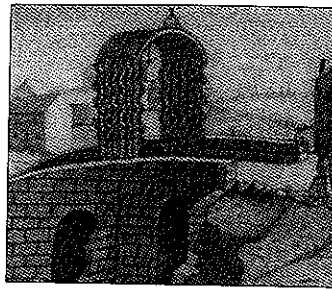


The New Republic

An Age of Political Passion, 1789–1800



Launching the New Government p. 160



Hamilton's Ambitious Program p. 162

“Party spirit is the fashion of the Times ... Party spirit makes the worst of everything that opposes her folly.”

Newark Centinel of Freedom, 1799

The adoption of the Constitution did little to lessen the divisions in America that had arisen during ratification. The Federalist supporters of the Constitution splintered into two opposing groups. One side rallied around Alexander Hamilton, who became the chief theorist and driving force for an ambitious Federalist agenda. For Hamilton and his allies, the adoption of the Constitution was simply the first step in creating a powerful central government.

These new Federalists envisioned a

future America as a great commercial empire that would, inspired by Britain's lead, develop a strong military and pursue economic development aggressively.

Opposing this bold agenda was a group that coalesced around Thomas Jefferson, who, with his friend James Madison, a former ally of Hamilton, helped define the core of the Republican opposition. This movement, while lacking the coherence and formal organization of a modern political party, battled its Federalist opponents on a wide range of political, economic, and constitutional issues. Republicans sought to limit the powers of the new federal government, opposed to the creation of a powerful financial and military state.

The radicalism of the French Revolution further polarized American political life, and political passions intensified during the turbulent 1790s. Federalists denounced the excesses of revolutionary France even as Republicans continued to affirm their support for France.

By the end of the 1790s, the partisan animosities had grown intense, as reflected in this pro-Federalist political cartoon, *The Times, A Political Portrait*. George Washington, who sits in a carriage behind a group of volunteer militiamen, rides out to meet the French enemy threat. As they march forward, the militia tramples a Republican printer, while a dog urinates on a copy of his newspaper. The artist shows Republican James Madison attempting to block Washington's progress with a giant pen, while Republicans Albert Gallatin and Thomas Jefferson restrain his progress from behind. The text at the bottom announces the triumph of American government and warns traitors that they will receive their just punishments.

After a decade of Federalist domination, Americans in 1800 turned to Thomas Jefferson, head of the Republican opposition, as their leader. In a close election contest, power was peacefully transferred from the Federalists to their opponents, and Jefferson became the nation's third president.

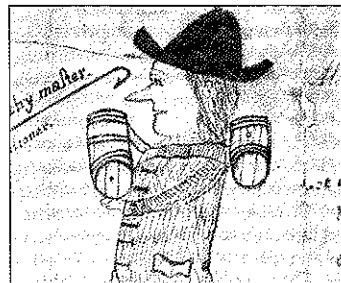


The Cavaliers are landing

Why was the period after the adoption of the Constitution so politically contentious?



Partisanship without Parties p. 168



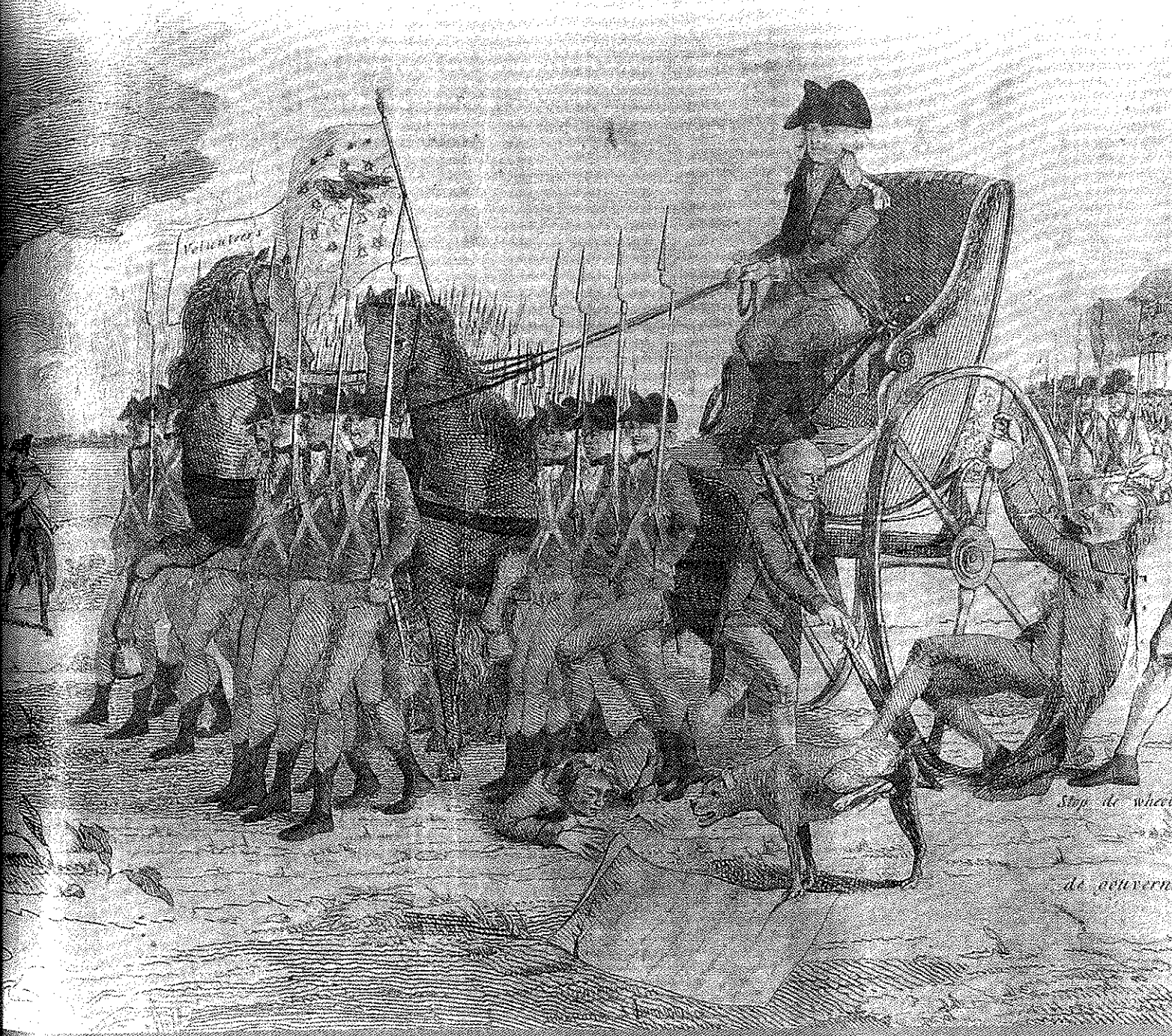
Conflicts at Home and Abroad p. 170



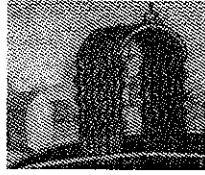
Cultural Politics in a Passionate Age p. 176



The Stormy Presidency of John Adams p. 180



Launching the New Government



Although intense partisanship had characterized American politics during the colonial and revolutionary eras, the republican ideas championed during the Revolution stressed the need for a virtuous citizenry. The Constitution created a system designed to check the dangers of factionalism. Still, leaders were expected to put the good of the nation above any factional interest.

Fortunately for America, the nation's first president, George Washington, was such a figure, a leader who tried to remain above partisanship. Appointing Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson to his cabinet demonstrated his commitment to this ideal. These were men whose views on government were almost at opposite extremes, and from them, Washington sought policy alternatives to deal with the pressing issues facing the new nation.

Choosing the First President

The Constitution had created an electoral college, a group of electors appointed by the states who had the responsibility of picking the president. On February 4, 1789, electors from all the states that had ratified the Constitution met in their respective state capitals and unanimously selected George Washington to be the nation's first president. John Adams, another prominent revolutionary leader, received half the number of votes that Washington did, becoming the first vice president. The remaining votes were split among ten other candidates.

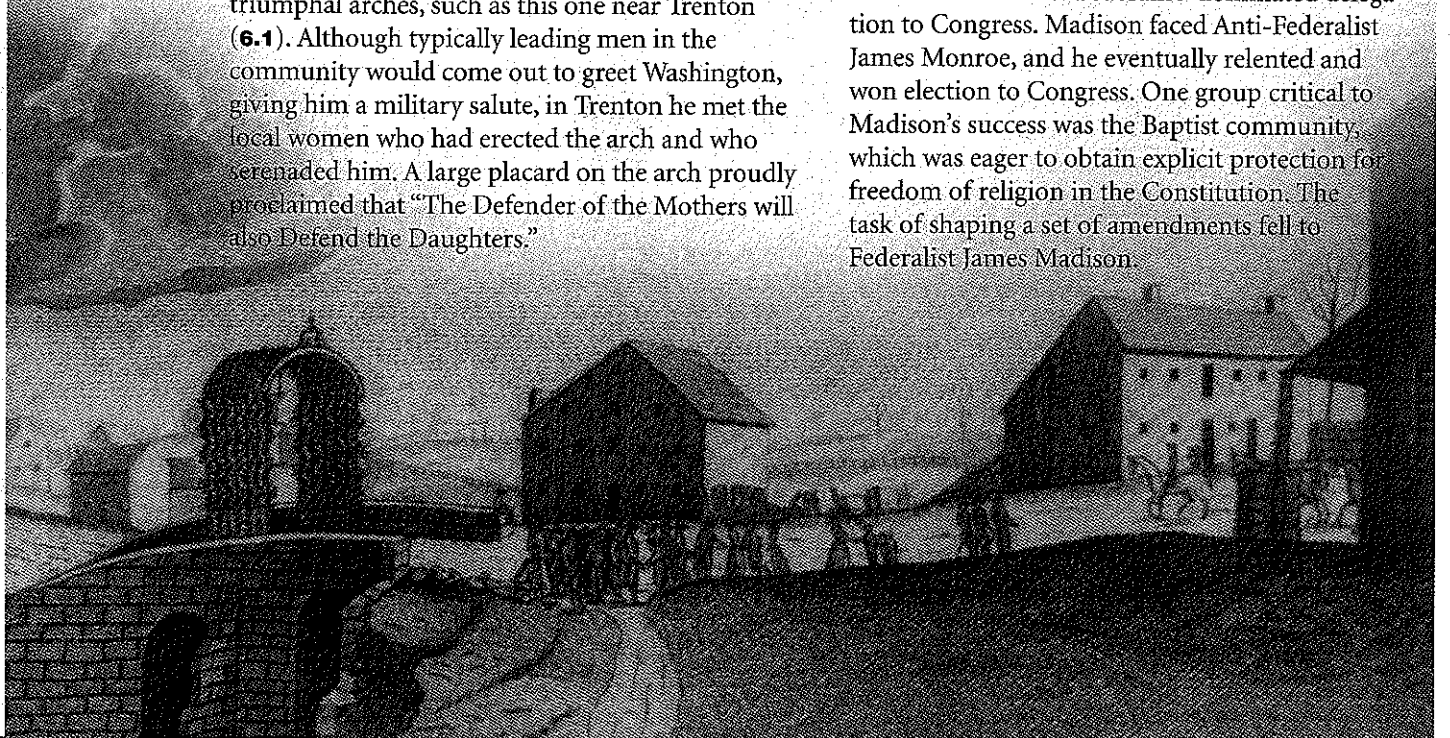
The nation celebrated Washington's election in a grand style. He traveled from his home at Mount Vernon in Virginia to the site of his inaugural in New York, feted along the way. Many towns erected triumphal arches, such as this one near Trenton (6.1). Although typically leading men in the community would come out to greet Washington, giving him a military salute, in Trenton he met the local women who had erected the arch and who serenaded him. A large placard on the arch proudly proclaimed that "The Defender of the Mothers will also Defend the Daughters."

The First Federal Elections: Completing the Constitution

While there had been little doubt that George Washington would be America's first president, the divisions between Federalists and Anti-Federalists influenced the first congressional elections. The issue that dominated the first federal elections was that of constitutional amendments.

Federalists were eager to have James Madison run for office for Congress. Madison agreed to run, but he balked at the idea of actively campaigning for a seat in Congress, believing that such campaigning was inconsistent with republican ideals. Fortunately, Madison's supporters persuaded him that if he did not take his case directly to the people, Virginia would send an Anti-Federalist-dominated delegation to Congress. Madison faced Anti-Federalist James Monroe, and he eventually relented and won election to Congress. One group critical to Madison's success was the Baptist community, which was eager to obtain explicit protection for freedom of religion in the Constitution. The task of shaping a set of amendments fell to Federalist James Madison.

6.1 Triumphal Arch Near Trenton
At Trenton a group of women erected a twenty-foot arch made of evergreens and laurels. On the right, Washington rides toward the arch.



Why did Madison shift his views on the need for a Bill of Rights?

Madison recognized that if properly framed, amendments might go a long way to eliminating lingering Anti-Federalist suspicions of the new federal government. Thus, although he had originally opposed Anti-Federalist calls for amendments during the struggle over ratification, Madison now recognized the political necessity of amendments. He accepted the unenviable task that he described as "the nauseous project of amendments," knowing that the process would be deeply politicized and that the few ardent Anti-Federalists in Congress would agitate for weakening the federal government. Still, Madison pared down the dozens of amendments proposed by the various state ratification conventions to a list of seventeen amendments. The Senate then whittled these down to twelve provisions and sent them to the states to ratify. The states did not adopt the first two proposed amendments, which dealt with legislative apportionment and congressional salaries. (More than two hundred years later, Congress adopted the Twenty-Seventh Amendment, which prohibited Congress from raising its own salary.)

The final form of the **Bill of Rights**, the first ten of the original twelve amendments to the Constitution, included protections for basic individual liberties and protections for the states. The First Amendment protected freedom of the press and religion. The Second Amendment guaranteed that the people would continue to have a right to keep and bear arms in a well-regulated militia. (This right has since been expanded to include private arms used for individual self defense within the home as well.) The Third Amendment forbade the government to quarter troops in the homes of private citizens. Several amendments protected the procedural rights associated with jury trial. Assuring those concerned that a bill of rights might inadvertently exclude some rights, the Ninth Amendment declared that enumeration of some rights did not mean the denial of others retained by the people. Finally, the fear that the new government would expand its powers by exploiting the vague clauses of the Constitution prompted inclusion of the Tenth Amendment, which stated that those powers not delegated to new government were reserved to the states and people.

The Bill of Rights assuaged the concerns of most moderate Anti-Federalists even if it did not satisfy the most ardent opponents of federal power. The adoption of the Bill of Rights resolved the most important issue remaining from the struggle between Federalists and Anti-Federalists, clearing the way for a new set of issues to come to the fore.

Filling Out the Branches of Government

The Constitution created a blueprint for the new federal government, but Congress and the new president still had to work out important details, including the structure of the executive and the judiciary departments. Congress filled out the structure of the executive branch, creating new cabinet positions for a secretary of state to advise the president on foreign affairs, a secretary of the treasury to oversee economic policy and a new office of attorney general to be the chief legal advisor to government. The position of secretary of war was a carryover from the government that had existed under the Articles of Confederation.

