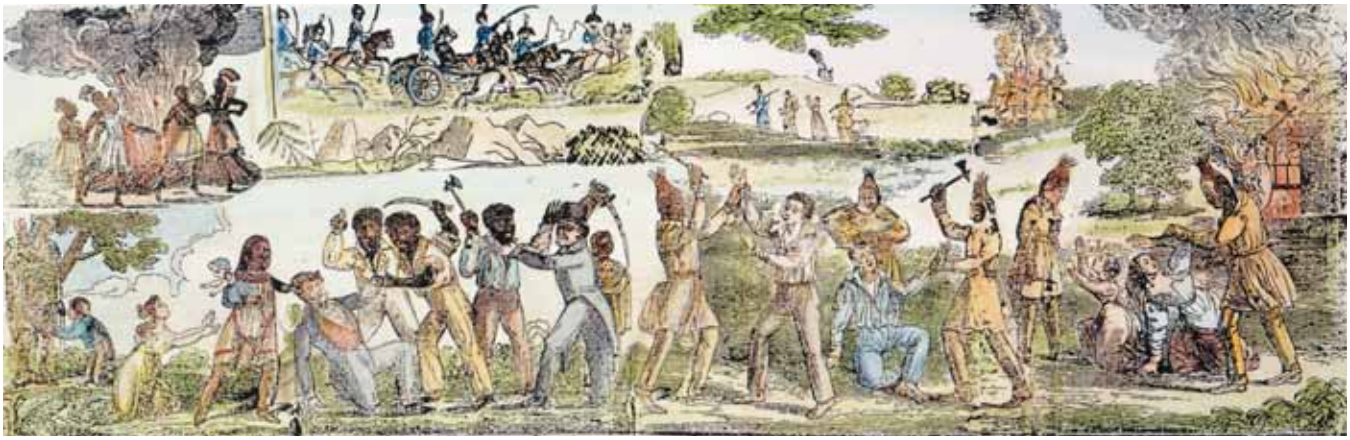
followers refused to leave rich, well-watered farmland in western Illinois in 1832, Jackson sent troops to expel them by force. Eventually, the U.S. Army pursued Black Hawk into the Wisconsin Territory and, in the brutal eight-hour Bad Axe Massacre, killed 850 of his 1,000 warriors. Over the next five years, American diplomatic pressure and military power forced seventy Indian peoples to sign treaties and move west of the Mississippi (Map 10.3).

In the meantime, the Cherokees had carried the defense of their lands to the Supreme Court, where they claimed the status of a "foreign nation." In *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* (1831), Chief Justice John Marshall denied that claim and declared that Indian peoples were "domestic dependent nations." However, in *Worcester v. Georgia* (1832), Marshall and the Court sided with the Cherokees against Georgia. Voiding Georgia's extension of state law over the Cherokees, the Court held that Indian nations were "distinct political communities, having territorial boundaries, within which their authority is exclusive [and is] guaranteed by the United States."

Instead of guaranteeing the Cherokees' territory, the U.S. government took it from them. In 1835, American officials and a minority Cherokee faction

MAP 10.3
The Removal of Native Americans, 1820–1846

As white settlers moved west, the U.S. government forced scores of Native American peoples to leave their ancestral lands. Andrew Jackson's Indian Removal Act of 1830 formalized this policy. Subsequently, scores of Indian peoples signed treaties that exchanged their lands in the East, Midwest, and Southeast for money and designated reservations in an Indian Territory west of the Mississippi River. When the Sauk, Fox, Cherokees, and Seminoles resisted resettlement, the government used the U.S. Army to enforce the removal policy.



Raising Public Opinion Against the Seminoles

During the eighteenth century, hundreds of enslaved Africans fled South Carolina and Georgia and found refuge in Spanish Florida, where they lived among and intermarried with the Seminole people. This color engraving from the 1830s—showing red and black Seminoles butchering respectable white families—sought to bolster political support for the removal of the Seminoles to Indian Territory. By the mid-1840s, after a decade of warfare, the U.S. Army had forced 2,500 Seminoles to migrate to Oklahoma. However, another 2,500 Seminoles continued to fight and eventually won a new treaty allowing them to live in Florida. The Granger Collection, New York.

negotiated the Treaty of New Echota, which specified that Cherokees would resettle in Indian Territory. When only 2,000 of 17,000 Cherokees had moved by the May 1838 deadline, President Martin Van Buren ordered General Winfield Scott to enforce the treaty. Scott's army rounded up 14,000 Cherokees (including mixed-race African Cherokees) and marched them 1,200 miles, an arduous journey that became known as the **Trail of Tears**. Along the way, 3,000 Indians died of starvation and exposure. Once in Oklahoma, the Cherokees excluded anyone of "negro or mulatto parentage" from governmental office, thereby affirming that full citizenship in their nation was racially defined. Just as the United States was a "white man's country," so Indian Territory would be defined as a "red man's country."

Encouraged by generous gifts of land, the Creeks, Chickasaws, and Choctaws moved west of the Mississippi, leaving the Seminoles in Florida as the only numerically significant Indian people remaining in the Southeast. Government pressure persuaded about half of the Seminoles to migrate to Indian Territory, but families whose ancestors had intermarried with runaway slaves feared the emphasis on "blood purity" there. During the 1840s, they fought a successful guerrilla war against the U.S. Army and retained their lands in central Florida. These Seminoles were the exception: the Jacksonians had forced the removal of most eastern Indian peoples.

The Jacksonian Impact

Jackson's legacy, like that of every other great president, is complex and rich. On the institutional level, he expanded the authority of the nation's chief executive. As Jackson put it, "The President is the direct representative of the American people." Assuming that role during the nullification crisis, he upheld national authority by threatening the use of military force, laying the foundation for Lincoln's defense of the Union a generation later. At the same time (and somewhat contradictorily), Jackson curbed the reach of the national government. By undermining Henry Clay's American System of national banking, protective tariffs, and internal improvements, Jackson reinvigorated the Jeffersonian tradition of a limited and frugal central government.

The Taney Court Jackson also undermined the constitutional jurisprudence of John Marshall by appointing Roger B. Taney as his successor in 1835. During his long tenure as chief justice (1835–1864), Taney partially reversed the nationalist and vested-property-rights decisions of the Marshall Court and gave constitutional legitimacy to Jackson's policies of states' rights and free enterprise. In the landmark case *Charles River Bridge Co. v. Warren Bridge Co.* (1837), Taney declared that a legislative charter—in this case, to build and operate a toll bridge—did not necessarily bestow a

monopoly, and that a legislature could charter a competing bridge to promote the general welfare: "While the rights of private property are sacredly guarded, we must not forget that the community also has rights." This decision directly challenged Marshall's interpretation of the contract clause of the Constitution in *Dartmouth College v. Woodward* (1819), which had stressed the binding nature of public charters and the sanctity of "vested rights" (Chapter 7). By limiting the property claims of existing canal and turnpike companies, Taney's decision allowed legislatures to charter competing railroads that would provide cheaper and more efficient transportation.

The Taney Court also limited Marshall's nationalistic interpretation of the commerce clause by enhancing the regulatory role of state governments. For example, in *Mayor of New York v. Miln* (1837), the Taney Court ruled that New York State could use its "police power" to inspect the health of arriving immigrants. The Court also restored to the states some of the economic powers they had exercised prior to the Constitution of 1787. In *Briscoe v. Bank of Kentucky* (1837), the justices allowed a bank owned by the state of Kentucky to issue currency, despite the wording of Article 1, Section 10 of the Constitution, which prohibits states from issuing "bills of credit."

EXPLAIN CONSEQUENCES
How did the Taney Court and the Jacksonian state constitutions alter the American legal and constitutional system?

States Revise Their Constitutions Inspired by Jackson and Taney, Democrats in the various states mounted their own constitutional revolutions. Between 1830 and 1860, twenty states called conventions that furthered democratic principles by reapportioning state legislatures on the basis of population and giving the vote to all white men. Voters also had more power because the new documents mandated the election, rather than the appointment, of most public officials, including sheriffs, justices of the peace, and judges.

The new constitutions also embodied the principles of **classical liberalism**, or **laissez-faire**, by limiting the government's role in the economy. (Twentieth-century social-welfare liberalism endorses the opposite principle: that government should intervene in economic and social life.) As president, Jackson had destroyed the American System, and his disciples now attacked the state-based Commonwealth System, which used chartered corporations and state funds to promote economic development. Most Jackson-era constitutions prohibited states from granting special charters to corporations and extending loans and credit guarantees to private businesses. "If there is any danger to be feared in . . . government," declared a New Jersey Democrat, "it is the danger of associated wealth, with special privileges." The revised constitutions also protected taxpayers by setting strict limits on state debt and encouraging judges to enforce them. Said New York reformer Michael Hoffman, "We will not trust the legislature with the power of creating indefinite mortgages on the people's property."

"The world is governed too much," the Jacksonians proclaimed as they embraced a small-government, laissez-faire outlook and celebrated the power of ordinary people to make decisions in the voting booth and the marketplace.

Class, Culture, and the Second Party System

The rise of the Democracy and Jackson's tumultuous presidency sparked the creation in the mid-1830s of a second national party: the **Whigs**. For the next two decades, Whigs and Democrats competed fiercely for votes and appealed to different cultural groups. Many evangelical Protestants became Whigs, while most Catholic immigrants and traditional Protestants joined the Democrats. By debating issues of economic policy, class power, and moral reform, party politicians offered Americans a choice between competing programs and political leaders. "Of the two great parties," remarked philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson, "[the Democracy] has the best cause . . . for free trade, for wide suffrage, [but the Whig Party] has the best men."

The Whig Worldview

The Whig Party arose in 1834, when a group of congressmen contested Andrew Jackson's policies and his high-handed, "kinglike" conduct. They took the name *Whigs* to identify themselves with the pre-Revolutionary American and British parties — also called Whigs — that had opposed the arbitrary actions of British monarchs. The Whigs accused "King Andrew I" of violating the Constitution by creating a spoils system and undermining elected legislators, whom they saw as the true representatives of the sovereign people. One Whig accused Jackson of ruling in a manner "more absolute than that of any absolute monarchy of Europe."

Initially, the Whigs consisted of political factions with distinct points of view. However, guided by Senators Webster of Massachusetts, Clay of Kentucky, and Calhoun of South Carolina, they gradually coalesced into a party with a distinctive stance and coherent

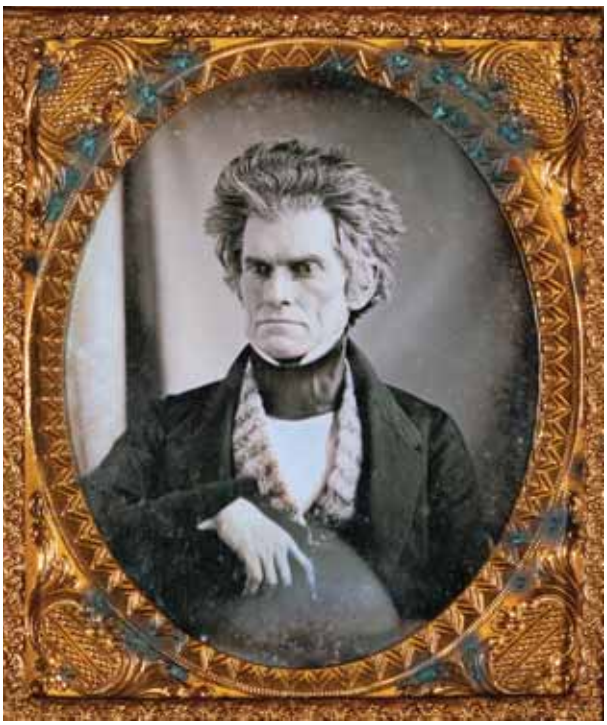
ideology. Like the Federalists of the 1790s, the Whigs wanted a political world dominated by men of ability and wealth; unlike the Federalists, they advocated an elite based on talent, not birth.

The Whigs celebrated the entrepreneur and the enterprising individual: "This is a country of self-made men," they boasted, pointing to the relative absence of permanent distinctions of class and status among white citizens. Embracing the Industrial Revolution, northern Whigs welcomed the investments of "moneyed capitalists," which provided workers with jobs and "bread, clothing and homes." Indeed, Whig congressman Edward Everett championed a "holy alliance" among laborers, owners, and governments and called for a return to Henry Clay's American System. Many New England and Pennsylvania textile and iron workers shared Everett's vision because they benefitted directly from protective tariffs.

Calhoun's Dissent Support for the Whigs in the South — less widespread than that in the North — rested on the appeal of specific policies and politicians. Some southern Whigs were wealthy planters who invested in railroads and banks or sold their cotton to New York merchants. But the majority were yeomen whites who resented the power and policies of low-country planters, most of whom were Democrats. In addition, some Virginia and South Carolina Democrats, such as John Tyler, became Whigs because they condemned Andrew Jackson's crusade against nullification.

Southern Whigs rejected their party's enthusiasm for high tariffs and social mobility, and John C. Calhoun was their spokesman. Extremely conscious of class divisions in society, Calhoun believed that northern Whigs' rhetoric of equal opportunity was contradicted not only by slavery, which he considered a fundamental American institution, but also by the wage-labor system of industrial capitalism. "There is and always has been in an advanced state of wealth and civilization a conflict between labor and capital," Calhoun declared in 1837. He urged slave owners and factory owners to unite against their common foe: the working class of enslaved blacks and propertyless whites.

Most northern Whigs rejected Calhoun's class-conscious social ideology. "A clear and well-defined line between capital and labor" might fit the slave South or class-ridden Europe, Daniel Webster conceded, but in the North "this distinction grows less and less definite as commerce advances." Ignoring the ever-increasing numbers of propertyless immigrants and native-born wageworkers, Webster focused on the growing size of the middle class, whose members generally favored Whig candidates. In the election of 1834, the Whigs took control of the House of Representatives by appealing to evangelical Protestants and upwardly mobile families — prosperous farmers, small-town merchants, and skilled industrial workers in New England, New York, and the new communities along the Great Lakes.



John C. Calhoun (1782–1850)

This daguerreotype, made close to the time of Calhoun's death, suggests his emotional intensity and thwarted ambition. The prime advocate of the doctrines of nullification and states' rights, a founder of the Whig Party, and a steadfast defender of slavery, Calhoun found his lifelong pursuit of the presidency frustrated by Martin Van Buren's political skills and sectional divisions over tariffs and slavery. © Image courtesy of the Gibbes Museum of Art/Carolina Art Association.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

How did the ideology of the Whigs differ from that of the Jacksonian Democrats?

Anti-Masons Become Whigs Many Whig voters in 1834 had previously supported the Anti-Masons, a powerful but short-lived party that formed in the late 1820s. As its name implies, Anti-Masons opposed the Order of Freemasonry. Freemasonry began in Europe as an organization of men seeking moral improvement by promoting the welfare and unity of humanity. Many Masons espoused republicanism, and the Order spread rapidly in America after the Revolution. Its ideology, mysterious symbols, and semisecret character gave the Order an air of exclusivity that attracted ambitious businessmen and political leaders, including George Washington, Henry Clay, and Andrew Jackson. In New

York State alone by the mid-1820s, there were more than 20,000 Masons, organized into 450 local lodges. However, after the kidnapping and murder in 1826 of William Morgan, a New York Mason who had threatened to reveal the Order's secrets, the Freemasons fell into disrepute. Thurlow Weed, a newspaper editor in Rochester, New York, spearheaded an Anti-Masonic Party, which condemned the Order as a secret aristocratic fraternity. The new party quickly ousted Freemasons from local and state offices, and just as quickly ran out of political steam.

Because many Anti-Masons espoused temperance, equality of opportunity, and evangelical morality, they gravitated to the Whig Party. Throughout the Northeast and Midwest, Whig politicians won election by proposing legal curbs on the sale of alcohol and local ordinances that preserved Sunday as a day of worship. The Whigs also secured the votes of farmers, bankers, and shopkeepers, who favored Henry Clay's American System. For these citizens of the growing Midwest, the Whigs' program of government subsidies for roads, canals, and bridges was as important as their moral agenda.

In the election of 1836, the Whig Party faced Martin Van Buren, the architect of the Democratic Party and Jackson's handpicked successor. Like Jackson, Van Buren denounced the American System and warned that its revival would create a "consolidated government." Positioning himself as a defender of individual rights, Van Buren also condemned the efforts of Whigs and moral reformers to enact state laws imposing temperance and national laws abolishing slavery. "The government is best which governs least" became his motto in economic, cultural, and racial matters.

To oppose Van Buren, the Whigs ran four candidates, each with a strong regional reputation. They hoped to garner enough electoral votes to throw the contest into the House of Representatives. However, the Whig tally — 73 electoral votes collected by William Henry Harrison of Ohio, 26 by Hugh L. White of Tennessee, 14 by Daniel Webster of Massachusetts, and 11 by W. P. Mangum of Georgia — fell far short of Van Buren's 170 votes. Still, the four Whigs won 49 percent of the popular vote, showing that the party's message of economic and moral improvement had broad appeal.

Labor Politics and the Depression of 1837–1843

As the Democrats battled Whigs on the national level, they faced challenges from urban artisans and workers. Between 1828 and 1833, artisans and laborers in fifteen states formed Working Men's Parties. "Past experience teaches us that we have nothing to hope from the aristocratic orders of society," declared the New York Working Men's Party. It vowed "to send men of our own description, if we can, to the Legislature at Albany."

The new parties' agenda reflected the values and interests of ordinary urban workers. The Philadelphia Working Men's Party set out to secure "a just balance of power . . . between all the various classes." It called for the abolition of private banks, chartered monopolies, and debtors' prisons, and it demanded universal public education and a fair system of taxation (Thinking Like a Historian, p. 336). It won some victories, electing a number of assemblymen and persuading the Pennsylvania legislature in 1834 to authorize tax-supported schools. Elsewhere, Working Men's candidates won office in many cities, but their parties' weakness in statewide contests soon took a toll. By the mid-1830s, most politically active workers had joined the Democratic Party.

The Working Men's Parties left a mixed legacy. They mobilized craft workers and gave political expression to their ideology of artisan republicanism. As labor intellectual Orestes Brownson defined their distinctive vision, "All men will be independent proprietors, working on their own capitals, on their own farms, or in their own shops." However, this emphasis on proprietorship inhibited alliances between the artisan-based Working Men's Parties and the rapidly increasing class of dependent wage earners. As Joseph Weydemeyer, a close friend of Karl Marx, reported from New York in the early 1850s, many American craft workers "are incipient bourgeois, and feel themselves to be such."

Moreover, the **Panic of 1837** threw the American economy — and the workers' movement — into disarray. The panic began when the Bank of England tried to boost the faltering British economy by sharply curtailing the flow of money and credit to the United States. Since 1822, British manufacturers had extended credit to southern planters to expand cotton production, and British investors had purchased millions of dollars of the canal bonds from the northern states. Suddenly deprived of British funds, American planters, merchants, and canal corporations had to withdraw gold from domestic banks to pay their foreign debts. Moreover, British textile mills drastically reduced their purchases of raw cotton, causing its price to plummet from 20 cents a pound to 10 cents or less.

Falling cotton prices and the drain of specie to Britain set off a financial panic. On May 8, the Dry Dock Bank of New York City ran out of specie, prompting worried depositors to withdraw gold and silver

coins from other banks. Within two weeks, every American bank had stopped trading specie and called in its loans, turning a financial panic into an economic crisis. "This sudden overthrow of the commercial credit" had a "stunning effect," observed Henry Fox, the British minister in Washington. "The conquest of the land by a foreign power could hardly have produced a more general sense of humiliation and grief."

To stimulate the economy, state governments increased their investments in canals and railroads. However, as governments issued (or guaranteed) more and more bonds to finance these ventures, they were unable to pay the interest charges, sparking a severe financial crisis on both sides of the Atlantic in 1839. Nine state governments defaulted on their debts, and hard-pressed European lenders cut the flow of new capital to the United States.

The American economy fell into a deep depression. By 1843, canal construction had dropped by 90 percent, prices and wages had fallen by 50 percent, and unemployment in seaports and industrial centers had reached 20 percent. Bumper crops drove down cotton prices, pushing hundreds of planters and merchants into bankruptcy. Minister Henry Ward Beecher described a land "filled with lamentation . . . its inhabitants wandering like bereaved citizens among the ruins of an earthquake, mourning for children, for houses crushed, and property buried forever."

IDENTIFY CAUSES
What factors led to the demise of the Anti-Masonic and Working Men's political parties?

By creating a surplus of unemployed workers, the depression completed the decline of the union movement and the Working Men's Parties. In 1837, six thousand masons, carpenters, and other building-trades workers lost their jobs in New York City, destroying their unions' bargaining power. By 1843, most local unions, all the national labor organizations, and all the workers' parties had disappeared.

"Tippecanoe and Tyler Too!"

Many Americans blamed the Democrats for the depression of 1837–1843. They criticized Jackson for destroying the Second Bank and directing the Treasury

Hard Times

The Panic of 1837 struck hard at Americans of all social ranks. This anti-Democratic cartoon shows unemployed workers turning to drink; women and children begging in the streets; and fearful depositors withdrawing funds as their banks collapse. As the plummeting hot-air balloon in the background symbolizes, the rising "Glory" of an independent America was crashing to earth.

Becoming Literate: Public Education and Democracy

The struggle for a genuinely *democratic* polity—"government of the people, by the people, and for the people," as Lincoln put it—played out at the local and state level in battles over who should participate in the political arena. As legislators argued over extending the franchise, they considered the knowledge that citizens needed to participate responsibly in politics. Although primary education was publicly supported in most New England towns (giving that region nearly universal literacy), it received only spotty funding in the other northern states and almost none in the South (restricting literacy there to one-third of the white population). The following documents address the resulting debate over publicly supported education and citizenship.

1. **Editorial from the *Philadelphia National Gazette*, 1830.** *Pennsylvania was one of the first states to debate legislation regarding universal free public education.*

The scheme of Universal Equal Education . . . is virtually "Agrarianism" [redistribution of land from rich to poor]. It would be a compulsory application of the means of the richer, for the direct use of the poorer classes. . . . One of the chief excitements to industry . . . is the hope of earning the means of educating their children respectably . . . that incentive would be removed, and the scheme of state and equal education be a premium for comparative idleness, to be taken out of the pockets of the laborious and conscientious.

2. **Thaddeus Stevens, speech before the Pennsylvania General Assembly, February 1835.** *Pennsylvania's Free Public School Act of 1834 was the handiwork of the Working Men's Party of Philadelphia (see p. 334). When over half of Pennsylvania's school districts refused to implement the law, the legislature threatened to repeal it. Thaddeus Stevens, later a leading antislavery advocate, turned back that threat through this speech to the Pennsylvania General Assembly.*

It would seem to be humiliating to be under the necessity, in the nineteenth century, of entering into a formal argument to prove the utility, and to free governments, the absolute necessity of education. . . . Such necessity would be degrading to a Christian age and a free republic. If an elective republic is to endure for any great length of time, every elector must have sufficient information, not only to accumulate wealth and take care of his pecuniary concerns, but to direct wisely the Legislatures, the Ambassadors, and the Executive of the nation; for some part of all these things, some agency in approving or disapproving of them, falls to every freeman. If, then, the permanency of our government depends upon such knowledge, it is the duty of government to see that the means of information be diffused to every citizen. This is a sufficient answer to those who deem education a private and not a public duty—who argue that they are willing to educate their own children, but not their neighbor's children.

3. **"Letter from a Teacher" in Catharine E. Beecher, *The True Remedy for the Wrongs of Women*, 1851.** *The public school movement created new opportunities not just for children of middle and lower classes but also for the young Protestant women who contributed to the "Benevolent Empire" as professional educators. Beecher's academy (see p. 369) in Hartford, Connecticut, sent out dozens of young women to establish schools.*

I am now located in this place, which is the county-town of a newly organized county [in a midwestern state]. . . . The Sabbath is little regarded, and is more a day for diversion than devotion. . . . My school embraces both sexes and all ages from five to seventeen, and not one can read intelligibly.

4. **"Popular Education," 1833.** *This piece appeared in the* North American Review, *the nation's first literary and cultural journal and the mouthpiece of New England's intellectual elite.*

[T]he mind of a people, in proportion as it is educated, will not only feel its own value, but will also perceive its rights. We speak now of those palpable rights which are recognised by all free states. . . . [T]he palpable rights of men, those of personal security, of property and of the free and unembarrassed pursuit of individual welfare, it is obviously impossible to conceal from an educated and reading people. Such a people rises at once above the condition of feudal tenants. . . . It directs its attention to

the laws and institutions that govern it. It compels public office to give an account of itself. It strips off the veil of secrecy from the machinery of power. . . . And when all this is spread abroad in newspaper details . . . of a people that can read; when the estimate is freely made, of what the government tax levies upon the daily hoard, and upon apparel, and upon every comfort of life, can it be doubted that such a people will demand and obtain an influence in affairs that so vitally concern it? This would be freedom.

5. Judge Baker, sentencing hearing in the court case against Mrs. Margaret Douglass of Norfolk, Virginia, January 10, 1854. *Southern whites considered the acquisition of literacy by blacks, whether slave or free, as a public danger, especially after the Nat Turner uprising in Southampton County, Virginia, in 1831 (Chapter 11, p. 362). A Virginia court sent Mrs. Margaret Douglass to jail for a month "as an example to all others" for teaching free black children to read so they might have access to books on religion and morality.*

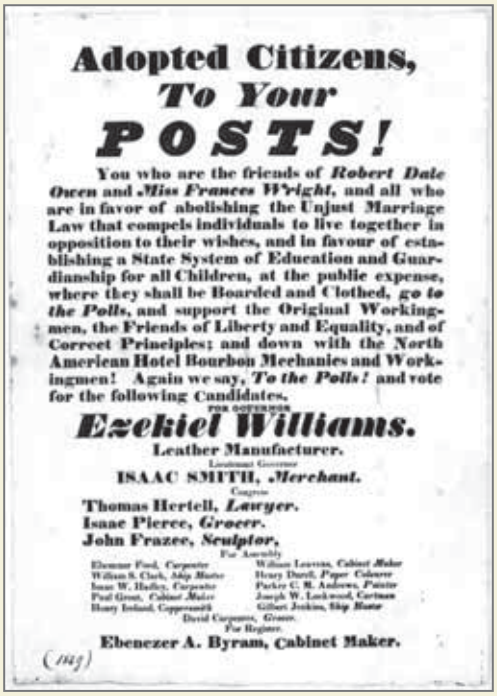
There are persons, I believe, in our community, opposed to the policy of the law in question. They profess to believe that universal intellectual culture is necessary to religious instruction and education, and that such culture is suitable to a state of slavery. . . .

Such opinions in the present state of our society I regard as manifestly mischievous. It is not true that our slaves cannot be taught religious and moral duty, without being able to read the Bible and use the pen. Intellectual and religious instruction often go hand in hand, but the latter may well be exist without the former; . . . among the whites one-fou[r]th or more are entirely without a knowledge of letters, [nonetheless,] respect for the law, and for moral and religious conduct and behavior, are justly and prope[r]ly appreciated and practiced. . . .

The first legislative provision upon this subject was introduced in the year 1831, immediately succeeding the bloody scenes of the memorable Southampton insurrection; and . . . was re-enacted with additional penalties in the year 1848. . . . After these several and repeated recognitions of the wisdom and propriety of the said act, it may well be said that bold and open opposition to it [must be condemned] . . . as a measure of self-preservation and protection.

Sources: (1) "Religion and Social Reform," the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, gilderlehrman.org; (2) *New York Legislature Documents*, Vol. 34, No. 65, Part 1 (Albany, NY: J. B. Lyon Company, 1919), 60; (3) Catharine E. Beecher, *Educational Reminiscences and Suggestions* (New York: J. D. Ford & Company, 1874), 127; (4) *The North American Review* 36, no. 58 (January 1833); (5) "The Case of Mrs. Margaret Douglass," *Africans in America*, pbs.org.

6. Working Men's Party poster for immigrant voters, New York, 1830.



Adopted Citizens,
To Your
POSTS!

You who are the friends of *Robert Dale Owen* and *Miss Frances Wright*, and all who are in favor of abolishing the Unjust Marriage Law that compels individuals to live together in opposition to their wishes, and in favour of establishing a State System of Education and Guardianship for all Children, at the public expense, where they shall be Boarded and Clothed, *go to the Polls*, and support the Original Workingmen, the Friends of Liberty and Equality, and of Correct Principles; and down with the North American Hotel Bourbon Mechanics and Workingmen! Again we say, *To the Polls!* and vote for the following Candidates.

FOR GOVERNOR
Ezekiel Williams.
Leather Manufacturer.
Lieutenant Governor
ISAAC SMITH, *Merchant.*
Congress
Thomas Hertell, *Lawyer.*
Isaac Pierce, *Grocer.*
John Frazee, *Sculptor,*
For Assembly
Ebenezer Ford, Carpenter — William Leverett, Cabinet Maker
William S. Clark, Ship Master — Henry Durell, Paper Colorer
Isaac W. Bailey, Carpenter — Parker C. S. Andrews, Painter
Paul Grant, Cabinet Maker — Joseph W. Lockwood, Cartman
Henry Ireland, Coppersmith — Gilbert Jenkins, Ship Master
David Carpenter, Grocer.
For Register.
Ebenezer A. Byram, Cabinet Maker.

Source: Joshua R. Greenberg, Advocating the Man.

ANALYZING THE EVIDENCE

1. What arguments does the editorial in the *Philadelphia National Gazette* (source 1) advance? How does Stevens (source 2) reframe this argument?
2. What does the letter from a former student of Beecher's (source 3) tell us about the links between educational reform and other social movements, such as Sabbatarianism (p. 305)? How does it help us to understand the fate of the "notables" and the "log cabin campaign" of 1840?
3. What is the larger agenda of the author of source 4? How is the argument here similar to, or different from, that in sources 1 and 2?
4. How does Judge Baker (source 5) justify the denial of education to African Americans?
5. What do the occupations of the Working Men's Party candidates suggest about its definition of "worker" (source 6)? How does the political agenda of the party relate to the arguments advanced in sources 2 and 4? To present-day debates regarding the education of illegal immigrants?

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

As these selections indicate, the debate over education had many facets. Did the power traditionally held by "notables" rest on their access to private schooling? Should a democratic society ensure the literacy of citizen voters? Was religious instruction a telling argument for slave literacy? Using these documents, your answers to the questions above, and materials in Chapters 8 and 10, write an essay that discusses public education, responsible citizenship, and social reform in America between 1820 and 1860.

Department in 1836 to issue the **Specie Circular**, an executive order that required the Treasury Department to accept only gold and silver in payment for lands in the national domain. Critics charged — mistakenly — that the Circular drained so much specie from the economy that it sparked the Panic of 1837. In fact (as noted above), the curtailing of credit by the Bank of England was the main cause of the panic.

Nonetheless, the public turned its anger on Van Buren, who took office just before the panic struck. Ignoring the pleas of influential bankers, the new president refused to revoke the Specie Circular or take actions to stimulate the economy. Holding to his philosophy of limited government, Van Buren advised Congress that "the less government interferes with private pursuits the better for the general prosperity." As the depression deepened in 1839, this laissez-faire outlook commanded less and less political support. Worse, Van Buren's major piece of fiscal legislation, the Independent Treasury Act of 1840, delayed recovery by pulling federal specie out of Jackson's pet banks (where it had backed loans) and placing it in government vaults, where it had little economic impact.

The Log Cabin Campaign The Whigs exploited Van Buren's weakness. In 1840, they organized their first national convention and nominated William Henry Harrison of Ohio for president and John Tyler of Virginia for vice president. A military hero of the Battle of Tippecanoe and the War of 1812, Harrison was well advanced in age (sixty-eight) and had little political experience. However, the Whig leaders in Congress, Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, wanted a president who would rubber-stamp their program for protective tariffs and a national bank. An unpretentious, amiable man, Harrison told voters that Whig policies were "the only means, under Heaven, by which a poor industrious man may become a rich man without bowing to colossal wealth."