For his cabinet Washington assembled an impressive group of leaders who had distinguished themselves in American public life during the Revolutionary War. Henry Knox, the secretary of war, was a leading Revolutionary War general; Edmund Randolph, the new attorney general, had introduced the Virginia plan in the constitutional convention; Thomas Jefferson, the secretary of state, had been the primary author of the Declaration of Independence; and the first secretary of the treasury, Alexander Hamilton, had been one of the co-authors of *The Federalist* along with John Jay, who became the first chief justice of the Supreme Court. Although none of his appointments had been Anti-Federalists, Washington's choices cut across a wide section of the political spectrum, with Hamilton representing the extreme nationalist position and Jefferson taking a stance far more sympathetic to state power.

During ratification some Anti-Federalists had expressed fear that the Constitution would create a large, expensive government with a vast bureaucracy. In reality the federal government was far less imposing. Scattered among several buildings near New York's Wall Street, the temporary home of the new government, the offices of the new government bore slight resemblance to the nightmare that some Anti-Federalists had predicted. The scale of the new government was modest, and the size of the new federal bureaucracy small. As a whole, the new government included about 350 officers. Jefferson's State Department employed two clerks, two assistants, and a part-time translator. (The modern State Department employs eight thousand people in Washington, D.C., and another eleven thousand overseas.)

Hamilton's Ambitious Program



In 1789 Congress requested that Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton issue a report on the state of the new nation's economy. Between 1790 and 1791, Hamilton responded with a series of reports to Congress, each report corresponding to a major part of his overall plan to bolster America's economy. These included reports on public credit, a national bank, the establishment of a mint to make money, and manufactures. Hamilton saw a strong national government as a necessity to promote American prosperity and protect the young nation's economic interests against foreign threats. In Hamilton's view the Constitution had created a central government with considerable power over the economy. In his reports he urged Congress and the president to use this authority to encourage economic growth. To accomplish this, Hamilton looked to Britain as a model for America's future. With a robust manufacturing and financial section, and the powerful Bank of England to energize its economy, Britain had the most diverse and sophisticated economy in all of Europe.

Hamilton's Vision for the New Republic

Alexander Hamilton envisioned America as a powerful nation with a strong government and a vigorous commercial economy. Before he could implement his ambitious program to realize this vision, however, Hamilton would have to overcome formidable opponents at nearly every turn. Hamilton's bold program not only frightened many former Anti-Federalists but also alarmed some strong supporters of the Constitution, notably James Madison, who did not wish to see the new government become a powerful state modeled after the government of Britain.

"In place of that noble love of liberty and republican government which carried us triumphantly through the war, [a pro-British] monarchical aristocratical party has sprung up, whose avowed object is to draw over us the substance, as they have already done the forms, of the British government."

THOMAS JEFFERSON, 1796

Another outspoken opponent of Hamilton's program was Madison's close friend Thomas Jefferson. Hamilton's economic vision clashed with Jefferson's vision of a nation composed of small farmers. The new opposition to Federalist efforts to create a powerful centralized government, who called themselves **Republicans**, united former Anti-Federalists and those Federalists who shared the concerns of Madison and Jefferson. Republicans believed that liberty could flourish only if the individual states remained powerful enough to protect their citizens from the power of the new federal government.

The leader who conceived this audacious Federalist agenda, a vision that would transform America, was a self-made man who lacked the aristocratic upbringing of his chief opponents, Virginians Jefferson and Madison. Hamilton came from an exceedingly modest background. Born in the West Indies, the illegitimate son of a Scottish merchant and a planter's daughter, Hamilton was orphaned at an early age but obtained a job as an apprentice clerk in a merchant firm. At the age of fourteen, he wrote "my Ambition is so prevalent that" he loathed the "Gro'ling condition of a Clerk or the like, to which my Fortune etc. condemns me, and would willingly risk my life, tho not my Character, to exalt my station." Hamilton was talented, ambitious, and hard working, and the proprietor of the merchant firm recognized his talent and helped him finance his education. Hamilton attended Kings College (now Columbia University) in New York City. He took advantage of the opportunities provided by the American Revolution, rising rapidly through the

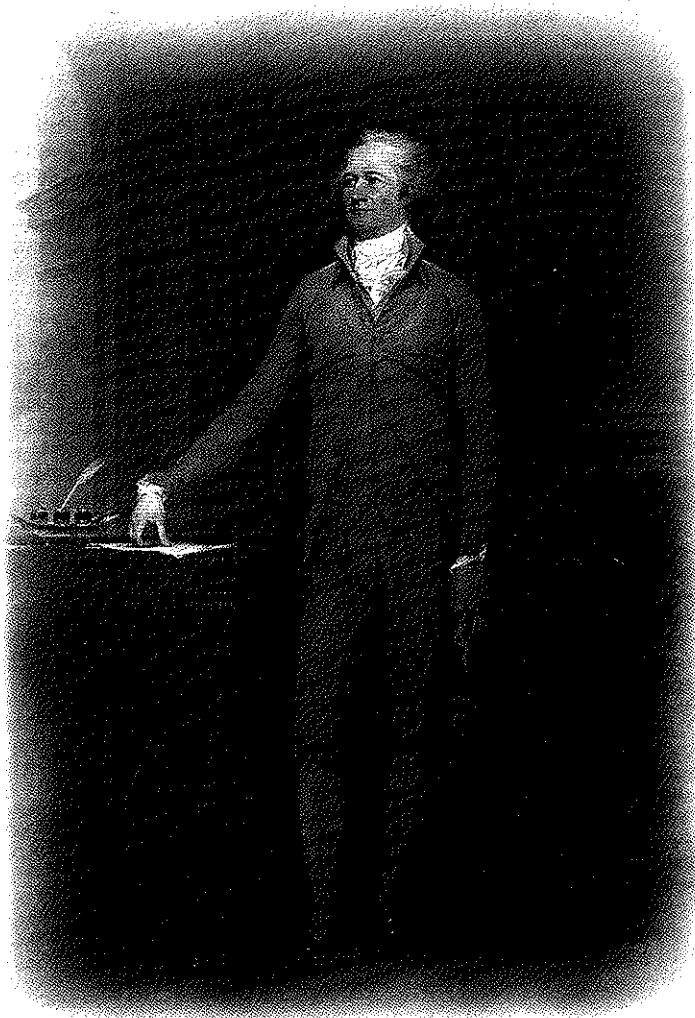
“In almost all the questions, great and small, which have arisen since the first session of Congress, Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison have been found among those who are disposed to narrow the federal authority [and sound] the alarm, with great affected solemnity, at encroachments, meditated on the rights of the States.”

ALEXANDER HAMILTON, 1792

ranks of the Continental Army to become Washington's personal aid. Marrying into a prominent New York family, he became an important political figure in that state and developed close ties to the city's financial community.

A successful lawyer with many friends and allies within New York's merchant community, Hamilton became one of the most influential political figures in the state. The New York merchant community commissioned this portrait (6.2) of Alexander Hamilton to honor him for his contribution to their economic prosperity. It provides one measure of his power and influence, particularly within the new nation's financial world. Yet the painting is as notable for what the artist omitted as for what he included. Hamilton insisted that no references to his important political accomplishments be included in the painting, something that commissioners of the portrait had requested. Realizing that much about his political life was controversial, Hamilton directed the artist to avoid any such references. Rather than depicting the complex, often contentious quality of his life, the painting presents the image of a disinterested republican statesman and writer.

Hamilton was an unabashed American nationalist and an elitist who viewed democracy with suspicion. He believed that there would always be class divisions in society. To survive and prosper, the new nation had to win the allegiance of the rich and powerful, binding their interests to those of the new federal government.



6.2 Alexander Hamilton

New York City's merchant community commissioned a portrait of Hamilton in 1792. Hamilton decided against having the painting represent his political career, which was steeped in controversy; he chose instead to have himself painted in a plain brown suit standing beside a table with an inkwell and quill.

The Assumption of State Debts

Hamilton's "Report on Public Credit" addressed the war debt of the states and the federal government. The new nation and the individual states had incurred considerable debt financing the American Revolution. This debt consisted of a multitude of different types of paper currency and securities that the Confederation government and the individual states had issued. The federal and state governments now owed about \$11 million of the debt to foreign bankers and governments. The remainder, around \$42 million in federal debt and \$21 million in state debt, was owed to American citizens who had supplied food, arms, and other materials for the Revolutionary War effort.

Hamilton proposed consolidating the debt of the individual states and the federal government. Hamilton's scheme called for the **assumption of the state debts**, by which the federal government would take over any outstanding debts that the states owed. Creditors who held state paper would exchange their notes for a new type of paper that promised to pay the bearer interest until the bearer redeemed the original value of the note. Hamilton's "Second Report on Public Credit" focused on financing this scheme and included a plan for taxing whiskey. Hamilton envisioned a permanently funded national debt in which income from taxes would service the interest, allowing the federal government to pay its other expenses.

The most controversial feature of Hamilton's plan dealt with the problem posed by speculation in these paper notes. The value of state- and

help create a powerful financial interest that would become a potential source of corruption. Rather than pay full value to speculators, Republicans favored a policy that would pay the full value of the debt to the original holders but not to the speculators. The Republican policy would have given speculators a reasonable return on their investment, but not a huge profit. Hamilton argued that this policy would violate the sanctity of contracts and undermine the credit of the new government. Eventually Hamilton defeated his opponents, and state debt certificates would be exchanged for federal ones at full face value.

Madison's Opposition

Hamilton was shocked to find his former ally James Madison leading the opposition to his

"In an agricultural country like this, therefore, to erect and concentrate and perpetuate a large moneyed interest ... must ... produce one or other of two evils: the prostration of agriculture at the feet of commerce, or a change in the present form of Federal Government fatal to the existence of American liberty."

Virginia's remonstrance against the assumption
of state debts, 16 December 1790

Confederation-issued paper had declined steadily as the hard-pressed states and the fledgling national government simply printed more paper to pay their debts. By the 1790s inflation had eroded the value of this paper. After the adoption of the Constitution, a small group of financial speculators had purchased large amounts of this devalued paper, hoping that the new government would finally redeem the paper at face value and net them a huge profit. Believing it was vital for the new nation to maintain excellent credit with investors, Hamilton insisted that government had an obligation to honor the debt at full face value.

Republicans feared that Hamilton's funding scheme would give a windfall to speculators. Besides being unjust, Republicans argued, such a plan would

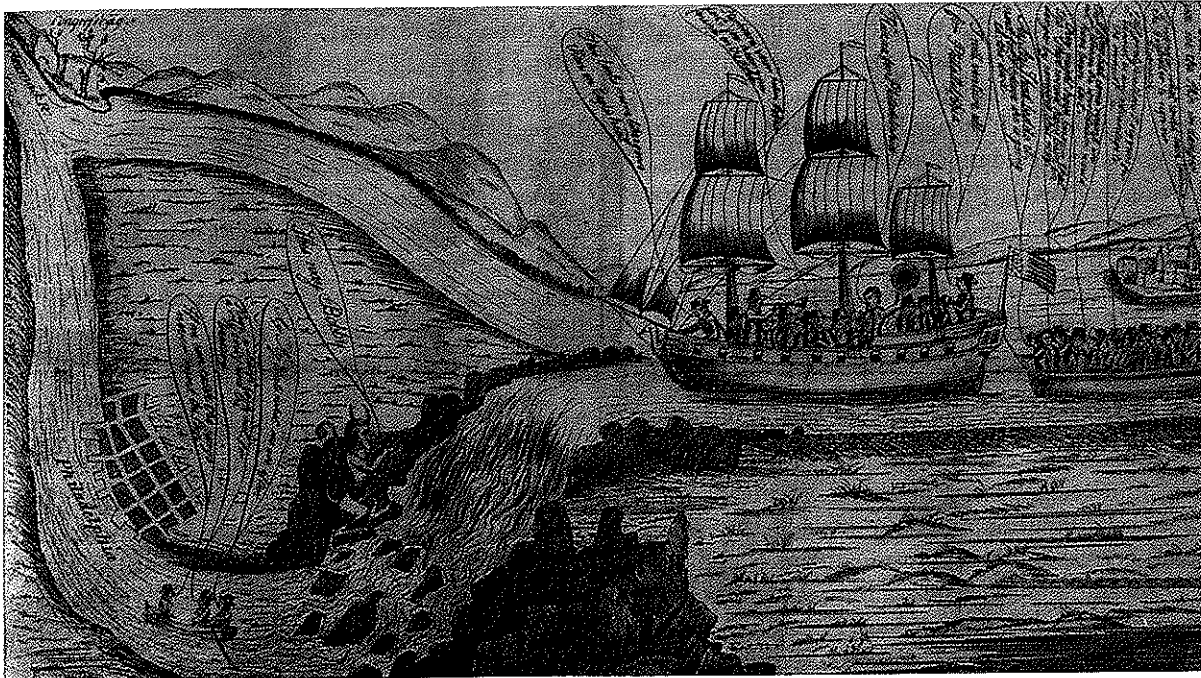
policies. During ratification Madison had sided with Hamilton and together with John Jay wrote *The Federalist*, the powerful defense of the Constitution. Madison had also supported Hamilton's early efforts to create an effective Treasury Department under the Articles of Confederation. What led Madison to change his position so dramatically and mount a vigorous opposition to Hamilton in 1789?

Madison's growing opposition to Hamilton's economic program was motivated by his desire to preserve the constitutional system he had labored so hard to create. The speculative frenzy caused by Hamilton's policy of assumption shocked Madison, who came to believe that Hamilton's program would undermine the republican values that the Constitution was designed to protect. While

Hamilton dreamed of a powerful state that might rival Britain, Madison was more interested in preserving his constitutional vision. In Madison's view, Hamilton's system would create vast inequalities of wealth, encourage corruption, and ultimately undermine America's republican form of government. Hamilton believed that Madison had been unduly influenced by Jefferson; indeed, Madison had always shared with his fellow Virginian a similar republican vision of an agrarian republic. Hamilton, by contrast, the product of New York's commercial ethos, believed that America's future depended on creating a powerful fiscal military state.

The split between Hamilton and Madison reflected a profound shift in the dynamics of American political life. A scant few years before, Madison had decried faction in *Federalist No. 10*. Now faced with the rise of Hamilton's Federalist agenda, Madison revised his thinking about factions and politics. In an essay published in the *National Gazette*, "A Candid State of Parties," he now conceded that America had become divided into a Republican party and an anti-Republican party (the Federalists).

Opposition to his plan of assumption took a great personal toll on Hamilton. Indeed, Jefferson described the secretary of the treasury as "somb[er], haggard, and dejected beyond comparison." Jefferson invited Hamilton to dinner with Madison, where the three worked out the final details of a deal to break the impasse over assumption. In exchange for gaining support for his economic program, Hamilton agreed to the proposal to move the new capital of the United States from New York City to a site on the Potomac River. Southerners such as Jefferson and Madison feared that keeping the nation's capital in its temporary home of New York City invited domination by commercial and financial interests. Although Hamilton might gain in the short run, Madison and Jefferson believed that the bargain they struck would lessen the influence of financial interests over the government. In the meanwhile, the government temporarily relocated to Philadelphia. This cartoon (6.3), which shows Congress embarked on the ship *Constitution* as it sails to its eventual home on the Potomac, captures the Republicans' association of urban commercial centers such as Philadelphia with



6.3 Congress Embarked on the Ship *Constitution*

Jefferson and Madison hoped that by relocating the capital to a new home on the Potomac, they would reduce the dangers of federal government corruption. In this cartoon the devil lures Congress to its temporary home in Philadelphia.

What did Madison and Jefferson gain by moving the location of the new capital to what is now Washington, D.C.?

corruption. The devil lures the ship to its clear doom on the rocky falls leading to Philadelphia.

The Bank, the Mint, and the Report on Manufactures

In his “Report on a National Bank,” Hamilton recommended that the federal government charter a national bank. The new Bank of the United States would serve as a depository for government funds, help bolster confidence in government securities, make loans, and provide the nation with a stable national currency. The government would own part of the stock in the new Bank of the United States, but would allow private investors to buy the majority of stock. At the time of his proposal, America’s financial sector was rudimentary: there were only three private banks in the United States. A national bank would help stabilize the economy of the new nation and provide a means of linking the interests of the wealthy to the prosperity of the new nation.

Once again Madison opposed Hamilton’s plan. Much of the debate on this proposal focused on the constitutionality of Hamilton’s plan. Madison wanted to see the Constitution interpreted according to the original understanding of the states that ratified it in 1788. Arguing for the narrow interpretation of congressional power, Madison denied that the Constitution authorized Congress to charter a national bank. Ultimately, however, Hamilton’s ideas prevailed, and the Federalist controlled Congress chartered the Bank of the United States. Having lost in Congress, Republicans held out hope for a presidential veto. Washington sought advice from the members of his cabinet about the constitutionality of the bank. Attorney General Edmund Randolph and Thomas Jefferson both agreed with Madison.

Jefferson took advantage of the occasion to articulate his own views on how to interpret the new Constitution. He acknowledged that the Constitution empowered Congress to enact laws “necessary and proper.” However, while the creation of a bank was convenient and useful, it was not in his view necessary for Congress to fulfill its obligations to raise revenues. This theory of strict construction approached the text of the Constitution in an almost literal manner. If the Constitution did not grant a power, then, according to the theory of strict construction, the Tenth Amendment reserved that power to the states and

the people. Madison and Jefferson designed their slightly different theories of constitutional interpretation to protect the rights of the people and the powers of the states against encroachment by the federal government.

By contrast, Hamilton’s theory of loose construction interpreted the language of the Constitution broadly. Hamilton believed the federal government enjoyed enormous latitude in determining the appropriate means for accomplishing any legitimate constitutional end. Even if a specific power was not listed, such as the power to charter a bank, Hamilton believed the Constitution implied such a power. In the case of the bank, Hamilton argued that Jefferson’s reasoning would effectively rewrite the constitution to restrict the powers of Congress to enact only those laws that were absolutely “necessary and proper.” In response to Madison and Jefferson’s suggestion of consulting the original intent of the state ratification conventions, Hamilton argued that “the intention is to be sought in the instrument itself.” Interpreters of the Constitution should follow well established legal rules for understanding statutes and apply them to the words of the Constitution. In other words, the actual text of the Constitution, not the arguments of Federalists, Anti-Federalists, or state ratification conventions, ought to shape subsequent interpretation. The struggle over the proper way of interpreting the Constitution had emerged as a major political battlefield in the new republic. Indeed, the proper interpretation of the Constitution remains a controversial issue in modern America.

As would happen throughout his first term in office, Washington sided with Hamilton against Madison and Jefferson. The successful chartering of the Bank of the United States was Hamilton’s second major victory in the struggle to define the character of the new republic.

Hamilton’s report on the necessity of a federal mint was the one part of his program that Jefferson enthusiastically endorsed. Hamilton proposed a currency that would include a variety of coins in different denominations emblazoned with different patriotic symbols. Jefferson not only recognized the need for a federal currency but as a part-time inventor he was also fascinated by the mechanics of minting money.

Hamilton’s “Report on Manufactures” detailed the remaining part of his plan to reshape the American economy. He called for a comprehensive

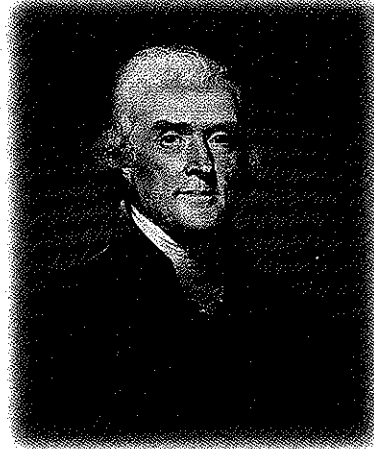
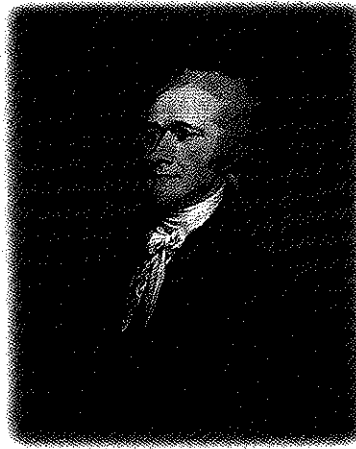
program to encourage domestic industry by providing incentives for industrial development and tariffs to help American industry compete against imported foreign goods, which were cheaper. Congress refused to follow Hamilton's recommendation to raise these tariffs sharply. Hamilton's more grandiose scheme to encourage industrial development generated little interest in Congress. However, Hamilton did manage to persuade Congress to enact a new series of taxes, including a duty on whiskey. In the struggle to shape the contours of the new nation's economy, Hamilton's Federalists had soundly defeated Jefferson, Madison, and the Republican opposition at nearly every turn. Hamilton was largely successful at implementing his visionary economic program.

Jefferson and Hamilton: Contrasting Visions of the Republic

Jefferson and Hamilton were a study in contrasts. Their backgrounds varied greatly: Jefferson was a southern slave owner; Hamilton, a northerner with strong abolitionist sympathies. Jefferson grew up a Virginia aristocrat, with every conceivable advantage; Hamilton was a self-made man who confessed that he was determined to escape his humble origins at almost any cost.

Regarding several of the most important issues facing the new American nation, the two men found themselves in distinctly separate camps, as summarized in the table (6.4). In general, Hamilton sought to endow the national government with additional powers; Jefferson sought to limit the powers of the federal government and protect state authority from further incursions.

The two men also approached the economy from radically different philosophies. Hamilton's idea of a thriving commercial republic was



Hamilton	Jefferson
Commercial Republic	Agrarian Republic
Broad Construction	Strict Construction
Standing Army	Militia
Pro-British	Pro-French

6.4 Political Views: Hamilton versus Jefferson

diametrically opposed to Jefferson's vision of a nation of independent yeoman farmers tilling the land. "While we have land to labour," Jefferson wrote, "let us never wish to see our citizens occupied at a work bench." Hamilton believed that America needed to emulate the powerful and diversified economy of Great Britain and foster commerce and manufacture.

A gulf separated the two men on questions of constitutional law as well. Hamilton believed in a broad, or loose, construction of the Constitution. He believed the federal government had to have wide latitude to choose whatever means was best suited to accomplish its legitimate objects. Jefferson, by contrast, believed in a strict construction of the Constitution so that the powers of the new government would be limited to those clearly established by the Constitution.

In foreign affairs the two men opposed one another as well. Hamilton was an Anglophile who not only championed Britain but also believed that Britain's path to economic power ought to guide America. Jefferson savored all things French, from wine to pastry. He thought America's interests were better served by supporting France.

Partisanship without Parties



The idea of political parties was inimical to the republican values of the post-Revolutionary era. In the struggle over ratification in 1788, Madison had written in *Federalist No. 10* that “the public good is disregarded in the conflicts of rival parties.” The partisan struggles that dominated American politics in the years after ratification forced Madison to rethink his view of parties. In 1792 Madison conceded that in “every political society, parties are unavoidable.” Although Americans increasingly used terms like *party* to describe the bitter conflicts of the 1790s, the partisan alignments they described had not yet achieved the highly organized structure of modern political parties. Political conflict in the 1790s was a transitional phase in the evolution of a modern two-party system. Some historians describe this period as that of the first party system, but many prefer to characterize it as a proto-party system that set the stage for the later developments of highly organized modern style parties. Indeed, although Americans were deeply divided politically, neither Federalists nor Republicans functioned as disciplined modern political parties. Neither group organized loyal supporters around a set of well-defined messages at a national level. Nor did either side successfully create permanent political structures that brought local and state politics under the umbrella of a coherent national organization. The partisan conflicts of this era produced two proto-parties, the Federalists and the Republicans.

A New Type of Politician

Although the aristocratic Thomas Jefferson and James Madison dominated the Republican movement, its success owed much to a new type of politician whose expertise lay in mobilizing voters and creating effective political organizations. The most influential of these new politicians was Virginia’s John Beckley. In contrast to Jefferson and Madison, who were connected to the gentry elite that dominated political life in Virginia, Beckley rose from the status of an indentured servant to a lowly clerk, and eventually became the clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives. He became an indispensable player in advancing the Republican cause. Indeed, while aristocratic politicians such as Jefferson and Madison continued to view themselves as members of a virtuous elite who were not motivated by party spite, Beckley and other members of this new class of professional politicians immersed themselves in the sometimes sordid task of coordinating campaign and attacking their opponents.

Beckley and other Republican figures who did much of the grassroots organizing were more at home in the world of taverns and coffee houses than they were in the world of elegant dinner parties that Jefferson and Madison inhabited. Beckley felt a kindred spirit with the artisans and merchants of

New York City and Philadelphia, having worked as a clerk. He felt a particular kinship with other self-made men, many of whom joined the Republican movement. In many respects Beckley’s life more closely resembled Hamilton’s than Jefferson’s. Despite this fact, Beckley threw himself into the task of promoting Jefferson’s fortunes and attacking Hamilton. Gossip became one highly effective means of political warfare that Beckley developed to a fine art. Beckley leaked information about an adulterous affair Hamilton was having with the wife of a shady financier. When the press reported rumors that Hamilton had provided sensitive financial information to his lover’s husband, Republican politicians pounced on Hamilton, who was forced to admit the affair but denied any financial improprieties. Beckley’s efforts weakened Hamilton’s political standing but did not destroy the New Yorker’s influence among Federalists.

The Growth of the Partisan Press

The expansion of the press facilitated the rise of partisan politics. In the years immediately following ratification of the Constitution, there was a dramatic, nearly threefold increase in the number

of newspapers, from a mere 92 in 1790 to nearly 235 in 1800. While eastern port towns and cities still supported the greatest number of papers, many interior market towns also boasted papers by the last decade of the eighteenth century. Many of these papers aligned themselves with one or the other main political movements in the country. John Fenno's *Gazette of the United States*, which he established "to endear the General Government to the people," articulated the Federalist point of view. To combat Fenno's influence, Jefferson and Madison persuaded the poet Philip Freneau to found the *National Gazette*, which rallied opposition to Hamilton and the Federalists. The resulting battle of words in the press between the two publications intensified the already highly charged political atmosphere. Federalists and Republicans each recognized that political success meant managing public opinion. "All power," James Madison noted, "has been traced to public opinion." A free government, therefore, calls for "a circulation of newspapers through the entire body of the people."

The level of partisan rancor in the press grew steadily over the course of the 1790s. No person was sharper in his attacks than Federalist William Cobbett, who often wrote under the pen name Peter Porcupine, a choice that reflected his prickly literary personality and barbed writing. Jefferson complained that the Federalist press was filled with "porcupines" and lamented that "a single sentence got hold of by the 'Porcupines,' will suffice to abuse and persecute me in their papers for months." Cobbett lambasted the Republicans as atheists and radical democrats who sought to destroy all government. He compared the leading Republican newspaper, the *Aurora*, to "a lewd and common strumpet" whose illegitimate offspring were falsehood and slander. The Republicans replied with their own stinging attacks. This Republican political cartoon (6.5) casts Cobbett as a tool of the devil and his Federalist lackeys in America.

The Democratic-Republican Societies

The emergence of a new type of political organization helped transform the political life of the new nation. Between 1793 and 1794, thirty-five Democratic-Republican Societies sprouted up across America.

Although not official organs of the Republican movement, most of the societies had close ties to local Republican organizations. The goal of these societies was to influence public opinion. The New York Democratic-Republican Society asserted that public opinion "is the foundation of all our liberties, and constitutes the only solid groundwork for all our Rights." In addition to publishing their sentiments on the political issues of the day, the societies staged Fourth of July celebrations, gave festive dinners, and sponsored public orations.

Republicans viewed the societies as a way to improve public understanding of political issues and refine public opinion. Federalists saw them in a different light. They denounced these "self-created societies" for sowing the "seeds of jealousy and distrust of the government." For Federalists, the Democratic-Republican Societies not only sapped the people's confidence in their government but also fomented radical ideas. Federalists viewed the role of elected representatives differently than did Republicans. Federalists supported a more traditional republican ideal of virtue in which citizens deferred to the wisdom of their leaders once they had been placed in office. Republicans embraced a more democratic ideal in which the voice of the people could be brought to bear on public questions through organizations such as the Democratic-Republican Societies.

6.5 Peter Porcupine
Liberty sits forlorn, while Federalist William Cobbett, "Peter Porcupine," scribbles attacks and insults. The devil and the British Lion urge on the Porcupine. A Jay bird, symbolic of Jay's Treaty, perches on the British Lion.



Why did the Federalists oppose the Democratic-Republican societies?

Conflicts at Home and Abroad



The French Revolution, the bloody toppling of the monarchy followed by the rise of a radical democratic government, sent shock waves across Europe and profoundly affected American politics. Republicans supported the revolution, and Federalists denounced its excesses. Europe was once again embroiled in conflict as France and Britain went to war with one another. Although

Washington continued to have the support of Republicans and Federalists, the contest over the vice presidency in 1792 demonstrated how deeply divided America had become. Federalist John Adams defeated his Republican rival, the former Anti-Federalist George Clinton, but the Republicans carried the entire South.

Closer to home America still needed to secure its borders. The British continued to occupy forts in the Old Northwest (the modern Midwestern states of Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan) and engaged in a lively trade with Indians, including the sale of firearms. The Spanish presence in Florida and Louisiana gave them control of the Mississippi, a vital artery for Western trade. American shipping no longer enjoyed the protection of the British Navy. In the Mediterranean pirates based in North Africa harassed American shipping and captured American sailors and cargoes.

Resistance to Hamilton's economic program erupted into violence in western Pennsylvania and Kentucky. Angry over the tax on whiskey, farmers protested and eventually turned to violence to vent their anger and frustration. Washington felt compelled to call out the militia to quell the rebellion. The new federal government had survived its most serious test, but the repression of the rebellion did little to heal the divisions in American political life.

The French Revolution in America

In 1789 a financial crisis in France precipitated a revolution that transformed a powerful European monarchy into a republic. At the beginning, American support for the French Revolution cut across partisan allegiances. Even the arch-Federalist newspaper, *Gazette of the United States*, greeted the news of the revolution with excitement, describing it as "one of the most glorious objects that can arrest the attention of mankind." Republican James Madison added that events in France were "glorious to mankind and so glorious to this country, because it has grown as it were out of the American Revolution."