The depression stacked the political cards against Van Buren, but the election turned as much on style as on substance. It became the great "log cabin campaign" — the first time two well-organized parties competed for votes through a new style of campaigning. Whig songfests, parades, and well-orchestrated mass meetings drew new voters into politics. Whig speakers assailed "Martin Van Ruin" as a manipulative politician with aristocratic tastes — a devotee of fancy wines, elegant clothes, and polite refinement, as indeed he was. Less truthfully, they portrayed Harrison as a self-made man who lived contentedly in a log cabin and quaffed hard cider, a drink of the common people. In fact, Harrison's father was a wealthy Virginia planter who

The Whigs Boost Harrison and Tyler for the White House

In their quest for victory in 1840, Whig political strategists advanced a wide-ranging (and misleading) set of policies. This poster celebrates William Henry Harrison and John Tyler as candidates who would secure protective tariffs for American manufacturers — a policy that appealed to northern voters but one that Tyler opposed. It also promises to cut the size of the U.S. Army, which General Harrison did not favor. However, denouncing a large "Standing Army" would win votes in Virginia, where it recalled the fears of Radical Whig Patriots of 1776 and remained central to the states' rights ideology espoused by Senator Tyler and other "Old Republicans."
Grouseland Foundation, Inc./Photo courtesy of "Fords the Art of Photography," Vincennes, IN.

President John Tyler (1790–1862)

Both as an "accidental" president and as a man, John Tyler left his mark on the world. His initiative to annex Texas made the election of 1844 into a pivotal contest and led to the war with Mexico in 1846. Tyler's first wife, Letitia, give birth to eight children before dying in the White House in 1842. Two years later, he married twenty-four-year-old Julia Gardiner, who bore him seven more children. White House Historical Association (White House Collection).

had signed the Declaration of Independence, and Harrison himself lived in a series of elegant mansions.

The Whigs boosted their electoral hopes by welcoming women to campaign festivities—a "first" for American politics. Many Jacksonian Democrats had long embraced an ideology of aggressive manhood, likening politically minded females to "public" women, prostitutes who plied their trade in theaters and other public places. Whigs took a more restrained view of masculinity and recognized that Christian women had already entered American public life through the temperance movement and other benevolent activities. In October 1840, Daniel Webster celebrated moral reform to an audience of twelve hundred women and urged them to back Whig candidates. "This way of making politicians of their women is something new under the sun," exclaimed one Democrat, worried that it would bring more Whig men to the polls. And it did: more than 80 percent of the eligible male voters cast ballots in 1840, up from fewer than 60 percent in 1832 and 1836 (see Figure 10.1). Heeding the Whigs' campaign slogan "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too," they voted Harrison into the White House with 53 percent of the popular vote and gave the party a majority in Congress.

Tyler Subverts the Whig Agenda Led by Clay and Webster, the Whigs in Congress prepared to reverse the Jacksonian revolution. Their hopes were short-lived; barely a month after his inauguration in 1841, Harrison died of pneumonia, and the nation got "Tyler Too." But in what capacity: as acting president or as president? The Constitution was vague on the issue. Ignoring his Whig associates in Congress, who wanted a weak chief executive, Tyler took the presidential oath of office and declared his intention to govern as he pleased. As it turned out, that would not be like a Whig.

UNDERSTAND POINTS OF VIEW
How did Whigs and Democrats view women in politics, and why did they hold those views?

Tyler had served in the House and the Senate as a Jeffersonian Democrat, firmly committed to slavery and states' rights. He had joined the Whigs only to protest Jackson's stance against nullification. On economic issues, Tyler shared Jackson's hostility to the Second Bank and the American System. He therefore vetoed Whig bills that would have raised tariffs and created a new national bank. Outraged by this betrayal, most of Tyler's cabinet resigned in 1842, and the Whigs expelled Tyler from their party. "His Accidency," as he

was called by his critics, was now a president without a party.

The split between Tyler and the Whigs allowed the Democrats to regroup. The party vigorously recruited subsistence farmers in the North, smallholding planters in the South, and former members of the Working Men's Parties in the cities. It also won support among Irish and German Catholic immigrants — whose numbers had increased during the 1830s — by backing their demands for religious and cultural liberty, such as the freedom to drink beer and whiskey. A pattern of **ethnocultural politics**, as historians refer to the practice of voting along ethnic and religious lines, now became a prominent feature of American life. Thanks to these urban and rural recruits, the Democrats remained the majority party in most parts of the nation. Their program of equal rights, states' rights, and cultural liberty was attractive to more white Americans than the Whig platform of economic nationalism, moral reform, temperance laws, and individual mobility.

SUMMARY

In this chapter, we examined the causes and the consequences of the democratic political revolution. We saw that the expansion of the franchise weakened the political system run by notables of high status and encouraged the transfer of power to professional politicians — men like Martin Van Buren, who were mostly of middle-class origin.

We also witnessed a revolution in government policy, as Andrew Jackson and his Democratic Party dismantled the mercantilist economic system of government-supported economic development. On the national level, Jackson destroyed Henry Clay's American System; on the state level, Democrats wrote new constitutions that ended the Commonwealth System of government charters and subsidies to private businesses. Jackson's treatment of Native Americans was equally revolutionary; the Removal Act of 1830 forcefully resettled eastern Indian peoples west of the Mississippi River, opening their ancestral lands to white settlement.

Finally, we watched the emergence of the Second Party System. Following the split in the Republican Party during the election of 1824, two new parties — the Democrats and the Whigs — developed on the national level and eventually absorbed the members of the Anti-Masonic and Working Men's parties. The new party system established universal suffrage for white men and a mode of representative government that was responsive to ordinary citizens. In their scope and significance, these political innovations matched the economic advances of both the Industrial Revolution and the Market Revolution.

CHAPTER REVIEW

MAKE IT STICK Go to **LearningCurve** to retain what you've read.

TERMS TO KNOW

Identify and explain the significance of each term below.

Key Concepts and Events

franchise (p. 316)
notables (p. 316)
political machine (p. 317)
spoils system (p. 318)
caucus (p. 318)
American System (p. 319)
internal improvements (p. 319)
corrupt bargain (p. 319)
"consolidated government" (p. 320)
Tariff of Abominations (p. 320)
nullification (p. 324)
states' rights (p. 324)
Second Bank of the United States (p. 325)
Indian Removal Act of 1830 (p. 327)
Trail of Tears (p. 331)
classical liberalism, or **laissez-faire** (p. 332)
Whigs (p. 332)
Panic of 1837 (p. 334)
Specie Circular (p. 338)
ethnocultural politics (p. 340)

Key People

Martin Van Buren (p. 317)
John Quincy Adams (p. 318)
Henry Clay (p. 319)
Andrew Jackson (p. 319)
John C. Calhoun (p. 324)
Daniel Webster (p. 324)
Nicholas Biddle (p. 326)
Roger B. Taney (p. 331)
John Tyler (p. 339)

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Answer these questions to demonstrate your understanding of the chapter's main ideas.

1. How did Andrew Jackson and the Democratic Party fundamentally change public policy? Illustrate your argument with specific examples.
2. What were the various constitutional arguments underlying the debates over internal improvements, the tariff, and nullification?
3. How and why did the policies of the federal and state governments toward Native Americans change between the 1790s (Chapter 7) and the 1850s, and what were the reactions of Indian peoples to those policies?
4. **THEMATIC UNDERSTANDING** Review the events listed under "Politics and Power" on the thematic timeline on page 283. As the timeline indicates, the Working Men's and Anti-Masonic parties rose and declined between 1827 and 1834, and then the Whig Party emerged. How do you explain the timing of these events?

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Recognize the larger developments and continuities within and across chapters by answering these questions.

1. **ACROSS TIME AND PLACE** The chapter argues that a democratic revolution swept America in the decades after 1820 and uprooted the old system of politics. After reviewing the discussions of politics in Chapters 6 and 7, explain how party systems and political alignments changed over time and then assess the strength of this argument.

2. **VISUAL EVIDENCE** Look again at the political cartoons on the tariff (p. 320) and the vice-presidency (p. 324). What point of view does the cartoonist support, and how effective are the cartoons in championing that view? How are today's negative political advertisements on television similar or different?

MORE TO EXPLORE

Start here to learn more about the events discussed in this chapter.

Robert J. Conley, *Mountain Windsongs: A Novel of the Trail of Tears* (1992). Captures the human impact of Jackson's removal policy.

Richard Hofstadter, *The Idea of a Party System* (1969). Lucidly explains the triumph of party politics.

Thomas N. Ingersoll, *To Intermix with Our White Brothers* (2005). Argues that fear of racial intermixture shaped popular thought and government policy toward Indians.

Robert V. Remini, *The Life of Andrew Jackson* (1988). Highlights Jackson's triumphs and shortcomings.

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (1835). A classic that is still worth dipping into; also available at **xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/detoc/home.html**.

Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic* (1986). Covers the ideology of working men.

TIMELINE

Ask yourself why this chapter begins and ends with these dates and then identify the links among related events.

1810s	• States expand white male voting rights • Martin Van Buren creates disciplined party in New York
1825	• House of Representatives selects John Quincy Adams as president • Adams endorses Henry Clay's American System
1828	• Working Men's Parties win support • Tariff of Abominations raises duties • Andrew Jackson elected president • John C. Calhoun's *South Carolina Exposition and Protest*
1830	• Jackson vetoes National Road bill • Congress enacts Jackson's Indian Removal Act
1831	• *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* denies Indians' independence, but *Worcester v. Georgia* (1832) upholds their political autonomy
1832	• Massacre of 850 Sauk and Fox warriors at Bad Axe • Jackson vetoes renewal of Second Bank • South Carolina adopts Ordinance of Nullification
1833	• Congress enacts compromise tariff
1834	• Whig Party formed by Clay, Calhoun, and Daniel Webster
1835	• Roger Taney named Supreme Court chief justice
1836	• Van Buren elected president
1837	• *Charles River Bridge* case weakens chartered monopolies • Panic of 1837 derails economy and labor movement
1838	• Many Cherokees die in Trail of Tears march to Indian Territory
1839–1843	• Defaults on bonds by state governments spark international financial crisis and depression
1840	• Whigs win "log cabin campaign"
1841	• John Tyler succeeds William Henry Harrison as president

KEY TURNING POINTS: Based on the events in the timeline (and your reading in Chapter 10), which five-year period brought more significant changes to American political and economic life: 1829–1833, Andrew Jackson's first term as president, or 1837–1842, the years of panic and depression? Explain and defend your choice.

CHAPTER 11

Religion and Reform 1800–1860

IDENTIFY THE BIG IDEA

To what extent did individualism, new religious sects, abolitionism, and women's rights (as the movement was called in the nineteenth century) change American culture between 1820 and 1860?

The spirit of reform is in every place," declared the children of legal reformer David Dudley Field in their handwritten monthly *Gazette* in 1842:

> The labourer with a family says "reform the common schools," the merchant and the planter say, "reform the tariff," the lawyer "reform the laws," the politician "reform the government," the abolitionist "reform the slave laws," the moralist "reform intemperance," . . . the ladies wish their legal privileges extended, and in short, the whole country is wanting reform.

Like many Americans, the Field children sensed that the political whirlwind of the 1830s had transformed the way people thought about themselves and about society. Suddenly, thousands of men and women took inspiration from the economic progress and democratic spirit of the age. Drawing on the religious optimism of the Second Great Awakening, they felt that they could improve their personal lives and society as a whole. Some activists dedicated themselves to the cause of reform. William Lloyd Garrison began as an antislavery advocate and foe of Indian removal and then went on to campaign for women's rights, pacifism, and the abolition of prisons. Susan B. Anthony embraced antislavery, temperance, and female suffrage. Such obsessively reform-minded individuals, warned Unitarian minister Henry W. Bellows, were pursuing "an object, which in its very nature is unattainable—the perpetual improvement of [people's] outward condition." In Bellows's view, human progress depended on inner character, the "regeneration of man" through Christian precepts.

Such debates reveal the multifaceted character of the reform impulse. Like Bellows, the first wave of American reformers, the benevolent religious improvers of the 1820s, hoped to promote morality and enforce social discipline. They championed regular church attendance, temperance, and a strict moral code. Their zeal offended many upright citizens: "A peaceable man can hardly venture to eat or drink, . . . to correct his child or kiss his wife, without obtaining the permission . . . of some moral or other reform society," said one.

A second wave of reformers—Garrison, Anthony, and other activists of the 1830s and 1840s—undertook to liberate people from archaic customs and traditional lifestyles. Mostly middle-class northerners and midwesterners, these activists promoted a bewildering assortment of radical ideals: extreme individualism, common ownership of property, the immediate emancipation of slaves, and sexual equality. Although their numbers were small, second-wave reformers challenged deeply rooted cultural practices and elicited horrified opposition among the majority of Americans. As one fearful southerner saw it, radical reformers favored a chaotic world with "No-Marriage, No-Religion, No-Private Property, No-Law and No-Government."

A Middle-Class Marriage During the 1830s, Joseph H. Davis used bright watercolors to paint scores of family portraits—150 still survive—that capture the comfortable lives of New England's middle classes. This double portrait commemorates the marriage of Hannah Roberts and Lewis Tebbets of Berwick, Maine. To emphasize their romantic love, Davis shows them gazing into each other's eyes, their hands linked by a prayer book, a symbol of their education and piety. Such respectable couples—Lewis Tebbets became a minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church—flocked to hear Ralph Waldo Emerson and other lecturers on the lyceum circuit. Terra Foundation for American Art, Chicago/Art Resource, NY.

Individualism: The Ethic of the Middle Class

Those fears were not exaggerated. Rapid economic growth and geographical expansion had weakened traditional institutions, forcing individuals to fend for themselves. In 1835, Alexis de Tocqueville coined the word ***individualism*** to describe the result. Native-born white Americans were "no longer attached to each other by any tie of caste, class, association, or family," the French aristocrat lamented, and so lived in social isolation. As Tocqueville mourned the loss of social ties, the New England essayist and philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882) celebrated the liberation of the individual. Emerson's vision influenced thousands of ordinary Americans and a generation of important artists, who, in the **American Renaissance**, a mid-nineteenth-century flourishing of literature and philosophy, wrote a remarkable number of first-class novels, poems, and essays.

The Founder of Transcendentalism

As this painting of Ralph Waldo Emerson by an unknown artist indicates, the young philosopher was an attractive man, his face brimming with confidence and optimism. With his radiant personality and incisive intellect, Emerson deeply influenced dozens of influential writers, artists, and scholars and enjoyed great success as a lecturer to the emerging middle class.

Ralph Waldo Emerson and Transcendentalism

Emerson was the leading voice of **transcendentalism**, an intellectual movement rooted in the religious soil of New England. Its first advocates were Unitarian ministers from well-to-do New England families who questioned the constraints of their Puritan heritage (Chapter 8). For inspiration, they turned to European romanticism, a new conception of self and society. Romantic thinkers, such as German philosopher Immanuel Kant and English poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, rejected the ordered, rational world of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. They embraced human passion and sought deeper insight into the mysteries of existence. By tapping their intuitive powers, the young Unitarians believed, people could come to know the infinite and the eternal.

As a Unitarian, Emerson stood outside the mainstream of American Protestantism. Unlike most Christians, Unitarians believed that God was a single being, not a trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In 1832, Emerson took a more radical step by resigning his Boston pulpit and rejecting all organized religion. He moved to Concord, Massachusetts, and wrote influential essays probing what he called "the infinitude of the private man," the radically free person.

The young philosopher argued that people were trapped by inherited customs and institutions. They wore the ideas of earlier times — New England Calvinism, for example — as a kind of "faded masquerade," and they needed to shed those values. "What is a man born for but to be a Reformer, a Remaker of what man has made?" Emerson asked. In his view, individuals could be remade only by discovering their "original relation with Nature" and entering into a mystical union with the "currents of Universal Being." The ideal setting for this transcendent discovery was under an open sky, in solitary communion with nature. The revivalist Charles Grandison Finney described his religious conversion in Emersonian terms: an individual in the woods, alone, joining with God in a mystical union.

The transcendentalist message of individual self-realization reached hundreds of thousands of people through Emerson's writings and lectures. Public lectures had become a spectacularly successful way of

spreading information and fostering discussion among the middle classes. Beginning in 1826, the lyceum movement — modeled on the public forum of the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle — arranged lecture tours by hundreds of poets, preachers, scientists, and reformers. The lyceum became an important cultural institution in the North and Midwest, but not in the South, where the middle class was smaller and popular education had a lower priority. In 1839, nearly 150 lyceums in Massachusetts invited lecturers to address more than 33,000 subscribers. Emerson was the most popular speaker, eventually delivering fifteen hundred lectures in more than three hundred towns in twenty states.

Emerson celebrated those who rejected tradition and practiced self-discipline and civic responsibility. His individualistic ethos spoke directly to the experiences of many middle-class Americans, who had left family farms to make their way in the urban world. His pantheistic view of nature — that it was saturated with the presence of God — encouraged Unitarians in Boston to create the Mount Auburn Cemetery, a beautiful planned landscape of trees and bushes and burial markers for the dead of all faiths; soon there were similar rural cemeteries in many American cities. Emerson's optimism also inspired many religious preachers of the Second Great Awakening, such as Finney, who told believers to transcend old doctrines and constraints. "God has made man a moral free agent," Finney declared.

Emerson worried that the new market society — the focus on work, profits, and consumption — was debasing Americans' spiritual lives. "Things are in the saddle," he wrote, "and ride mankind." Seeking to revive intellectual life, transcendentalists created communal experiments. The most important was Brook Farm, just outside Boston, where Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Margaret Fuller were residents or frequent visitors. Members recalled that they "inspired the young with a passion for study, and the middle-aged with deference and admiration." Whatever its intellectual excitement and spiritual rewards, Brook Farm was an economic failure. The residents planned to produce their own food and exchange their surplus milk, vegetables, and hay for manufactures. However, most members were ministers, teachers, writers, and students who had few farming skills; only the cash of affluent residents kept the enterprise afloat for five years. After a devastating fire in 1846, the organizers disbanded the community and sold the farm.

With the failure of Brook Farm, the Emersonians abandoned their quest for new social institutions. They accepted the brute reality of the emergent commercial and industrial order and tried to reform it, especially through the education of workers and the movement to abolish slavery.

UNDERSTAND POINTS OF VIEW
What were the main principles of transcendentalism, and how did they differ from the beliefs of most Protestant Christians?

Emerson's Literary Influence

Even as Emerson urged his fellow citizens to break free from tradition and expand their spiritual awareness, he issued a declaration of literary independence. In "The American Scholar" (1837), Emerson urged American authors to free themselves from the "courtly muse" of Old Europe and find inspiration in the experiences of ordinary Americans: "the ballad in the street; the news of the boat; the glance of the eye; the form and gait of the body."

Thoreau, Fuller, and Whitman One young New England intellectual, Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862), heeded Emerson's call and sought inspiration from the natural world. In 1845, depressed by his beloved brother's death, Thoreau built a cabin near Walden Pond in Concord, Massachusetts, and lived alone there for two years. In 1854, he published *Walden, or Life in the Woods*, an account of his search for meaning beyond the artificiality of civilized society:

> I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.

Walden's most famous metaphor provides an enduring justification for independent thinking: "If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer." Beginning from this premise, Thoreau advocated a thoroughgoing individuality, urging readers to avoid unthinking conformity to social norms and peacefully to resist unjust laws.

As Thoreau was seeking self-realization for men, Margaret Fuller (1810–1850) was exploring the possibilities of freedom for women. Born into a wealthy Boston family, Fuller mastered six languages and read broadly in classic literature. Embracing Emerson's ideas, she started a transcendental "conversation," or discussion group, for educated Boston women in 1839. While editing *The Dial*, the leading transcendentalist journal, Fuller published *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1844).

***Margaret Fuller*, 1848**

At the age of thirty-eight, the American transcendentalist author Margaret Fuller moved to Italy, where she reported on the Revolution of 1848 for the *New York Tribune*. There she fell in love with Thomas Hicks (1823–1890), a much younger American artist. Hicks rebuffed Fuller's romantic advances but painted this flattering portrait, softening her features and giving her a pensive look. Fuller took as a lover a petty noble and republican revolutionary, Giovanni Angelo, Marchese d'Ossoli, and gave birth to a son in September 1848. Two years later, the entire family died in a shipwreck while en route to the United States. Constance Fuller Threinen.

Fuller embraced the transcendental principle that all people could develop a life-affirming mystical relationship with God. Every woman therefore deserved psychological and social independence: the ability "to grow, as an intellect to discern, as a soul to live freely and unimpeded." She wrote: "We would have every arbitrary barrier thrown down [and] every path laid open to Woman as freely as to Man." Fuller became the literary critic of the *New York Tribune* and traveled to Italy to report on the Revolution of 1848, only to drown in a shipwreck en route home to the United States. Fuller's life and writings inspired a rising generation of women writers and reformers.

EXPLAIN CONSEQUENCES
How did authors of the American Renaissance incorporate transcendentalist ideas into their work?

To see a longer excerpt of *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*, along with other primary sources from this period, see ***Sources for America's History.***

The poet Walt Whitman (1819–1892) also responded to Emerson's call. He had been "simmering, simmering," he recalled, and then Emerson "brought me to a boil." Whitman worked as a printer, a teacher, a journalist, an editor of the *Brooklyn Eagle*, and an influential publicist for the Democratic Party. However, poetry was the "direction of his dreams." In *Leaves of Grass*, a collection of wild, exuberant poems first published in 1855 and constantly revised and expanded, Whitman recorded in verse his efforts to transcend various "invisible boundaries": between solitude and community, between prose and poetry, even between the living and the dead. At the center of *Leaves of Grass* is the individual — "I, Walt." He begins alone: "I celebrate myself, and sing myself." Because he has an Emersonian "original relation" with nature, Whitman claims perfect communion with others: "For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you." For Emerson, Thoreau, and Fuller, the individual had a divine spark; for Whitman, the collective democracy assumed a sacred character.

The transcendentalists were optimistic but not naive. Whitman wrote about human suffering with passion, and Emerson laced his accounts of transcendence with twinges of anxiety. "I am glad," he once said, "to the brink of fear." Thoreau was gloomy about everyday life: "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation." Nonetheless, dark murmurings remain muted in their work, overshadowed by assertions that nothing was impossible for the individual who could break free from tradition.

Darker Visions Emerson's writings also influenced two great novelists, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville, who had more pessimistic worldviews. Both sounded powerful warnings that unfettered egoism could destroy individuals and those around them. Hawthorne brilliantly explored the theme of excessive individualism in his novel *The Scarlet Letter* (1850). The two main characters, Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale, blatantly challenge their seventeenth-century New England community by committing adultery and producing a child. Their decision to ignore social restraints results not in liberation but in degradation: a profound sense of guilt and condemnation by the community.

Herman Melville explored the limits of individualism in even more extreme and tragic terms and emerged

as a scathing critic of transcendentalism. His most powerful statement was *Moby Dick* (1851), the story of Captain Ahab's obsessive hunt for a mysterious white whale that ends in death for Ahab and all but one member of his crew. Here, the quest for spiritual meaning in nature brings death, not transcendence, because Ahab, the liberated individual, lacks inner discipline and self-restraint.

Moby Dick was a commercial failure. The middle-class audience that devoured sentimental American fiction refused to follow Melville into the dark, dangerous realm of individualism gone mad. What middle-class readers emphatically preferred were the more modest examples of individualism offered by Emerson and Finney: personal improvement and religious piety through spiritual awareness and self-discipline.

Rural Communalism and Urban Popular Culture

Between 1820 and 1860, thousands of Americans grew dissatisfied with life in America's emerging market society and retreated into rural areas of the Northeast and Midwest (Map 11.1). There they sought to create ideal communities, or **utopias**, that would allow people to live differently and realize their spiritual potential.

Simultaneously, tens of thousands of rural Americans and European immigrants poured into the larger cities of the United States. There, they created a popular culture that challenged some sexual norms, reinforced traditional racist feelings, and encouraged new styles of dress and behavior.

The Utopian Impulse

Many rural communalists were farmers and artisans seeking refuge from the economic depression of 1837–1843. Others were religious idealists. Whatever their origins, these rural utopias were symbols of social protest and experimentation. By advocating the common ownership of property (socialism) and unconventional forms of marriage and family life, the communalists challenged traditional property rights and gender roles.

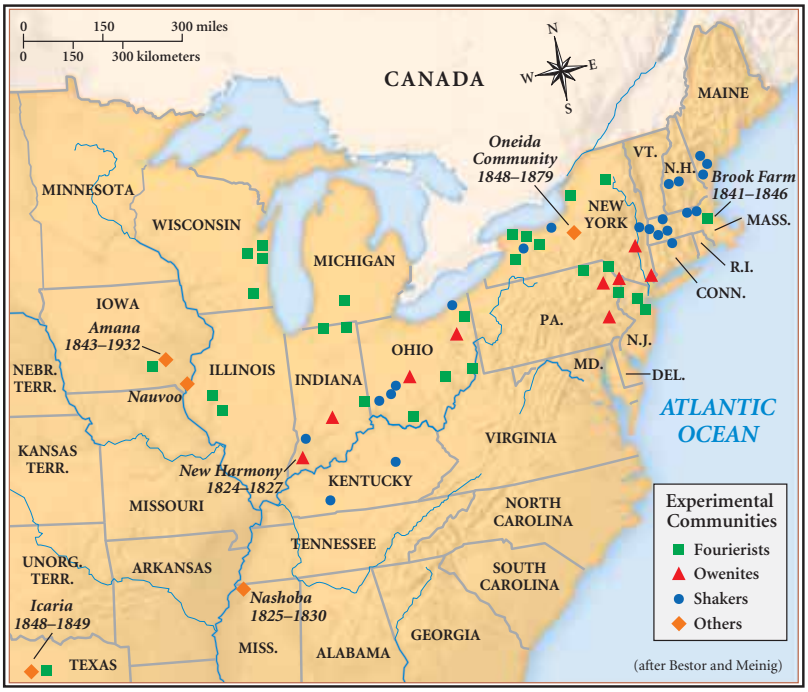
Mother Ann and the Shakers

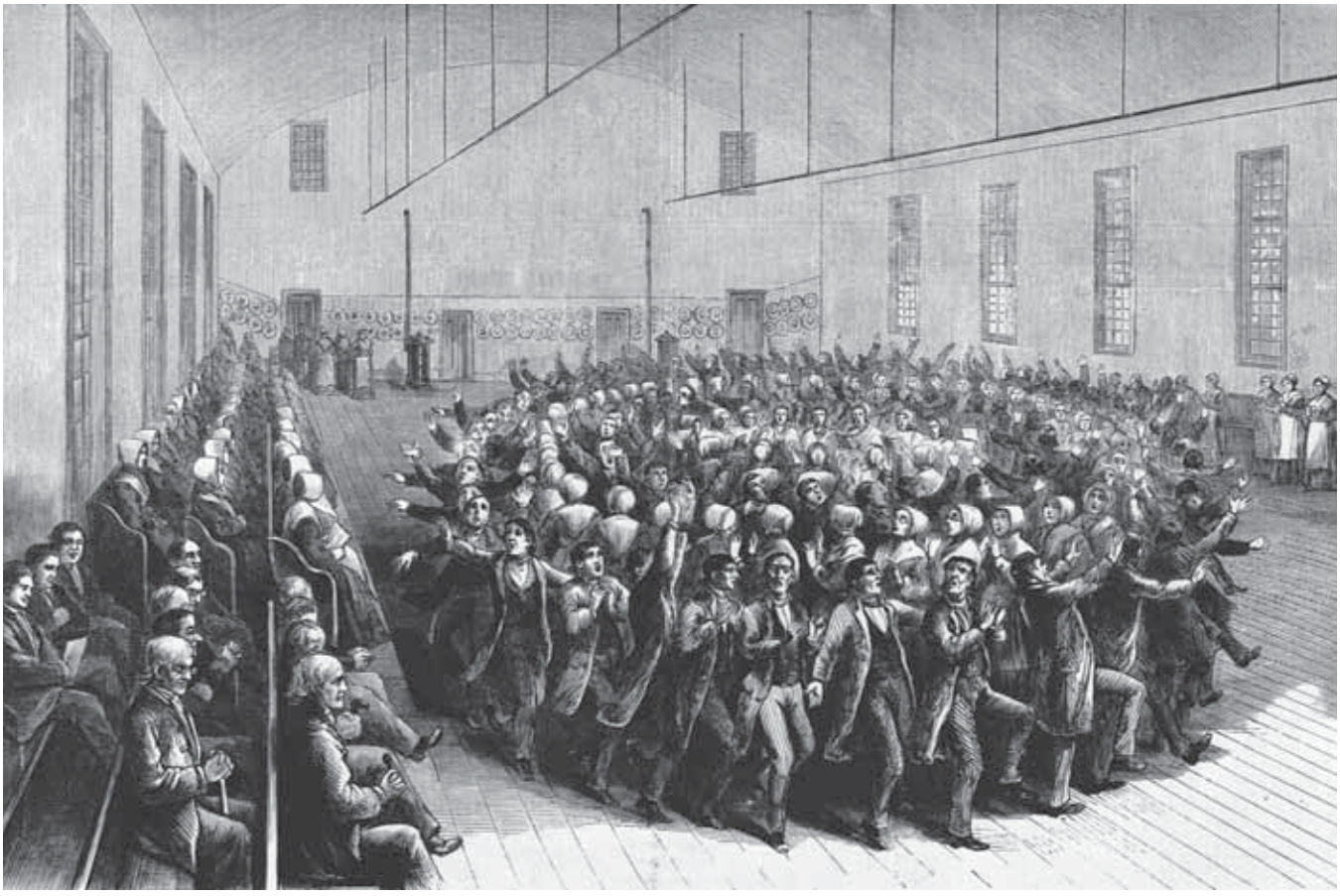
The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing, known as the Shakers because of the ecstatic dances that were part of their worship, was the first successful American communal movement. In 1770, Ann Lee Stanley (Mother Ann), a young cook in Manchester, England, had a vision that she was an incarnation of Christ. Four years later, she led a few followers to America and established a church near Albany, New York.

After Mother Ann's death in 1784, the Shakers honored her as the Second Coming of Christ, withdrew from the profane world, and formed disciplined

MAP 11.1
Major Communal Experiments Before 1860

Some experimental communities settled along the frontier, but the vast majority chose rural areas in settled regions of the North and Midwest. Because they opposed slavery, communalists usually avoided the South. Most secular experiments failed within a few decades, as the founders lost their reformist enthusiasm or died off; tightly knit religious communities, such as the Shakers and the Mormons, were longer-lived.





Shakers at Prayer

Most Americans viewed the Shakers with a mixture of fascination and suspicion. They feared the sect's radical aspects, such as a commitment to celibacy and communal property, and considered the Shakers' dancing more an invitation to debauchery than a form of prayer. Those apprehensions surfaced in this engraving, *The Shakers of New Lebanon* (New York), which expresses both the powerful intensity and the menacing character of this Shaker spiritual ritual. The work of the journalist-engraver Joseph Becker, the picture appeared in Frank Leslie's *Illustrated Newspaper* in 1873.

religious communities. Members embraced the common ownership of property; accepted strict oversight by church leaders; and pledged to abstain from alcohol, tobacco, politics, and war. Shakers also repudiated sexual pleasure and marriage. Their commitment to celibacy followed Mother Ann's testimony against "the lustful gratifications of the flesh as the source and foundation of human corruption." The Shakers' theology was as radical as their social thought. They held that God was "a dual person, male and female." This doctrine prompted Shakers to repudiate male leadership and to place community governance in the hands of both women and men — the Eldresses and the Elders.

IDENTIFY CAUSES
What factors led to the proliferation of rural utopian communities in nineteenth-century America?

Shakers founded twenty communities, mostly in New England, New York, and Ohio. Their agriculture and crafts, especially furniture making, acquired a reputation for quality that made most Shaker communities self-sustaining and even comfortable. Because the Shakers disdained sexual intercourse, they relied on conversions and the adoption of thousands of young orphans to increase their numbers. During the 1830s, three thousand adults, mostly women, joined the Shakers, attracted by their communal intimacy and sexual equality. To Rebecca Cox Jackson, an African American seamstress from Philadelphia, the Shakers seemed to be "loving to live forever." However, with the proliferation of public and private orphanages during the 1840s and 1850s, Shaker communities began to decline and, by 1900, had virtually disappeared. They

left as a material legacy a plain but elegant style of wood furniture.

Albert Brisbane and Fourierism As the Shakers' growth slowed during the 1840s, the American Fourierist movement mushroomed. Charles Fourier (1777–1837) was a French reformer who devised an eight-stage theory of social evolution that predicted the imminent decline of individual property rights and capitalist values. Fourier's leading disciple in America was Albert Brisbane. Just as republicanism had freed Americans from slavish monarchical government, Brisbane argued, so Fourierist **socialism** would liberate workers from capitalist employers and the "menial and slavish system of Hired Labor or Labor for Wages." Members would work for the community, in cooperative groups called phalanxes; they would own its property in common, including stores and a bank, a school, and a library.

Fourier and Brisbane saw the phalanx as a humane system that would liberate women as well as men. "In society as it is now constituted," Brisbane wrote, individual freedom was possible only for men, while "woman is subjected to unremitting and slavish domestic duties." In the "new Social Order . . . based upon Associated households," men would share women's domestic labor and thereby increase sexual equality.