When the tide of the French Revolution turned more radical and violent, however, many Americans began to re-examine their support for the French cause. The execution of France's King Louis XVI and his queen Marie Antoinette in 1793 outraged Federalists, who now strongly denounced the revolution. This cartoon (6.6) captures the Federalist belief that the French Revolution had perverted American ideas of liberty. The French goddess of "liberty" sits next to the guillotine, a new device for execution developed in revolutionary France that used a heavy blade to decapitate its victims. Republicans remained steadfast in their support for the ideals of the French Revolution while attempting to distance themselves from its worst excesses.

The French Revolution became a symbol for both Republicans and Federalists. The former group championed the democratic ideals of the revolution, and the latter opposed its violence and radicalism. Ardent pro-French Republicans began addressing each other as "citizen," a custom borrowed from revolutionary France. Many Republican women

"The French Revolution is a political convulsion that in a great or less degree shakes the whole civilized world and it is of real consequence to the principles and of course to the happiness of a Nation to estimate it rightly."

ALEXANDER HAMILTON, 1794

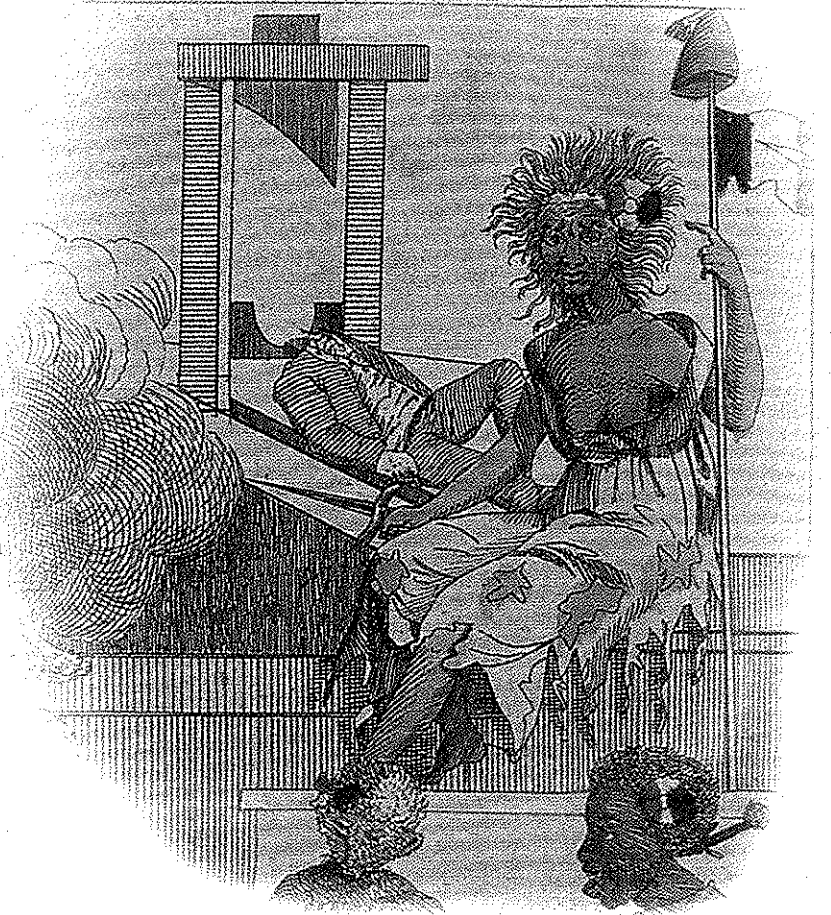
followed suit, some using the term *citizen* and others *citizenship* or *citess* among themselves. France's new minister Edmund Genêt arrived in America two days after word of the execution of King Louis XVI arrived in the spring of 1793. Philadelphia's Republican women turned out in red, white, and blue to welcome the new representative of revolutionary France. While Republican men wore the tricolor cockade on their hats, women attached tricolor pins to their chests to affirm support for France. One sarcastic Federalist commentator, denouncing the rage, described "these fiery frenchified dames" as "monsters in human shape."

When revolutionary France declared war on Britain in 1793, Americans found themselves reluctantly drawn into European affairs. Attitudes toward France became a political lightning rod, concentrating and focusing political feelings for both Republicans and Federalists. The French Revolution came to symbolize many of the hopes and fears of Americans struggling to come to terms with their own revolutionary heritage. Republicans defined the revolution by its ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity; Federalists focused on the bloody excesses of the revolution's policies and saw it as a confirmation of the danger of taking ideas of liberty and equality too far.

Adams versus Clinton: A Contest for Vice President

By 1792 Washington feared that the level of partisan conflict in the nation might tear apart the political fabric of the nation. Although Hamilton and Jefferson's mutual antagonism had hardened, both men agreed that Washington was the one figure who could rise above partisan squabbles and unite the nation. Hamilton implored Washington "to make a further sacrifice of your tranquility and happiness to the public good."

Although Republicans did not wish to challenge Washington directly, they decided to run the popular former Anti-Federalist Governor of New York George Clinton against John Adams for the office of vice president. Republican newspapers praised Washington but took aim at Adams, charging that he was an avowed supporter of monarchy and aristocracy. Invoking recent events in France, one radical newspaper editor even suggested that the time had arrived in America to "lop off every unfruitful branch, and root out of the soil of freedom all of the noxious weeds of aristocracy."

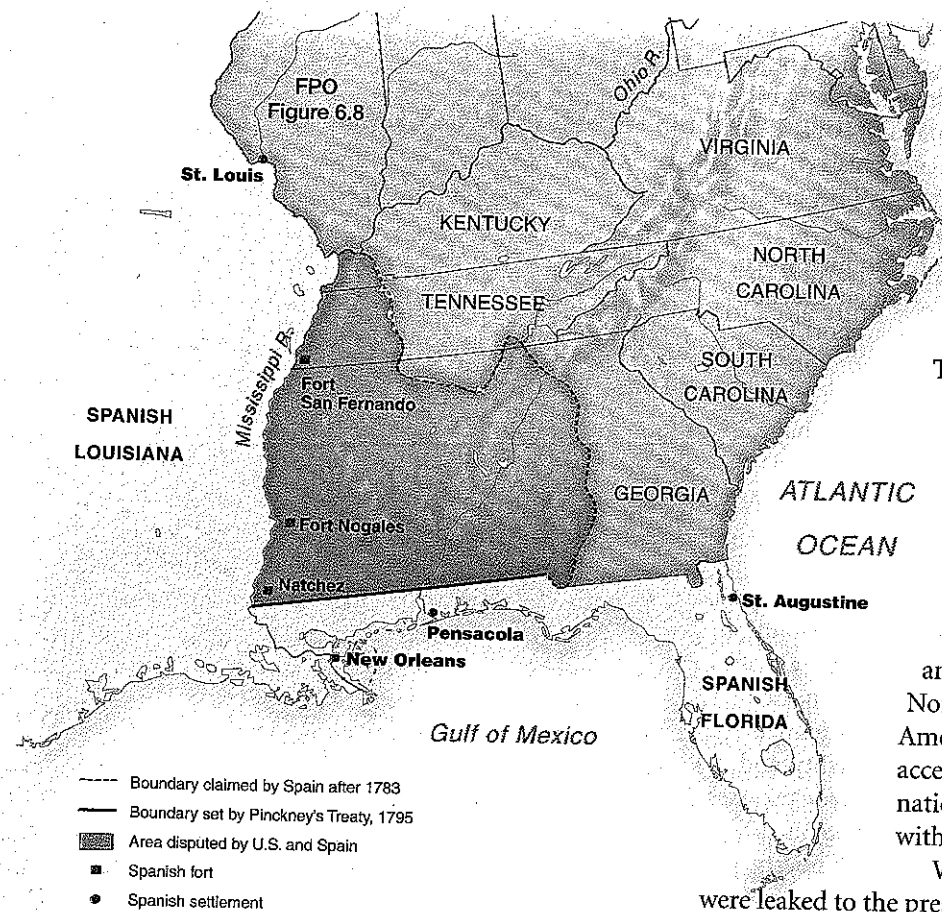


Adams weathered this challenge and handily defeated Clinton by a margin of 77 to 50 (with five additional votes scattered among other Republican candidates). The sectional character of politics was evident in the electoral college. Clinton carried the entire South, the most solidly Republican region.

Diplomatic Controversies and Triumphs

The new American nation had many diplomatic challenges, some arising from the French Revolution, but others stemming from unresolved issues with Britain. American ships traveled the oceans in search of trade opportunities, but no longer enjoyed the protection of the powerful British navy. Closer to home, the British retained control of their forts in the Northwest, defying the Treaty of Paris (1783) which required the British to relinquish them. Spain's control of the Mississippi River and the port of New Orleans, both of which were vital to the economic prosperity of the old Southwest (modern

6.6 Liberty and the Guillotine
This Federalist cartoon shows the French Revolution debasing Liberty, who appears in tattered clothes but sports the tricolor cockade, symbol of the revolution, in her hair. Liberty sits in front of the bodies of victims decapitated by the guillotine, a bloody symbol of what Federalists regarded as the French Revolution's perverse theories of justice.



6.7 Map of Spanish Interests in America

Spanish control of the Mississippi River and Port of New Orleans was a source of great concern to Americans. The Mississippi River was a vital conduit for goods, which were then shipped to the Port of New Orleans.

Kentucky, Tennessee and Mississippi), was another source of concern (6.7).

War between France and Britain in 1793 opened up economic opportunities for American merchants, who traded with both sides in the conflict. While Britain remained America's chief trading partner, trade with France was becoming increasingly important to the nation's prosperity.

Britain hoped to use its naval advantage to cut off trade between France and other nations, including America. American merchants who violated the British embargo against France had their ships and cargoes impounded. The British navy seized more than 250 American ships and confiscated many cargoes. Angry over British policy, Republicans proposed an embargo against the British. Federalists opposed this proposal, however, arguing that American economic well-being depended on good

relations with Britain, not with France. President Washington appointed the respected Federalist from New York and chief justice of the Supreme Court, John Jay, as a special envoy to travel to London to negotiate a settlement with the British. Jay had helped negotiate the Treaty of Paris, ending conflict between America and Britain.

In 1795 Jay successfully negotiated a treaty (thereafter called Jay's Treaty) with Britain, which agreed to compensate America for cargoes seized in 1793-1794 and to vacate forts in the Northwest Territory. However, America failed to win from Britain acceptance of the right of neutral nations to trade with belligerents without harassment.

When the details of Jay's Treaty were leaked to the press, Republicans responded with outrage, finding the treaty overly generous to the British. Angry protesters burned effigies of Jay and copies of the treaty in cities and towns across the mid-Atlantic and South, the regions of the country in which Republican sympathies were strongest. Jay's Treaty not only inflamed popular passions but also provoked a fierce debate in Congress over the role of the House of Representatives in foreign affairs. Republicans in the House believed that Jay had made too many concessions. The House demanded to see Jay's negotiating instructions, believing that Federalists had never intended to exact major concessions from the British. The House even threatened to withhold funding to implement the treaty until the instructions were made public. Federalists denounced the House's actions as an unconstitutional intrusion on the treaty-making powers of the president and the Senate.

Jay had negotiated with Britain from a position of weakness, but the American envoy charged with obtaining concessions from Spain was in a far stronger position. The U.S. minister to Britain, Federalist Thomas Pinckney, traveled to Spain to begin negotiations about American access to the Mississippi and New Orleans. Pinckney's Treaty (1795) secured America's right to navigate the

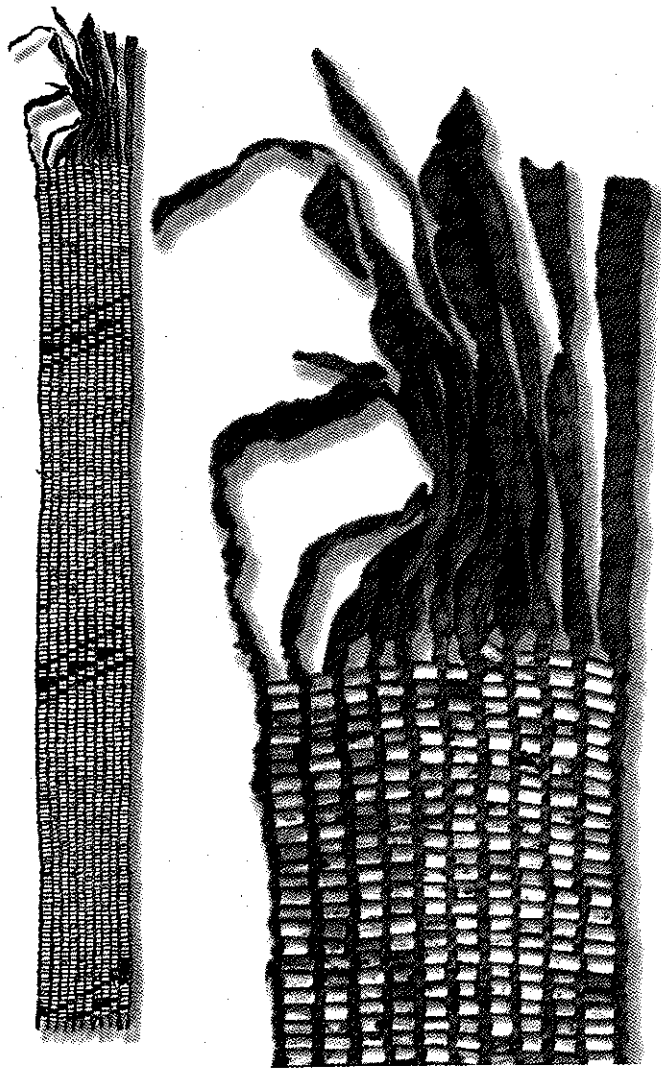
Mississippi River and use the Port of New Orleans. It also settled a boundary dispute between America and Spanish Florida. Spain had feared that America might try to acquire Spanish Florida and Louisiana by force, so it was more than willing to seek favorable terms over the trade and negotiate the boundary dispute between the two nations.

Violence along the Frontier

Securing America's Western frontier—an area that included the Northwest Territory, the Tennessee frontier, and the Mississippi Territory—was important for the new nation. It meant not only negotiating with Britain and Spain but also dealing with the Indian nations that occupied much of this land. In addition, the government faced strong resentments that arose among farmers over federal taxation of locally distilled whiskey.

Settlers streamed into Western territories, invariably resulting in conflicts with the indigenous populations. In the Old Northwest, the Shawnee, Delaware, and Miami confederated to defend their lands against settlers' incursions. In 1790 Little Turtle, a war chief of the Miami, led a pan-Indian war force comprising twelve different tribes that defeated an American army led by General Josiah Harmar in Ohio. A year later Indians in Ohio dealt an even more crushing blow to an army led by General Arthur St. Clair. More than nine hundred American soldiers were killed or wounded, and St. Clair barely escaped with his life.