Brisbane skillfully promoted Fourier's ideas in his influential book *The Social Destiny of Man* (1840), a regular column in Horace Greeley's *New York Tribune*, and hundreds of lectures. Fourierist ideas found a receptive audience among educated farmers and craftsmen, who yearned for economic stability and communal solidarity following the Panic of 1837. During the 1840s, Fourierists started nearly one hundred cooperative communities, mostly in western New York and the Midwest. Most communities quickly collapsed as members fought over work responsibilities and social policies. Fourierism's rapid decline revealed the difficulty of maintaining a utopian community in the absence of a charismatic leader or a compelling religious vision.

John Humphrey Noyes and Oneida John Humphrey Noyes (1811–1886) was both charismatic and religious. He ascribed the Fourierists' failure to their secular outlook and embraced the pious Shakers as the true "pioneers of modern Socialism." The Shakers' marriageless society also inspired Noyes to create a community that defined sexuality and gender roles in radically new ways.

Attacking the Women's Rights Movement

Amelia Jenks Bloomer (1818–1894) wrote for her husband's newspaper, the *County Courier* of Seneca Falls, New York. In 1848 she attended the women's convention there and began her own biweekly newspaper, *The Lily*, focusing on temperance and women's rights. In 1851, Bloomer enthusiastically promoted—and serendipitously gave her name to—the comfortable women's costume devised by another temperance activist: loose trousers gathered at the ankles topped by a short skirt. Fearing women's quest for equal dress and equal rights, humorists such as John Leech ridiculed the new female attire. Here, bloomer-attired women smoke away and belittle the male proprietor as "one of the 'inferior animals,' " a thinly veiled effort by Leech to reassert men's "natural" claim as the dominant sex. From *Punch* 1851, John Leech Archive.

No. VI.—SOMETHING MORE OF BLOOMERISM.

(BEHIND THE COUNTER THERE IS ONE OF THE "INFERIOR ANIMALS")

Noyes was a well-to-do graduate of Dartmouth College who joined the ministry after hearing a sermon by Charles Grandison Finney. Dismissed as the pastor of a Congregational church for holding unorthodox beliefs, Noyes turned to **perfectionism**, an evangelical Protestant movement of the 1830s that attracted thousands of New Englanders who had migrated to New York and Ohio. Perfectionists believed that Christ had already returned to earth (the Second Coming) and therefore people could aspire to sinless perfection in their earthly lives. Unlike most perfectionists, who lived conventional personal lives, Noyes rejected marriage, calling it a major barrier to perfection. "Exclusiveness, jealousy, quarreling have no place at the marriage supper of the Lamb," Noyes wrote. Instead of the Shakers' celibacy, Noyes embraced "complex marriage," in which all members of the community were married to one another. He rejected monogamy partly to free women from their status as the property of their husbands, as they were by custom and by common law. Symbolizing the quest for equality, Noyes's women followers cut their hair short and wore pantaloons under calf-length skirts.

In 1839, Noyes set up a perfectionist community near his hometown of Putney, Vermont. However, local outrage over the practice of complex marriage forced Noyes to relocate the community in 1848 to an isolated area near Oneida, New York, where the members could follow his precepts. To give women the time and energy to participate fully in community affairs, Noyes urged them to avoid multiple pregnancies. He asked men to help by avoiding orgasm during intercourse. Less positively, he encouraged sexual relations at a very early age and used his position of power to manipulate the sexual lives of his followers.

By the mid-1850s, the Oneida settlement had two hundred residents and became self-sustaining when the inventor of a highly successful steel animal trap joined the community. With the profits from trap making, the Oneidians diversified into the production of silverware. When Noyes fled to Canada in 1879 to avoid prosecution for adultery, the community abandoned complex marriage but retained its cooperative spirit. The Oneida Community, Ltd., a jointly owned silverware-manufacturing company, remained a successful communal venture until the middle of the twentieth century.

The historical significance of the Oneidians, Shakers, and Fourierists does not lie in their numbers, which were small, or in their fine crafts. Rather, it stems from their radical questioning of traditional sexual norms and of the capitalist values and class divisions of the emerging market society. Their utopian communities stood as countercultural blueprints of a more egalitarian social and economic order.

Joseph Smith and the Mormon Experience

The Mormons, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, were religious utopians with a conservative social agenda: to perpetuate close-knit communities and patriarchal power. Because of their cohesiveness, authoritarian leadership, and size, the Mormons provoked more animosity than the radical utopians did.

Joseph Smith Like many social movements of the era, **Mormonism** emerged from religious ferment among families of Puritan descent who lived along the

A Mormon Man and His Wives

The practice of polygamy split the Mormon community and, because it deviated from Christian religious principles, enraged Protestant denominations. This Mormon household, pictured in the late 1840s, was unusually prosperous, partly because of the labor of the husband's multiple wives. Although the cabin provides cramped quarters for a large polygamous family, it boasts a brick chimney and—a luxury for any pioneer home—a glass window. Library of Congress.

Erie Canal and who were heirs to a religious tradition that believed in a world of wonders, supernatural powers, and visions of the divine.

The founder of the Latter-day Church, Joseph Smith Jr. (1805–1844), was born in Vermont to a poor farming and shop-keeping family that migrated to Palmyra in central New York. In 1820, Smith began to have religious experiences similar to those described in conversion narratives: "[A] pillar of light above the brightness of the sun at noonday came down from above and rested upon me and I was filled with the spirit of God." Smith came to believe that God had singled him out to receive a special revelation of divine truth. In 1830, he published *The Book of Mormon*, which he claimed to have translated from ancient hieroglyphics on gold plates shown to him by an angel named Moroni. *The Book of Mormon* told the story of an ancient Jewish civilization from the Middle East that had migrated to the Western Hemisphere and of the visit of Jesus Christ, soon after his Resurrection, to those descendants of Israel. Smith's account explained the presence of native peoples in the Americas and integrated them into the Judeo-Christian tradition.

Smith proceeded to organize the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Seeing himself as a prophet in a sinful, excessively individualistic society, Smith revived traditional social doctrines, including patriarchal authority. Like many Protestant ministers, he encouraged practices that led to individual success in the age of capitalist markets and factories: frugality, hard work, and enterprise. Smith also stressed communal discipline to safeguard the Mormon "New Jerusalem." His goal was a church-directed society that would restore primitive Christianity and encourage moral perfection.

Constantly harassed by anti-Mormons, Smith struggled to find a secure home for his new religion. At one point, he identified Jackson County in Missouri as the site of the sacred "City of Zion," and his followers began to settle there. Agitation led by Protestant ministers quickly forced them out: "Mormons were the common enemies of mankind and ought to be destroyed," said one cleric. Smith and his growing congregation eventually settled in Nauvoo, Illinois, a town they founded on the Mississippi River (Map 11.2). By the early 1840s, Nauvoo had 30,000 residents. The Mormons' rigid discipline and secret rituals — along with their prosperity, hostility toward other sects, and bloc voting in Illinois elections — fueled resentment among their neighbors. That resentment increased when Smith refused to accept Illinois laws of which he disapproved, asked Congress to make Nauvoo a separate federal territory, and declared himself a candidate for president of the United States.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST
In what ways were Mormons similar to, and different from, other communal movements of the era?

Moreover, Smith claimed to have received a new revelation justifying polygamy, the practice of a man having multiple wives. When leading Mormon men took several wives — "plural celestial marriage" — they threw the Mormon community into turmoil and enraged nearby Christians. In 1844, Illinois officials arrested Smith and charged him with treason for allegedly conspiring to create a Mormon colony in Mexican territory. An anti-Mormon mob stormed the jail in Carthage, Illinois, where Smith and his brother were being held and murdered them.

Brigham Young and Utah Led by Brigham Young, Smith's leading disciple and now the sect's "prophet, seer and revelator," about 6,500 Mormons fled the United States. Beginning in 1846, they crossed the

MAP 11.2
The Mormon Trek, 1830–1848
Because of their unorthodox religious views and communal solidarity, Mormons faced hostility first in New York and then in Missouri and Illinois. After founder Joseph Smith Jr. was murdered, Brigham Young led the polygamist faction of Mormons into lands claimed by Mexico and thinly populated by Native Americans. From Omaha, the migrants followed the path of the Oregon Trail to Fort Bridger and then struck off to the southwest. They settled along the Wasatch Range in the basin of the Great Salt Lake in present-day Utah.

Great Plains into Mexican territory and settled in the Great Salt Lake Valley in present-day Utah. Using cooperative labor and an irrigation system based on communal water rights, the Mormon pioneers quickly spread agricultural communities along the base of the Wasatch Range. Many Mormons who rejected polygamy remained in the United States. Led by Smith's son, Joseph Smith III, they formed the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and settled throughout the Midwest.

When the United States acquired Mexico's northern territories in 1848, the Salt Lake Mormons petitioned Congress to create a vast new state, Deseret, stretching from Utah to the Pacific coast. Instead, Congress set up the much smaller Utah Territory in 1850 and named Brigham Young its governor. Young and his associates ruled in an authoritarian fashion, determined to ensure the ascendancy of the Mormon Church and its practices. By 1856, Young and the Utah territorial legislature were openly vowing to resist federal laws. Pressed by Protestant church leaders to end polygamy and considering the Mormons' threat of nullification "a declaration of war," President James Buchanan dispatched a small army to Utah. As the "Nauvoo Legion" resisted the army's advance, aggressive Mormon militia massacred a party of 120 California-bound emigrants and murdered suspicious travelers and Mormons seeking to flee Young's regime. Despite this bloodshed, the "Mormon War" ended quietly in June 1858. President Buchanan, a longtime supporter of the white South, feared that the forced abolition of polygamy would serve as a precedent for ending slavery and offered a pardon to Utah citizens who would acknowledge federal authority. (To enable Utah to win admission to the Union in 1896, its citizens ratified a constitution that "forever" banned the practice of polygamy. However, the state government has never strictly enforced that ban.)

The Salt Lake Mormons had succeeded even as other social experiments had failed. Reaffirming traditional values, their leaders resolutely used strict religious controls to perpetuate patriarchy and communal discipline. However, by endorsing private property and individual enterprise, Mormons became prosperous contributors to the new market society. This blend of economic innovation, social conservatism, and hierarchical leadership, in combination with a strong missionary impulse, created a wealthy and expansive church that now claims a worldwide membership of about 12 million people.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST
How were the cultures of utopian communalists and urban residents similar to and different from the mainstream culture described in Chapters 8 and 9?

Urban Popular Culture

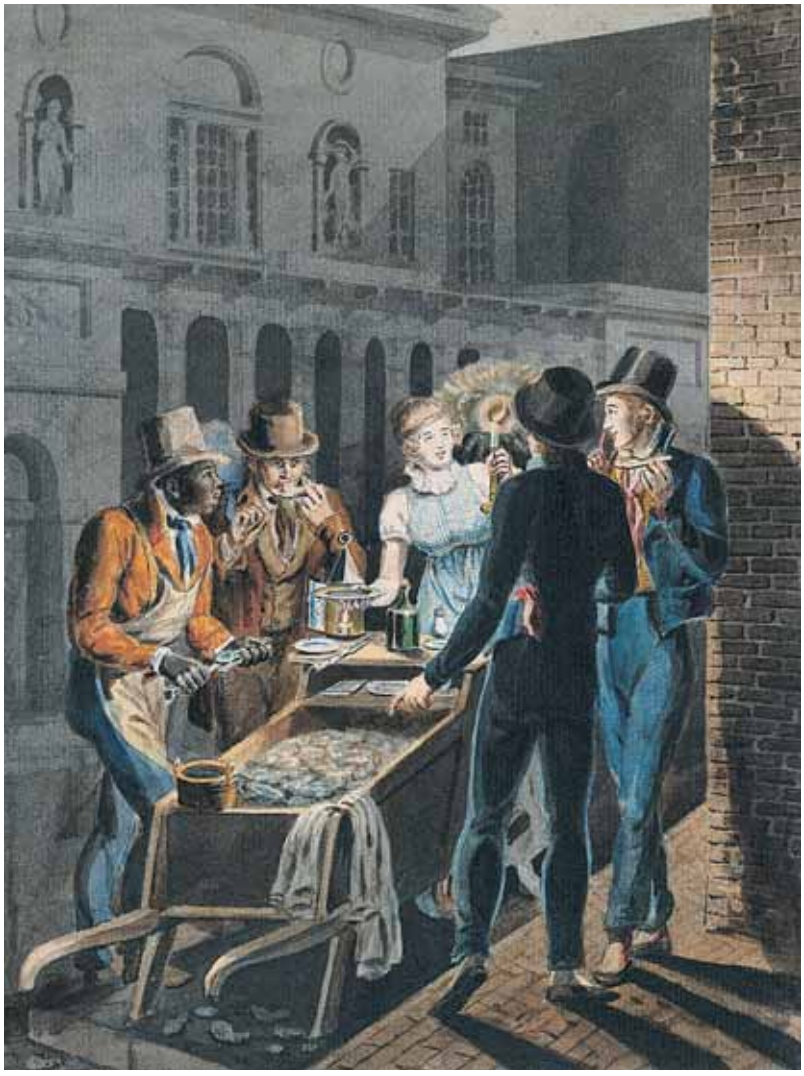
As utopians organized communities in the countryside, rural migrants and foreign immigrants created a new urban culture. In 1800, American cities were overgrown towns with rising death rates: New York had only 60,000 residents, Philadelphia had 41,000, and life expectancy at birth was a mere twenty-five years. Then urban growth accelerated as a huge in-migration outweighed the high death rates. By 1840, New York's population had ballooned to 312,000; Philadelphia and its suburbs had 150,000 residents; and three other cities — New Orleans, Boston, and Baltimore — each had about 100,000. By 1860, New York had become a metropolis with more than 1 million residents: 813,000 in Manhattan and another 266,000 in the adjacent community of Brooklyn.

Sex in the City These newly populous cities, particularly New York, generated a new urban culture. Thousands of young men and women flocked to the city searching for adventure and fortune, but many found only a hard life. Young men labored for meager wages building thousands of tenements, warehouses, and workshops. Others worked as low-paid clerks or operatives in hundreds of mercantile and manufacturing firms. The young women had an even harder time. Thousands toiled as live-in domestic servants, ordered about by the mistress of the household and often sexually exploited by the master. Thousands more scraped out a bare living as needlewomen in New York City's booming ready-made clothes industry. Unwilling to endure domestic service or subsistence wages, many young girls turned to prostitution. Dr. William Sanger's careful survey, commissioned in 1855 by worried city officials, found six thousand women engaged in commercial sex. Three-fifths were native-born whites, and the rest were foreign immigrants; most were between fifteen and twenty years old. Half were or had been domestic servants, half had children, and half were infected with syphilis.

Commercialized sex — and sex in general — formed one facet of the new urban culture. "Sporting men" engaged freely in sexual conquests; otherwise respectable married men kept mistresses in handy apartments; and working men frequented bawdy houses. New York City had two hundred brothels in the 1820s and five hundred by the 1850s. Prostitutes — so-called "public" women — openly advertised their wares on Broadway,

Night Life in Philadelphia

This watercolor by Russian painter Pavel Svinin (1787–1839) captures the social diversity and allure of urban America. A respectable gentleman relishes the delicacies sold by a black oysterman. Meanwhile, a young woman—probably a prostitute but perhaps an adventurous working girl—engages the attention of two well-dressed young "swells" outside the Chestnut Street Theatre. Such scenes were new to Americans and marked the beginning of a profound split between the nation's rural and urban cultures. © The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image source: Art Resource, NY.



the city's most fashionable thoroughfare, and welcomed clients on the infamous "Third Tier" of the theaters. Many men considered illicit sex as a right. "Man is endowed by nature with passions that must be gratified," declared the *Sporting Whip*, a working-class magazine. Even the Reverend William Berrian, pastor of the ultra-respectable Trinity Episcopal Church, remarked from the pulpit that he had resorted ten times to "a house of ill-fame."

Prostitution formed only the tip of the urban sexual volcano. Freed from family oversight, men formed homoerotic friendships and relationships; as early as 1800, the homosexual "Fop" was an acknowledged character in Philadelphia. Young people moved from partner to partner until they chanced on an ideal mate. Middle-class youth strolled along Broadway in the latest fashions: elaborate bonnets and silk dresses for young women; flowing capes, leather boots, and silver-plated walking sticks for young men. Rivaling the elegance on Broadway was the colorful dress on the Bowery, the broad avenue that ran along the east side of lower Manhattan. By day, the "Bowery Boy" worked as an apprentice or journeyman. By night, he prowled the streets as a "consummate dandy," his hair cropped at the back of his head "as close as scissors could cut," with long front locks "matted by a lavish application of *bear's grease*, the ends tucked under so as to form a roll and brushed until they shone like glass bottles." The "B'hoy," as he was called, cut a dashing figure as he walked along with a "Bowery Gal" in a striking dress and shawl: "a light pink contrasting with a deep blue" or "a bright yellow with a brighter red."

Minstrelsy Popular entertainment was a central facet of the new urban culture. In New York, workingmen could partake of traditional rural blood

sports — rat and terrier fights as well as boxing matches — at Sportsmen Hall, or they could seek drink and fun in billiard and bowling saloons. Other workers crowded into the pit of the Bowery Theatre to see the "Mad Tragedian," Junius Brutus Booth, deliver a stirring (abridged) performance of Shakespeare's *Richard III*. Reform-minded couples enjoyed evenings at the huge Broadway Tabernacle, where they could hear an abolitionist lecture, see the renowned Hutchinson Family Singers lead a roof-raising rendition of their antislavery anthem, "Get Off the Track," and sentimentally lament the separation of a slave couple in Stephen Foster's "Oh Susanna," a popular song of the late 1840s. Families could visit the museum of oddities (and hoaxes) created by P. T. Barnum, the great cultural entrepreneur and founder of the Barnum & Bailey Circus.

However, the most popular theatrical entertainments were the minstrel shows, in which white actors in blackface presented comic routines that combined racist caricature and social criticism. **Minstrelsy** began around 1830, when a few actors put on blackface and performed song-and-dance routines (Thinking Like a Historian, p. 358). The most famous was John Dartmouth Rice, whose "Jim Crow" blended a weird shuffle-dance-and-jump with unintelligible lyrics delivered in "Negro dialect." By the 1840s, there were hundreds of minstrel troupes, including a group of black entertainers, Gavitt's Original Ethiopian Serenaders. The actor-singers' rambling lyrics poked racist fun at African Americans, portraying them as lazy, sensual, and irresponsible while simultaneously using them to criticize white society. Minstrels ridiculed the drunkenness of Irish immigrants, parodied the halting English of German immigrants, denounced women's demands for political rights, and mocked the arrogance of upper-class men. Still, by caricaturing blacks, the minstrels declared the importance of being white and spread racist sentiments among Irish and German immigrants.

Immigrant Masses and Nativist Reaction

By 1850, immigrants were a major presence throughout the Northeast. Irish men and women in New York City numbered 200,000, and Germans 110,000 (Figure 11.1). German-language shop signs filled entire neighborhoods, and German foods (sausages, hamburgers, sauerkraut) and food customs (such as drinking beer in family *biergärten*) became part of the city's culture. The mass of impoverished Irish migrants found allies in the American Catholic Church, which soon became an Irish-dominated institution, and the Democratic Party, which gave them a foothold in the political process.

Native-born New Yorkers took alarm as hordes of ethnically diverse migrants altered the city's culture. They organized a nativist movement — a final aspect of the new urban world. Beginning in the mid-1830s, nativists called for a halt to immigration and mounted a cultural and political assault on foreign-born residents (Chapter 9). Gangs of B'hoys assaulted Irish youths in the streets, employers restricted Irish workers to the most menial jobs, and temperance reformers denounced the German fondness for beer. In 1844, the American Republican Party, with the endorsement of the Whigs, swept the city elections by focusing on

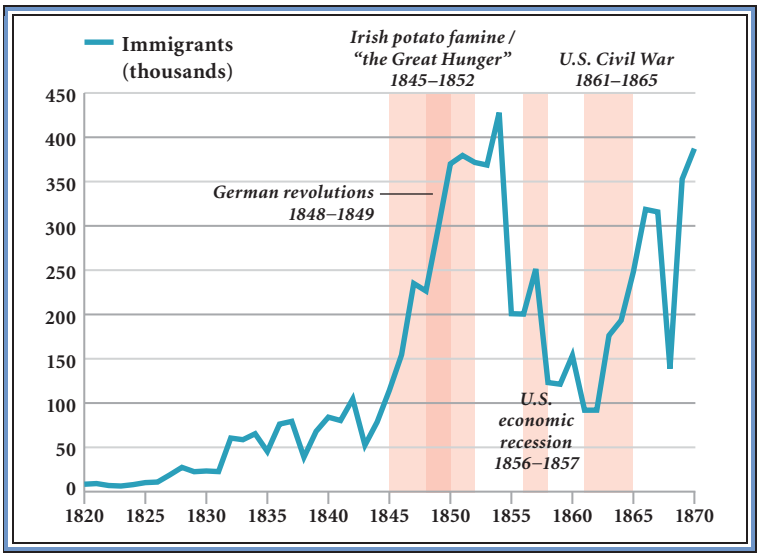


FIGURE 11.1
The Surge in Imigration, 1854–1855
In 1845, the failure of the potato crop in Ireland prompted the wholesale migration to the United States of peasants from the overcrowded farms of its western counties. Population growth and limited economic prospects likewise spurred the migration of tens of thousands of German peasants, while the failure of the liberal republican political revolution of 1848 prompted hundreds of prominent German politicians and intellectuals to follow them. An American economic recession cut the flow of immigrants, but the booming northern economy during the Civil War again persuaded Europeans to set sail for the United States.

the culturally emotional issues of temperance, anti-Catholicism, and nativism.

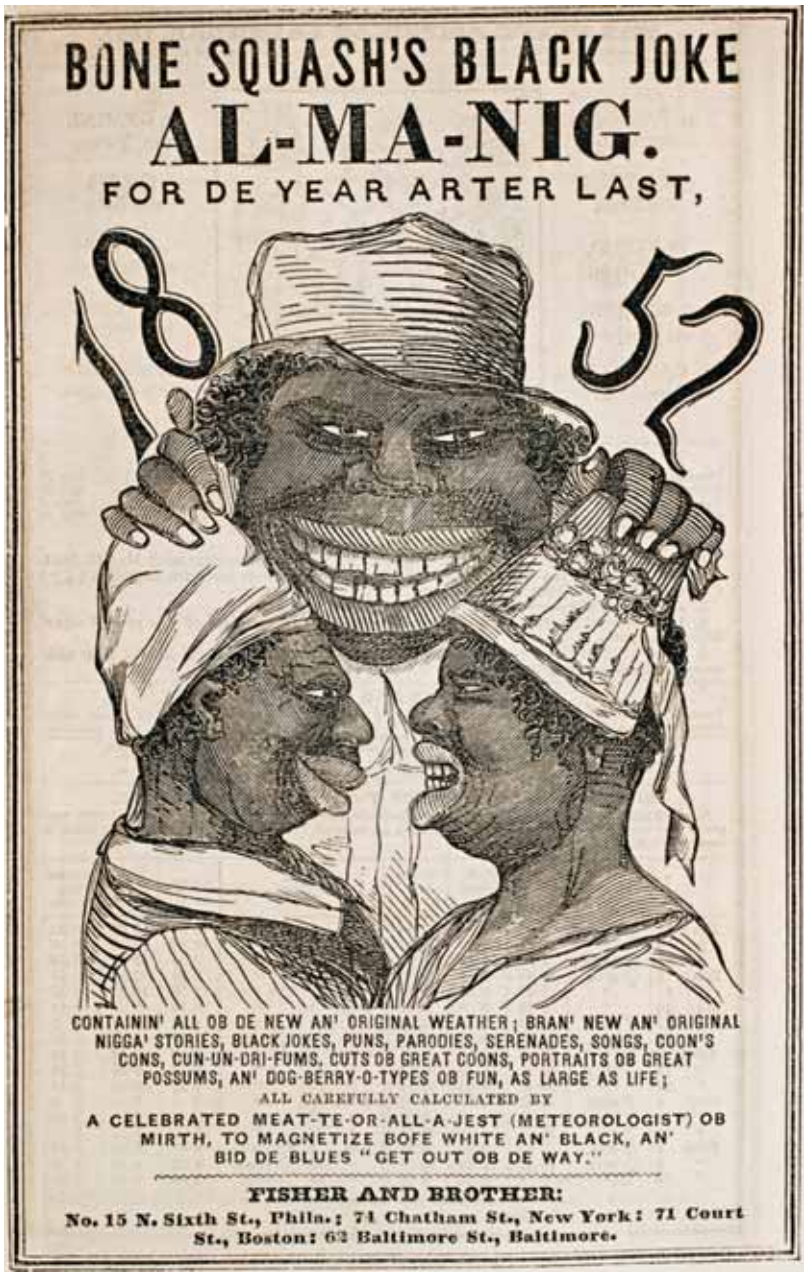
In the city, as in the countryside, new values were challenging old beliefs. The sexual freedom celebrated by Noyes at Oneida had its counterpart in commercialized sex and male promiscuity in New York City, where it came under attack from the Female Moral Reform Society. Similarly, the disciplined rejection of tobacco and alcohol by the Shakers and the Mormons found a parallel in the Washington Temperance Society and other urban reform organizations. American society was in ferment, and the outcome was far from clear.

Abolitionism

Like other reform movements, the **abolitionist** crusade of the 1830s drew on the religious enthusiasm of the Second Great Awakening. Around 1800, antislavery activists had assailed human bondage as contrary to republicanism and liberty. Three decades later, white abolitionists condemned slavery as a sin and demanded immediate, uncompensated emancipation. Their uncompromising stance led to fierce political debates, urban riots, and sectional conflict.

Rampant Racism

Minstrel shows and their music were just two facets of the racist culture of mid-nineteenth-century America. Exploiting the market for almanacs among farmers and city-folk alike, the publishing firm of Fisher and Brother produced the *Black Joke Al-Ma-Nig* for 1852. Like other almanacs, it provided astrological charts, weather predictions, and a detailed calendar of events. To boost sales, the almanac included "new an' original nigga' stories, black jokes, puns, parodies" that would "magnetize bofe white an' black." Such racist caricatures of black faces and language influenced white views of African Americans well into the twentieth century. Courtesy: The Library Company of Philadelphia.



Dance and Social Identity in Antebellum America

Styles of dance and attitudes toward them tell us a great deal about cultural and social norms. When nineteenth-century Americans took to partying, their dances—regardless of the class or ethnic identity of the dancers—focused more on individual couples and allowed more room for improvisation and intimacy than the dance forms of the previous century.

1. **William Sidney Mount, *Rustic Dance After a Sleigh Ride*, 1830.** *In the eighteenth century, wealthy, fashionable Americans danced the French minuet, a ceremonious and graceful dance in which couples executed prescribed steps while barely touching. Ordinary white folks preferred the country dances brought by their ancestors from Europe, which also involved intricate steps, line formations, and limited physical contact. Mount (1807–1868) was self-taught, lived in rural Long Island, and depicted scenes of everyday life. This painting, replete with amorous pursuits, depicts a traditional contra dance in which the lead couple advances a few steps and then sashays to the back of the line, as another couple takes its place.*

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts, USA/Bequest of Martha C. Karolik for the M. and M. Karolik/Collection of American Paintings, 1815–65/The Bridgeman Art Library.

2. **"The Polka Fashions," from *Godey's Lady's Book*, 1845.** *"A magazine of elegant literature," according to its publisher, Louis A. Godey, the* Lady's Book *was the most widely circulated American periodical prior to the Civil War and an arbiter of good taste among the aspiring middle classes. Each issue contained a sheet of music for the latest dance craze. The* Lady's Book *cautiously endorsed the waltz, a sensuous dance that required a close embrace, but enthusiastically welcomed its cousin, the polka, whose lively tempo and rapid spinning had a wholesome and joyful quality. Introduced from Bohemia, the polka dominated the ballrooms of America's upper and middle classes in the 1840s and 1850s.*

Private Collection/The Bridgeman Art Library.

3. **George Templeton Strong, diary entry, December 23, 1845.**

Well, last night I spent at Mrs. Mary Jones's great ball. Very splendid affair—"the Ball of the Season." . . . Two houses open, standing supper table, "dazzling array of beauty and fashion." "Polka" for the first time brought under my inspection. It's a kind of insane Tartar jig performed to disagreeable music of an uncivilized character.

4. **Description of juba dancing from Charles Dickens, *American Notes for General Circulation*, 1842.** *In New York's Five Points slum in 1842, Charles Dickens described a challenge dance featuring William Henry Lane, or Master Juba, a young African American who created juba dancing, a blend of Irish jig and African dance moves.*

The corpulent black fiddler, and his friend who plays the tambourine, stamp upon the boarding of the small raised orchestra in which they sit, and play a lively measure. Five or six couples come upon the floor, marshalled by a lively young negro, who is the wit of the assembly, and the greatest dancer known. . . . Instantly the fiddler grins, and goes at it tooth and nail; there is new energy in the tambourine. . . . Single shuffle, double shuffle, cut and cross-cut; snapping his fingers, rolling his eyes, turning in his knees, presenting the backs of his legs in front, spinning about on his toes and heels like nothing but the man's fingers on the tambourine; dancing with two left legs, two right legs, two wooden legs, two wire legs, two spring legs — all sorts of legs and no legs — . . . having danced his partner off her feet, and himself too, he finishes by leaping gloriously on the bar-counter, and calling for something to drink.

5. **Poster advertising Barlow, Wilson, Primrose, and West's "Mammoth Minstrels' Colored Masquerade."** *Unlike slavery, minstrelsy survived the Civil War and remained popular until the early twentieth century, when it evolved into vaudeville. Barlow, Wilson, Primrose, and West's Mammoth Minstrels toured the United States, Europe, and Australia between 1877 and 1882, thrilling audiences with the clog dances that had devolved out of juba.*

Sources: (3) Luther S. Harris, *Around Washington Square: An Illustrated History of Greenwich Village* (Baltimore, 2003), 41; (4) Charles Dickens, *American Notes and Pictures from Italy* (C. Scribner: New York, 1868), 107.

ANALYZING THE EVIDENCE

1. What do sources 1 and 2 suggest about sexual manners among rural folk and genteel urbanites?
2. What does the polka (sources 3 and 4) reveal about changing cultural practices among the social elite?
3. Compare the juba and minstrelsy dances described above (sources 4 and 5) with the polka and contra dance forms (sources 1 and 2). How were dance forms and popular entertainment evolving? How did those changes relate to broader social developments?
4. The waltz, polka, and juba dances were popular during the Second Great Awakening, when (and long afterward) preachers often complained that "dance is destructive to Christian life." Why might ministers (and priests) take such a view? Would any form of dance be acceptable to them?

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Using the material on class, religion, and culture in Chapters 9 and 11, the description of the Quarterons Ball in Chapter 12 (p. 387), and the insights you have gathered by a careful inspection of these sources, write an essay showing how dance and other entertainments reflect or reveal differences among American social groups.

Private Collection/Photo © Barbara Singer/The Bridgeman Art Library.

Black Social Thought: Uplift, Race Equality, and Rebellion

Beginning in the 1790s, leading African Americans in the North advocated a strategy of social uplift, encouraging free blacks to "elevate" themselves through education, temperance, and hard work. By securing "respectability," they argued, blacks could become the social equals of whites. To promote that goal, black leaders — men such as James Forten, a Philadelphia sailmaker; Prince Hall, a Boston barber; and ministers Hosea Easton and Richard Allen (Chapter 8) — founded an array of churches, schools, and self-help associations. Capping this effort, John Russwurm and Samuel D. Cornish of New York published the first African American newspaper, *Freedom's Journal*, in 1827.

The black quest for respectability elicited a violent response in Boston, Pittsburgh, and other northern cities among whites who refused to accept African Americans as their social equals. "I am Mr. _____'s help," a white maid informed a British visitor. "I am no sarvant; none but negers are sarvants." Motivated by racial contempt, white mobs terrorized black communities. The attacks in Cincinnati were so violent and destructive that several hundred African Americans fled to Canada for safety.

CHANGE OVER TIME
How and why did African American efforts to achieve social equality change between 1800 and 1840?