These two demoralizing defeats prompted a major reorganization of the War Department. In the summer of 1794, a new, more professional army under the leadership of General Anthony Wayne decisively defeated Ohio's Indian tribes at the Battle of Fallen Timbers. In 1795 the defeated Indians signed the Treaty of Greenville, which stipulated that the twelve Ohio tribes relinquish their claims on most of Ohio. In Indian cultures the signing of treaties was a ceremonial occasion in which certain rituals were observed, including the exchange of gifts. Indians gave this wampum belt (6.8), an important ceremonial item, to American negotiators at the Treaty of Greenville ceremony. Chippewa Chief Mash-i-pi-nash-i-wish explained the meaning of this gift in these terms: "When I show you this belt, I point out to you your children at one end of it, and mine at the other.... Remember, we have taken the Great Spirit to witness our present actions; we will make a new world, and leave nothing on it to incommode

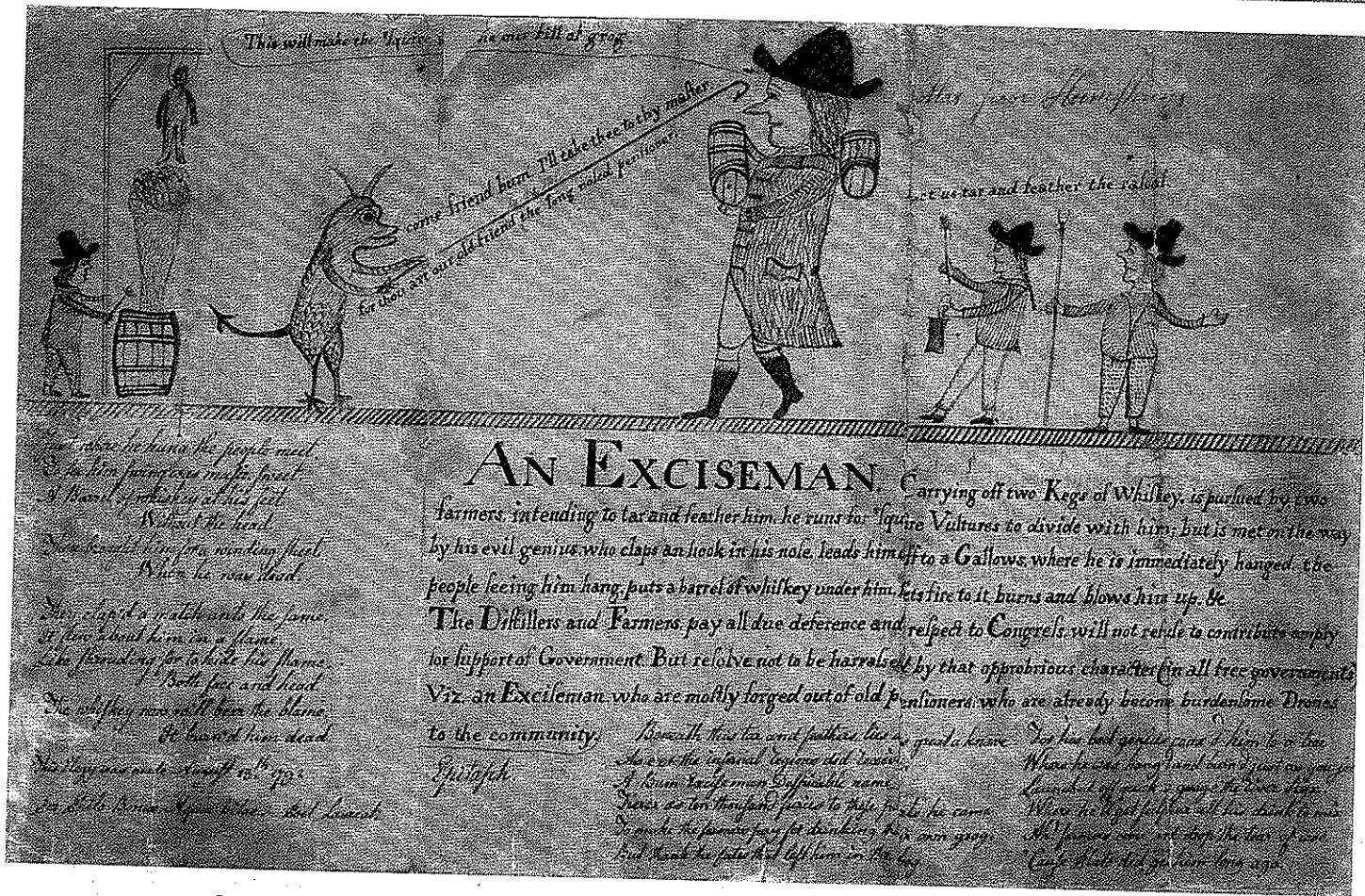


6.8 Wampum Belt Beads, usually made from seashells, were strung together in a wampum belt. This particular belt, given during the Treaty of Greenville ceremony, symbolized the Indian belief that they would now join with the United States into one great family. The American negotiators interpreted the gift as a sign of Indian submission to America.

our children." Wayne and the other American negotiators also believed that the indigenous peoples of Ohio had entered into a new relationship with Americans that fit a familial ideal. Americans, however, did not understand the gift of wampum in the same way as the Chippewa did. For Americans, Indians had joined the American family as dependents, not equals.

The most serious test of the new Republic's ability to govern came in 1794, when anger over Hamilton's economic policies turned violent. Resentment against the hated whiskey tax had festered since its enactment in 1791. The Whiskey Rebellion erupted when farmers from Pennsylvania and Kentucky took up arms to protest the whiskey excise tax.

Distilling had long been important economically in parts of western Pennsylvania and Kentucky, where farmers turned grain into whiskey. Once they had distilled it into alcohol, farmers could transport



6.9 Political Cartoon, Whiskey Rebellion

In this cartoon, which denounces the hated whiskey tax, two distillers chase an excise man (tax collector), threatening to tar and feather him. Meanwhile, a demon hooks the tax collector by the nose and leads him to the gallows to be executed.

it more cheaply than the bulkier and heavy grains from which it was produced. Whiskey also sold at a higher price than grain, so Western farmers could earn a higher profit on their crops.

Protest against the whiskey tax began peacefully. Opponents of Federalist policy sought repeal of the law, and attacked the law in the local press. As anger intensified, angry farmers drew on the rich traditions of popular protest that Americans had used during the Revolution, such as the one depicted in this contemporary cartoon (6.9). The scene shows an angry crowd of tax protesters who have executed and burned in effigy a local tax collector. By July of 1794, frustration over the government's policy turned violent. A crowd of five hundred western Pennsylvania farmers, many armed with muskets, marched on the home of a government tax collector, John Neville, seeking to intimidate him. Two protestors were killed in the attack and Neville's home was burned to the ground. Two weeks later

six thousand armed men gathered and threatened to attack the nearby town of Pittsburgh if the government did not meet their demand for repealing the tax. Washington's advisors were divided over the best response. Federalists and Republicans differed over the causes of the rebellion and how to respond to it. Federalist blamed the Democratic-Republican Societies for fomenting discord and favored a swift and decisive military response. Republicans faulted Hamilton's economic program and counseled moderation and patience. For an analysis of Washington's decision in dealing with this rebellion, see *Choices and Consequences: Washington's Decision to Crush the Whiskey Rebellion*.

After negotiations failed, Washington dispatched the militia and resistance to government authority quickly crumbled. One hundred and fifty individuals were arrested, and two obscure figures were convicted of treason. Rather than see the two become martyrs, however, Washington pardoned them.

Why did the Whiskey Rebellion present such a problem for Republicans?

Choices and Consequences

WASHINGTON'S DECISION TO CRUSH THE WHISKEY REBELLION

The armed resistance of Western farmers to the detested Whiskey tax posed a serious dilemma for Washington. Should the president negotiate with the rebels or use military force to put down the rebellion? Washington's cabinet differed over the best course of action. The Whiskey Rebellion tested the new government created by the Constitution. The situation was further complicated by the uncertainty over the militia. Even if Washington wished to use the militia, it was not clear if the militia would respond. During Shays's Rebellion (Chapter 5) the militia had refused to fire on other citizens and sided with the rebels. Washington had to consider this issue as well as the larger question about how the new government ought to respond to a direct challenge to its authority. Washington had three choices:

Choices

- 1 Call up the militia and immediately dispatch them to western Pennsylvania to subdue the rebels by force.
- 2 Adopt a conciliatory posture and make any necessary concessions to the rebels, including repealing the tax, and thereby avoid an armed response.
- 3 Offer the rebels a chance to end their protest; mobilize the militia and have it ready to march if the offer was rejected.

Decision

Republican leaders outside of the administration had hoped Washington would adopt a conciliatory posture and recognize that since an unjust tax was the root of the problem, it would make sense to accede to the rebels' demands. Hamilton and other Federalists counseled a decisive show of force. Washington opted instead for the

third choice. After efforts to peacefully persuade the rebels to stand down failed, he acted quickly and decisively to put down the rebellion. Concerns that the militias of neighboring states might side with the rebels proved unfounded. The rebels were no match for the militia, and the rebellion fizzled once troops had marched westward.

Consequences

Washington's decision to put down the rebellion ended it in western Pennsylvania. In other parts of the nation, however, such as Kentucky, where support for tax resistance was more pervasive, nonviolent methods of resistance proved effective. In Kentucky few citizens were willing to act as tax collectors and juries were unlikely to convict individuals who

refused to pay the taxes. One unexpected consequence of the rebellion was the undermining of the authority of the Democratic-Republican Societies, who were blamed for stirring up opposition to the government and fanning the resentments of the Whiskey Rebels:

Continuing Controversies

Why were some Federalists reluctant to use force to put down the Whiskey Rebellion? Washington's decision to use force has prompted some controversy. Supporters of Washington's actions argue that Washington wisely sought to demonstrate that armed resistance to government authority was not an affirmation of liberty, but threatened to undermine liberty and the rule of law. Detractors of Washington's actions argue that Pennsylvania's own government felt that it was unnecessary to mobilize the militia and that a peaceful resolution to the crisis was possible.



Why did Federalist policy not work in Kentucky?

Cultural Politics in a Passionate Age



Politics seeped into every aspect of popular culture in the years after the adoption of the Constitution. Even fashion became a political battleground, so much so that sporting the wrong color badge could lead to violence. The bitter political disputes of the day were also woven into the fabric of a new literary art form, the novel. Novels proved to be particularly important to women, who were not only among the main readers of novels but also became authors as well. The way the nation confronted issues of race and slavery also reflected the larger political divisions of the day. The slave uprising in the French Caribbean colony of Saint-Domingue became a flash point, focusing renewed attention on the issue of abolitionism and slavery.

Political Fashions and Fashionable Politics

Nearly every aspect of American political culture was swept up in the political passions of the age. In the politically charged environment of the 1790s, political debates spilled over into the new nation's streets and town squares. Ordinary citizens read newspapers or attended political meetings to keep abreast of the latest political developments. They also used taverns to host political meetings where Federalists and their Republican opponents offered up a range of toasts on everything from the militia to the French Revolution. Even the simple act of hoisting a glass of ale could become a political gesture, particularly when the press reported the accompanying toasts. Citizens marched in parades and occasionally even rioted to express their frustrations with political developments.

Even fashion was swept up into the political conflicts. Americans signaled their political allegiances and foreign policy preferences by adopting the latest Paris or London styles. Republican supporters of the French Revolution adorned their hats with a red, white, and blue (the colors of the French flag) tricolor cockade, a small rosette-like decoration attached to one's cap. Federalists, by contrast, favored a black cockade, a decoration that some soldiers had used during the American Revolution. By the end of the decade, sporting the "wrong" type of ornament in the streets of Philadelphia could easily trigger a small riot.

Literature, Education, and Gender

The 1790s was a period in which a huge increase in the amount of printed matter was available to

Americans. In addition to the expansion of newspapers, there was a huge outpouring of books, magazines, broadsides, and pamphlets. The market for books increased dramatically in the thirty years between the American Revolution and 1800. The number of booksellers in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston almost quadrupled in that time. In the last decade of the eighteenth century, 266 new lending libraries opened across America. The new libraries were not restricted to prosperous coastal cities, but as one contemporary noted, "in our inland towns of consequence, social libraries have been instituted composed of books designed to amuse rather than to instruct." While the cost of books may have been beyond men and women of modest means, a subscription to one of these libraries was often not.

Americans could also turn to magazines for education and amusement. The titles of several new magazines suggested a calculated effort to appeal to both men and women. For example, *The Gentlemen and Ladies Town and Country Magazine* began publishing in 1789. In a few cases magazines aimed to court the growing number of female readers directly. Thus, *The Lady's Magazine and Repository of Entertaining Knowledge*, founded in 1791 in Philadelphia, targeted a female audience.

The rise of a new literary form, the novel, in eighteenth-century England helped to spur the enormous expansion in America's publishing industry. Americans eagerly consumed imported novels, and new works written by American authors appeared as well. Women became an important audience for the novel; women also wrote many of the most successful early novels. Susanna Rowson's *Charlotte Temple*, first published in England (1791), was reprinted in America three years later, where the first edition quickly sold out. Although written in England, the story's American setting made it

particularly popular in the new republic. The moral of the novel was unmistakable. The heroine, Charlotte Temple, foolishly leaves England for America, where she elopes with a knave who reneges on his promise to marry her. Charlotte is eventually abandoned, suffers physical and mental depredations, and dies soon after giving birth to a child out of wedlock.

Immigrating to America in 1793, Rowson fared much better than her character Charlotte. After a brief career as an actress, Rowson established the Young Ladies' Academy, in Boston (1797). Her curriculum included reading, writing, arithmetic, and needlework.

Another important female author was Judith Sargent Murray, who became an outspoken advocate of equality and education for women. Her essay "On the Equality of the Sexes," published in the *Massachusetts Magazine* in 1790 under the pen name "Constantia," argued that women's intellectual abilities were equal to those of men and that if provided with a proper education women could equal men in accomplishment. Murray not only wrote articles for literary magazines but also used the novel to spread her ideals about the equality of the sexes. Her novel, *The Story of Margaretta* (1798), used the conventions of sentimental novels such as *Charlotte Temple*, but recast them in terms that reflected her views of female education. Rather than fall prey to seduction, suffering abandonment and ruin, a fate typical for many other female characters in popular novels, Margaretta uses her intelligence and superior education to avoid these perils.