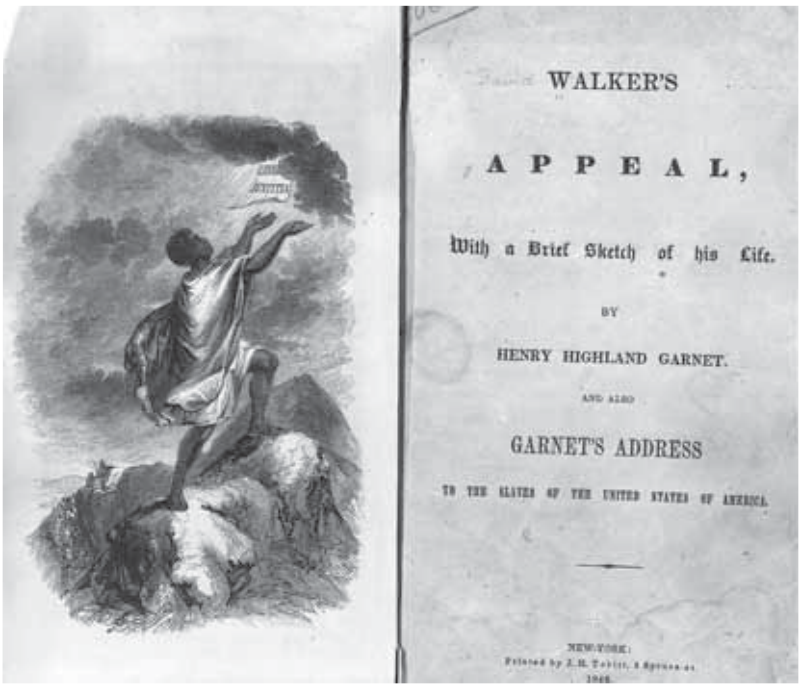
David Walker's *Appeal*

Responding to the attacks, David Walker published a stirring pamphlet, *An Appeal . . . to the Colored Citizens of the World* (1829), protesting black "wretchedness in this Republican Land of Liberty!!!!!" Walker was a free black from North Carolina who had moved to Boston, where he sold secondhand clothes and copies of *Freedom's Journal*. A self-educated author, Walker ridiculed the religious pretensions of slaveholders, justified slave rebellion, and in biblical language warned of a slave revolt if justice were delayed. "We must and shall be free," he told white Americans. "And woe, woe, will be it to you if we have to obtain our freedom by fighting. . . . Your destruction is at hand, and will be speedily consummated unless you repent." Walker's pamphlet quickly went through three printings and, carried by black merchant seamen, reached free African Americans in the South.

In 1830, Walker and other African American activists called a national convention in Philadelphia. The delegates refused to endorse either Walker's radical call for a slave revolt or the traditional program of uplift for free blacks. Instead, this new generation of activists demanded freedom and "race equality" for those of African descent. They urged free blacks to use every legal means, including petitions and other forms of political protest, to break "the shackles of slavery."

Nat Turner's Revolt

As Walker threatened violence in Boston, Nat Turner, a slave in Southampton County,



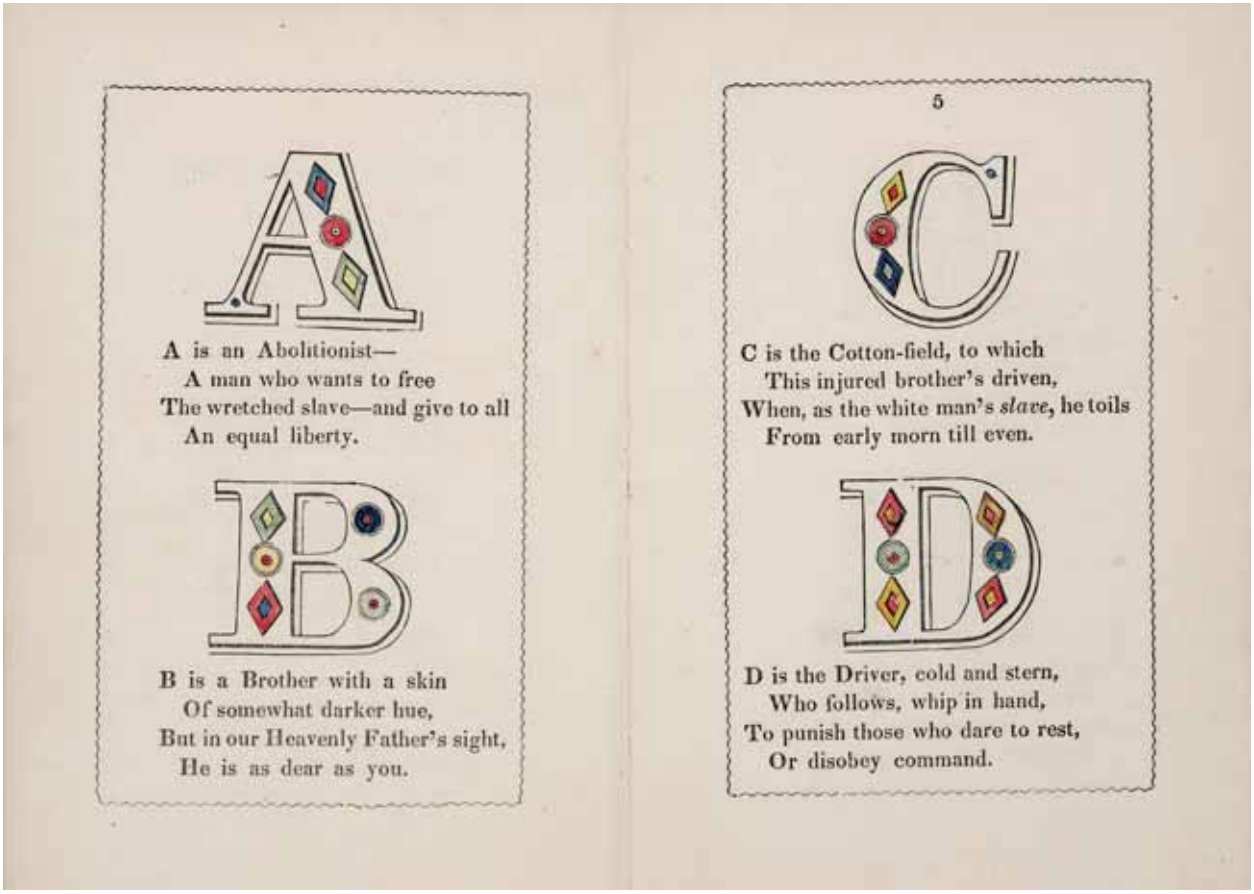
A Call for Revolution
David Walker (1785–1830), who ran a used clothing shop in Boston, spent his hard-earned savings to publish *An Appeal . . . to the Colored Citizens of the World* (1829), a learned and passionate attack on racial slavery. Walker depicted Christ as an avenging "God of justice and of armies" and raised the banner of slave rebellion. A year later, a passerby found Walker in the doorway of his shop, dead from unknown causes. Library of Congress.

Virginia, staged a bloody revolt—a chronological coincidence that had far-reaching consequences. As a child, Turner had taught himself to read and had hoped for emancipation, but one new master forced him into the fields, and another separated him from his wife. Becoming deeply spiritual, Turner had a religious vision in which "the Spirit" explained that "Christ had laid down the yoke he had borne for the sins of men, and that I should take it on and fight against the Serpent, for the time was fast approaching when the first should be last and the last should be first." Taking an eclipse of the sun in August 1831 as an omen, Turner and a handful of relatives and friends rose in rebellion and killed at least 55 white men, women, and children. Turner hoped that hundreds of slaves would rally to his cause, but he mustered only 60 men. The white militia quickly dispersed his poorly armed force and took their revenge. One company of cavalry killed 40 blacks in two days and put 15 of their heads on poles to warn "all those who should undertake a similar plot." Turner died by hanging, still identifying his mission with that of his Savior. "Was not Christ crucified?" he asked.

Deeply shaken by Turner's Rebellion, the Virginia assembly debated a law providing for gradual emancipation and colonization abroad. When the bill failed by a vote of 73 to 58, the possibility that southern planters would voluntarily end slavery was gone forever. Instead, the southern states toughened their slave codes, limited black movement, and prohibited anyone from teaching slaves to read. They would meet Walker's radical *Appeal* with radical measures of their own.

Evangelical Abolitionism

Rejecting Walker's and Turner's resort to violence, a cadre of northern evangelical Christians launched a moral crusade to abolish the slave regime. If planters did not allow blacks their God-given status as free



The Anti-Slavery Alphabet

Girding themselves for a long fight, abolitionists conveyed their beliefs to the next generation. This primer, written by Quakers Hannah and Mary Townsend and published in Philadelphia in 1846, taught young children the alphabet by spreading the antislavery message. "A" was for "Abolitionist," and "B" was for a "Brother," an enslaved black who, though of a "darker hue," was considered by God "as dear as you." The Huntington Library & Art Collections, San Marino, CA.

moral agents, these radical Christians warned, they faced eternal damnation at the hands of a just God.

William Lloyd Garrison, Theodore Weld, and Angelina and Sarah Grimké The most determined abolitionist was William Lloyd Garrison (1805–1879). A Massachusetts-born printer, Garrison had worked during the 1820s in Baltimore on an antislavery newspaper, the *Genius of Universal Emancipation*. In 1830, Garrison went to jail, convicted of libeling a New England merchant engaged in the domestic slave trade. In 1831, Garrison moved to Boston, where he immediately started his own weekly, *The Liberator* (1831–1865), and founded the New England Anti-Slavery Society.

Influenced by a bold pamphlet, *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition* (1824), by an English Quaker, Elizabeth Coltman Heyrick, Garrison demanded immediate abolition without compensation to slaveholders. "I will not retreat a single inch," he declared, "AND I WILL BE HEARD." Garrison accused the American Colonization Society (Chapter 8) of perpetuating slavery and assailed the U.S. Constitution as "a covenant with death and an agreement with Hell" because it implicitly accepted racial bondage.

In 1833, Garrison, Theodore Weld, and sixty other religious abolitionists, black and white, established the American Anti-Slavery Society. The society won financial support from Arthur and Lewis Tappan, wealthy silk merchants in New York City. Women abolitionists established separate groups, including the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society, founded by Lucretia Mott in 1833, and the Anti-Slavery Conventions of American Women, a network of local societies. The women raised money for *The Liberator* and carried the movement to the farm villages and small towns of the Midwest, where they distributed abolitionist literature and collected thousands of signatures on antislavery petitions.

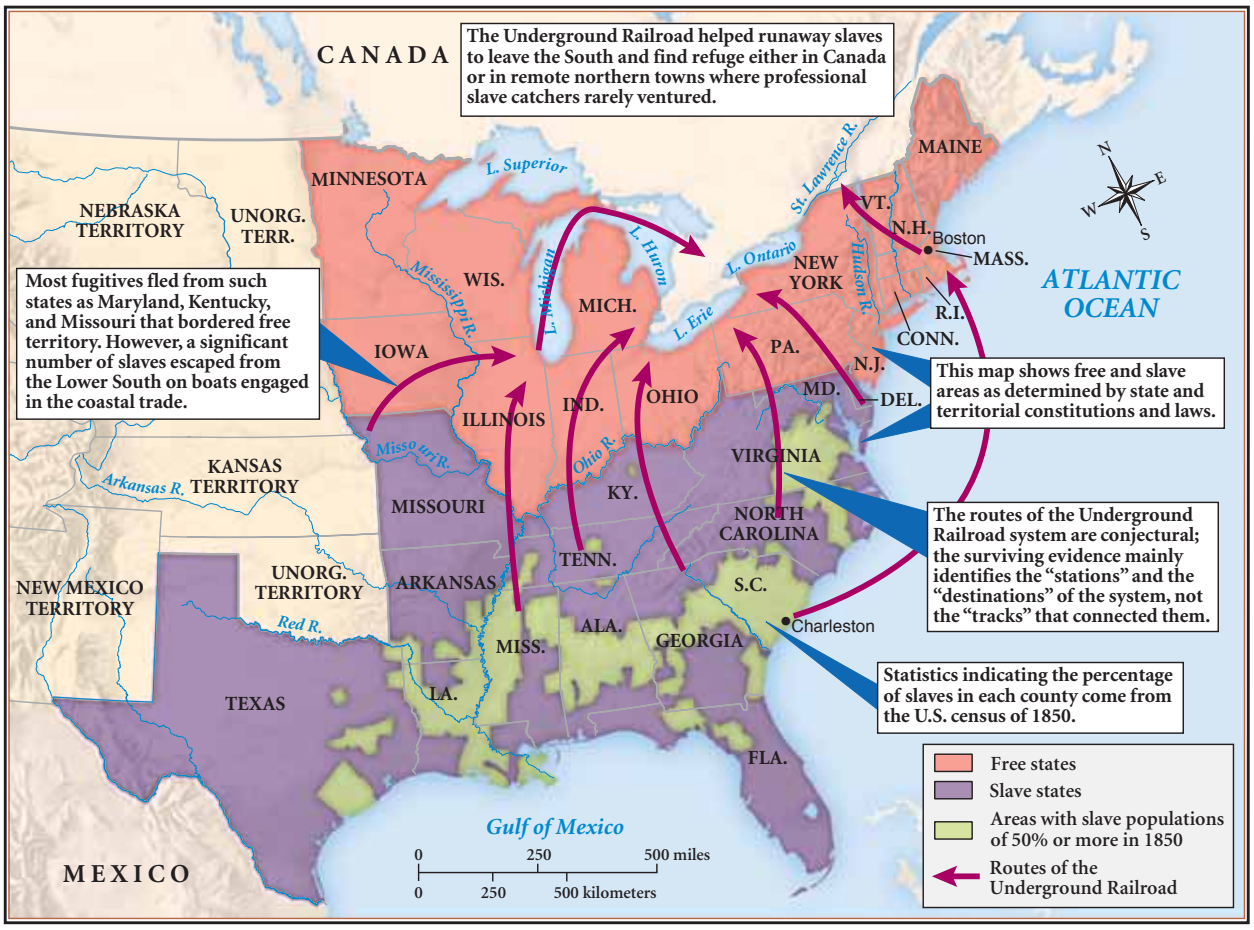
COMPARE AND CONTRAST
How did the ideology and tactics of the Garrisonian abolitionists differ from those of the antislavery movements discussed in Chapters 6 and 8?

Abolitionist leaders launched a three-pronged plan of attack. To win the support of religious Americans, Weld published *The Bible Against Slavery* (1837), which used passages from Christianity's holiest book to discredit slavery. Two years later, Weld teamed up with the Grimké sisters — Angelina, whom he married, and Sarah. The Grimkés had left their father's plantation in South Carolina, converted to Quakerism, and taken up the abolitionist cause in Philadelphia. In *American Slavery as It Is: Testimony of a Thousand Witnesses* (1839), Weld and the Grimkés addressed a simple question: "What is the actual condition of the slaves in the United States?" Using reports from southern newspapers and firsthand testimony, they presented incriminating evidence of the inherent violence of slavery. Angelina Grimké told of a treadmill that South Carolina slave owners used for punishment: "One poor girl, [who was] sent there to be flogged, and who was accordingly stripped naked and whipped, showed me the deep gashes on her back — I might have laid my whole finger in them — large pieces of flesh had actually been cut out by the torturing lash." Filled with such images of pain and suffering, the book sold more than 100,000 copies in a single year.

The American Anti-Slavery Society To spread their message, the abolitionists turned to mass communication. Using new steam-powered presses to print a million pamphlets, the American Anti-Slavery Society carried out a "great postal campaign" in 1835, flooding the nation, including the South, with its literature.

The abolitionists' second tactic was to aid fugitive slaves. They provided lodging and jobs for escaped blacks in free states and created the **Underground Railroad**, an informal network of whites and free blacks in Richmond, Charleston, and other southern towns that assisted fugitives (Map 11.3). In Baltimore, a free African American sailor loaned his identification papers to future abolitionist Frederick Douglass, who used them to escape to New York. Harriet Tubman and other runaways risked re-enslavement or death by returning repeatedly to the South to help others escape. "I should fight for . . . liberty as long as my strength lasted," Tubman explained, "and when the time came for me to go, the Lord would let them take me." Thanks to the Railroad, about one thousand African Americans reached freedom in the North each year.

There, they faced an uncertain future because most whites continued to reject civic or social equality for African Americans. Voters in six northern and midwestern states adopted constitutional amendments that denied or limited the franchise for free blacks. "We want no masters," declared a New York artisan, "and least of all no negro masters." Moreover, the Fugitive Slave Law (1793) allowed owners and their hired slave catchers to seize suspected runaways and return them to bondage. To thwart these efforts, white abolitionists and free blacks formed mobs that attacked slave catchers, released their captives, and often spirited them off to British-ruled Canada, which refused to extradite fugitive slaves.



MAP 11.3

The Underground Railroad in the 1850s

Before 1840, most African Americans who fled slavery did so on their own or with the help of family and friends. Thereafter, they could count on support from members of the Underground Railroad. Provided with food and directions by free blacks in the South, fugitive slaves crossed into free states. There, they received protection and shelter from abolitionists who arranged for their transportation to Canada or to "safe" American cities and towns.

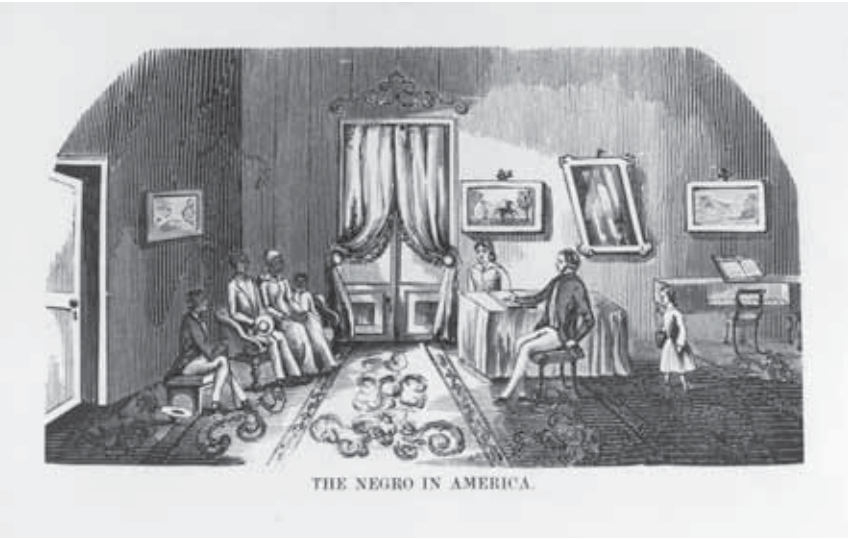
A political campaign was the final element of the abolitionists' program. Between 1835 and 1838, the American Anti-Slavery Society bombarded Congress with petitions containing nearly 500,000 signatures. They demanded the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, an end to the interstate slave trade, and a ban on admission of new slave states.

Thousands of deeply religious farmers and small-town proprietors supported these efforts. The number of local abolitionist societies grew from two hundred in 1835 to two thousand by 1840, with nearly 200,000 members, including many transcendentalists. Emerson condemned Americans for supporting slavery, and Thoreau, viewing the Mexican War as a naked scheme to extend slavery, refused to pay taxes and submitted to arrest. In 1848, he published "Resistance to Civil Government," an essay urging individuals to follow a higher moral law. The black abolitionist Henry Highland Garnet went further; his *Address to the Slaves of the United States of America* (1841) called for "Liberty or Death" and urged slave "Resistance! Resistance! Resistance!"

Opposition and Internal Conflict

Still, abolitionists remained a minority, even among churchgoers. Perhaps 10 percent of northerners and midwesterners strongly supported the movement, and only another 20 percent were sympathetic to its goals.

Attacks on Abolitionism Slavery's proponents were more numerous and equally aggressive. The



"The Negro in His Own Country" Versus "The Negro in America"

Slave owners and their intellectual and religious allies responded to abolitionists' attacks by defending slavery as a "positive good." These two images, from Josiah Priest's *Bible Defence of Slavery* (1852), support the argument that enslavement saved Africans from a savage, war-ridden life (note the skeleton in the top image) and exposed them to the civilized world. Such publications achieved wide circulation and popularity among the planter classes. Chicago History Museum.

abolitionists' agitation, ministers warned, risked "embroiling neighborhoods and families — setting friend against friend, overthrowing churches and institutions of learning, embittering one portion of the land against the other." Wealthy men feared that the attack on slave property might become an assault on all property rights, conservative clergymen condemned the public roles assumed by abolitionist women, and northern wage earners feared that freed blacks would work for lower wages and take their jobs. Underlining the national "reach" of slavery, northern merchants and textile manufacturers supported the southern planters who supplied them with cotton, as did hog farmers in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois and pork packers in Cincinnati and Chicago who profited from lucrative sales to slave plantations. Finally, whites almost universally opposed "**amalgamation**," the racial mixing and intermarriage that Garrison seemed to support by holding meetings of blacks and whites of both sexes.

UNDERSTAND POINTS OF VIEW

Which groups of Americans opposed the abolitionists, and why did they do so?

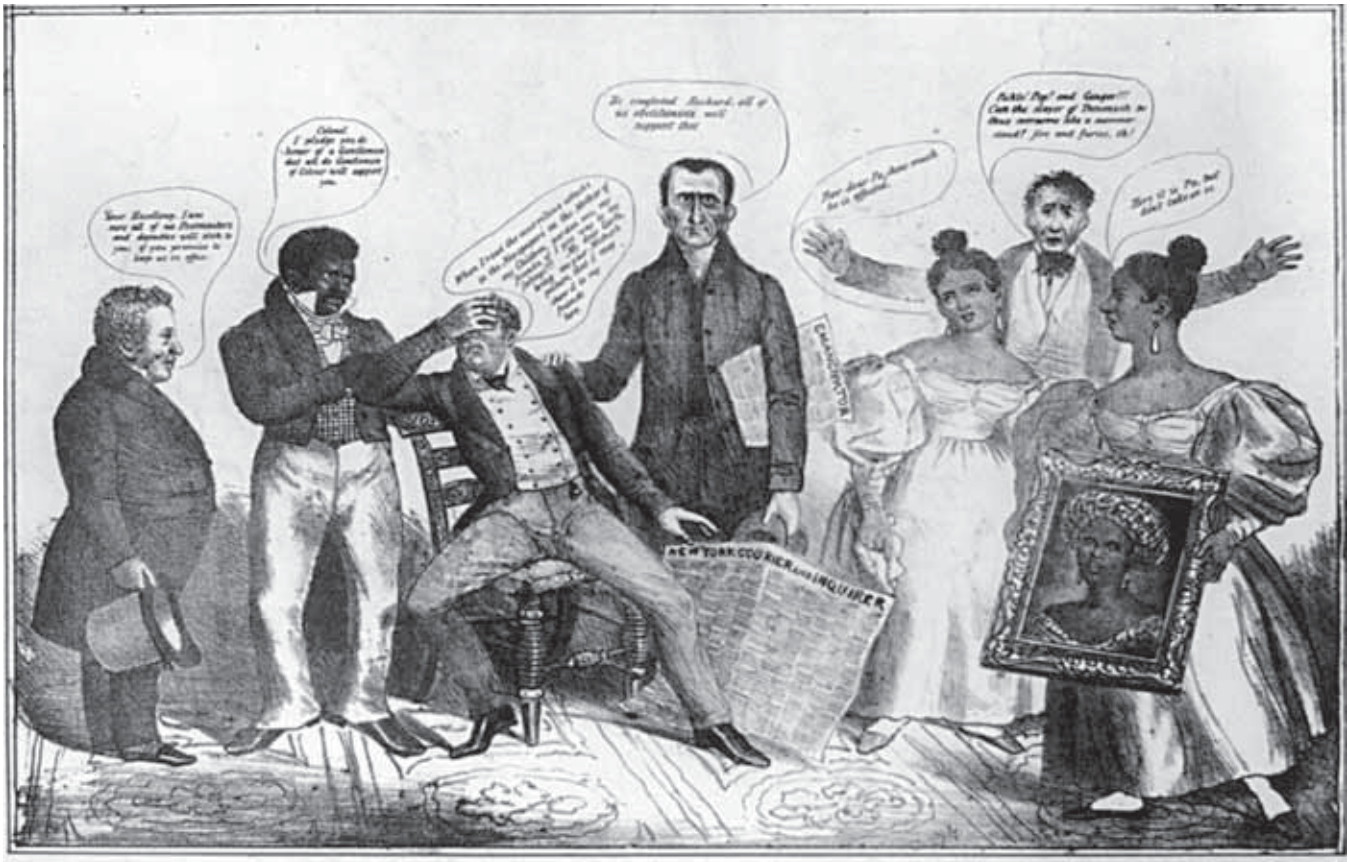
Racial fears and hatreds led to violent mob actions. White workers in northern towns laid waste to taverns and brothels where blacks and whites mixed, and they vandalized "respectable" African American churches, temperance halls, and orphanages. In 1833, a mob of 1,500 New Yorkers stormed a church in search of Garrison and Arthur Tappan. Another white mob swept through Philadelphia's African American neighborhoods, clubbing and stoning residents and destroying homes and churches. In 1835, "gentlemen of property and standing" — lawyers, merchants, and bankers — broke up an abolitionist convention in Utica, New

York. Two years later, a mob in Alton, Illinois, shot and killed Elijah P. Lovejoy, editor of the abolitionist *Alton Observer*. By pressing for emancipation and equality, the abolitionists had revealed the extent of racial prejudice and had heightened race consciousness, as both whites and blacks identified across class lines with members of their own race.

Racial solidarity was especially strong in the South, where whites banned abolitionists. The Georgia legislature offered a $5,000 reward for kidnapping Garrison and bringing him to the South to be tried (or lynched) for inciting rebellion. In Nashville, vigilantes whipped a northern college student for distributing abolitionist pamphlets; in Charleston, a mob attacked the post office and destroyed sacks of abolitionist mail. After 1835, southern postmasters simply refused to deliver mail suspected to be of abolitionist origin.

Politicians joined the fray. President Andrew Jackson, a longtime slave owner, asked Congress in 1835 to restrict the use of the mails by abolitionist groups. Congress refused, but in 1836, the House of Representatives adopted the so-called **gag rule**. Under this informal agreement, which remained in force until 1844, the House automatically tabled antislavery petitions, keeping the explosive issue of slavery off the congressional stage.

Internal Divisions Assailed by racists from the outside, evangelical abolitionists fought among themselves over gender issues. Many antislavery clergymen



The Complexities of Race

This cartoon takes aim at Richard Mentor Johnson of Kentucky, the distraught man being comforted by abolitionists Frederick Douglass and William Lloyd Garrison. A longtime congressman and senator, Johnson was the Democrats' vice-presidential candidate in 1836. Although the party stood for the South and slavery—and condemned mixed-race unions—Johnson lived openly with an African American woman, Julia Chinn, whose daughters hold her portrait. Future Supreme Court justice John Catron noted with disgust that Johnson tried "to force his daughters into society" and that they and their mother "claimed equality." Racial prejudice cost Johnson some votes, but he won a plurality in the electoral college, and, on a party-line vote, Democrats in the Senate elected him Martin Van Buren's vice president. Library of Congress.

opposed an activist role for women, but Garrison had broadened his reform agenda to include pacifism, the abolition of prisons, and women's rights: "Our object is universal emancipation, to redeem women as well as men from a servile to an equal condition." In 1840, Garrison's demand that the American Anti-Slavery Society support women's rights split the abolitionist movement. Abby Kelley, Lucretia Mott, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, among others, remained with Garrison in the American Anti-Slavery Society and assailed both the institutions that bound blacks and the customs that constrained free women.

Garrison's opponents founded a new organization, the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, which turned to politics. Its members mobilized their churches to oppose racial bondage and organized the Liberty Party, the first antislavery political party. In 1840, the new party nominated James G. Birney, a former Alabama slave owner, for president. Birney and the Liberty Party argued that the Constitution did not recognize slavery and, consequently, that slaves became free when they entered areas of federal authority, such as the District of Columbia and the national territories. However, Birney won few votes, and the future of political abolitionism appeared dim.

Popular violence in the North, government-aided suppression in the South, and internal schisms stunned the abolitionist movement. By melding the energies and ideas of evangelical Protestants, moral reformers, and transcendentalists, it had raised the banner of antislavery to new heights, only to face a hostile backlash. "When we first unfurled the banner of *The Liberator*," Garrison admitted, "it did not occur to us that nearly every religious sect, and every political party would side with the oppressor."

The Women's Rights Movement

The prominence of women among the abolitionists reflected a broad shift in American culture. By joining religious revivals and reform movements, women entered public life. Their activism caused many gender issues — sexual behavior, marriage, family authority — to become subjects of debate. The debate entered a new phase in 1848, when some reformers focused on women's rights and demanded complete equality with men.

Origins of the Women's Movement

"Don't be afraid, not afraid, fight Satan; stand up for Christ; don't be afraid." So spoke Mary Walker Ostram on her deathbed in 1859. Her religious convictions were as firm at the age of fifty-eight as they had been in 1816, when she joined the first Sunday school in Utica, New York. Married to a lawyer-politician and childless, Ostram had devoted her life to evangelical Presbyterianism and its program of benevolent social reform. At her funeral, minister Philemon Fowler celebrated Ostram as a "living fountain" of faith, an exemplar of "Women's Sphere of Influence" in the world.

A Nineteenth-Century Middle-Class Family

Whereas colonial-era families were large, often with six to eight children, nineteenth-century middle-class couples, such as Azariah and Eliza Caverly, pictured here in 1836 by Joseph H. Davis (1811–1865), consciously limited their fertility, treated their spouses with affection, and carefully supervised the education of their children. The Caverlys' daughter fingers a Bible, suggesting her future moral responsibilities as a mother, while their son holds a square ruler, either indicating Azariah's profession or foreshadowing the son's career as a prosperous architect or engineer. Fenimore Art Museum, Cooperstown, New York.

Although Reverend Fowler heaped praise on Ostram, he rejected a public presence for women. Like men of the Revolutionary era, Fowler thought women should limit their political role to that of "republican mother," instructing "their sons in the principles of liberty and government." Women inhabited a "**separate sphere**" of domestic life, he said, and had no place in "the markets of trade, the scenes of politics and popular agitation, the courts of justice and the halls of legislation. Home is her peculiar sphere."

However, Ostram and many other middle-class women were redefining the notion of the domestic sphere by becoming active in their churches. Their spiritual activism bolstered their authority within the household and gave them new influence over many areas of family life, including the timing of pregnancies. Publications such as *Godey's Lady's Book*, a popular monthly periodical, and Catharine Beecher's *Treatise on Domestic Economy* (1841) taught women how to make their homes examples of middle-class efficiency and domesticity. Women in propertied farm families were equally vigilant and carried domestic issues into the public sphere. To protect their homes and husbands from alcoholic excess, they joined the Independent Order of Good Templars, a temperance group which made women full members (American Voices, p. 368).

Moral Reform Some religious women developed a sharp consciousness of gender and became public actors. In 1834, middle-class women in New York City founded the Female Moral Reform Society and elected Lydia Finney, the wife of revivalist Charles Grandison Finney, as its president. The society tried to curb prostitution and to protect single women from moral corruption. Rejecting the sexual double standard, its members demanded chaste behavior by men. By 1840, the Female Moral Reform Society had blossomed into a national association, with 555 chapters and 40,000 members throughout the North and Midwest. Employing only women as agents, the society provided moral guidance for young women who were working as factory operatives, seamstresses, or servants. Society members visited brothels, where they sang hymns, offered prayers, searched for runaway girls, and noted the names of clients. They also founded homes of refuge for prostitutes and won the passage of laws in Massachusetts and New York that made seduction a crime.

Improving Prisons, Creating Asylums, Expanding Education Other women set out to improve public institutions, and Dorothea Dix (1801–1887) was their model. Dix's paternal grandparents were prominent Bostonians, but her father, a Methodist minister, ended up an impoverished alcoholic. Emotionally abused as a child, Dix grew into a compassionate young woman with a strong sense of moral purpose. She used money from her grandparents to set up charity schools to "rescue some of America's miserable children from vice" and became a successful author. By 1832, she had published seven books, including *Conversations on Common Things* (1824), an enormously successful treatise on natural science and moral improvement.

TRACE CHANGE OVER TIME

Using the material on women's lives in Chapters 4, 8, and 11, analyze and explain the changing nature of their "private" and "public" lives.

In 1841, Dix took up a new cause. Discovering that insane women were jailed alongside male criminals, she persuaded Massachusetts lawmakers to enlarge the state hospital to house indigent mental patients. Exhilarated by that success, Dix began a national movement to establish state asylums for the mentally ill. By 1854, she had traveled more than 30,000 miles and had visited eighteen state penitentiaries, three hundred county jails, and more than five hundred almshouses and hospitals. Dix's reports and agitation prompted many states to improve their prisons and public hospitals.