Murray helped found the Dorchester Ladies Academy in Massachusetts. A fifteen-year-old student at the academy, Maria Crowninshield, produced this remarkable allegory of female education (6.10). Although at one level this fine example of needlework conformed to the traditional ideas of female education, which focused on sewing skills, the subject matter chosen by the artist signaled her commitment to a modern expansive conception of female education. The young girl depicted is reading a copy of English author Hannah Moore's *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* (1799). Moore's volume, which advocated an expansion of educational opportunities for women, was one of a number of tracts defending the idea of women's education. The most radical voice demanding changes in women's roles was Mary Wollstonecraft, an English writer whose *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792) sparked a lively debate on both sides of the Atlantic in

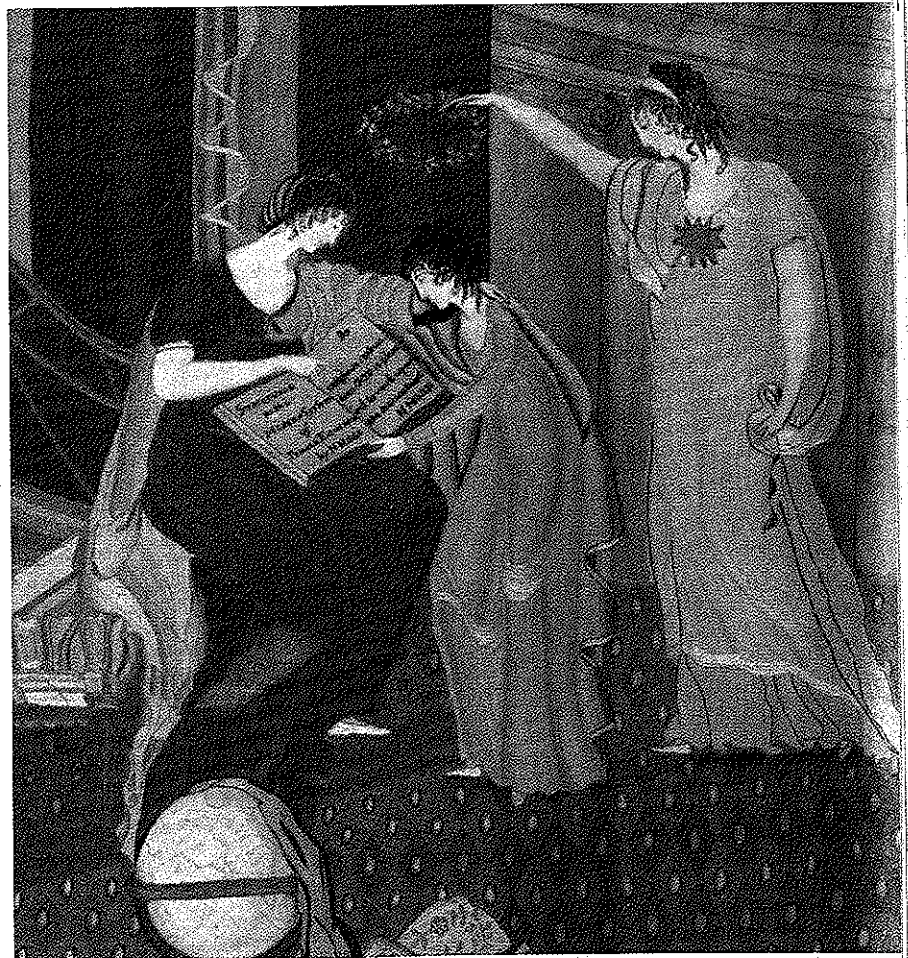
the 1790s about the need for equality of education for men and women.

Federalists, Republicans, and the Politics of Race

Fashion and reading material were not the only aspects of American culture to be swept up in the political passions and divisions of the age. These passions also extended to the politics of race. This issue became a major concern as a result of events in the Caribbean, where slaves in Saint-Domingue rose up against their French masters and seized control of the island in 1791. Federalists and Republicans were divided over how to respond to events in Saint-Domingue (present-day Haiti).

Toussaint L'Ouverture, a talented former slave, forged an effective all-black fighting force that routed the planters. Should America embrace the most recent revolutionary struggle for liberty? At first the Washington administration supported the ruling white elite, but as L'Ouverture's forces

6.10 Allegory of Female Education
In this needlework composition, young Maria Crowninshield, a student at the Ladies Academy in Dorchester, Massachusetts, depicts a young student receiving instruction from a female teacher. [Source: Photograph Courtesy Peabody Essex Museum]



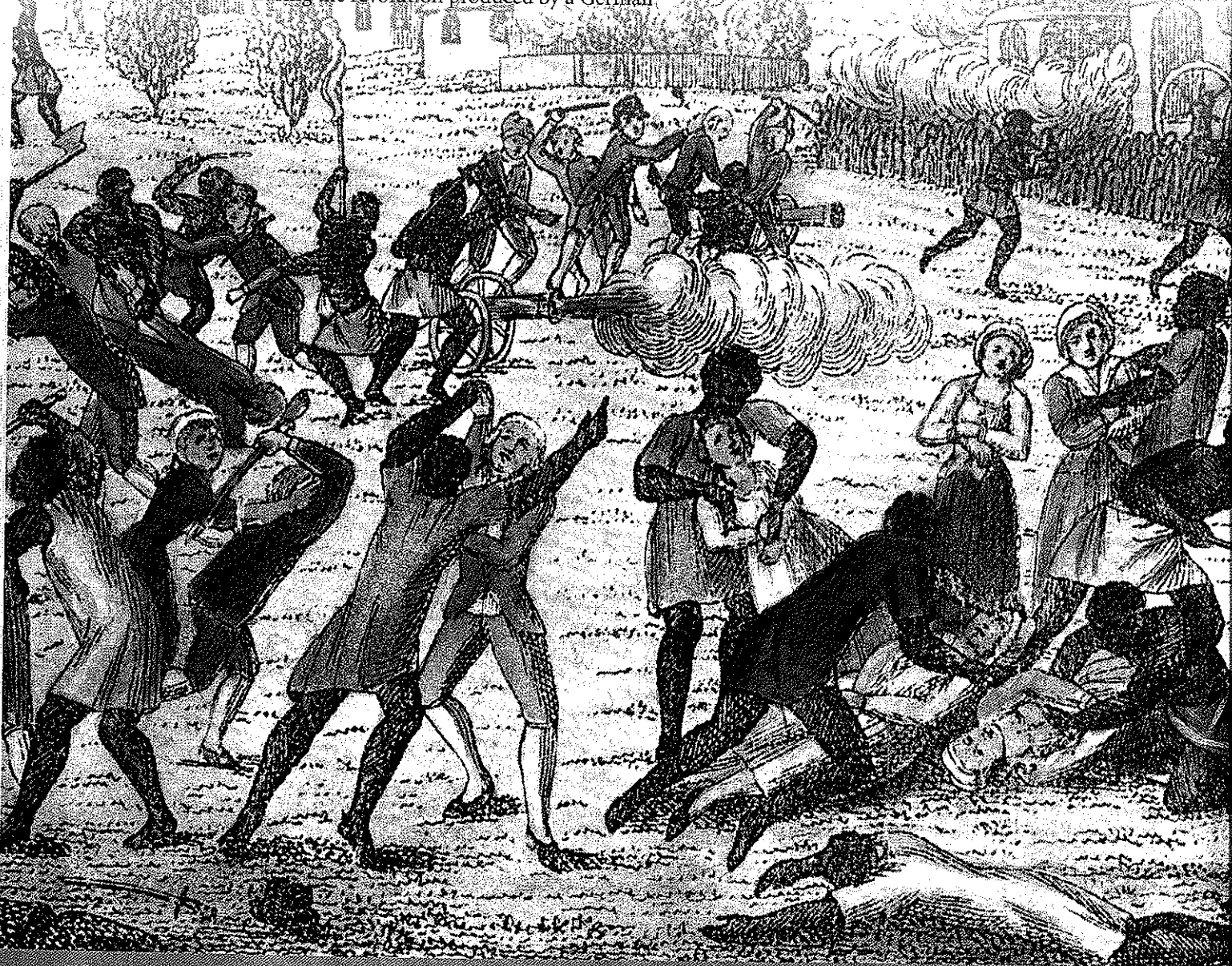
solidified their hold on the island, the American government accepted the need to establish stable relations with the new government there. Indeed, as relations with France worsened, many Federalists began to urge Washington to strengthen relations with Saint-Domingue, hoping to renew the lucrative trade with the former French colony. However, while Federalists supported recognition of the former French colony, Republicans in Congress opposed such a move. Republicans' attitudes toward Saint-Domingue were motivated in part by their loyalty to France, which was eager to recapture the island; but their attitudes also reflected the party's commitment to protecting the institution of slavery. Republicans feared that America slaves might emulate their oppressed brethren in the Caribbean. Saint-Domingue conjured up a nightmare for most slave owners, such as the graphic depiction of bloodletting during the revolution produced by a German

engraver (6.11). Although concern over slave insurrection was most keen in the South, Republicans outside of this region also voiced concerns. Republican Congressman Albert Gallatin of Pennsylvania warned Congress of the danger that supporters of L'Ouverture's ideas might "spread their views among the Negro people there [in America] and excite dangerous insurrections among them."

Even among those most opposed to slavery, few were willing to speak up in support of the ideal of racial equality. Racist attitudes can be found among ardent supporters of abolitionism. Thus, one can see evidence of condescension in the pro-abolitionist painting, *Liberty Displaying the Arts and Sciences*, commissioned by an organization founded by Benjamin Franklin, The Library Company. *Images as History: Liberty Displaying the Arts and Sciences* explores the tensions within early abolitionist thought.

6.11 Saint-Domingue Revolution

For Republicans, particularly in the Southern states, images such as this one conjured up their worst nightmare—a bloody slave insurrection.



Why did Republicans oppose normalizing relations with St. Domingue?

Images as History

LIBERTY DISPLAYING THE ARTS AND SCIENCES

In the 1790s, the Library Company of Philadelphia, a premier cultural institution founded in 1731 by Benjamin Franklin, commissioned Samuel Jennings's painting *Liberty Displaying the Arts and Sciences*. The painting was to represent the ideals of the new American nation. What symbols does the artist include to show the cultural achievements of the new nation? How does the artist portray African Americans?

The Library Company directors asked Jennings to include the goddess of liberty along with "Symbols of Painting, Architecture, Mechanics, Astronomy," including a broken chain at the feet of the goddess of liberty, a symbol of the painting's abolitionist sentiments. Although Jennings added some of his own ideas to the composition, he largely followed the directors' suggestions.

The painting reflected the influence of the classical world, including copies of the writings of Homer and Virgil, two of its greatest authors, but Jennings did not slight the intellectual and cultural achievements of the

modern world. He used volumes of authors Milton and Shakespeare to represent modern literary achievements, at least of the English-speaking world. A telescope, symbol of the advancement of science, appears in the lower right-hand corner. Finally, as instructed by his patrons, Jennings included the Goddess of Liberty with a liberty pole and cap, two symbols closely linked with the American Revolution.

Jennings's included a "Group of Negroes, who are paying Homage to Liberty, for the boundless Blessings they receive through her." The African Americans bow before Liberty. Cast in this subservient pose, they do not appear as masters of their own destinies. Nor does Jennings's treatment suggest that African Americans created any of the cultural achievements of the new nation. Although clearly abolitionist in sympathy, the painting does not endorse the notion of racial equality. African Americans are rendered as subservient, not as actors in charge of their own destiny.

The Goddess of Liberty sits with a liberty pole topped by a liberty cap.

The broken chains symbolize the abolition of slavery.



A group of African Americans bows before Liberty.

The telescope symbolizes the advancements made by modern science.

Liberty Displaying the Arts and Sciences [Source: The Library Company of Philadelphia]

What symbols does the artist use to represent the achievements of the arts and science in the new American nation?

The Stormy Presidency of John Adams



George Washington did not seek a third term of office, a decision that set a precedent for subsequent presidents. (The unofficial two-term limit that Washington established bound presidents until the middle of the twentieth century, when Franklin Delano Roosevelt won a third term.) In the election of 1796, the Federalist congressional caucus selected John Adams and

Thomas Pinckney as candidates, while Republicans put forward Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr. Party discipline, however, was lax. When it came time for the electoral college to meet and vote for president and vice president, 52 of the 136 electors cast votes for individuals not selected by either the Federalist or Republican congressional caucuses. Adams won the most votes and became President, and Jefferson polled the next most votes and became Vice President. Although Adams defeated Jefferson, the bitter electoral contest intensified the partisan divisions within America. Conflict in Europe only exacerbated these tensions. Events in Europe threatened to drag America into war. Fearful that America was threatened from abroad and concerned that domestic radicals were working to undermine American interests, Federalists passed repressive measures that prompted Republicans to intensify their opposition to Federalist power and rally around their leader, Thomas Jefferson.

In 1800 Jefferson once again faced Adams in a presidential election. This time Jefferson defeated Adams, but the election resulted in a tie between Jefferson and his vice-presidential running mate, Aaron Burr. The Constitution provided that under these circumstances, the House of Representative would determine the election's outcome. After a flurry of politicking, Federalists agreed to select Jefferson, who became president.

In Richmond, Virginia, the debate over liberty inspired a slave named Gabriel to lead a rebellion aimed at liberating Virginia's slave population. Although the rebellion failed, it highlighted the inescapable conflict between American ideals of liberty and the realities of racial slavery.

Washington's Farewell Address

Washington never wavered in his belief that he acted above party, but by the middle of his second term in office he had adopted most of Hamilton's Federalist agenda, which in turn prompted the most outspoken Republican editors to attack Washington. Rather than respond to these attacks directly, Washington used his Farewell Address, a written statement widely printed in newspapers across the nation in September 1796, as an occasion to reiterate his basic political ideals.

In his Farewell Address Washington attacked the growing factionalism, partisanship, and growing regional tensions in American politics. He sounded an alarm, cautioning the nation "in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the Spirit of Party, generally." Recognizing that foreign policy disputes had been particularly divisive, he advised that in matters of diplomacy America "steer clear of permanent alliances, with any portion of the foreign world." Washington was not counseling strict isolation, but rather suggesting that America enter only into temporary alliances that served its interests. Above all, Washington wished to see America pursue a policy free of irrational hatreds or allegiances to foreign nations. The address sought to fuse idealism and realism into a workable approach to foreign policy.