Both as reformers and teachers, other northern women transformed public education. From Maine to Wisconsin, women vigorously supported the movement led by Horace Mann to increase elementary schooling and improve the quality of instruction. As secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education from 1837 to 1848, Mann lengthened the school year; established teaching standards in reading, writing, and arithmetic; and recruited well-educated women as teachers. The intellectual leader of the new women educators was Catharine Beecher, who founded academies for young women in Hartford, Connecticut, and Cincinnati, Ohio. In widely read publications, Beecher argued that "energetic and benevolent women" were better qualified than men were to impart moral and intellectual instruction to the young. By the 1850s, most teachers were women, both because local school boards heeded Beecher's arguments and because they could hire women at lower salaries than men. As secular educators as well as moral reformers, women were now part of American public life.

From Black Rights to Women's Rights

As women addressed controversial issues such as moral reform and emancipation, they faced censure over their public presence. Offended by this criticism, which revealed their own social and legal inferiority, some women sought full freedom for their sex.

Saving the Nation from Drink

The temperance crusade was the most successful antebellum reform movement. It mobilized more than a million supporters in all sections of the nation and significantly lowered the consumption of alcoholic beverages. Nonetheless, like other reform efforts, the antidrinking crusade divided over questions of strategy and tactics. The following passages, taken from the writings of leading temperance advocates, show that some reformers favored legal regulation while others preferred persuasion and voluntary abstinence.

Lyman Beecher

"Intemperance Is the Sin of Our Land"

A leading Protestant minister and spokesman for the Benevolent Empire, Lyman Beecher regarded drunkenness as a sin. His *Six Sermons on . . . Intemperance* (1829) condemned the recklessness of working-class drunkards and called on responsible members of the middle class to lead the way to a temperate society.

Intemperance is the sin of our land, and, with our boundless prosperity, is coming in upon us like a flood; and if anything shall defeat the hopes of the world, which hang upon our experiment of civil liberty, it is that river of fire. . . .

In every city and town the poor-tax, created chiefly by intemperance, is [increasing the burden on taxpaying citizens]. . . . The frequency of going upon the town [relying on public welfare] has taken away the reluctance of pride, and destroyed the motives to providence which the fear of poverty and suffering once supplied. The prospect of a destitute old age, or of a suffering family, no longer troubles the vicious portion of our community. They drink up their daily earnings, and bless God for the poor-house, and begin to look upon it as, of right, the drunkard's home. . . . Every intemperate and idle man, whom you behold tottering about the streets and steeping himself at the stores, regards your houses and lands as pledged to take care of him, puts his hands deep, annually, into your pockets. . . .

What then is this universal, natural, and national remedy for intemperance? IT IS THE BANISHMENT OF ARDENT SPIRITS FROM THE LIST OF LAWFUL ARTICLES OF COMMERCE, BY A CORRECT AND EFFICIENT PUBLIC SENTIMENT; SUCH AS HAS TURNED SLAVERY OUT OF HALF OUR LAND, AND WILL YET EXPEL IT FROM THE WORLD.

We are not therefore to come down in wrath upon the distillers, and importers, and venders of ardent spirits. None of us are enough without sin to cast the first stone. . . . It is the buyers who have created the demand for ardent spirits, and made distillation and importation a gainful traffic. . . . Let the temperate cease to buy — and the demand for ardent spirits will fall in the market three fourths, and ultimately will fail wholly. . . .

This however cannot be done effectually so long as the traffic in ardent spirits is regarded as lawful, and is patronized by men of reputation and moral worth in every part of the land. Like slavery, it must be regarded as sinful, impolitic, and dishonorable. That no measures will avail short of rendering ardent spirits a contraband of trade, is nearly self-evident.

Abraham Lincoln

"A New Class of Champions"

In Baltimore in 1840, a group of reformed alcoholics formed the Washington Temperance Society, which turned the antidrinking movement in a new direction. By talking publicly about their personal experiences of alcoholic decline and spiritual recovery, they inspired thousands to "sign the pledge" of total abstinence. (Its philosophy exists today in the organization Alcoholics Anonymous.) In 1842, Lincoln, an ambitious lawyer and Illinois legislator who did not drink, praised such "moral suasion" in an address to the Washingtonians of Springfield, Illinois.

Although the temperance cause has been in progress for near twenty years, it is apparent to all that it is just now being crowned with a degree of success hitherto unparalleled. The list of its friends is daily swelled by the additions of fifties, of hundreds, and of thousands.

The warfare heretofore waged against the demon intemperance has somehow or other been erroneous. . . . [Its] champions for the most part have been preachers [such as Beecher], lawyers, and hired agents. Between these and the mass of mankind there is a want of approachability. . . .

But when one who has long been known as a victim of intemperance bursts the fetters that have bound him,

and appears before his neighbors "clothed and in his right mind," . . . to tell of the miseries once endured, now to be endured no more . . . there is a logic and an eloquence in it that few with human feelings can resist. . . .

In my judgment, it is to the battles of this new class of champions that our late success is greatly, perhaps chiefly, owing. . . . [Previously,] too much denunciation against dram-sellers and dram-drinkers was indulged in. This I think was both impolitic and unjust. . . . When the dram-seller and drinker were incessantly [condemned] . . . as moral pestilences . . . they were slow [to] . . . join the ranks of their denouncers in a hue and cry against themselves.

By the Washingtonians this system of consigning the habitual drunkard to hopeless ruin is repudiated. . . . They teach hope to all — despair to none. As applying to their cause, they deny the doctrine of unpardonable sin. . . .

If the relative grandeur of revolutions shall be estimated by the great amount of human misery they alleviate, and the small amount they inflict, then indeed will this be the grandest the world shall ever have seen. Of our political revolution of '76 we are all justly proud. It has given us a degree of political freedom far exceeding that of any other nation of the earth. . . . But, with all these glorious results, past, present, and to come, [this freedom] had its evils too. It [was abused by drunken husbands and thereby] breathed forth famine, swam in blood, and rode in fire; and long, long after, the orphan's cry and the widow's wail continued to break the sad silence that ensued. These were the price, the inevitable price, paid for the blessings it brought. . . .

Turn now to the temperance revolution. In it we shall find a stronger bondage broken, a viler slavery manumitted, a greater tyrant deposed; in it, more of want supplied, more disease healed, more sorrow assuaged. By it no orphans starving, no widows weeping.

Glorious consummation! Hail, fall of fury! Reign of reason, all hail!

American Temperance Magazine
"You Shall Not Sell"

In 1851, the Maine legislature passed a statute prohibiting the sale of alcoholic beverages in the state. The Maine Supreme Court upheld the statute, arguing that the legislature had the "right to regulate by law the sale of any article, the use of which would be detrimental of the morals of the people." Subsequently, the *American Temperance Magazine* became a strong advocate of legal prohibition and by 1856 had won passage of "Maine Laws" in twelve other states (Chapter 9).

This is a utilitarian age. The speculative has in all things yielded to the practical. Words are mere noise unless they are things [and result in action].

In this sense, moral suasion is moral balderdash. "Words, my lord, words" . . . are a delusion. . . . The drunkard's mental and physical condition pronounces them an absurdity. He is ever in one or other extreme — under the excitement of drink, or in a state of morbid collapse. . . . Reason with a man when all reason has fled, and it is doubtful whether he or you is the greater fool. . . . Moral suasion! Bah!

Place this man we have been describing out of the reach of temptation. He will have time to ponder. His mind and frame recover their native vigor. The public-house does not beset his path. . . . Thus, and thus only, will reformation and temperance be secured. And how is this accomplished? Never except through the instrumentality of the law. If it were possible to reason the drunkard into sobriety, it would not be possible to make the rum-seller forego his filthy gains. Try your moral suasion on him. . . . The only logic he will comprehend, is some such ordinance as this, coming to him in the shape and with the voice of law — you shall not sell.

Source: David Brion Davis, *Antebellum American Culture: An Interpretive Anthology* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 395–398, 403–409.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

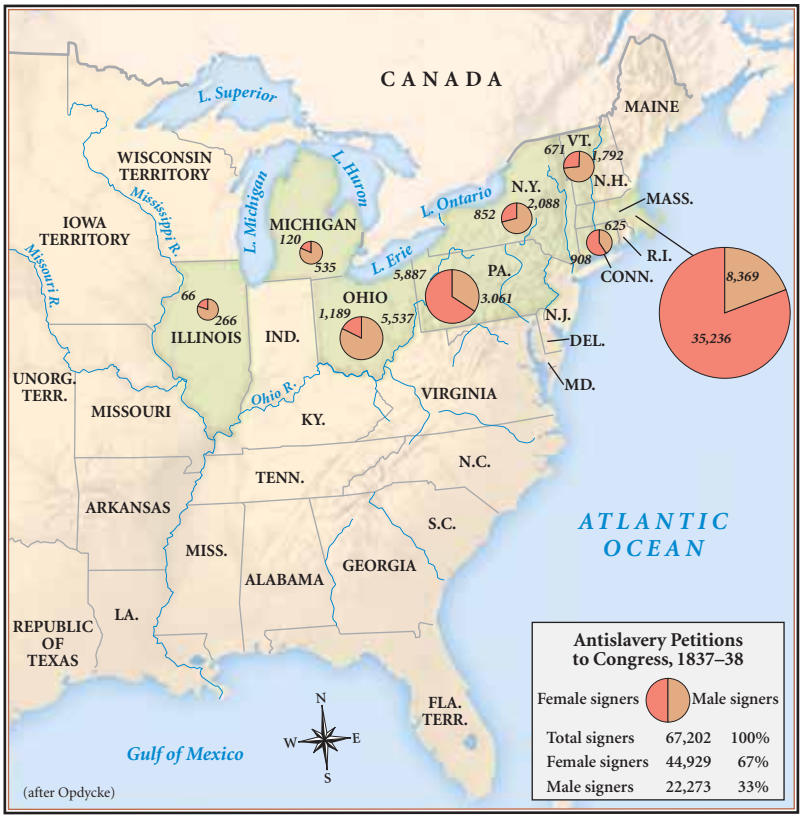
1. What does Lincoln's address suggest about his general political philosophy?
2. Compare Beecher's position to Lincoln's. In what ways are they similar? How are they different? Then compare Beecher's solution to that of the *American Temperance Magazine*. Are they the same? Whose view of personal responsibility versus institutional coercion is closest to the position of Orestes Brownson (Chapter 9, pp. 308–309)?
3. In which of these selections do you see the influence of the Second Great Awakening, especially the evangelical message of Charles Grandison Finney? Where do you see the influence of the Market Revolution and the cultural values of the rising middle class? What positions do these selections take with respect to the appropriate role of government in regulating morality and personal behavior?

Abolitionist Women Women were central to the antislavery movement because they understood the special horrors of slavery for women. In her autobiography, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, black abolitionist Harriet Jacobs described forced sexual intercourse with her white owner. "I cannot tell how much I suffered in the presence of these wrongs," she wrote. According to Jacobs and other enslaved women, such sexual assaults incited additional cruelty by their owners' wives, who were enraged by their husbands' promiscuity. In her best-selling novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), Harriet Beecher Stowe pinpointed the sexual abuse of women as a profound moral failing of the slave regime.

As Garrisonian women attacked slavery, they frequently violated social taboos by speaking to mixed audiences of men and women. Maria W. Stewart, an African American, spoke to mixed crowds in Boston in the early 1830s. As abolitionism blossomed, scores of white women delivered lectures condemning slavery, and thousands more made home "visitations" to win converts to their cause (Map 11.4). When Congregationalist clergymen in New England assailed Angelina and Sarah Grimké for such activism in a Pastoral Letter in 1837, Sarah Grimké turned to the Bible for justification: "The Lord Jesus defines the duties of his followers in his Sermon on the Mount . . . without any reference to sex or condition," she replied: "Men and women were CREATED EQUAL; both are moral and accountable beings and whatever is right for man to do, is right for woman." In a pamphlet debate with Catharine Beecher (who believed that women should exercise authority primarily as wives, mothers, and schoolteachers), Angelina Grimké pushed the argument beyond religion by invoking Enlightenment principles to claim equal civic rights:

> It is a woman's right to have a voice in all the laws and regulations by which she is governed, whether in Church or State. . . . The present arrangements of society on these points are a violation of human rights, a rank usurpation of power, a violent seizure and confiscation of what is sacredly and inalienably hers.

By 1840, female abolitionists were asserting that traditional gender roles resulted in the **domestic slavery** of women. "How can we endure our present marriage relations," asked Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "[which give a woman] no charter of rights, no individuality of her own?" As reformer Ernestine Rose put it: "The radical difficulty . . . is that women are considered as belonging to men." Having acquired a public voice and



MAP 11.4
Women and Antislavery, 1837–1838
Beginning in the 1830s, abolitionists and antislavery advocates dispatched dozens of petitions to Congress demanding an end to forced labor. Women accounted for two-thirds of the 67,000 signatures on the petitions submitted in 1837–1838, a fact that suggests not only the influence of women in the antislavery movement but also the extent of female organizations and social networks. Lawmakers, eager to avoid sectional conflict, devised an informal agreement (the "gag rule") to table the petitions without discussion.

political skills in the crusade for African American freedom, thousands of northern women now advocated greater rights for themselves.

Seneca Falls and Beyond During the 1840s, women's rights activists devised a pragmatic program of reform. Unlike radical utopians, they did not challenge the institution of marriage or the conventional division of labor within the family. Instead, they tried to strengthen the legal rights of married women by seeking legislation that permitted them to own property (America Compared, p. 372). This initiative won crucial support from affluent men, who feared bankruptcy in the volatile market economy and wanted to put some family assets in their wives' names. Fathers also desired their married daughters to have property rights to protect them (and their paternal inheritances) from financially irresponsible husbands. Such motives prompted legislatures in three states — Mississippi, Maine, and Massachusetts — to enact **married women's property laws** between 1839 and 1845. Then, women activists in New York won a comprehensive statute that became the model for fourteen other states. The New York statute of 1848 gave women full legal control over the property they brought to a marriage.

PLACE EVENTS IN CONTEXT
What was the relationship between the abolitionist and women's rights movements?

Crusading Reformers

Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815–1902) and Susan B. Anthony (1820–1906) were a dynamic duo. Stanton, the well-educated daughter of a prominent New York judge, was an early abolitionist and the mother of seven children. Anthony came from a Quaker family and became a teacher and a temperance activist. Meeting in 1851, Stanton and Anthony became friends and co-organizers. From 1854 to 1860, they led a successful struggle to expand New York's Married Women's Property Law of 1848. During the Civil War, they formed the Women's Loyal National League, which helped win passage of the Thirteenth Amendment, ending slavery. In 1866, they joined the American Equal Rights Association, which demanded the vote for women and African Americans. © Bettmann/Corbis.

Also in 1848, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott organized a gathering of women's rights activists in the small New York town of Seneca Falls. Seventy women and thirty men attended the **Seneca Falls Convention**, which issued a rousing manifesto extending to women the egalitarian republican ideology of the Declaration of Independence. "All men and women are created equal," the Declaration of Sentiments declared, "[yet] the history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman [and] the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her." To persuade Americans to right this long-standing wrong, the activists resolved to "employ agents, circulate tracts, petition the State and National legislatures, and endeavor to enlist the pulpit and the press on our behalf." By staking out claims for equality for women in public life, the Seneca Falls reformers repudiated both the natural inferiority of women and the ideology of separate spheres.

Most men dismissed the Seneca Falls declaration as nonsense, and many women also rejected the activists and their message. In her diary, one small-town mother and housewife lashed out at the female reformer who "aping mannish manners . . . wears absurd and barbarous attire, who talks of her wrongs in harsh tone, who struts and strides, and thinks that she proves herself superior to the rest of her sex."

Still, the women's rights movement grew in strength and purpose. In 1850, delegates to the first national women's rights convention in Worcester, Massachusetts, hammered out a program of action. The women called on churches to eliminate notions of female inferiority in their theology. Addressing state legislatures, they proposed laws to allow married women to institute lawsuits, testify in court, and assume custody of their children in the event of divorce or a husband's death. Finally, they began a concerted campaign to win the vote for women. As delegates to the 1851 convention

Women's Rights in France and the United States, 1848

During the political uprising in France in 1848, Pauline Roland and Jeanne Deroine unsuccessfully sought voting rights and an equal civil status for French women. However, the two women won election to the Central Committee of the Associative Unions, the umbrella organization of French trade unions. Imprisoned for their activism, they dispatched a letter to the Second Woman's Rights Convention, which met in Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1851.

When their letter was read to the Convention, Ernestine Potowsky Rose (1810–1892) offered the following response, which indicated the different perspective and political strategy of the American women's movement.

Pauline Roland and Jeanne Deroine

Letter to the Convention of the Women of America

Dear Sisters: Your courageous declaration of Woman's Rights has resounded even to our prison and has filled our souls with inexpressible joy. In France the [conservative] reaction [to the uprising of 1848] has suppressed the cry of liberty of the women of the future. . . . The Assembly kept silence in regard to the right of one half of humanity. . . . No mention was made of the right of woman in a Constitution framed in the name of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. . . .

[However,] the right of woman has been recognized by the laborers and they have consecrated that right by the election of those who had claimed it in vain for both sexes. . . . It is by labor; it is by entering resolutely into the ranks of the working people that women will conquer the civil and political equality on which depends the happiness of the world. . . . Sisters of America! your socialist sisters of France are united with you in the vindication of the right of woman to civil and political equality. . . . [Only] by the union of the working classes of both sexes [can we achieve] . . . the civil and political equality of woman.

Ernestine Rose

Speech to the Second Woman's Rights Convention

After having heard the letter read from our poor incarcerated sisters of France, well might we exclaim, Alas poor France! Where is thy glory?

. . . But need we wonder that France, governed as she is by Russian and Austrian despotism, does not recognize . . . the Rights of Woman, when even here, in this far-famed land of freedom . . . woman, the mockingly so-called "better half" of man, has yet to plead for her rights. . . . In the laws of the land, she has no rights; in government she has no voice. . . . From the cradle to the grave she is subject to the power and control of man. Father, guardian, or husband, one conveys her like some piece of merchandise over to the other.

. . . Carry out the republican principle of universal suffrage, or strike it from your banners and substitute "Freedom and Power to one half of society, and Submission and Slavery to the other." Give women the elective franchise. Let married women have the same right to property that their husbands have. . . .

There is no reason against woman's elevation, but . . . prejudices. The main cause is a pernicious falsehood propagated against her being, namely that she is inferior by her nature. Inferior in what? What has man ever done that woman, under the same advantages could not do?

Source: *History of Woman Suffrage*, ed. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage (New York: Fowler & Wells, 1887), 1: 234–242.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. What strategy to achieve women's rights do Roland and Deroine advocate? What strategy can be detected in Rose's remarks? How are their perspectives similar to, or different from, one another?
2. What does this French-American comparison (and your reading in Chapter 11) suggest about the nature and values of the American women's rights movement?

proclaimed, suffrage was "the corner-stone of this enterprise, since we do not seek to protect woman, but rather to place her in a position to protect herself."

The activists' legislative campaign required talented organizers and lobbyists. The most prominent political operative was Susan B. Anthony (1820–1906), a Quaker who had acquired political skills in the temperance and antislavery movements. Those experiences, Anthony reflected, taught her "the great evil of woman's utter dependence on man." Joining the

women's rights movement, she worked closely with Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Anthony created an activist network of political "captains," all women, who relentlessly lobbied state legislatures. In 1860, her efforts secured a New York law granting women the right to control their own wages (which fathers or husbands had previously managed); to own property acquired by "trade, business, labors, or services"; and, if widowed, to assume sole guardianship of their children. Genuine individualism for women, the dream of transcendentalist Margaret Fuller, had advanced a tiny step closer to reality. In such small and much larger ways, the mid-century reform movements had altered the character of American culture.

SUMMARY

In this chapter, we examined four major cultural movements of the mid-nineteenth century — transcendentalist reform, communalism, abolitionism, and women's rights — as well as the new popular culture in New York City. Our discussion of the transcendentalists highlighted the influence of Ralph Waldo Emerson on the great literary figures of the era and linked transcendentalism to the rise of individualism and the character of middle-class American culture.

Our analysis of communal experiments probed their members' efforts to devise new rules for sexual behavior, gender relationships, and property ownership. We saw that successful communal experiments, such as Mormonism, required a charismatic leader or a religious foundation and endured if they developed strong, even authoritarian, institutions.

We also traced the personal and ideological factors that linked the abolitionist and women's rights movements. Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and the Grimké sisters began as antislavery advocates, but, denied access to lecture platforms by male abolitionists and conservative clergy, they became staunch advocates of women's rights. This transition was a logical one: both enslaved blacks and married women were "owned" by men, either as property or as their legal dependents. Consequently, the efforts to abolish the legal prerogatives of husbands were as controversial as those to end the legal property rights of slave owners. As reformers took aim at such deeply rooted institutions and customs, many Americans feared that their activism would not perfect society but destroy it.

CHAPTER REVIEW

MAKE IT STICK Go to **LearningCurve** to retain what you've read.

TERMS TO KNOW

Identify and explain the significance of each term below.

Key Concepts and Events

individualism (p. 346)
American Renaissance (p. 346)
transcendentalism (p. 346)
utopias (p. 349)
socialism (p. 351)
perfectionism (p. 352)
Mormonism (p. 352)
minstrelsy (p. 356)
abolitionism (p. 357)
Underground Railroad (p. 362)
amalgamation (p. 364)
gag rule (p. 365)
separate sphere (p. 367)
domestic slavery (p. 370)
married women's property laws (p. 371)
Seneca Falls Convention (p. 371)

Key People

Ralph Waldo Emerson (p. 346)
Henry David Thoreau (p. 347)
Margaret Fuller (p. 347)
Walt Whitman (p. 348)
Herman Melville (p. 349)
Nat Turner (p. 360)
William Lloyd Garrison (p. 362)
Dorothea Dix (p. 367)
Elizabeth Cady Stanton (p. 371)
Susan B. Anthony (p. 371)

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Answer these questions to demonstrate your understanding of the chapter's main ideas.

1. Analyze the relationship between religion and reform in the decades from 1800 to 1860. Why did many religious people feel compelled to remake society? How successful were they? Do you see any parallels with social movements today?
2. The word *reform* has a positive connotation, as an effort to make things better. Yet many mid-nineteenth-century Americans viewed some "reforms," such as abolitionism and women's rights, as destructive to the social order, and other "reforms," such as Sabbatarianism and temperance, as threats to individual freedom. What was the apparent conflict among reform, social order, and liberty?
3. **THEMATIC UNDERSTANDING** Review the events listed under "Ideas, Beliefs, and Culture" on the thematic timeline on page 283, paying particular attention to the entries related to individualism and rights on the one hand and to various communal and religious movements on the other. What was the relationship between these somewhat contradictory cultural impulses? How were these two movements related to the social and economic changes in America in the decades after 1800?

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Recognize the larger developments and continuities within and across chapters by answering these questions.

1. **ACROSS TIME AND PLACE** Did the era of reform (1820–1860) increase or diminish the extent of social and cultural freedom that existed during the Revolutionary era (1770–1820)?
2. **VISUAL EVIDENCE** Compare the cheerful depiction of the young woman in the watercolor depicting "night life in Philadelphia" on page 355 with the thoughtful or intense expression on the faces of the social reformers depicted in this chapter (Emerson, p. 346; Fuller, p. 348; and Stanton and Anthony, p. 371). Given their beliefs, would those reformers have approved or disapproved of the conduct of the young Philadelphia woman? Explain your reasoning.

MORE TO EXPLORE

Start here to learn more about the events discussed in this chapter.

Patricia Cline Cohen, *The Murder of Helen Jewett: The Life and Death of a Prostitute in New York City* (1998). A gripping murder mystery that probes the nature of the new plebeian culture.

Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815–1848* (2007). A comprehensive history from a cultural perspective.

Paul E. Johnson and Sean Wilentz, *The Kingdom of Matthias* (1995). A compelling story of religious utopianism gone mad.

Stephen B. Oates, *The Fires of Jubilee* (1975). Explores the life and rebellion of Nat Turner.

Mark Perry, *Lift Up Thy Voice* (2001). Offers a study of the Grimké family.

David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness* (1995). Shows how racism shaped white working-class culture.

TIMELINE

Ask yourself why this chapter begins and ends with these dates and then identify the links among related events.

1826	• Lyceum movement begins
1829	• David Walker's *Appeal . . . to the Colored Citizens of the World*
1830	• Joseph Smith publishes *The Book of Mormon*
1830s	• Emergence of minstrelsy shows
1831	• William Lloyd Garrison founds *The Liberator* • Nat Turner's uprising in Virginia
1832	• Ralph Waldo Emerson turns to transcendentalism
1833	• Garrison organizes American Anti-Slavery Society
1834	• New York activists create Female Moral Reform Society
1835	• Abolitionists launch great postal campaign, sparking series of antiabolitionist riots
1836	• House of Representatives adopts gag rule
1837	• Grimké sisters defend public roles for women
1840	• Liberty Party runs James G. Birney for president
1840s	• Fourierist communities arise in Midwest
1841	• Dorothea Dix promotes hospitals for mentally ill
1844	• Margaret Fuller publishes *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*
1845	• Henry David Thoreau goes to Walden Pond
1846	• Brigham Young leads Mormons to Salt Lake
1848	• Seneca Falls Convention proposes women's equality
1850	• Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*
1851	• Herman Melville publishes *Moby Dick*
1852	• Harriet Beecher Stowe writes *Uncle Tom's Cabin*
1855	• Dr. Sanger surveys sex trade in New York City • Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*
1858	• "Mormon War" over polygamy

KEY TURNING POINTS: Most of the entries here relate to events in the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s. In your judgment, which is the most important event in each decade? Over all three decades? Write a coherent essay that justifies your choices and, if possible, relates those events to each other.

CHAPTER 12

The South Expands: Slavery and Society 1800–1860

IDENTIFY THE BIG IDEA

How did the creation of a cotton-based economy change the lives of whites and blacks in all regions of the South?

Life in South Carolina had been good to James Lide. A slave-owning planter along the Pee Dee River, Lide and his wife raised twelve children and long resisted the "Alabama Fever" that prompted thousands of Carolinians to move west. Finally, at age sixty-five, probably seeking land for his many offspring, he moved his slaves and family—including six children and six grandchildren—to a plantation near Montgomery, Alabama. There, the family lived initially in a squalid log cabin with air holes but no windows. Even after building a new house, the Lides' life remained unsettled. "Pa is quite in the notion of moving somewhere," his daughter Maria reported. Although James Lide died in Alabama, many of his children moved on. In 1854, at the age of fifty-eight, Eli Lide migrated to Texas, telling his father, "Something within me whispers onward and onward."

The Lides' story was that of southern society. Between 1800 and 1860, white planters moved west and, using the muscles and sweat of a million enslaved African Americans, brought millions of acres into cultivation. By 1840, the South was at the cutting edge of the American Market Revolution (Figure 12.1). It annually produced and exported 1.5 million bales of raw cotton—over two-thirds of the world's supply—and its economy was larger and richer than that of most nations. "Cotton is King," boasted the *Southern Cultivator*.

No matter how rich they were, few cotton planters in Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas lived in elegant houses or led cultured lives. They had forsaken the aristocratic gentility of the Chesapeake and the Carolinas to make money. "To sell cotton in order to buy negroes—to make more cotton to buy more negroes, 'ad infinitum,' is the aim . . . of the thorough-going cotton planter," a traveler reported from Mississippi in 1835. "His whole soul is wrapped up in the pursuit." Plantation women lamented the loss of genteel surroundings and polite society. Raised in North Carolina, where she was "blest with every comfort, & even luxury," Mary Drake found Mississippi and Alabama "a dreary waste."

Enslaved African Americans knew what "dreary waste" really meant: unremitting toil, unrelieved poverty, and profound sadness. Sold south from Maryland, where his family had lived for generations, Charles Ball's father became "gloomy and morose" and ran off and disappeared. With good reason: on new cotton plantations, slaves labored from "sunup to sundown" and from one end of the year to the other, forced to work by the threat of the lash. Always wanting more, southern planters and politicians plotted to extend their plantation economy across the continent.

A Slave Family Picking Cotton Picking cotton—thousands of small bolls attached to 3-foot-high woody and often prickly stalks—was a tedious and time-consuming task, taking up to four months on many plantations. However, workers of both sexes and all ages could pick cotton, and masters could measure output by weighing the baskets of each picker or family, chastising those who failed to meet their quotas. What does this early photograph of a family of pickers, taken on a plantation near Savannah, Georgia, suggest about women's and children's lives, family relations, and living conditions?

The Domestic Slave Trade

In 1817, when the American Colonization Society began to transport a few freed blacks to Africa (Chapter 8), the southern plantation system was expanding rapidly. In 1790, its western boundary ran through the middle of Georgia; by 1830, it stretched through western Louisiana; by 1860, the slave frontier extended far into Texas (Map 12.1). That advance of 900 miles more than doubled the geographical area cultivated by slave labor and increased the number of slave states from eight in 1800 to fifteen by 1850. The federal government played a key role in this expansion. It acquired Louisiana from the French in 1803, welcomed the slave states of Mississippi and Alabama into the Union in 1817 and 1819, removed Native Americans from the southeastern states in the 1830s, and annexed Texas and Mexican lands in the 1840s.

To cultivate this vast area, white planters imported enslaved laborers first from Africa and then from the Chesapeake region. Between 1776 and 1809, when Congress outlawed the Atlantic slave trade, planters purchased about 115,000 Africans. "The Planter will . . . Sacrifice every thing to attain Negroes," declared one slave trader. Despite the influx, the demand for labor far exceeded the supply. Consequently, planters imported new African workers illegally, through the Spanish colony of Florida until 1819 and then through the Mexican province of Texas. Yet these Africans — about 50,000 between 1810 and 1865 — did not satisfy the demand.

The Upper South Exports Slaves

Planters seeking labor looked to the Chesapeake region, home in 1800 to nearly half of the nation's black population. There, the African American population

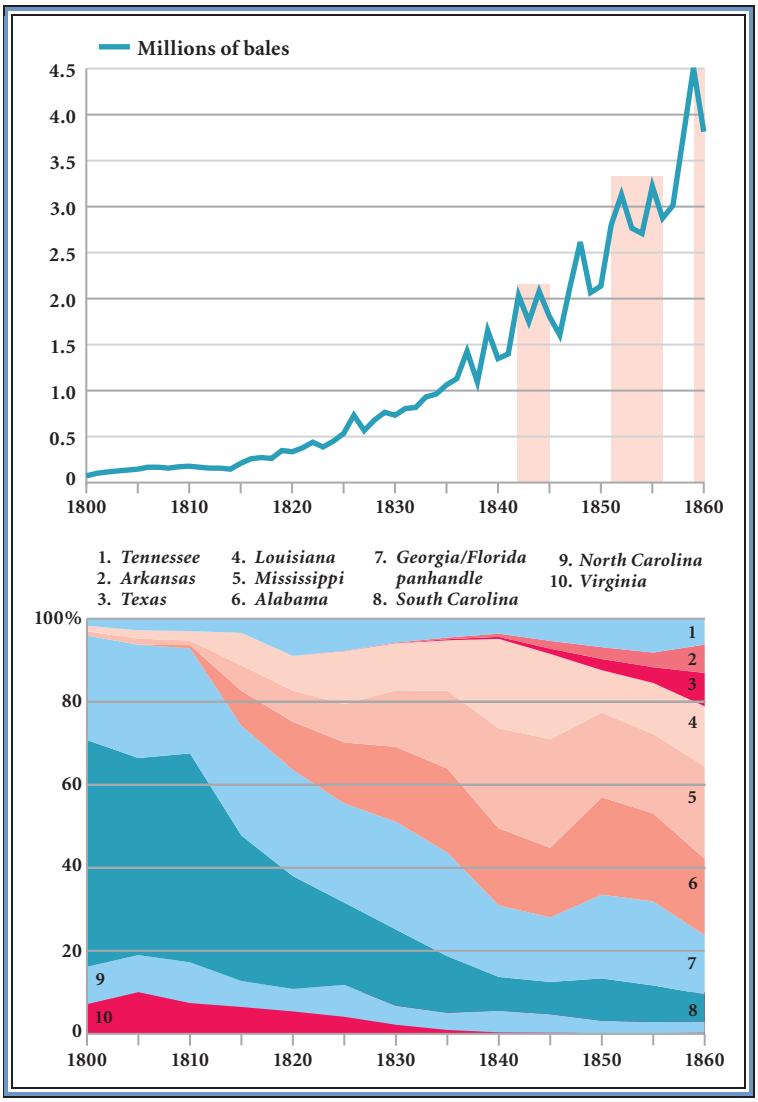
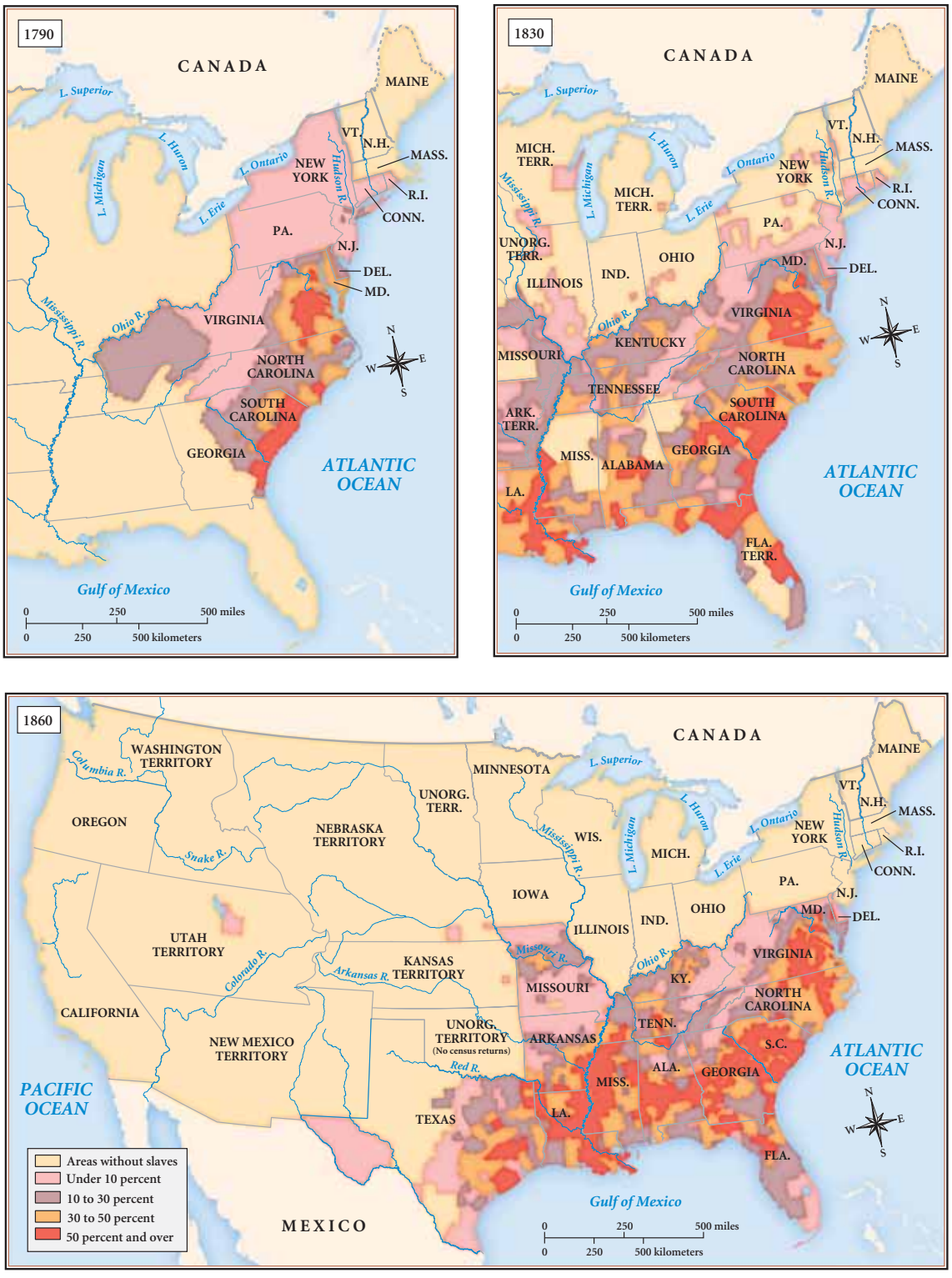


FIGURE 12.1
Cotton Production and Producers, 1800–1860

Until 1820, Georgia and South Carolina plantations (marked #7 and #8 on the right side of the lower graph) grew more than one-half of American cotton. As output increased significantly between 1820 and 1840 (see the upper graph), the locus of production shifted. By the early 1840s, planters had moved hundreds of thousands of slaves to the Mississippi Valley, and Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama (#4, #5, and #6) grew nearly 70 percent of a much larger cotton crop. Simultaneously, production leapt dramatically, reaching (as the red bars show) 2 million bales a year by the mid-1840s, 3 million by the mid-1850s, and 4 million on the eve of the Civil War.

Source: From *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery*, by Robert W. Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman. Copyright © 1974 Little Brown.



MAP 12.1

Distribution of the Slave Population in 1790, 1830, and 1860

The cotton boom shifted the African American population to the South and West. In 1790, most slaves lived and worked on Chesapeake tobacco and Carolina rice and indigo plantations. By 1830, those areas were still heavily populated by black families, but hundreds of thousands of slaves also labored on the cotton and sugar lands of the Lower Mississippi Valley and on cotton plantations in Georgia and northern Florida. Three decades later, the majority of blacks lived and worked along the Mississippi River and in an arc of fertile cotton lands—the "black belt"—sweeping from Mississippi through South Carolina.

was growing rapidly from natural increase — an average of 27 percent a decade by the 1810s — and creating a surplus of enslaved workers on many plantations. The result was a growing domestic trade in slaves. Between 1818 and 1829, planters in just one Maryland tobacco-growing county — Frederick — sold at least 952 slaves to traders or cotton planters. Plantation owners in Virginia disposed of 75,000 slaves during the 1810s and again during the 1820s. The number of forced Virginia migrants jumped to nearly 120,000 during the 1830s and then averaged 85,000 during the 1840s and 1850s. In Virginia alone, then, slave owners ripped 440,000 African Americans from communities where their families had lived for three or four generations. By 1860, the "mania for buying negroes" from the Upper South had resulted in a massive transplantation of more than 1 million slaves (Figure 12.2). A majority of African Americans now lived and worked in the Deep South, the lands that stretched from Georgia to Texas.

IDENTIFY CAUSES
What factors drove the expansion of the domestic slave trade, and how did it work?

This African American migration took two forms: transfer and sale. Looking for new opportunities, thousands of Chesapeake and Carolina planters — men like James Lide — sold their existing plantations and moved their slaves to the Southwest. Many other planters gave slaves to sons and daughters who moved west. Such transfers accounted for about 40 percent of the African American migrants. The rest — about 60 percent of the 1 million migrants — were "sold south" through traders.

Just as the Atlantic slave trade enriched English merchants in the eighteenth century, so the domestic market brought wealth to American traders between 1800 and 1860. One set of routes ran to the Atlantic coast and sent thousands of slaves to sugar plantations in Louisiana, the former French territory that entered the Union in 1812. As sugar output soared, slave traders scoured the countryside near the port cities of Baltimore, Alexandria, Richmond, and Charleston — searching, as one of them put it, for "likely young men such as I think would suit the New Orleans market." Each year, hundreds of muscular young slaves passed through auction houses in the port cities bound for the massive trade mart in New Orleans. Because this **coastal trade** in laborers was highly visible, it elicited widespread condemnation by northern abolitionists.

Sugar was a "killer" crop, and Louisiana (like the eighteenth-century West Indies) soon had a well-deserved reputation among African Americans "as a place of slaughter." Hundreds died each year from disease, overwork, and brutal treatment. Maryland farmer John Anthony Munnikhuysen refused to allow his daughter Priscilla to marry a Louisiana sugar planter, declaring: "Mit has never been used to see negroes flayed alive and it would kill her."

The **inland system** that fed slaves to the Cotton South was less visible than the coastal trade but more extensive. Professional slave traders went from one rural village to another buying "young and likely Negroes." The traders marched their purchases in coffles — columns of slaves bound to one another — to Alabama, Mississippi, and Missouri in the 1830s and to Arkansas and Texas in the 1850s. One slave described the arduous journey: "Dem Speckulators would put the chilluns in a wagon usually pulled by oxens and de

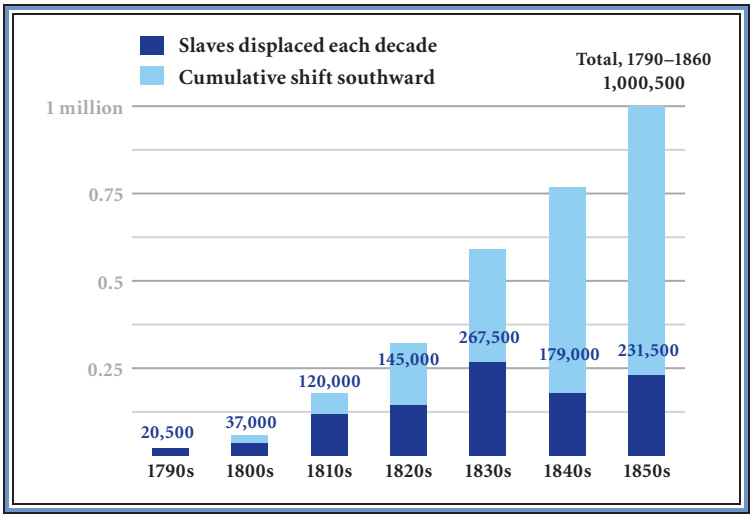


FIGURE 12.2
Forced Slave Migration to the Lower South, 1790–1860
The cotton boom set in motion a vast redistribution of the African American population. Between 1790 and 1860, white planters moved or sold more than a million enslaved people from the Upper to the Lower South, a process that broke up families and long-established black communities. Based on data in Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery*, by Robert W. Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman. Copyright © 1974 Little Brown and in *Speculators and Slaves: Masters, Traders, and Slaves in the Old South*, by Michael Tadman, University of Wisconsin Press, 1996.

The Inland Slave Trade

Mounted whites escort a convoy of slaves from Virginia to Tennessee in Lewis Miller's *Slave Trader, Sold to Tennessee* (1853). For white planters, the interstate trade in slaves was lucrative; it pumped money into the declining Chesapeake economy and provided young workers for the expanding plantations of the cotton belt. For blacks, it was a traumatic journey, a new Middle Passage that broke up their families and communities. "Arise! Arise! and weep no more, dry up your tears, we shall part no more," the slaves sing sorrowfully as they journey to new lives in Tennessee. Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Museum, Williamsburg, VA.

older folks was chained or tied together sos dey could not run off." Once a coffle reached its destination, the trader would sell slaves "at every village in the county."

Chesapeake and Carolina planters provided the human cargo. Some planters sold slaves when poor management or their "own extravagances" threw them into debt. "Trouble gathers thicker and thicker around me," Thomas B. Chaplin of South Carolina lamented in his diary. "I will be compelled to send about ten prime Negroes to Town on next Monday, to be sold." Many more planters doubled as slave traders, earning substantial profits by traveling south to sell some of their slaves and those of their neighbors. Thomas Weatherly of South Carolina drove his surplus slaves to Hayneville, Alabama, where he "sold ten negroes." Colonel E. S. Irvine, a member of the South Carolina legislature and "a highly respected gentleman" in white circles, likewise traveled frequently "to sell a drove of Negroes." Prices marched in step with those for cotton; during a boom year in the 1850s, a planter noted that a slave "will fetch $1000, cash, quick."

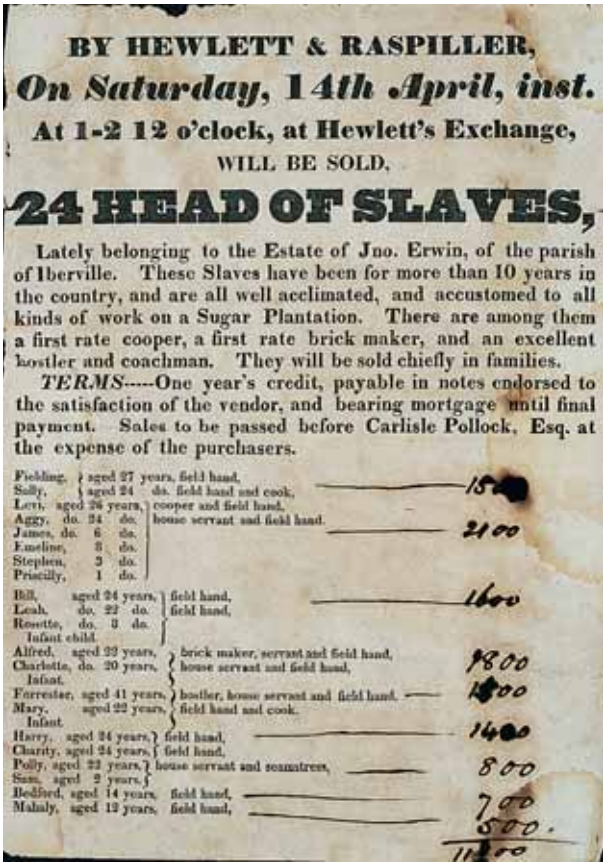
The domestic slave trade was crucial to the prosperity of the migrating white planters because it provided workers to fell the forests and plant cotton in the Gulf states. Equally important, it sustained the wealth of slave owners in the Upper South. By selling surplus black workers, tobacco, rice, and grain producers in the Chesapeake and Carolinas added about 20 percent to their income. As a Maryland newspaper remarked in 1858, "[The trade serves as] an almost universal resource to raise money. A prime able-bodied slave is worth three times as much to the cotton or sugar planter as to the Maryland agriculturalist."

The Impact on Blacks

For African American families, the domestic slave trade was a personal disaster that underlined their status — and vulnerability — as chattel slaves. In law, they were the movable personal property of the whites who owned them. As Lewis Clark, a fugitive from slavery, noted: "Many a time i've had 'em say to me, 'You're my property.'" "The being of slavery, its soul and its body, lives and moves in the **chattel principle**, the property principle, the bill of sale principle," declared former slave James W. C. Pennington. As a South Carolina master put it, "[The slave's earnings] belong to me because I bought him."

Slave property underpinned the entire southern economic system. Whig politician Henry Clay noted that the "immense amount of capital which is invested in slave property . . . is owned by widows and orphans, by the aged and infirm, as well as the sound and vigorous. It is the subject of mortgages, deeds of trust, and family settlements." Clay concluded: "I know that there is a visionary dogma, which holds that negro slaves cannot be the subject of property [but] . . . that is property which the law declares to be property."

As a slave owner, Clay also knew that property rights were key to slave discipline. "I govern them . . . without the whip," another master explained, "by stating . . . that I should sell them if they do not conduct themselves as I wish." The threat was effective. "The Negroes here dread nothing on earth so much as this," a Maryland observer noted. "They regard the south with perfect horror, and to be sent there is considered as the worst punishment." Thousands of slaves suffered



BY HEWLETT & RASPILLER,

On Saturday, 14th April, inst.

At 1-2 12 o'clock, at Hewlett's Exchange,

WILL BE SOLD,

24 HEAD OF SLAVES,

Lately belonging to the Estate of Jno. Erwin, of the parish of Iberville. These Slaves have been for more than 10 years in the country, and are all well acclimated, and accustomed to all kinds of work on a Sugar Plantation. There are among them a first rate cooper, a first rate brick maker, and an excellent hostler and coachman. They will be sold chiefly in families.

TERMS-----One year's credit, payable in notes endorsed to the satisfaction of the vendor, and bearing mortgage until final payment. Sales to be passed before Carlisle Pollock, Esq. at the expense of the purchasers.

Fielding, aged 37 years, field hand,
Sally, aged 24 do. field hand and cook,
Levi, aged 24 years, cooper and field hand,
Aggy, do. 24 do. house servant and field hand.
James, do. 6 do.
Emeline, 3 do.
Stephen, 2 do.
Priscilly, 1 do.

Bill, aged 24 years, field hand,
Leah, do. 22 do. field hand,
Rosette, do. 3 do.
Infant child.

Alfred, aged 22 years, brick maker, servant and field hand,
Charlotte, do. 20 years, house servant and field hand,
Infant.

Forrester, aged 41 years, hostler, house servant and field hand,
Mary, aged 22 years, field hand and cook.
Infant.

Harry, aged 24 years, field hand,
Charity, aged 24 years, field hand,
Polly, aged 22 years, house servant and seamstress,
Sam, aged 2 years,
Bedford, aged 14 years, field hand,
Mahaly, aged 12 years, field hand,

Slave Auction Notice

This public notice for a slave auction to be held in Iberville, Louisiana, advertises "24 Head of Slaves" as if they were cattle—a striking commentary on the "chattel principle" and business of slavery. Library of Congress.

that fate, which destroyed about one in every four slave marriages. "Why does the slave ever love?" asked black abolitionist Harriet Jacobs in her autobiography, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, when her partner "may at any moment be wrenched away by the hand of violence?" After being sold, one Georgia slave lamented, "My Dear wife for you and my Children my pen cannot Express the griffe I feel to be parted from you all."

The interstate slave trade often focused on young adults. In northern Maryland, planters sold away boys and girls at an average age of seventeen years. "Dey sole my sister Kate," Anna Harris remembered decades later, "and I ain't seed or heard of her since." The trade also separated almost a third of all slave children under the age of fourteen from one or both of their parents. Sarah Grant remembered, "Mamma used to cry when she had to go back to work because she was always scared some of us kids would be sold while she was away." Well might she worry, for slave traders worked quickly. "One night I lay down on de straw mattress wid my mammy," Vinny Baker recalled, "an' de nex' mo'nin I woke up an' she wuz gone." When their owner sold seven-year-old Laura Clark and ten other children from their plantation in North Carolina, Clark sensed that she would see her mother "no mo' in dis life."

EXPLAIN CONSEQUENCES
What were the effects of the slave trade on black families?

Despite these sales, 75 percent of slave marriages remained unbroken, and the majority of children lived with one or both parents until puberty. Consequently, the sense of family among African Americans remained strong. Sold from Virginia to Texas in 1843, Hawkins Wilson carried with him a mental picture of his family. Twenty-five years later and now a freedman, Wilson set out to find his "dearest relatives" in Virginia. "My sister belonged to Peter Coleman in Caroline County and her name was Jane. . . . She had three children, Robert, Charles and Julia, when I left—Sister Martha belonged to Dr. Jefferson. . . . Sister Matilda belonged to Mrs. Botts."

During the decades between sale and freedom, Hawkins Wilson and thousands of other African Americans constructed new lives for themselves in the Mississippi Valley. Undoubtedly, many did so with a sense of foreboding, knowing from personal experience that their owners could disrupt their lives at any moment. Like Charles Ball, some "longed to die, and escape from the bonds of my tormentors." The darkness of slavery shadowed even moments of joy. Knowing that sales often ended slave marriages, a white minister blessed one couple "for so long as God keeps them together."

Many white planters "saw" only the African American marriages that endured and ignored those they had broken. Accordingly, many owners considered themselves **benevolent masters**, committed to the welfare of "my family, black and white." Some masters gave substance to this paternalist ideal by treating kindly "loyal and worthy" slaves—black overseers, the mammy who raised their children, and trusted house servants. By preserving the families of these slaves, many planters could believe that they "sold south" only "coarse" troublemakers and uncivilized slaves who had "little sense of family." Other owners were more honest about the human cost of their pursuit of wealth. "Tomorrow the negroes are to get off [to Kentucky]," a slave-owning woman in Virginia wrote to a friend, "and I expect there will be great crying and moaning, with children Leaving there

mothers, mothers there children, and women there husbands."

Whether or not they acknowledged the slaves' pain, few southern whites questioned the morality of the slave trade. Responding to abolitionists' criticism, the city council of Charleston, South Carolina, declared that "the removal of slaves from place to place, and their transfer from master to master, by gift, purchase, or otherwise" was completely consistent "with moral principle and with the highest order of civilization" (American Voices, p. 384).

To see a longer excerpt of the city council of Charleston, South Carolina, document, along with other primary sources from this period, see ***Sources for America's History***.

The World of Southern Whites

American slavery took root in the early eighteenth century on the tobacco plantations of the Chesapeake and in the rice fields of the Carolina low country. However, it grew to maturity during the first half of the nineteenth century on the cotton fields and sugar plantations of the Mississippi Valley. By then, a small elite of extraordinarily wealthy planter families stood at the top of southern society. These families — about three thousand in number — each owned more than one hundred slaves and huge tracts of the most fertile lands. Their ranks included many of the richest families in the United States. On the eve of the Civil War, southern slave owners accounted for nearly two-thirds of all American men with wealth of $100,000 or more. Other white southerners — backcountry yeomen farmers and cotton-planting tenants in particular — occupied some of the lowest rungs of the nation's social order. The expansion of southern slavery, like the flowering of northern capitalism, increased inequalities of wealth and status.

The Dual Cultures of the Planter Elite

The westward movement split the plantation elite into two distinct groups: the traditional aristocrats of the Old South, whose families had gained their wealth from tobacco and rice, and the upstart capitalist-inclined planters of the cotton states.

The Traditional Southern Gentry The Old South gentry dominated the Tidewater region of the Chesapeake and the low country of South Carolina and Georgia. During the eighteenth century, these planters built impressive mansions and adopted the manners and values of the English landed gentry (Chapter 3). Their aristocratic-oriented culture survived the Revolution of 1776 and soon took on a republican glaze

Redcliffe Plantation

In 1857, James Henry Hammond began construction of this house on a 400-acre site in Aiken County, South Carolina. It originally had a double-decked porch in the Greek Revival style, which gave it an even more imposing presence. Fifty enslaved African Americans worked at Redcliffe, and nearly three hundred more on Hammond's other properties, providing the wealth that allowed his family to live in comfort. Hammond lived at Redcliffe until he died in 1864 at the age of fifty-seven, his health undermined by his struggles with Confederate leaders over wartime policies and by mercury poisoning from the laxatives he had taken for nearly forty years. Michael A. Stroud.

The Debate over Free and Slave Labor

As the abolitionist assault on slavery mounted, its rhetoric shaped the debate over the emergent system of wage labor in the northern states. By the 1850s, New York senator William Seward starkly contrasted the political systems of the South and the North in terms of their labor systems: "the one resting on the basis of servile or slave labor, the other on voluntary labor of freemen." Seward strongly favored the "free-labor system," crediting to it "the strength, wealth, greatness, intelligence, and freedom, which the whole American people now enjoy." As the following documents show, some Americans agreed with Seward, while others, such as *New York Tribune* editor Horace Greeley and South Carolina senator James Henry Hammond (who is quoted often in this chapter and whose house appears on page 383), contested his premises and conclusions.

South Carolina Senator James Henry Hammond

Speech to the Senate, March 4, 1858

In response to New York senator Seward, Senator Hammond urged admission of Kansas under the proslavery Lecompton Constitution and, by way of argument, celebrated the success of the South's cotton economy and its political and social institutions.

In all social systems there must be a class to do the menial duties, to perform the drudgery of life. . . . Such a class you must have, or you would not have that other class which leads progress, civilization, and refinement. It constitutes the very mud-sill of society and of political government. . . . Fortunately for the South, she found a race adapted to that purpose to her hand. A race inferior to her own, but eminently qualified in temper, in vigor, in docility, in capacity to stand the climate, to answer all her purposes. We use them for our purpose, and call them slaves. . . .

The Senator from New York said yesterday that the whole world had abolished slavery. Aye, the name, but not the thing; . . . for the man who lives by daily labor, and scarcely lives at that, and who has to put out his labor in the market, and take the best he can get for it; in short, your whole hireling class of manual laborers and "operatives," as you call them, are essentially slaves. The difference between us is, that our slaves are hired for life and well compensated; there is no starvation, no begging, no want of employment among our people, and not too much employment either. Yours are hired by the day, not cared for, and scantily compensated, which may be proved in the most painful manner, at any hour in any street in any of your large towns.

Source: *The Congressional Globe* (Washington, DC, March 6, 1858), 962.

New York Protestant Episcopal Church Mission Society

Sixth Annual Report, 1837

This excerpt demonstrates the society's belief that a class-bound social order could be avoided by encouraging "a spirit of independence and self-estimation" among the poor.

In the older countries of Europe, there is a CLASS OF POOR: families born to poverty, living in poverty, dying in poverty. With us there are none such. In our bounteous land individuals alone are poor; but they form no poor class, because with them poverty is but a transient evil . . . save [except] paupers and vagabonds . . . all else form one common class of citizens; some more, others less advanced in the career of honorable independence.

Source: New York Protestant Episcopal Church Mission Society, Sixth Annual Report (New York, 1837), 15–16.

Horace Greeley

Public Letter Declining an Invitation to Attend an Antislavery Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, June 3, 1845

This letter from the editor of the *New York Tribune* explains his broad definition of slavery.

Dear Sir: — I received, weeks since, your letter inviting me to be present at a general convention of opponents of Human Slavery. . . . What is Slavery? You will probably answer; "The legal subjection of one human being to the will and power of another." But this definition appears to me inaccurate. . . .

I understand by Slavery, that condition in which one human being exists mainly as a convenience for other human beings. . . . In short, . . . where the relation [is

one] of authority, social ascendency and power over subsistence on the one hand, and of necessity, servility, and degradation on the other — there, in my view, is Slavery. . . . If I am less troubled concerning the Slavery prevalent in Charleston or New-Orleans, it is because I see so much Slavery in New-York. . . .

Wherever Opportunity to Labor is obtained with difficulty, and is so deficient that the Employing class may virtually prescribe their own terms and pay the Laborer only such share as they choose of the produce, there is a strong tendency to Slavery.

Source: Horace Greeley, *Hints Toward Reform in Lectures, Addresses, and Other Writings* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1850), 352–355.

Editorial in the *Staunton Spectator*, 1859

Entitled "Freedom and Slavery," this editorial argues that "the black man's lot as a slave, is vastly preferable to that of his free brethren at the North."

The intelligent, christian slave-holder at the South is the best friend of the negro. He does not regard his bondsmen as mere chattel property, but as human beings to whom he owes duties. While the Northern Pharisee will not permit a negro to ride on the city railroads, Southern gentlemen and ladies are seen every day, side by side, in cars and coaches, with their faithful servants. Here the honest black man is not only protected by the laws and public sentiment, but he is respected by the community as truly as if his skin were white. Here there are ties of genuine friendship and affection between whites and blacks, leading to an interchange of all the comities of life. The slave nurses his master in sickness, and sheds tears of genuine sorrow at his grave.

Source: *Staunton Spectator*, December 6, 1859, p. 2, c. 1.

James Henry Hammond

Private Letter to His Son Harry Hammond, 1856

This letter regards the future of Hammond's slave mistress, Sally Johnson, her son Henderson, and her daughter Louisa, who was the common mistress of father and son, and Louisa's children whom they sired.

In the last will I made I left to you . . . Sally Johnson the mother of Louisa & all the children of both. Sally says Henderson is my child. It is possible, but I do not believe it Yet act on her's rather than my opinion. Louisa's first child may be mine. I think not. Her second I believe is mine. Take care of her & her children who are both of your blood if not of mine. . . . The services of the rest will compensate for indulgence to these. I cannot free these people & send them North. It would be cruelty to them. Nor would I like that any but my own blood should own as slaves my own blood or Louisa. I leave them to your charge, believing that you will best appreciate & most independently carry out my wishes in regard to them. Do not let Louisa or any of my children or possible children be the Slaves of Strangers. Slavery in the family will be their happiest earthly condition.

Source: James Hammond to Harry Hammond, February 19, 1856, in JHH Papers, SCL, quoted in Drew Gilpin Faust, *James Henry Hammond and the Old South: A Design for Mastery* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), 87.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Which of these documents argue for slave owners as benevolent paternalists and the institution of slavery as a "positive good"? What other points of view are represented?
2. Given the discussion of "class" and "honorable independence" in the Mission Society statement, how would an Episcopalian reply to Hammond's critique of the northern labor system?
3. How can we understand Hammond's treatment of Sally Johnson and her daughter, as well as his refusal to free his and his son's children, in the context of his 1858 speech and the *Staunton Spectator*'s editorial?
4. Using the principles asserted in his letter, how would Horace Greeley analyze the southern labor system, as described by Hammond and the *Staunton Spectator*? Why does Greeley suggest that the northern system has only "a strong tendency to Slavery"?
5. Consider the sources above in the light of this Abraham Lincoln comment: "although volume upon volume is written to prove slavery a very good thing, we never hear of the man who wishes to take the good of it, by being a slave himself."

(Chapter 8). Classical republican theory, which had long identified political tyranny as the major threat to liberty, had its roots in the societies of Greece and Rome, where slavery was part of the natural order of society. That variety of republicanism appealed to wealthy southerners, who feared federal government interference with their slave property. On the state level, planters worried about populist politicians who would mobilize poorer whites, and so they demanded that authority rest in the hands of incorruptible men of "virtue."

Indeed, affluent planters cast themselves as a **republican aristocracy**. "The planters here are essentially what the nobility are in other countries," declared James Henry Hammond of South Carolina. "They stand at the head of society & politics . . . [and form] an aristocracy of talents, of virtue, of generosity and courage." Wealthy planters criticized the democratic polity and middle-class society that was developing in the Northeast and Midwest. "Inequality is the fundamental law of the universe," declared one planter. Others condemned professional politicians as "a set of demagogues" and questioned the legitimacy of universal suffrage. "Times are sadly different now to what they were when I was a boy," lamented David Gavin, a prosperous South Carolinian. Then, the "Sovereign people, alias mob" had little influence; now they vied for power with the elite. "[How can] I rejoice for a freedom," Gavin thundered, "which allows every bankrupt, swindler, thief, and scoundrel, traitor and seller of his vote to be placed on an equality with myself?"

To maintain their privileged identity, aristocratic planters married their sons and daughters to one another and expected them to follow in their footsteps — the men working as planters, merchants, lawyers, newspaper editors, and ministers and the women hosting plantation balls and church bazaars. To confirm their social preeminence, they lived extravagantly and entertained graciously. James Henry Hammond built a Greek Revival mansion with a center hall 53 feet by 20 feet, its floor embellished with stylish Belgian tiles and expensive Brussels carpets. "Once a year, like a great feudal landlord," Hammond's neighbor recounted, "[he] gave a fete or grand dinner to all the country people."

TRACE CHANGE OVER TIME

Between 1800 and 1860, what changes occurred in the South's plantation crops, labor system, defense of slavery, and elite planter lifestyle?

Rice planters remained at the apex of the plantation aristocracy. In 1860, the fifteen proprietors of the vast plantations in All Saints Parish in South Carolina owned 4,383 slaves — nearly 300 apiece — who annually grew and processed 14 million pounds of rice. As inexpensive Asian rice entered the world market in the 1820s and cut their profits, the Carolina rice aristocrats sold some slaves and worked the others harder, sustaining their luxurious lifestyle. The "hospitality and elegance" of Charleston and Savannah impressed savvy English traveler John Silk Buckingham. Buckingham likewise found "polished" families among long-established French Catholic planters in New Orleans and along the Mississippi River: There, the "sugar and cotton planters live in splendid edifices, and enjoy all the luxury that wealth can impart" (America Compared, p. 387).

In tobacco-growing regions, the lives of the planter aristocracy followed a different trajectory, in part because slave ownership was widely diffused. In the 1770s, about 60 percent of white families in the Chesapeake region owned at least one African American. As wealthy tobacco planters moved their estates and slaves to the Cotton South, middling whites (who owned between five and twenty slaves) came to dominate the Chesapeake economy. The descendants of the old tobacco aristocracy remained influential, but increasingly as slave-owning grain farmers, lawyers, merchants, industrialists, and politicians. They hired out surplus slaves, sold them south, or allowed them to purchase their freedom.

The Ideology and Reality of "Benevolence"

The planter aristocracy flourished around the periphery of the South's booming Cotton Belt — in Virginia, South Carolina, and Louisiana — but it took the lead in defending slavery. Ignoring the Jeffersonian response to slavery as a "misfortune" or a "necessary evil" (Chapter 8), southern apologists in the 1830s argued that the institution was a **"positive good"** because it subsidized an elegant lifestyle for a white elite and provided tutelage for genetically inferior Africans. "As a race, the African is inferior to the white man," declared Alexander Stephens, the future vice president of the Confederacy. "Subordination to the white man, is his normal condition." Apologists depicted planters and their wives as aristocratic models of "disinterested benevolence," who provided food and housing for their workers and cared for them in old age. One wealthy Georgian declared, "Plantation government should be eminently patriarchal. . . . The pater-familias, or head of the family, should, in one sense, be the father of the whole concern, negroes and all."

Those planters who embraced Christian stewardship tried to shape the religious lives of their chattel.

Bernhard, Duke of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach

The Racial Complexities of Southern Society

In 1825 and 1826, Bernhard, heir to the German principality of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach, traveled throughout the United States, and in 1828 he published an account of his adventures. After a military career, the duke ruled his principality from 1853 until his death in 1862.