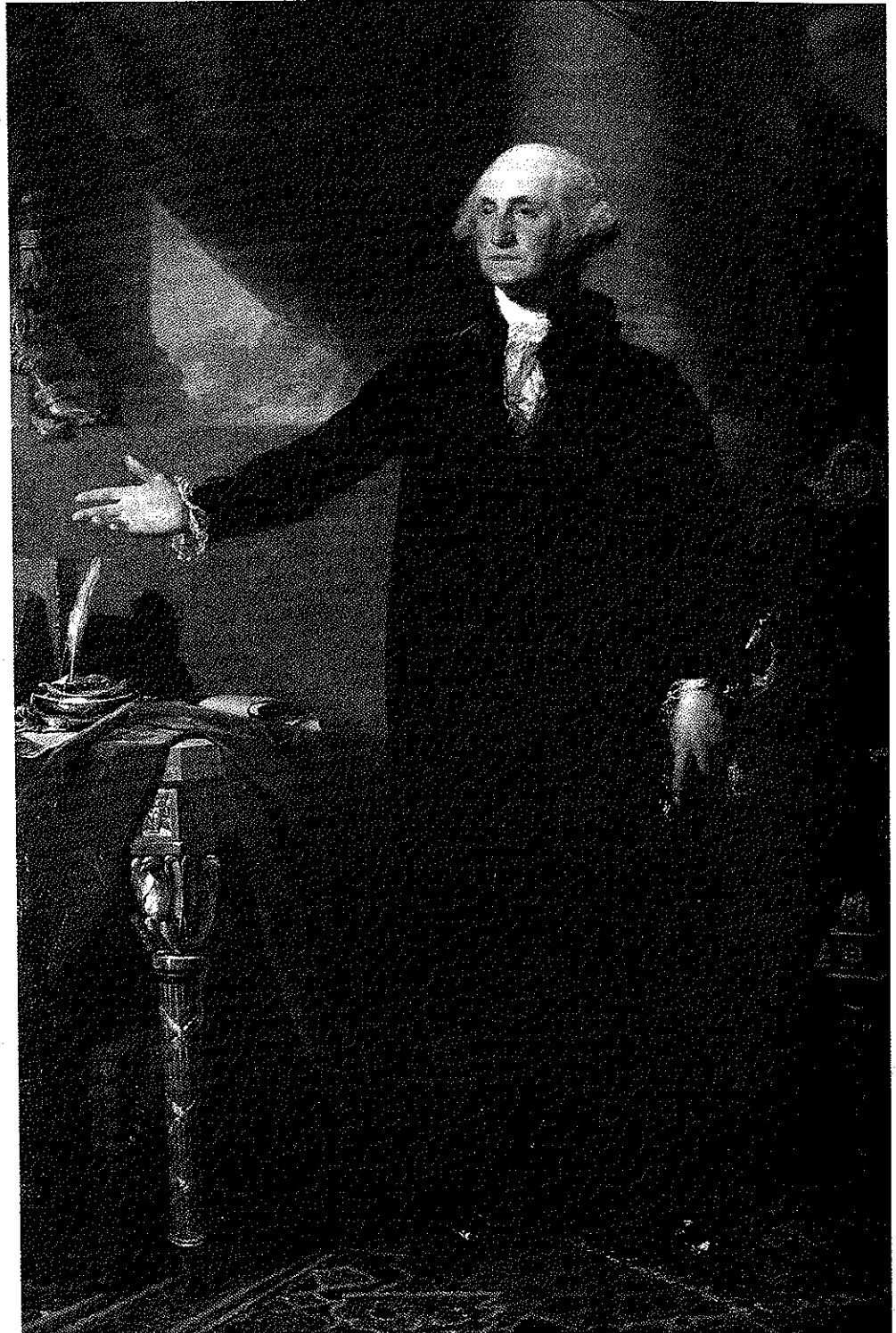
In this famous portrait of Washington done at the end of his presidency (1796), the artist, Gilbert Stuart, created a painting filled with symbolism that captured the central role of Washington's presidency in launching the new nation (6.12). When the painting was first displayed publicly, the announcement noted that Washington was "surrounded with allegorical emblems of his public life in the service of his country, which are highly illustrative of the great and tremendous storms which have frequently prevailed." The public notice went on to assure viewers that "these storms have abated, and the appearance of the rainbow is

**“Thomas Jefferson is a firm Republican,
—John Adams is an avowed Monarchist... Will you, by your votes,
contribute to make the avowed friend of monarchy President?”**

Election statement in favor of Jefferson (1796)

introduced in the background as a
sign” of America’s bright future.

Although Gilbert Stuart’s portrait of Washington suggested that the nation had weathered its worst storms, the period after Washington’s retirement from politics proved to be even more contentious. The election of 1796 was closely fought and bitterly divisive. John Adams defeated his rival Thomas Jefferson by a narrow margin of three electoral votes. Intrigue had marred the election. Alexander Hamilton sought to undermine Adams’s candidacy by backing Thomas Pinckney, who was running with Adams. When Adams learned of Hamilton’s plan, he arranged to have some of his supporters in New England divert votes from Pinckney. The Constitution did not anticipate the rise of parties, nor did it envision the idea of presidential tickets with a designated candidate for president and vice president running together. The Founders’ system was simpler: the president was the candidate with the most votes, and the vice president was the runner up. When Federalist plots resulted in votes being diverted from Pinckney, Thomas Jefferson became the candidate with the second most votes and hence became the new vice president. The most

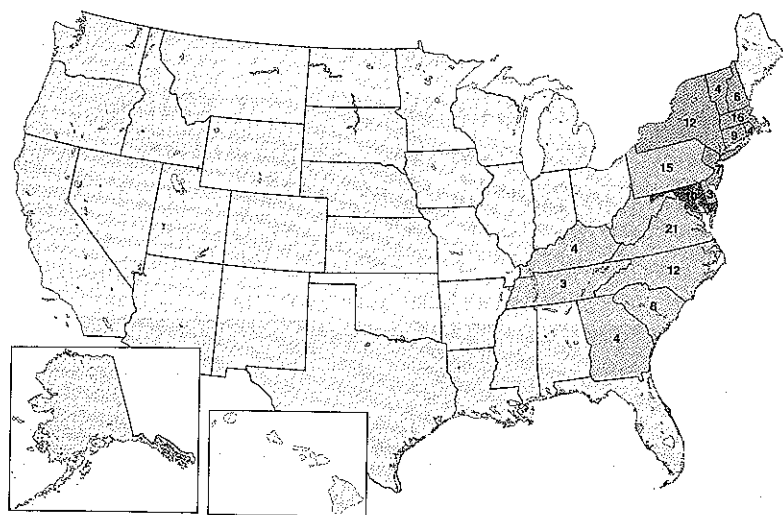


6.12 Portrait of President

George Washington

Gilbert Stuart’s painting included several allegorical elements. The passing storm and the rainbow symbolized the new nation’s stormy beginnings and bright future.

What visual elements does the artist use to represent the future of America in this painting of George Washington?



Electoral vote by state	Electoral Vote (%)	Popular Vote
John Adams (Federalist)	71 (51)	Unknown
Thomas Jefferson (Democratic-Republican)	68 (49)	Unknown
Thomas Pinckney (Federalist)	59 (43)	Unknown
Aaron Burr (Democratic-Republican)	30 (22)	Unknown
Maryland (Electors split)	7 for Adams 3 for Jefferson	Unknown
Others (Various)	48 (35)	Unknown

6.13 Electoral Map 1796

This map of the electoral votes in the presidential election of 1796 shows the regional basis of American politics at that time. The strength of Thomas Jefferson, the Republican candidate, was concentrated in the South and Pennsylvania. John Adams, the Federalist candidate, was strongest in New England, New York, New Jersey, and Delaware.

obvious pattern in the election was regional. John Adams carried New England and most of the mid-Atlantic apart from Pennsylvania. Jefferson took the entire South and Pennsylvania (6.13).

The XYZ Affair and Quasi-War with France

Adams, pictured in 6.14, assumed the presidency just as a crisis with France was coming to a head. In 1796 the French government, still angry over what it viewed as a pro-British tilt in American foreign policy, had recalled its diplomatic envoy. France began seizing American ships trading with Britain. Hoping to avert a war, Adams sent three American ministers to France to negotiate a settlement. The delegates included Charles Cotesworth Pinckney of South Carolina, John Marshall of Virginia, and Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts. At first, the French Directory, the revolutionary committee that had replaced the king after the French Revolution and ruled France from 1795 to 1799, snubbed the American delegation. When three French officials, identified simply as “X,” “Y,” and “Z,” demanded a bribe from America’s diplomats as the price of beginning negotiations, public furor erupted over what was dubbed the XYZ Affair. These officials sought a bribe of \$250,000 for themselves, a generous loan of \$12 million to France, and an official apology from President Adams for unflattering remarks he had made about the French government. In a contemporary political cartoon (6.15) the five-headed “monster” of the French Directory (the

revolutionary committee had five members) demands payment of a bribe from America’s ambassadors.

The XYZ Affair galvanized Americans, who united behind Adams’s decision to prepare for war by increasing allocations for the military. “Millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute,” became the rallying cry. While Hamilton’s allies among the Federalists sought an explicit declaration of war



6.14 John Adams

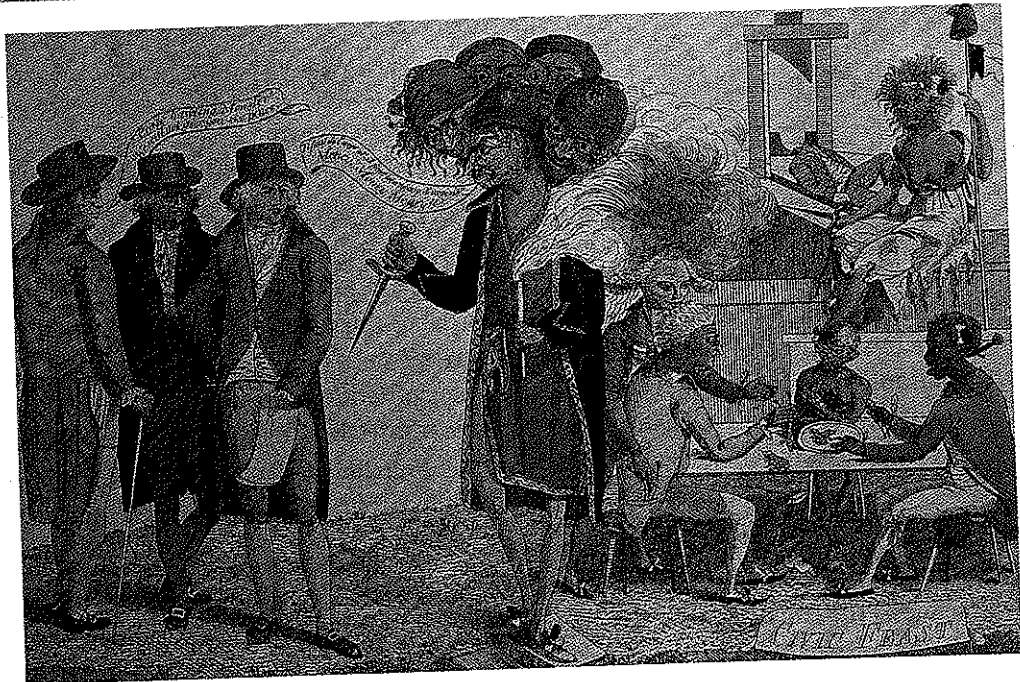
John Adams was elected president in 1796 in the first truly partisan presidential campaign in the new nation’s brief history.

against France, Adams resisted pressure to declare full-fledged war. The undeclared naval war between France and America, or Quasi-War, lasted almost two years between 1798 and 1800. In addition to creating a new Department of the Navy to coordinate America's naval war, Congress tripled the size of the regular army and created a special provisional army numbering some fifty thousand. Washington reluctantly agreed to head the provisional army if Hamilton were appointed his second in command, a request that would have given Hamilton authority over many military leaders more experienced than he. Hamilton's bold effort to elevate himself above so many other qualified officers angered many Federalists who aligned themselves with Adams. Federalists were now divided into Adams and Hamilton factions.

The Alien and Sedition Acts

Federalists enacted a broad program designed to deal with the threats posed by the Quasi-War. To pay for the enormous expansion in the size of the military, the Federalist-controlled Congress passed a new property tax that fell on land, slaves, and buildings. Federalists in Congress then proposed a series of laws, the Alien and Sedition Acts, designed to protect America from the danger of foreign and domestic subversion.

The Alien Acts, which included three separate laws, made it more difficult to become a citizen and gave the government far-reaching powers to deport dangerous resident aliens. The Sedition Act made it a crime to "combine or conspire together with the intent to oppose any measure or measures of the government of the United States." The act criminalized any attempt to "write, print, utter, or publish" statements "false, scandalous, or malicious" against "the government of the United States, or either house of Congress of the United States, or the President." Conspicuously absent from the act were criminal penalties for attacking Republican Vice President Thomas Jefferson. The Federalist press was free to hurl whatever invectives it chose at Jefferson with impunity. Federalists and Republicans debated



the constitutionality of the Sedition Act. *Competing Visions: Congressional Debate over the Sedition Act* discusses the congressional arguments over the constitutionality of the Sedition Act (see p. 184).

Federalists used the authority of the Sedition Act to prosecute twenty-five individuals, all Republican sympathizers. The list of targets included printers, outspoken politicians, and other prominent public figures. Federalists even prosecuted one drunken Republican for his declaration that he did not care if a cannon salute to President Adams "fired thro' his a—." The harshest sentence, a \$400 fine and an eighteen-month prison sentence, went to David Brown, an itinerant preacher and political agitator who had raised a liberty pole in Dedham, Massachusetts, with a placard that read "No Stamp Act, No Sedition, no Alien Bills, no Land Tax: downfall to the Tyrants of America, peace and retirement to the President, long live the Vice-President."

Republicans had tried to use every constitutional means at their disposal to protest the Sedition Act. They first sought to petition Congress to repeal the law and then tried to use the court system to challenge its constitutionality. When both of these means failed, leading Republicans cast about for a new strategy to challenge it. Madison and Jefferson articulated such a strategy in two separate documents, the Virginia Resolution (1798) and the Kentucky Resolution (1798). Madison authored the former; Jefferson, the latter. Both documents defended the rights of the states to judge the constitutionality of federal laws and if necessary to protect their citizens against actions of

6.15 The Paris Monster
This colorful cartoon ridicules French corruption and depravity in the XYZ Affair. The "Many Headed Monster," the symbol of French government, wields a dagger while he solicits a bribe from the American delegation. The American ministers respond, "We will not give you six pence."

Competing Visions

CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE OVER THE SEDITION ACT

In response to the increasing rancor of the partisan press and the belief that supporters of French Revolutionary ideas were actively working to subvert American government, Federalists passed a federal sedition law (1798). Federalists defended the constitutionality of the act, noting that individual states had enacted similar laws and further arguing that such a power was essential to the survival of any government. Republicans attacked the act as an unconstitutional violation of the First Amendment's protections for freedom of speech and the press and a violation of the Tenth Amendment's guarantee of federalism, which limited the powers of the new government to those delegated by the Constitution. Republican Matthew Lyon and Federalist Roger Griswold traded insults, then blows, as partisan tensions reached a peak in Congress. In considering the Republican and Federalist arguments presented here, which interpretation of the Bill of Rights seems more persuasive? Why?

John Nicholas, a Virginia Republican, captured the essence of the constitutional arguments against the Sedition Act in an impassioned speech in the House of Representatives. Nicholas employed the Republican theory of strict construction, arguing that the Sedition Act violated the express language of the Bill of Rights.

I have looked in vain among the enumerated powers given to Congress in the Constitution; for the authority to pass a bill like the present (one); but I found instead express prohibition against passing it.... One of the first acts of this Government was to propose certain Amendments to the Constitution ... "that the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people" [Tenth Amendment]; and also, "that Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press" [First Amendment].

Harrison Gray Otis, a Federalist from Massachusetts, rejected the Republican argument on constitutional grounds, arguing that government had an inherent right to protect itself against sedition. Neither the First Amendment nor the Tenth Amendment required the government to ignore sedition. Otis argued that the constitution was not a suicide pact that prevented government from taking actions to defend itself against subversion.

The present bill is perfectly harmless and contains no provision which is not practiced ... under the laws ... of the several states.... Every independent government has a right to preserve and defend itself against injuries and outrages which endanger its existence; for unless it has this power, it is unworthy of the name of a free Government.