In New Orleans we were invited to a subscription ball. . . . Only good society is invited to these balls. The first to which we came was not very well attended; but most of the ladies were very nice looking and well turned out in the French manner. Their clothing was elegant after the latest Paris fashions. They danced very well and did credit to their French dancing masters. Dancing and some music are the main branches of the education of a Creole [an American-born white] woman. . . .

The native men are far from matching the women in elegance. And they stayed only a short time, preferring to escape to a so-called "Quarterons Ball" which they find more amusing and where they do not have to stand on ceremony. . . .

A "quarteron" [actually an octoroon, a person of one-eighth African ancestry] is the offspring of a mestizo mother and a white father, just as the mestizo is the child of a mulatto and a white man. The "quarterons" are almost completely white. There would be no way of recognizing them by their complexion, for they are often fairer than the Creoles. Black hair and eyes are generally the signs of their status, although some are quite blond. The ball is attended by the free "quarterons." Yet the deepest prejudice reigns against them on account of their colored origin; the white women particularly feel or affect to feel a strong repugnance to them.

Marriage between colored and white people is forbidden by the laws of the state. Yet the "quarterons," for their part, look upon the Negroes and mulattoes as inferiors and are unwilling to mix with them. The girls therefore have no other recourse than to become the mistresses of white men. The "quarterons" regard such attachment as the equivalent of marriage. They would not think of entering upon it other than with a formal contract in which the man engages to pay a stipulated sum to the mother or father of the girl. . . .

Some of these women have inherited from their fathers and lovers, and possess considerable fortunes. Their status is nevertheless always very depressed. They must not ride in the street in coaches, and their lovers can bring them to the balls in their own conveyances only after nightfall. . . . But many of these girls are much more carefully educated than the whites, behave with more polish and more politeness, and make their lovers happier than white wives their husbands. And yet the white ladies speak of these unfortunate depressed creatures with great disdain, even bitterness. Because of the depth of these prejudices, many fathers send their daughters, conceived after this manner, to France where good education and wealth are no impediments to the attainment of a respectable place.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. What does this passage suggest about the effect of slavery and the meaning of racial identity on sexual relationships and marriages in America and in France?
2. How does Bernhard's account help to explain the values and outlook of the free black population in the South?

They built churches on their plantations, welcomed evangelical preachers, and required their slaves to attend services. A few encouraged African Americans with spiritual "gifts" to serve as exhorters and deacons. Most of these planters acted from sincere Christian belief, but they also hoped to counter abolitionist criticism and to use religious teachings to control their workers.

Indeed, slavery's defenders increasingly used religious justifications for human bondage. Protestant

ministers in the South pointed out that the Hebrews, God's chosen people, had owned slaves and that Jesus Christ had never condemned slavery. As James Henry Hammond told a British abolitionist in 1845: "What God ordains and Christ sanctifies should surely command the respect and toleration of man." However, many aristocratic defenders of slavery were absentee owners or delegated authority to overseers, and they rarely glimpsed the day-to-day brutality of their regime of forced labor. "I was at the plantation last Saturday and the crop was in fine order," an absentee's son wrote to his father, "but the negroes are most brutally scarred & several have run off."

Cotton Entrepreneurs There was much less hypocrisy and far less elegance among the entrepreneurial planters of the Cotton South. "The glare of expensive luxury vanishes" in the black soil regions of Alabama and Mississippi, John Silk Buckingham remarked as he traveled through the Cotton South. Frederick Law Olmsted — the future architect of New York's Central Park, who during the mid-1850s traveled through the South for the *New York Times* — found that the plantations in Mississippi mostly had "but small and mean residences." Aristocratic paternalism vanished as well. A Mississippi planter put it plainly: "Everything has to give way to large crops of cotton, land has to be cultivated wet or dry, negroes [must] work, hot or cold."

Angry at being sold south and pressed to hard labor, many slaves grew "mean" and stubborn. Those who would not labor were subject to the lash. "Whiped all the hoe hands," Alabama planter James Torbert wrote matter-of-factly in his journal. Overseers pushed workers hard because their salaries often depended on the amount of cotton they were able "to make for the market." A Mississippi slave recalled, "When I wuz so tired I cu'dnt hardly stan', I had to spin my cut of cotton befor' I cu'd go to sleep. We had to card, spin, an' reel at nite."

Cotton was a demanding crop because of its long growing season. Slaves plowed the land in March; dropped seeds into the ground in early April; and, once the plants began to grow, continually chopped away the surrounding grasses. In between these tasks, they planted the corn and peas that would provide food for them and the plantation's hogs and chickens. When the cotton bolls ripened in late August, the long four-month picking season began. Slaves in the Cotton South, concluded Olmsted, worked "much harder and more unremittingly" than those in the tobacco regions. Moreover, fewer of them acquired craft skills than in tobacco, sugar, and rice areas, where slave coopers and engineers made casks, processed sugar, and built irrigation systems.

To increase output, profit-seeking cotton planters began during the 1820s to use a rigorous **gang-labor system**. Previously, many planters had supervised their workers sporadically or assigned them specific tasks to complete at their own pace. Now masters with twenty or more slaves organized disciplined teams, or "gangs," supervised by black drivers and white overseers. They instructed the supervisors to work the gangs at a steady pace, clearing and plowing land or hoeing and picking cotton. A traveler in Mississippi described two gangs returning from work:

> First came, led by an old driver carrying a whip, forty of the largest and strongest women I ever saw together; they were all in a simple uniform dress of a bluish check stuff, the skirts reaching little below the knee. . . . They carried themselves loftily, each having a hoe over the shoulder, and walking with a free, powerful swing.

Next marched the plow hands with their mules, "the cavalry, thirty strong, mostly men, but a few of them women." Finally, "a lean and vigilant white overseer, on a brisk pony, brought up the rear."

The gang-labor system enhanced profits by increasing productivity. Because slaves in gangs finished tasks in thirty-five minutes that took a white yeoman planter an hour to complete, gang labor became ever more prevalent. In one Georgia county, the percentage of blacks working in gangs doubled between 1830 and 1850. As the price of raw cotton surged after 1846, the wealth of the planter class skyrocketed. And no wonder: nearly 2 million enslaved African Americans now labored on the plantations of the Cotton South and annually produced 4 million bales of the valuable fiber.

Planters, Smallholding Yeomen, and Tenants

Although the South was a **slave society** — that is, a society in which the institution of slavery affected all aspects of life — most white southerners did not own slaves. The percentage of white families who held blacks in bondage steadily decreased — from 36 percent in 1830, to 31 percent in 1850, to about 25 percent a decade later. However, slave ownership varied by region. In some cotton-rich counties, 40 percent of the white families owned slaves; in the hill country near the Appalachian Mountains, the proportion dropped to 10 percent.

The Inherent Brutality of Slavery

Like all systems of forced labor, American racial slavery relied ultimately on physical coercion. Slave owners and overseers routinely whipped slaves who worked slowly or defied their orders. On occasion, they applied the whip with such ferocity that the slave was permanently injured or killed. This photograph of a Mississippi slave named Gordon, taken after he fled to the Union army in Louisiana in 1863 and published in *Harper's Weekly*, stands as graphic testimony to the inherent brutality of the system. Library of Congress.

Planter Elites A privileged minority of 395,000 southern families owned slaves in 1860, their ranks divided into a strict hierarchy. The top one-fifth of these families owned twenty or more slaves. This elite — just 5 percent of the South's white population — dominated the economy, owning over 50 percent of the entire slave population of 4 million and growing 50 percent of the South's cotton crop. The average wealth of these planters was $56,000 (about $1.6 million in purchasing power today); by contrast, a prosperous southern yeoman or northern farmer owned property worth a mere $3,200.

Substantial proprietors, another fifth of the slave-owning population, held title to six to twenty bondsmen and -women. These middling planters owned almost 40 percent of the enslaved laborers and produced more than 30 percent of the cotton. Often they pursued dual careers as skilled artisans or professional men. Thus some of the fifteen slaves owned by Georgian Samuel L. Moore worked in his brick factory, while others labored on his farm. Dr. Thomas Gale used the income from his medical practice to buy a Mississippi plantation that annually produced 150 bales of cotton. In Alabama, lawyer Benjamin Fitzpatrick used his legal fees to buy ten slaves.

Like Fitzpatrick, lawyers acquired wealth by managing the affairs of the slave-owning elite, representing planters and merchants in suits for debt, and helping smallholders and tenants register their deeds and contracts. Standing at the legal crossroads of their small towns, they rose to prominence and regularly won election to public office. Less than 1 percent of the male population, in 1828 lawyers made up 16 percent of the Alabama legislature and an astounding 26 percent in 1849.

Smallholding Planters and Yeomen Smallholding slave owners were much less visible than the wealthy grandees and the middling lawyer-planters. These planters held from one to five black laborers in bondage and owned a few hundred acres of land. Some smallholders were well-connected young men who would rise to wealth when their father's death blessed them with more land and slaves. Others were poor but ambitious men trying to pull themselves up by their bootstraps, often encouraged by elite planters and proslavery advocates. "Ours is a proslavery form of Government, and the proslavery element should be increased," declared a Georgia newspaper. "We would like to see every white man at the South the owner of a family of negroes." Some aspiring planters achieved modest prosperity. A German settler reported from Alabama in 1855 that "nearly all his countrymen" who emigrated with him were slaveholders. "They were poor on their arrival in the country; but no sooner did they realize a little money than they invested it in slaves."

Bolstered by the patriarchal ideology of the planter class, yeomen farmers ruled their smallholdings with a firm hand. The male head of the household had legal authority over all the dependents — wives, children, and slaves — and, according to one South Carolina judge, the right on his property "to be as churlish as he pleases." Yeomen wives had little power; like women

UNDERSTAND POINTS OF VIEW

By 1860, what different groups made up the South's increasingly complex society? How did these groups interact?

in the North, they lost their legal identity when they married. To express their concerns, many southern women joined churches, where they usually outnumbered men by a margin of two to one. Women especially welcomed the message of spiritual equality preached in evangelical Baptist and Methodist churches, and they hoped that the church community would hold their husbands to the same standards of Christian behavior to which they conformed. However, most churches supported patriarchal rule and told female members to remain in "wifely obedience," whatever the actions of their husbands.

Whatever their authority within the household, most southern yeomen lived and died as hardscrabble farmers. They worked alongside their slaves in the fields, struggled to make ends meet as their families grew, and moved regularly in search of opportunity. Thus, in 1847, James Buckner Barry left North Carolina with his new wife and two slaves to settle in Bosque County, Texas. There he worked part-time as an Indian fighter while his slaves toiled on a drought-ridden farm that barely kept the family in food. In South Carolina, W. J. Simpson struggled for years as a smallholding cotton planter and then gave up. He hired out one of his two slaves and went to work as an overseer on his father's farm.

Less fortunate smallholders fell from the privileged ranks of the slave-owning classes. Selling their land and slaves to pay off debts, they joined the mass of propertyless tenants who farmed the estates of wealthy landlords. In 1860, in Hancock County, Georgia, there were 56 slave-owning planters and 300 propertyless white farm laborers and factory workers; in nearby Hart County, 25 percent of the white farmers were tenants. Across the South, about 40 percent of the white population worked as tenants or farm laborers; as the *Southern Cultivator* observed, they had "no legal right nor interest in the soil [and] no homes of their own."

Poor Freemen Propertyless whites suffered the ill consequences of living in a slave society that accorded little respect to hardworking white laborers. Nor could

North Carolina Emigrants: Poor White Folks

Completed in 1845, James Henry Beard's (1811–1893) painting depicts a family moving north to Ohio. Unlike many optimistic scenes of emigration, the picture conveys a sense of resigned despair. The family members, led by a sullen, disheveled father, pause at a water trough while their cow drinks and their dog chews a bone. The mother looks apprehensively toward the future as she cradles a child; two barefoot older children listlessly await their father's command. New York writer Charles Briggs interpreted the painting as an "eloquent sermon on Anti-Slavery . . . , the blight of Slavery has paralyzed the strong arm of the man and destroyed the spirit of the woman." Although primarily a portrait painter, Beard questioned the ethics and optimism of American culture in *Ohio Land Speculator* (1840) and *The Last Victim of the Deluge* (1849), as well as in *Poor White Folks*.

Cincinnati Art Museum, Ohio, USA/Gift of the Proctor & Gamble Company/The Bridgeman Art Library.

they hope for a better life for their children, because slave owners refused to pay taxes to fund public schools. Moreover, wealthy planters bid up the price of African Americans, depriving white laborers and tenants of easy access to the slave labor required to accumulate wealth. Finally, planter-dominated legislatures forced all white men, whether they owned slaves or not, to serve in the patrols and militias that deterred black uprisings. The majority of white southerners, Frederick Law Olmsted concluded, "are poor. They . . . have little — very little — of the common comforts and consolations of civilized life. Their destitution is not material only; it is intellectual and it is moral."

Marking this moral destitution, poor whites enjoyed the psychological satisfaction that they ranked above blacks. As Alfred Iverson, a U.S. senator from Georgia (1855–1861), explained: a white man "walks erect in the dignity of his color and race, and feels that he is a superior being, with the more exalted powers and privileges than others." To reinforce that sense of racial superiority, planter James Henry Hammond told his poor white neighbors, "In a slave country every freeman is an aristocrat."

Rejecting that half-truth, many southern whites fled planter-dominated counties in the 1830s and sought farms in the Appalachian hill country and beyond — in western Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, the southern regions of Illinois and Indiana, and Missouri. Living as yeomen farmers, they used family labor to grow foodstuffs for sustenance. To obtain cash or store credit to buy agricultural implements, cloth, shoes, salt, and other necessities, yeomen families sold their surplus crops, raised hogs for market sale, and — when the price of cotton rose sharply — grew a few bales. Their goals were modest: on the family level, they wanted to preserve their holdings and buy enough land to set up their children as small-scale farmers. As citizens, smallholders wanted to control their local government and elect men of their own kind to public office. However, thoughtful yeomen understood that the slave-based cotton economy sentenced family farmers to a subordinate place in the social order. They could hope for a life of independence and dignity only by moving north or farther west, where labor was "free" and hard work was respected.

Expanding and Governing the South

By the 1830s, settlers from the South had carried both yeoman farming and plantation slavery into Arkansas and Missouri. Between those states and the Rocky Mountains stretched great grasslands. An army explorer, Major Stephen H. Long, thought the plains region "almost wholly unfit for cultivation" and in 1820 labeled it the Great American Desert. The label stuck. Americans looking for land turned south, to Mexican territory. At the same time, elite planters struggled to control state governments in the Cotton South.

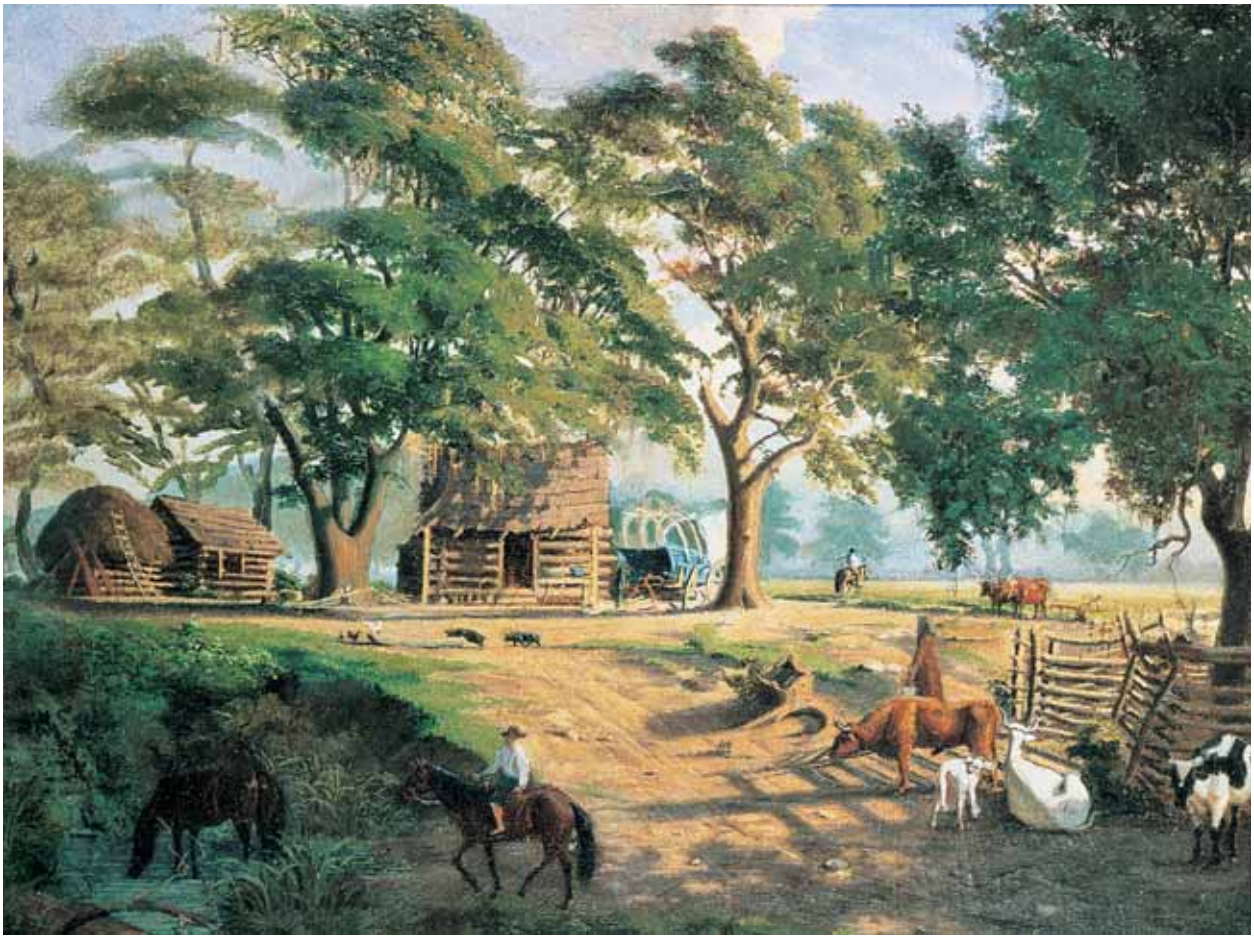
The Settlement of Texas

After winning independence from Spain in 1821, the Mexican government pursued an activist settlement policy. To encourage migration to the refigured state of Coahuila y Tejas, it offered sizable land grants to its citizens and to American emigrants. Moses Austin, an American land speculator, settled smallholding farmers on his large grant, and his son, Stephen F. Austin, acquired even more land — some 180,000 acres — which he sold to newcomers. By 1835, about 27,000 white Americans and their 3,000 African American slaves were raising cotton and cattle in the well-watered plains and hills of eastern and central Texas. They far outnumbered the 3,000 Mexican residents, who lived primarily near the southwestern Texas towns of Goliad and San Antonio.

When Mexico in 1835 adopted a new constitution creating a stronger central government and dissolving state legislatures, the Americans split into two groups. The "war party," led by Sam Houston and recent migrants from Georgia, demanded independence for Texas. Members of the "peace party," led by Stephen Austin, negotiated with the central government in Mexico City for greater political autonomy. They believed Texas could flourish within a decentralized Mexican republic, a "federal" constitutional system favored by the Liberal Party in Mexico (and advocated in the United States by Jacksonian Democrats). Austin won significant concessions for the Texans, including an exemption from a law ending slavery, but in 1835 Mexico's president, General Antonio López de Santa Anna, nullified them. Santa Anna wanted to impose national authority throughout Mexico. Fearing central control, the war party provoked a rebellion that most of the American settlers ultimately supported. On March 2, 1836, the American rebels proclaimed the independence of Texas and adopted a constitution legalizing slavery.

To put down the rebellion, President Santa Anna led an army that wiped out the Texan garrison defending the **Alamo** in San Antonio and then captured Goliad,

UNDERSTAND POINTS OF VIEW
What issues divided the Mexican government and the Americans in Texas, and what proposals sought to resolve them?



Starting Out in Texas

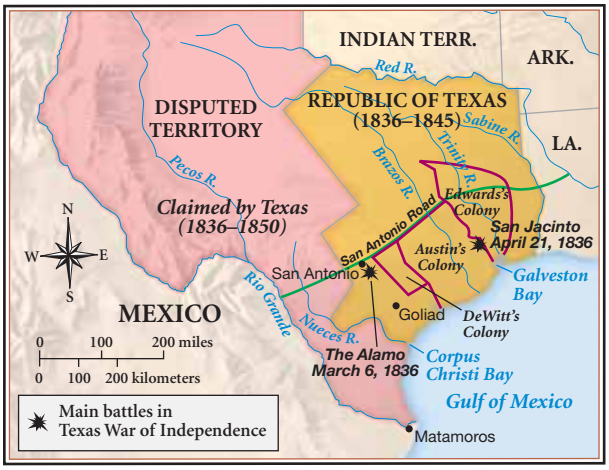
Thousands of white farmers, some owning a few slaves, moved onto small farms in Texas and Arkansas during the 1840s and 1850s. They lived in crudely built log huts; owned a few cows, horses, and oxen; and eked out a meager living by planting a few acres of cotton in addition to their crops of corn. Their aspirations were simple: to achieve modest prosperity during their lives and to assist their children to own farms of their own. Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library.

executing about 350 prisoners of war (Map 12.2). Santa Anna thought that he had crushed the rebellion, but New Orleans and New York newspapers romanticized the deaths at the Alamo of folk heroes Davy Crockett and Jim Bowie. Drawing on anti-Catholic sentiment aroused by Irish immigration and the massacre at Goliad, they urged Americans to "Remember the Alamo" and depicted the Mexicans as tyrannical butchers in the service of the pope. American adventurers, lured by offers of land grants, flocked to Texas to join the rebel forces. Commanded by General Sam Houston, the Texans routed Santa Anna's overconfident army in the Battle of San Jacinto in April 1836, winning de facto independence. The Mexican government refused to recognize the Texas Republic but, for the moment, did not seek to conquer it.

The Texans voted for annexation by the United States, but President Martin Van Buren refused to bring the issue before Congress. As a Texas diplomat reported, the cautious Van Buren and other party politicians feared that annexation would spark a war with Mexico and, beyond that, a "desperate death-struggle . . . between the North and the South [over the extension of slavery]; a struggle involving the probability of a dissolution of the Union."

The Politics of Democracy

As national leaders refused admission to Texas, elite planters faced political challenges in the Cotton South. Unlike the planter-aristocrats who ruled the colonial world, they lived in a republican society with a



MAP 12.2

American Settlements, the Texas-Mexican War, and Boundary Disputes

During the 1820s the Mexican government encouraged Americans to settle in the sparsely populated state of Coahuila y Tejas. By 1835 the nearly 30,000 Americans far outnumbered Mexican residents. To put down an American-led revolt, General Santa Anna led 6,000 soldiers into Tejas in 1836. After overwhelming the rebels at the Alamo in March, Santa Anna set out to capture the Texas Provisional Government, which had fled to Galveston. But the Texans' victory at San Jacinto in April ended the war and secured de facto independence for the Republic of Texas (1836–1845). However, the annexation of Texas to the United States sparked a war with Mexico in 1846, and the state's boundaries remained in dispute until the Compromise of 1850.

democratic ethos. The Alabama Constitution of 1819 granted suffrage to all white men; it also provided for a **secret ballot** (rather than voice-voting); apportionment of legislative seats based on population; and the election of county supervisors, sheriffs, and clerks of court. Given these democratic provisions, political factions in Alabama had to compete for votes. When a Whig newspaper sarcastically asked whether the state's policies should "be governed and controlled by the whim and caprice of the majority of the people," Democrats hailed the power of the common folk. They called on "Farmers, Mechanics, laboring men" to repudiate Whig "aristocrats . . . the soft handed and soft headed gentry."

Taxation Policy Whatever the electioneering rhetoric, most Whig and Democrat political candidates were men of substance. In the early 1840s, nearly 90 percent of Alabama's legislators owned slaves, testimony to the political power of the slave-owning minority. Still, relatively few lawmakers — only about 10 percent — were rich planters, a group voters by and large distrusted. "A rich man cannot sympathize with the poor," declared one candidate. Consequently, the majority of elected state officials, and most county officials, in the Cotton South came from the ranks of middle-level planters and planter-lawyers. Astute politicians, they refrained from laying "oppressive" taxes on the people, particularly the white majority who owned no slaves. Between 1830 and 1860, the Alabama legislature obtained about 70 percent of the state's revenue from taxes on slaves and land. Another 10 to 15 percent came from levies on carriages, gold watches, and other luxury goods and on the capital invested in banks, transportation companies, and manufacturing enterprises.

To win the votes of taxpaying slave owners, Alabama Democrats advocated limited government and low taxes. They attacked their Whig opponents for favoring higher taxes and for providing government subsidies for banks, canals, railroads, and other internal improvements. "Voting against appropriations is the safe and popular side," one Democratic legislator declared, and his colleagues agreed; until the 1850s, they rejected most of the bills that would have granted subsidies to transportation companies or banks.

If tax policy in Alabama had a democratic thrust, elsewhere in the South it did not. In some states, wealthy planters used their political muscle to exempt slave property from taxation. Or they shifted the burden to backcountry yeomen, who owned low-quality pasturelands, by taxing farms according to acreage rather than value. Planter-legislators also spared themselves the cost of building fences around their fields by enacting laws that required yeomen to "fence in" their livestock. And, during the 1850s, wealthy legislators throughout the South used public funds to subsidize the canals and railroads in which they had invested, ignoring the protests of yeoman-backed legislators.

The Paradox of Southern Prosperity Even without these internal improvements, the South had a strong economy. Indeed, it ranked fourth in the world in 1860, with a per capita income among whites higher than that of France and Germany. As a contributor to a Georgia newspaper argued in the 1850s, planters and yeomen should not complain about "tariffs, and merchants, and manufacturers" because "the most highly prosperous people now on earth, are to be found in these very [slave] States." Such arguments tell only part of the story. Nearly all African Americans — 40 percent of the population — lived in dire and permanent poverty. And, although the average southern white man was 80 percent richer than the average northerner in

EXPLAIN CONSEQUENCES
How did the political power of slave owners affect tax policy and the character of economic development in the southern states?

1860, the southerner's *non-slave* wealth was only 60 percent of the northern average. Moreover, the wealth of the industrializing Northeast was increasing at a faster pace than that of the South. Between 1820 and 1860, slave-related trade across the Atlantic declined from 12.6 percent of world trade to 5.3 percent.

Influential southerners blamed the shortcomings of their plantation-based economy on outsiders: "Purely agricultural people," intoned slave-owning planter-politician James Henry Hammond, "have been in all ages the victims of rapacious tyrants grinding them down." And they steadfastly defended their way of life. "We have no cities — we don't want them," boasted U.S. senator Louis Wigfall of Texas in 1861. "We want no manufactures: we desire no trading, no mechanical or manufacturing classes. . . . As long as we have our rice, our sugar, our tobacco, and our cotton, we can command wealth to purchase all we want." So wealthy southerners continued to buy land and slaves, a strategy that neglected investments in the great technological innovations of the nineteenth century — water- and steam-powered factories, machine tools, steel plows, and crushed-gravel roads — that would have raised the South's productivity and wealth.

Urban growth, the key to prosperity in Europe and the North, occurred primarily in the commercial cities around the periphery of the South: New Orleans, St. Louis, and Baltimore. Factories — often staffed by slave labor — appeared primarily in the Chesapeake region, which had a diverse agricultural economy and a surplus of bound workers. Within the Cotton South, wealthy planters invested in railroads primarily to grow more cotton; when the Western & Atlantic Railroad reached the Georgia upcountry, the cotton

Colonel and Mrs. James A. Whiteside, Son Charles and Servants

James A. Whiteside (1803–1861) was a Tennessee lawyer, politician, land speculator, and entrepreneur, with investments in iron manufacturing, banking, steamboats, and railroads. In 1857, he became vice president of the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad. The following year, Whiteside persuaded the Scottish-born painter James Cameron (1817–1882) to move to Chattanooga, where Cameron completed this ambitious portrait of the colonel; his second wife, Harriet; their youngest child, Charles; and two enslaved "servants." The painting shows the family at home, with a view of Chattanooga and of Lookout Mountain, where the colonel had built a hotel. Whiteside died from pneumonia in 1861 after returning home from Virginia with his son James, who had fallen ill while serving in the Confederate army. Hunter Museum of American Art, Chattanooga, Tennessee. Gift of Mr. & Mrs. Thomas B. Whiteside, 1975.7.

crop there quickly doubled. Cotton and agriculture remained King.

Slavery also deterred Europeans from migrating to the South, because they feared competition from bound labor. Their absence deprived the region of skilled artisans and of hardworking laborers to drain swamps, dig canals, smelt iron, and work on railroads. When entrepreneurs tried to hire slaves for these dangerous tasks, planters replied that "a negro's life is too valuable to be risked." Slave owners also feared that hiring out would make their slaves too independent. As a planter told Frederick Law Olmsted, such workers "had too much liberty . . . and got a habit of roaming about and taking care of themselves."

Thus, despite its increasing size and booming exports, the South remained an economic colony: Great Britain and the North bought its staple crops and provided its manufactures, financial services, and shipping facilities. In 1860, some 84 percent of southerners — more than double the percentage in the northern states — still worked in agriculture, and southern factories turned out only 10 percent of the nation's manufactures. The South's fixation on an "exclusive and exhausting" system of cotton monoculture and slave labor filled South Carolina textile entrepreneur William Gregg with "dark forebodings": "It has produced us such an abundant supply of all the luxuries and elegances of life, with so little exertion on our part, that we have become enervated, unfitted for other and more laborious pursuits."

The African American World

By the 1820s, the cultural life of most slaves reflected both the values and customs of their West African ancestors and the language, laws, and religious beliefs of the South's white population. This mix of African- and European-derived cultural values persisted for decades because whites discouraged blacks from assimilating and because slaves prized their diverse African heritages.

Evangelical Black Protestantism

The emergence of black Christianity illustrated the synthesis of African and European cultures. From the 1790s to the 1840s, the Second Great Awakening swept over the South, and evangelical Baptist and Methodist preachers converted thousands of white families and hundreds of enslaved blacks (see Chapter 8). Until that time, African-born blacks, often identifiable by their ritual scars, had maintained the religious practices of their homelands.

African Religions and Christian Conversion Africans carried their traditional religious practices to the United States. Some practiced Islam, but the majority relied on African gods and spirits. As late as 1842, Charles C. Jones, a Presbyterian minister, noted that the blacks on his family's plantation in Georgia believed "in second-sight, in apparitions, charms, witchcraft . . . [and other] superstitions brought from Africa." Fearing for their own souls if they withheld "the means of salvation" from African Americans, Jones and other zealous Protestant preachers and planters set out to convert slaves.

Other Protestant crusaders came from the ranks of pious black men and women who had become Christians in the Chesapeake. Swept to the Cotton South by the domestic slave trade, they carried with them the evangelical message of emotional conversion, ritual baptism, and communal spirituality. Equally important, these crusaders adapted Protestant doctrines to black needs. Enslaved Christians pointed out that blacks as well as whites were "children of God" and should be treated accordingly. **Black Protestantism** generally ignored the doctrines of original sin and predestination, and preachers didn't use biblical passages that encouraged unthinking obedience to authority. A white minister in Liberty County, Georgia, reported that when he urged slaves to obey their masters, "one half of my audience deliberately rose up and walked off."

PLACE EVENTS IN CONTEXT
How did the Second Great Awakening affect the development of black religion?

Black Worship Indeed, some African American converts envisioned the deity as the Old Testament warrior who had liberated the Jews and so would liberate them. Inspired by a vision of Christ, Nat Turner led his bloody rebellion against slavery in Virginia (see Chapter 11). Other black Christians saw themselves as Chosen People: "de people dat is born of God." Charles Davenport, a Mississippi slave, recalled black preachers "exhort[ing] us dat us was de chillun o' Israel in de wilderness an' de Lawd done sont us to take dis lan' o' milk an' honey."

Still, African Americans expressed their Christianity in distinctive ways. The thousands of blacks who joined the Methodist Church respected its ban on profane dancing but praised the Lord in what minister Henry George Spaulding called the "religious dance of the Negroes." Spaulding described the African-derived

Black Kitchen Ball

From time to time, festive celebrations punctuated the demanding work routine of slaves' lives. In this 1838 painting, *Kitchen Ball at White Sulphur Springs Virginia*, African Americans dance to the music of a fiddle and a fife (on the right). Note the light complexions and Europeanized features of the most prominent figures, the result of either racial mixing or the cultural perspective of the artist. The painter, Christian Mayr, was born in Germany in 1805 and migrated to the United States in 1833. After working for years as a traveling portrait painter, Mayr settled in New York City in 1845 and died there in 1850.
North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh. Purchased with funds from the State of North Carolina.

"ring shout" this way: "Three or four, standing still, clapping their hands and beating time with their feet, commence singing in unison one of the peculiar shout melodies, while the others walk around in a ring, in single file, joining also in the song." The songs themselves were usually collective creations, devised spontaneously from bits of old hymns and tunes. Recalled an ex-slave:

> We'd all be at the "prayer house" de Lord's day, and de white preacher he'd splain de word and read whar Esekial done say — Dry bones gwine ter lib ergin. And, honey, de Lord would come a-shinin' thoo dem pages and revive dis ole nigger's heart, and I'd jump up dar and den and holler and shout and sing and pat, and dey would all cotch de words and I'd sing it to some ole shout song I'd heard 'em sing from Africa, and dey'd all take it up and keep at it, and keep a-addin' to it, and den it would be a spiritual.

By such African-influenced means, black congregations devised a distinctive and joyous brand of Protestant worship to sustain them on the long journey to emancipation and the Promised Land. "O my Lord delivered Daniel," the slaves sang, "O why not deliver me too?"

Forging Families and Communities

Black Protestantism was one facet of an increasingly homogeneous African American culture in the rural South. Even in South Carolina — a major point of entry for imported slaves — only 20 percent of the black residents in 1820 had been born in Africa. The domestic

slave trade mingled blacks from many states, erased regional differences, and prompted the emergence of a core culture in the Lower Mississippi Valley. A prime example was the fate of the Gullah dialect, which combined words from English and a variety of African languages in an African grammatical structure. Spoken by blacks in the Carolina low country well into the twentieth century, Gullah did not take root on the cotton plantations of Alabama and Mississippi. There, slaves from Carolina were far outnumbered by migrants from the Chesapeake, who spoke black English. Like Gullah, black English used double negatives and other African grammatical forms, but it consisted primarily of English words rendered with West African pronunciation (for example, with *th* pronounced as *d*—"de preacher").

Nonetheless, African influences remained significant. At least one-third of the slaves who entered the United States between 1776 and 1809 came from the Congo region of West-Central Africa, and they brought their cultures with them. As traveler Isaac Holmes reported in 1821: "In Louisiana, and the state of Mississippi, the slaves . . . dance for several hours during Sunday afternoon. The general movement is in what they call the Congo dance." Similar descriptions of blacks who "danced the Congo and sang a purely African song to the accompaniment of . . . a drum" appeared as late as 1890.

African Americans also continued to respect African incest taboos by shunning marriages between cousins. On the Good Hope Plantation in South Carolina, nearly half of the slave children born between 1800 and 1857 were related by blood to one another; yet when they married, only one of every forty-one unions took place between cousins. White planters were not the source of this taboo: cousin marriages were frequent among the 440 South Carolina men and women who owned at least one hundred slaves in 1860, in part because such unions kept wealth within an extended family (Thinking Like a Historian, p. 398).

Unlike white marriages, slave unions were not legally binding. According to a Louisiana judge, "slaves have no legal capacity to assent to any contract . . . because slaves are deprived of all civil rights." Nonetheless, many African Americans took marriage vows before Christian ministers or publicly marked their union in ceremonies that included the West African custom of jumping over a broomstick together. Once married, newly arrived young people in the Cotton South often chose older people in their new communities as fictive "aunts" and "uncles." The slave trade had destroyed their family, but not their family values.

UNDERSTAND POINTS OF VIEW
In what respects did African cultural practices affect the lives of enslaved African Americans?

The creation of fictive kinship ties was part of a community-building process, a partial substitute for the family ties that sustained whites during periods of crisis. Naming children was another. Recently imported slaves frequently gave their children African names. Males born on Friday, for example, were often called Cuffee—the name of that day in several West African languages. Many American-born parents chose names of British origin, but they usually named sons after fathers, uncles, or grandfathers and daughters after grandmothers. Those transported to the Cotton South often named their children for relatives left behind. Like incest rules and marriage rituals, this intergenerational sharing of names evoked memories of a lost world and bolstered kin ties in the new one.

Negotiating Rights

By forming stable families and communities, African Americans gradually created a sense of order in the harsh and arbitrary world of slavery. In a few regions, slaves won substantial control over their lives.

Working Lives During the Revolutionary era, blacks in the rice-growing lowlands of South Carolina successfully asserted the right to labor by the "task." Under the **task system**, workers had to complete a precisely defined job each day—for example, digging up a quarter-acre of land, hoeing half an acre, or pounding seven mortars of rice. By working hard, many finished their tasks by early afternoon, a Methodist preacher reported, and had "the rest of the day for themselves, which they spend in working their own private fields . . . planting rice, corn, potatoes, tobacco &c. for their own use and profit."

Slaves on sugar and cotton plantations led more regimented lives, thanks to the gang-labor system. As one field hand put it, there was "no time off [between] de change of de seasons. . . . Dey was allus clearin' mo' lan' or sump'." Many slaves faced bans on growing crops on their own. "It gives an excuse for trading," explained one owner, and that encouraged roaming and independence. Still, many masters hired out surplus workers as teamsters, drovers, steamboat workers, turpentine gatherers, and railroad builders; in 1856, no fewer than 435 hired slaves laid track for the Virginia & Tennessee Railroad. Many owners regretted the result. As an overseer remarked about a slave named John, "He is not as good a hand as he was before he went to Alabamy."

Childhood in Black and White

A major theme of Harriet Beecher Stowe's powerful antislavery novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is the sin of separating black families and denying parental rights to enslaved mothers and fathers. The following documents reveal the dynamics of plantation family life, and particularly mother-child relations.

1. **Ex-slave Josephine Smith, interviewed at age ninety-four by Mary A. Hicks, Raleigh, North Carolina, 1930s.** *Slave children had loving but limited relationships with their mothers, who worked long hours in the fields and were sometimes sold away from their children.*

I 'members seein' a heap o' slave sales, wid de niggers in chains, an' de spec'ulators sellin' an' buyin' dem off. I also 'members seein' a drove of slaves wid nothin' on but a rag 'twixt dere legs bein' galloped roun' 'fore de buyers. 'Bout de wust thing dat eber I seed do' wuz a slave 'woman at Louisburg who had been sold off from her three weeks old baby, an wuz bein' marched ter New Orleans.

She had walked till she quz give out, an' she wuz weak enough ter fall in de middle o' de road. . . . As I pass by dis 'oman begs me in God's name fer a drink o' water, an' I gives it ter her. I ain't neber be so sorry fer nobody. . . . Dey walk fer a little piece an' dis 'oman fall out. She dies dar side o' de road, an' right dar dey buries her, cussin', dey tells me, 'bout losin' money on her.

2. **"Narrative of James Curry, a Fugitive Slave," *The Liberator*, January 10, 1840.** *The abolitionist newspaper* The Liberator *published heartrending accounts of death and separation in slave families and how "fictive kinship" assisted the survivors.*

My mother's labor was very hard. She would go to the house in the morning, take her pail upon her head, and go away to the cow-pen, and milk fourteen cows. She then put on the bread for the family breakfast, and got the cream ready for churning, and set a little child to churn it, she having the care of from ten to fifteen children, whose mothers worked in the field. . . . Among the slave children, were three little orphans, whose mothers, at their death, committed them to the care of my mother. One of them was a babe. She took them and treated them as her own. The master took no care about them. She always took a share of the cloth she had provided for her own children, to cover these little friendless ones.

3. **Former slave Barney Alford, interview for the Works Progress Administration in Mississippi, 1930s.**

Ole mammy 'Lit' wus mity ole en she lived in one corner of de big yard en she keered fur all de black chilluns while de old folks wurk in de field. Mammy Lit wus good to all de chilluns en I had ter help her wid dem chilluns en keep dem babies on de pallet. Mammy Lit smoked a pipe, en sum times I wuld hide dat pipe, en she wuld slap me fur it, den sum times I wuld run way en go ter de kitchen whar my mammy wus at wurk en mammy Lit wuld hafter cum fur me en den she wuld whip me er gin. She sed I wus bad.

4. **"Mrs. Meriwether Administering Bitters," illustration from John Pendleton Kennedy, *Swallow Barn, Or, A Sojourn in the Old Dominion*, 1851.** *Bitters—strong alcoholic beverages flavored with bitter herbs—were administered as medicine in the nineteenth century, as in this depiction of a planter's wife tending to enslaved children. Kennedy's cheerful depictions of Virginia plantation life in this popular book, first published in 1832, reinforced the notion of slavery as a "positive good."*

Source: Picture Research Consultants & Archives.

5. **G. M. J., "Early Culture of Children," 1855.** *This excerpt from a Christian advice manual for mothers reflects the values of the mid-nineteenth-century white Protestant middle class.*

"Train up a child in the way he should go," is a law as imperative in the 19th century, as when first uttered by the lips of the wise man. Mothers are the natural executors of this law to their daughters. Nothing but the most unavoidable and pressing force of circumstances, should wrench this power from their hands. Who will guard with a mother's jealous eye the health, habits, morals, and religion of this most delicate part of creation. . . . How often I have been pained to see mothers place those delicate plants in the nursery with servants, whose tastes, feelings, morals, manners, and language are but a little removed from the lower animals of creation; there to receive impressions, and imbibe habits, which will grow with their growth, and strengthen with their strength, until like the branches of the giant oak, they shall expand and deepen into a shade that will forever conceal the parent stock.

6. **Visiting Cards Created by Philadelphia Portrait Painter and Photographer Peregrine F. Cooper, As We Found Them (left), As They Are Now (right), 1864.** *One of the ways to "train up a child in the way he should go" was to inculcate abolitionist sentiments early and often.*

Source: George Eastman House.

Sources: (1) WPA Slave Narrative Project, 1936–38, learnnc.org; (2) "Narrative of James Curry, a Fugitive Slave," *The Liberator*, January 10, 1840, learnnc.org; (3) The MS Gen Web Project, msgw.org/slaves/alford-xslave.htm; (5) *Home Garner; or the Intellectual and Moral Store House*, ed. Mary G. Clarke (Philadelphia: J. P. Lippincott & Co., 1855), 115.

ANALYZING THE EVIDENCE

1. What do these sources reveal about slave communities? About the extent to which the ideology of "benevolent paternalism" governed the behavior of slave owners?
2. How does the engraving (source 4) compare to the descriptions of the care of slave children (sources 1–3)? What biases, if any, can you detect in these sources?
3. How would a person holding the beliefs described in source 5 react to the engraving of Mrs. Meriwether? To images showing slave "mammies" raising the master's children?
4. How do the images of enslaved children in source 6 pertain to "train[ing] up a child in the way he should go"? How effective are they? What emotions do they play upon?

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

In the political system, debate over "the peculiar institution" of slavery often focused on property rights and constitutional principles. In the actual world of the plantation, human bondage evoked a range of human emotions—jealousy, resentment, anger, love, fear, tenderness—and human pain. Write an essay that assesses the economic, legal, and political arguments over slavery in light of the experiences of enslaved mothers and children.

Antebellum Slave Quarters

During the colonial period, owners often housed their slaves by gender in communal barracks. In the nineteenth century, slaves usually lived in family units in separate cabins. The slave huts on this South Carolina plantation were sturdily built but had few windows. Inside, they were sparsely furnished. Library of Congress.

The planters' greatest fear was that enslaved African Americans — a majority of the population in most cotton-growing counties — would rise in rebellion. Legally speaking, owners had virtually unlimited power over their slaves. "The power of the master must be absolute," intoned Justice Thomas Ruffin of the North Carolina Supreme Court in 1829. But absolute power required brutal coercion, and only hardened or sadistic masters had the stomach for such violence. "These poor negroes, receiving none of the fruits of their labor, do not love work," explained one woman who worked her own farm; "if we had slaves, we should have to . . . beat them to make use of them."

Moreover, passive resistance by African Americans seriously limited their owners' power. Slaves slowed the pace of work by feigning illness and losing or breaking tools. One Maryland slave, faced with transport to Mississippi and separation from his wife, flatly refused "to accompany my people, or to be exchanged or sold," his owner reported. Masters ignored such feelings at their peril. A slave (or a relative) might retaliate by setting fire to the master's house and barns, poisoning his food, or destroying his crops. Fear of resistance, as well as critical scrutiny by abolitionists, prompted many masters to reduce their reliance on the lash and use positive incentives such as food and special privileges. Noted Frederick Law Olmsted: "Men of sense have discovered that it was better to offer them rewards than to whip them." Nonetheless, owners could always resort to violence, and countless masters regularly asserted their power by demanding sex from their female slaves. As ex-slave Bethany Veney lamented in her autobiography, from "the unbridled lust of the slave-owner . . . the law holds . . . no protecting arm" over black women.

PLACE EVENTS IN CONTEXT

How successful were slaves in securing significant control over their lives?

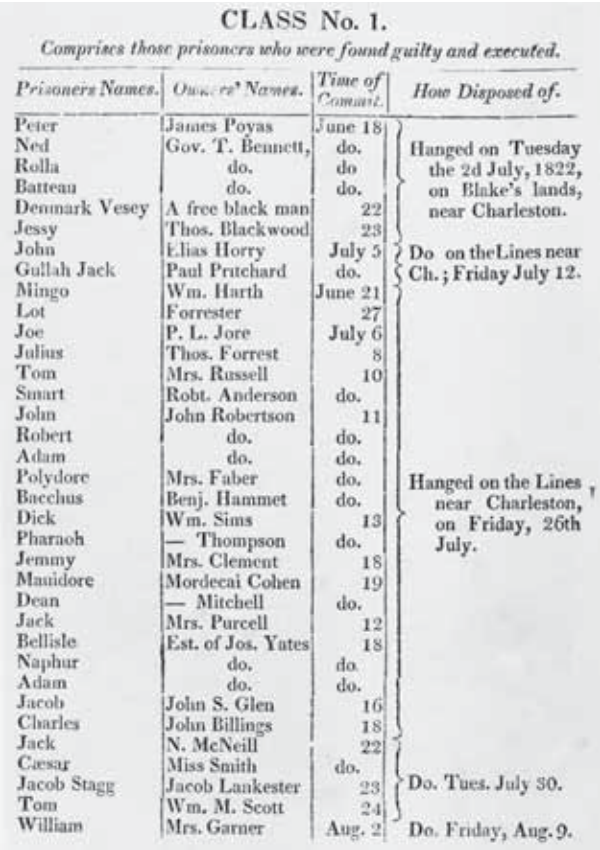
Survival Strategies Slavery remained an exploitative system grounded in fear and coercion. Over the decades, hundreds of individual slaves responded by attacking their masters and overseers. But only a few blacks — among them Gabriel and Martin Prosser (1800) and Nat Turner (1831) — plotted mass uprisings. Most slaves recognized that revolt would be futile; they lacked the autonomous institutions such as the communes of European peasants, for example, needed to organize a successful rebellion. Moreover, whites

were numerous, well armed, and determined to maintain their position of racial superiority.

Escape was equally problematic. Blacks in the Upper South could flee to the North, but only by leaving their family and kin. Slaves in the Lower South escaped to sparsely settled regions of Florida, where some intermarried with the Seminole Indians. Elsewhere in the South, escaped slaves eked out a meager existence in inhospitable marshy areas or mountain valleys. Consequently, most African Americans remained on plantations; as Frederick Douglass put it, they were "pegged down to one single spot, and must take root there or die."

"Taking root" meant building the best possible lives for themselves. Over time, enslaved African Americans pressed their owners for a greater share of the product of their labor, much like unionized workers in the North were doing. Thus slaves insisted on getting paid for "overwork" and on the right to cultivate a garden and sell its produce. "De menfolks tend to de gardens round dey own house," recalled a Louisiana slave. "Dey raise some cotton and sell it to massa and git li'l money dat way." Enslaved women raised poultry and sold chickens and eggs. An Alabama slave remembered buying "Sunday clothes with dat money, sech as hats and pants and shoes and dresses." By the 1850s, thousands of African Americans were reaping the small rewards of this underground economy, and some accumulated sizable property. Enslaved Georgia carpenter Alexander Steele owned four horses, a mule, a silver watch, two cows, a wagon, and large quantities of fodder, hay, and corn.

Whatever their material circumstances, few slaves accepted the legitimacy of their status. Although he was fed well and never whipped, a former slave told an English traveler, "I was cruelly treated because I was kept in slavery."



CLASS No. 1.

Comprises those prisoners who were found guilty and executed.

Prisoners Names.	*Owners' Names.*	*Time of Convict.*	*How Disposed of.*
Peter	James Poyas	June 18	Hanged on Tuesday the 2d July, 1822, on Blake's lands, near Charleston.
Ned	Gov. T. Bennett,	do.	
Rolla	do.	do	
Batteau	do.	do.	
Denmark Vesey	A free black man	22	
Jessy	Thos. Blackwood	23	
John	Elias Horry	July 5	Do on the Lines near Ch.; Friday July 12.
Gullah Jack	Paul Pritchard	do.	
Mingo	Wm. Harth	June 21	
Lot	Forrester	27	
Joe	P. L. Jore	July 6	
Julius	Thos. Forrest	8	
Tom	Mrs. Russell	10	
Smart	Robt. Anderson	do.	
John	John Robertson	11	
Robert	do.	do.	
Adam	do.	do.	
Polydore	Mrs. Faber	do.	Hanged on the Lines near Charleston, on Friday, 26th July.
Bacchus	Benj. Hammet	do.	
Dick	Wm. Sims	13	
Pharaoh	— Thompson	do.	
Jemmy	Mrs. Clement	18	
Mauidore	Mordecai Cohen	19	
Dean	— Mitchell	do.	
Jack	Mrs. Purcell	12	
Bellisle	Est. of Jos. Yates	18	
Naphur	do.	do	
Adam	do.	do.	
Jacob	John S. Glen	16	
Charles	John Billings	18	
Jack	N. McNeill	22	
Cæsar	Miss Smith	do.	
Jacob Stagg	Jacob Lankester	23	Do. Tues. July 30.
Tom	Wm. M. Scott	24	
William	Mrs. Garner	Aug. 2	Do. Friday, Aug. 9.

"An Account of the Late Intended Insurrection, Charleston, South Carolina"

In 1820, Charleston had a free black population of 1,500 and an array of African American institutions, including the Brown Fellowship Society (for those of mixed racial ancestry) and an African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church. In 1822, Charleston authorities accused a free black, Denmark Vesey, of organizing a revolt to free the city's slaves. Although historians long accepted the truth of that charge, recent scholarship suggests that Vesey's only offense was antagonizing some whites by claiming his rights as a free man and that fearful slave owners conjured up the plot. Regardless, South Carolina officials hanged Vesey and thirty-four alleged co-conspirators and tore down the AME church where they allegedly plotted the uprising. David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

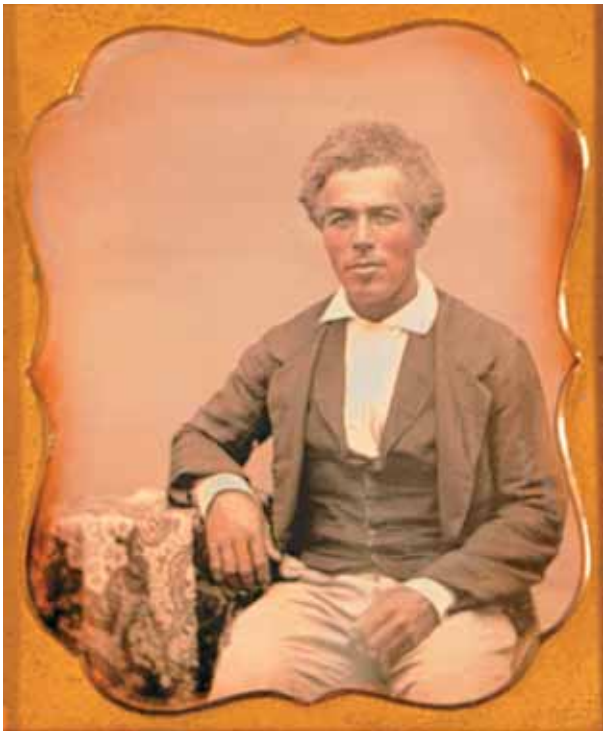
The Free Black Population

Some African Americans escaped slavery through flight or a grant of freedom by their owners and, if they lived in the North, through gradual emancipation laws that, by 1840, had virtually ended bound labor. The proportion of free blacks rose from 8 percent of the African American population in 1790 to about 13 percent between 1820 and 1840, and then (because of high birthrates among enslaved blacks) fell to 11 percent. Still, the number of free blacks continued to grow. In the slave state of Maryland in 1860, half of all African Americans were free, and many more were "term" slaves, guaranteed their freedom in exchange for a few more years of work.

Northern Blacks Almost half of free blacks in the United States in 1840 (some 170,000) and again in 1860 (250,000) lived in the free states of the North. However, few of them enjoyed unfettered freedom. Most whites regarded African Americans as their social inferiors and confined them to low-paying jobs. In rural areas, blacks worked as farm laborers or tenant farmers; in

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

How were the lives of free African Americans different in the northern and southern states?



A Master Bridge Builder

Horace King (1807–1885) was a self-made man of color, a rarity in the nineteenth-century South. Born a slave of mixed European, African, and Native American (Catawba) ancestry, King built major bridges in Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi during the early 1840s. After winning his freedom in 1846, he built and ran a toll bridge across the Chattahoochee River in Alabama. During the Civil War, King worked as a contractor for the Confederacy; during Reconstruction, he served two terms as a Republican in the Alabama House of Representatives. Collection of the Columbus Museum, Columbus, Georgia; Museum Purchase.

towns and cities, they toiled as domestic servants, laundresses, or day laborers. Only a small number of African Americans owned land. "You do not see one out of a hundred . . . that can make a comfortable living, own a cow, or a horse," a traveler in New Jersey noted. In most states, law or custom prohibited northern blacks from voting, attending public schools, or sitting next to whites in churches. They could testify in court against whites only in Massachusetts. The federal government did not allow African Americans to work for the postal service, claim public lands, or hold a U.S. passport. As black activist Martin Delaney remarked in 1852: "We are slaves in the midst of freedom."

Of the few African Americans able to make full use of their talents, several achieved great distinction. Mathematician and surveyor Benjamin Banneker (1731–1806) published an almanac and helped lay out the new capital in the District of Columbia; Joshua Johnston (1765–1832) won praise for his portraiture; and merchant Paul Cuffee (1759–1817) acquired a small fortune from his business enterprises. More impressive and enduring were the community institutions created by free African Americans. Throughout the North, these largely unknown men and women founded schools, mutual-benefit organizations, and fellowship groups, often called Free African Societies. Discriminated against by white Protestants, they formed their own congregations and a new religious denomination — the African Methodist Episcopal Church, headed by Bishop Richard Allen (see Chapter 8).

These institutions gave African Americans a measure of cultural autonomy, even as they marked sharp social divisions among blacks. "Respectable" blacks tried through their dress, conduct, and attitude to win the "esteem and patronage" of prominent whites — first Federalists and then Whigs and abolitionists — who were sympathetic to their cause. Those efforts separated them from impoverished blacks, who distrusted not only whites but also blacks who "acted white."

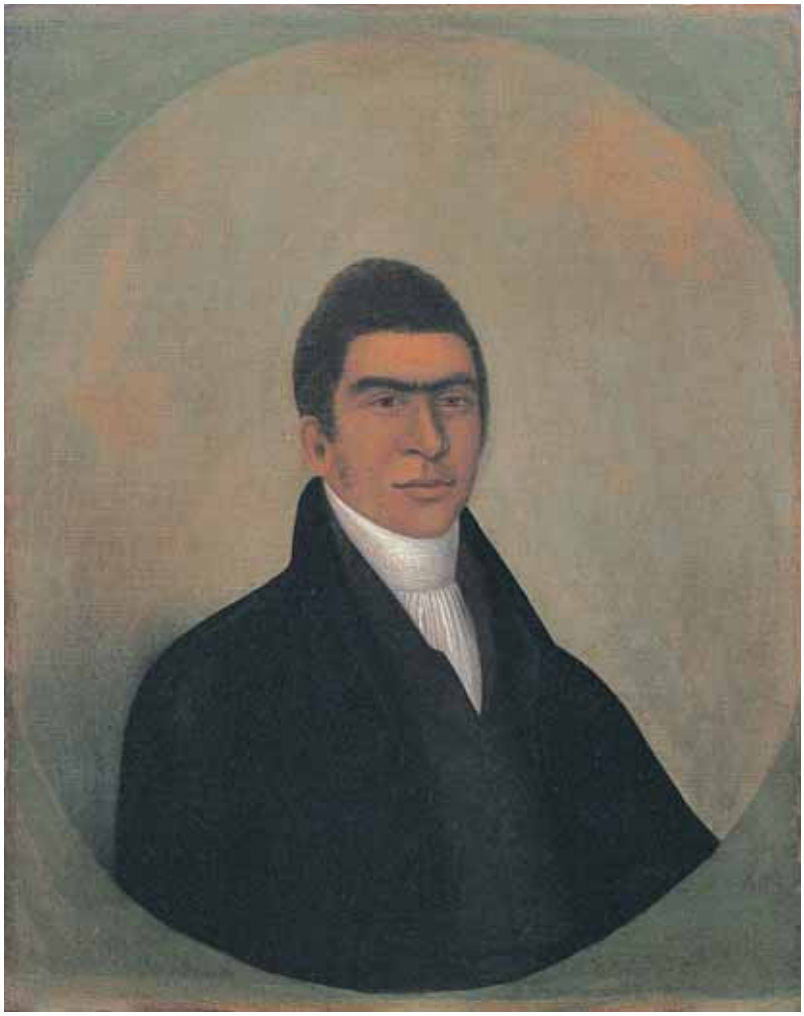
Standing for Freedom in the South The free black population in the slave states numbered approximately 94,000 in 1810 and 225,000 in 1860. Most of these men and women lived in coastal cities — Mobile, Memphis, New Orleans — and in the Upper South. Partly because skilled Europeans avoided the South, free blacks formed the backbone of the urban artisan workforce. African American carpenters, blacksmiths, barbers, butchers, and shopkeepers played prominent roles in the economies of Baltimore, Richmond, Charleston, and New Orleans. But whatever their skills, free blacks faced many dangers. White officials often denied jury trials to free blacks accused of crimes, and sometimes they forced those charged with vagrancy back into slavery. Some free blacks were simply kidnapped and sold.

As a privileged minority among African Americans in the South, free blacks had divided loyalties. To advance the welfare of their families, some distanced themselves from plantation slaves and assimilated white culture and values. Indeed, mixed-race individuals sometimes joined the ranks of the planter class. David Barland, one of twelve children born to a white Mississippi planter and his black slave Elizabeth, himself owned no fewer than eighteen slaves. In neighboring Louisiana, some free blacks supported secession because they owned slaves and were "dearly attached to their native land."

Such individuals were exceptions. Most free African Americans acknowledged their ties to the great mass of slaves, some of whom were their relatives. "We's different [from whites] in color, in talk and in 'ligion and

An African American Clergyman

This flattering portrait is one of two paintings of African Americans by black artist Joshua Johnson (who also went by the surname Johnston). The son of an enslaved black woman and a white man, who bought his son's freedom in 1782, Johnson described himself in an advertisement in the *Baltimore Intelligence* in 1798 as a "Portrait Painter . . . a self-taught genius deriving from nature and industry his knowledge of the Art." White merchant families in Maryland and Virginia held Johnson's work in high regard and commissioned most of his thirty or so extant works. Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick, Maine. Museum Purchase, George Otis Hamlin Fund.



beliefs," said one. Calls by white planters in the 1840s to re-enslave free African Americans reinforced black unity. Knowing their own liberty was not secure so long as slavery existed, free blacks celebrated on August 1, the day slaves in the British West Indies won emancipation, and sought a similar goal for enslaved African Americans. As a delegate to the National Convention of Colored People in 1848 put it, "Our souls are yet dark under the pall of slavery." In the rigid American caste system, free blacks stood as symbols of hope to enslaved African Americans and as symbols of danger to most whites.

SUMMARY

In this chapter, we focused on the theme of an expanding South. Beginning about 1800, planters carried the system of plantation slavery from its traditional home in the Upper South to the Mississippi Valley and beyond. Powered by cotton, this movement westward involved the forced migration of more than 1 million enslaved African Americans and divided the planter elite into aristocratic paternalists and entrepreneurial capitalists.

We also examined the character of white and black societies in the Cotton South. After 1820, less than a third of white families owned slaves, and another third were yeomen farmers; propertyless tenant farmers and laborers made up the rest. Many whites joined evangelical Protestant churches, as did blacks, who infused their churches with African modes of expression. Indeed, church and family became core institutions of African American society, providing strength and solace amid the tribulations of slavery. Finally, we explored the initiatives taken by the free black population, in both the northern and southern states, to achieve individual mobility and to build community institutions. These efforts resulted in a church-based leadership class and a black abolitionist movement.

CHAPTER REVIEW

MAKE IT STICK Go to **LearningCurve** to retain what you've read.

TERMS TO KNOW

Identify and explain the significance of each term below.

Key Concepts and Events

coastal trade (p. 380)
inland system (p. 380)
chattel principle (p. 381)
benevolent masters (p. 382)
republican aristocracy (p. 386)
"positive good" argument (p. 386)
gang-labor system (p. 388)
slave society (p. 388)
Alamo (p. 391)
secret ballot (p. 393)
black Protestantism (p. 395)
task system (p. 397)

Key People

Harriet Jacobs (p. 382)
James Henry Hammond (p. 384)
Stephen Austin (p. 391)
Antonio López de Santa Anna (p. 391)
Sam Houston (p. 391)

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Answer these questions to demonstrate your understanding of the chapter's main ideas.

1. Why in 1860 did white southerners remain committed to the institution of slavery and its expansion?
2. Based on what you have learned in Part 4, compare and contrast society in the American South with that in the North. Was America, in fact, two distinct societies by 1860? If not, what bonds, beliefs, and cultural practices united Americans across regional boundaries? If so, what factors contributed to the development of separate regional identities?
3. **THEMATIC UNDERSTANDING** Review the events listed under "Identity" on the thematic timeline on page 283, and then discuss how the end of the Atlantic slave trade in 1807 and the subsequent rise of the domestic slave trade affected the identity of the African American population.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Recognize the larger developments and continuities within and across chapters by answering these questions.

1. **ACROSS TIME AND PLACE** After reviewing the relevant materials in Chapters 3, 8, and 12, explain how the plantation economy and the system of slavery changed between 1720 and 1860.
2. **VISUAL EVIDENCE** Chapter 12 contains a number of paintings or photographs of enslaved African Americans. In your judgment, do those images, either individually or as a group, capture the reality of slave life? Explain your position while evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of paintings and photographs as historical evidence.

MORE TO EXPLORE

Start here to learn more about the events discussed in this chapter.

Edward Ball, *Slaves in the Family* (1998). Recounts Ball's ancestors' ownership of slaves, their illicit sexual unions, and the family's diverse racial identity.

Ira Berlin, *Generations of Captivity* (2003). Traces the history of slavery in the United States.

Charlene M. Boyer Lewis, *Ladies and Gentlemen on Display* (2001). Explores the lives of the planter class.

Stephanie McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds* (1995). Evokes the patriarchal lives of yeomen families.

Adam Rothman, *Slave Country: American Expansion and the Origins of the Deep South* (2005). Analyzes the changing character of slavery and African American society.

For primary documents on the black Christian church, consult **docsouth.unc.edu/church/index.html**.

TIMELINE

Ask yourself why this chapter begins and ends with these dates and then identify the links among related events.

1810s	• Africans from Congo region influence black culture for decades • Natural increase produces surplus of slaves in Old South • Domestic slave trade expands, disrupting black family life
1812	• Louisiana becomes a state, and its sugar output increases
1817	• Mississippi becomes a state; Alabama follows (1819)
1820s	• Free black population increases in North and South • Entrepreneurial planters in Cotton South turn to gang labor • Southern Methodists and Baptists become socially conservative • African Americans increasingly adopt Christian beliefs
1830s	• Gentry in Old South adopt paternalistic ideology and argue that slavery is a "positive good" • Boom in cotton production • Percentage of slave-owning white families falls • Yeomen farm families retreat to hill country • Lawyers become influential in southern politics
1840s	• Southern Whigs advocate economic diversification • Gradual emancipation completed in North
1850s	• Cotton prices and production increase • Slave prices rise • Southern states subsidize railroads, but industry remains limited

KEY TURNING POINTS: Using the five entries in the timeline for the 1830s, write an essay that describes the economy, society, and polity of the South in that decade and that analyzes the significance of the decade's developments in the evolution of the region between 1800 and 1860.