Congressional Pugilists,
Republican Matthew Lyon and
Federalist Roger Griswold

the federal government. Republicans based this idea on the notion that the Constitution was a compact among the people of the states who not only retained all powers not delegated to the new government but also retained a right to judge when acts of the federal government were a violation of the Constitution. Neither Madison nor Jefferson took the next logical step and asserted a right of the states to actively nullify an unconstitutional act of the federal government. Both men hoped that persuasion, not force, would be the mechanism used by the states to challenge an unconstitutional exercise of federal power. In keeping with this notion, Virginia and Kentucky distributed their resolutions to the other state legislatures hoping that other states would follow their example and rally against the Sedition Act. However, legislatures in the Federalist-dominated New England states attacked the Virginia and Kentucky resolutions as dangerous and unconstitutional assertions of state power against the power of the federal government. Federalists argued that final arbiter of the constitutionality of acts of Congress ought to be the federal courts, not the state legislatures.

Angered by the northern Federalist legislatures' reactions, Jefferson authored a second set of Kentucky Resolutions (1799). In these, he introduced the constitutional doctrine of nullification, which asserted that states could nullify unconstitutional laws. Jefferson did not answer how a state would accomplish the goal of constitutional nullification. The Virginia and Kentucky resolutions became the foundation for subsequent arguments about states' rights, the theory that the Constitution was a compact among the states and that the individual states retained the right to judge when the federal government's actions were unconstitutional.

The other significant outgrowth of the Alien and Sedition crisis was the development of a new theory of freedom of the press. This new theory, the basis for modern theories of freedom of the press, argued that political opinions were not subject to any government control. Rather than try to limit dissenting ideas, the new view embraced the idea of a market place of ideas. More speech, not less, was the antidote to the threat posed by dangerous ideas.

The Disputed Election of 1800

The Quasi-War with France, which was winding down by 1800, had split Federalists into two factions. Although Adams supported a military build up, he never abandoned hope of a negotiated settlement. Hamilton, by contrast, believed that the war with

France provided an opportunity to crush domestic opposition and forge an alliance with Britain. Adams had little interest in such grandiose schemes, which may have included vague plans for a joint Anglo-American conquest of Spanish America. The president also resented Hamilton's meddling in the affairs of his administration.

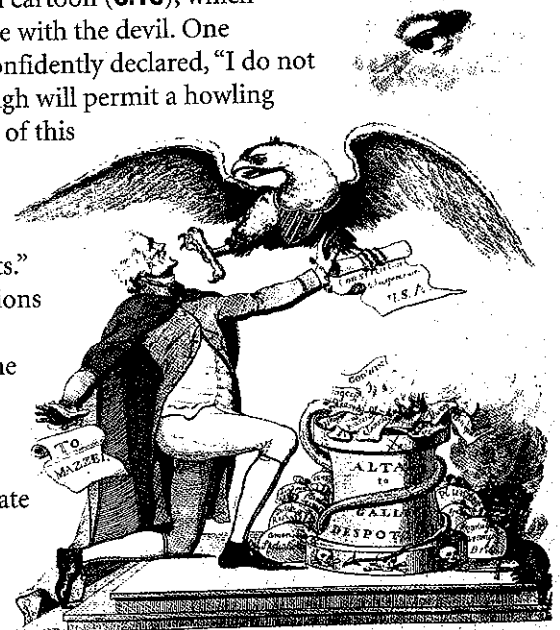
Adams persisted in trying to negotiate a settlement with France, and changes in the French government now made a peaceful solution likely. The radical phase of the French Revolution ended when Napoleon Bonaparte, an ambitious general of the French Army, seized control of France's government in 1799. Eager to gain U.S. support for his military campaign against Spain and England, Napoleon negotiated a treaty with Adams that ended the naval conflict between the two nations. However, Adams's statesmanlike effort to seek peace angered Hamiltonians. Exacerbating the tensions between the two men, Adams privately attacked Hamilton's "British faction." In turn, believing that Adams lacked the resolve to deal with France or the Republicans, Hamilton published a pamphlet denouncing the president. The split within the ranks of Federalists could hardly have come at a worse time: the election of 1800 loomed on the horizon.

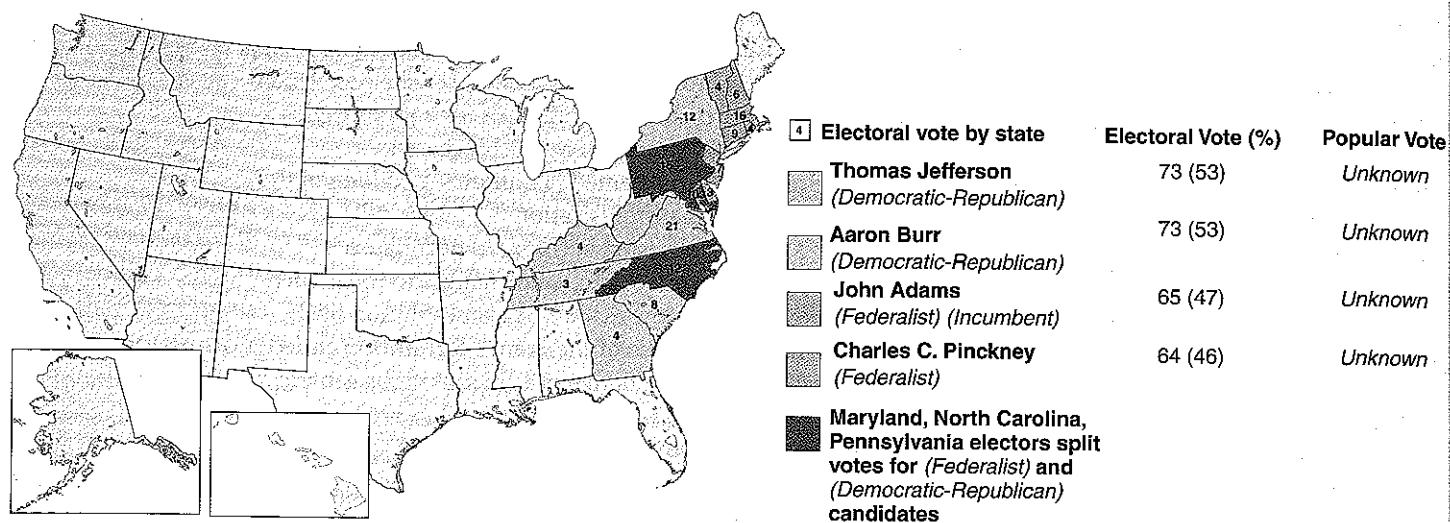
The election of 1800 presented the nation with a clear choice between Federalist Adams and Republican Jefferson. Each party indulged in campaigning that was more rancorous than anything either side had experienced in previous elections. Federalists attacked Jefferson as an atheist and radical supporter of the French Revolution, themes captured in this political cartoon (6.16), which shows Jefferson in league with the devil. One Connecticut minister confidently declared, "I do not believe that the Most High will permit a howling atheist to sit at the head of this nation." Republicans, in turn, prayed for deliverance from "Tories; from Aristocrats."

Despite dire predictions about the dangers of electing Jefferson—some New Englanders hid their family Bibles, fearing that President Jefferson might confiscate them—Republicans garnered enough votes to win. Still, the election was

6.16 Anti-Jefferson Political Cartoon

Jefferson's opponents portrayed him as an atheist who drew radical ideas from the French Revolution. In this image the American eagle tries to prevent Jefferson from throwing the Constitution into the flames emanating from the altar of Gallic (French) despotism.





6.17 Electoral Map of 1800

Adams's support in the election of 1800 was concentrated chiefly in New England. Jefferson drew support from the South and the mid-Atlantic.

extremely close. As the map (6.17) shows, support for Adams was strongest in New England, while Jefferson carried the South and parts of the mid-Atlantic. A mere eight votes marked the margin of victory between the two sides.

The Republican victory triggered a constitutional crisis that few would have predicted. The actual vote in the electoral college had produced a tie between Jefferson and the Republican candidate for vice president, Aaron Burr. This was possible because the Constitution did not direct electors to cast separate ballots for president and vice president. A tie meant that the sitting House of Representatives, dominated by Federalists, would decide the election. The new Republican-dominated House would not take its seats until March of 1801. The political situation was tense. Rumors about political deals and conspiracies circulated widely. As a precautionary measure, Pennsylvania and Virginia both mobilized their militias, a decision that sent a clear message that these two states would not sit by while scheming politicians in Congress cast aside the will of the people. The politicians indeed schemed and negotiated, thus making resolution of the deadlock time consuming.

Many Federalists believed that Jefferson was a fanatic, viewing Burr as a safer alternative. This was not the case for Alexander Hamilton, however, who had been Burr's rival in New York politics for more than a decade. Rather than see Burr emerge victorious, Hamilton persuaded Federalists that Jefferson was the lesser of the two evils. Jefferson had also worked hard to assure a number of Federalists, including Hamilton, that he was not intent on a radical course that would undermine all hard-won Federalist policies of the previous decade. With Hamilton's support and some assurances from

Jefferson, a deal was finally struck. It took five days and thirty-five ballots before the House finally voted to elect Jefferson.

Jefferson's victory narrowly averted another constitutional crisis. Despite the threat that Virginia and Pennsylvania had mobilized their militias while the House was casting its ballots, the election of 1800 peacefully transferred political power from Federalists to Republicans, a notable achievement given the tense political atmosphere of the 1790s. To avert any future deadlock in subsequent presidential elections, the Twelfth Amendment to the Constitution, adopted in 1804, required that electors cast separate ballots for president and vice president.

Gabriel's Rebellion

The French Revolution and the struggles between Federalists and Republicans leading up to the election of 1800 helped spread ideas about liberty throughout American society. These notions percolated down into every community of America, including slave communities in the South. The most dramatic illustration of this came in Virginia in 1800. Gabriel's Rebellion, a slave insurrection in Richmond, drew together free blacks and slaves in a plot to liberate the Richmond's slaves.

Gabriel, the slave leader of the rebellion, was trained as a blacksmith and enjoyed considerable mobility. His master allowed Gabriel to hire himself out to others and to keep a portion of his earnings for himself. Gabriel used his mobility to make contact with other slaves and free blacks and together with them formulated a bold plan to seize the state arsenal and distribute arms to Virginia's slaves. Gabriel was not only aware of the slave uprising in

Saint-Domingue and the French Revolution but also showed himself to be keenly aware of the ideas of the American Revolution. He planned to march his troops under a banner emblazoned with the words "death or liberty." Gabriel had taken Patrick Henry's famous words, reversed them, and transformed them into the rallying cry for a slave rebellion. Governor James Monroe mobilized the state militia which easily crushed the rebellion. To deal with the rebels, the state convened a special court that tried slaves without the benefit of a jury. Twenty-six of those put on trial were convicted and sentenced to death. Although the state of Virginia showed little concern for the rights of the accused slaves, the state was obligated to pay out close to \$9,000 to the slave owners, who were legally entitled to be compensated for the loss of their property.

Conclusion

The 1790s was a time of extended crises at home and abroad, and events in Europe heightened domestic political tensions. The French Revolution contributed to this polarization of American political life. Federalists viewed that revolution as proof that an excessive devotion to liberty and equality threatened peace and stability. Republicans, by contrast, embraced the French Revolution enthusiastically; only slowly, over the course of the decade, did they withdraw their support.

The leading architect of Federalist policy for most of the 1790s was Alexander Hamilton, who supported a pro-British foreign policy, a strong federal government, and an economic policy favoring the development of a complex commercial economy. Republicans, led by Madison and Jefferson, supported France and favored an economy in which small producers, farmers, and artisans dominated economic life. For Republicans, if government were to have any role in fostering economic development, it would be the individual state governments, not the federal government.

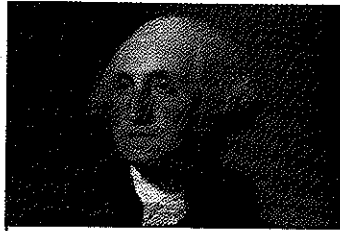
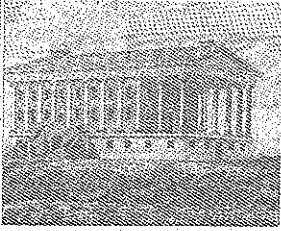
Most political conflicts in the years following ratification of the Constitution quickly escalated into constitutional contro-

"Mr. Jefferson, though too revolutionary in his notions, is yet a lover of liberty and will be desirous of something like orderly Government.—Mr. Burr loves nothing but himself ... and will be content with nothing short of permanent power in his own hands."

ALEXANDER HAMILTON, 1800

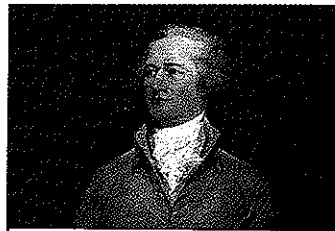
versies as each side accused the other of advocating policies that the other believed unconstitutional. Federalists defended a policy of broad, or loose, construction, believing that in its sphere of authority the new government had wide latitude to adopt whatever policies seemed expedient to accomplish its aims. Republicans championed a policy of strict construction, construing the Constitution in an almost literal fashion.

Conflict over the economy, foreign policy, and the meaning of key provisions of the Constitution produced an age of intense political passion. Yet, despite the intense partisanship of this decade, Americans had not yet reconciled themselves to the existence of political parties as a permanent feature of public life. The peaceful transition of power from Federalists to Republicans in 1800 was a tribute to the structure of government created by the Constitution and to Americans' commitment to the principles of constitutionalism. The shift from being an opposition movement to controlling the national government posed unexpected challenges for Jefferson, Madison, and other Republicans.



1789

Washington inaugurated
Washington becomes
America's first president



1790–1791

**Hamilton's Report on
Public Credit**
Federalist economic program
implemented

Bill of Rights ratified
Constitution amended to
protect individual liberty and
include additional structural
supports for federalism

**Bank of the United States
established**
Congress approves a key
element of the Hamiltonian
program



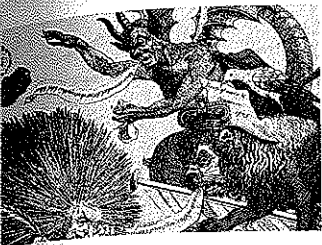
1793–1794

Whiskey Rebellion
Farmers in western
Pennsylvania protest the
whiskey excise tax

CHAPTER REVIEW

Review Questions

1. What were the main features of Hamilton's economic plan? How did each of these components contribute to the growth of the American economy?
2. Why did Jefferson and Madison wish to relocate the nation's capital away from New York City?
3. What was Hamilton's theory of constitutional interpretation, and how did it differ from Jefferson's theory?
4. How did the French Revolution affect domestic American politics?
5. How did the novel reflect and influence ideas about women's roles in the new republic?
6. What were the differences between the views of Republicans and Federalists toward the revolution in Saint-Domingue (modern-day Haiti)? What political factors might account for these differences?
7. What was the constitutional basis for the Republicans' challenge to the constitutionality of the Sedition Act? Explain.
8. What symbols does the cartoonist who created the anti-Jefferson political cartoon, "Providential Detection," use to signal his opposition to Jeffersonian political views?



1795

Jay's Treaty
Senate ratifies Jay's Treaty with Great Britain. Republicans oppose treaty



1796

John Adams elected president
Washington declines to serve a third term and is succeeded by Federalist John Adams



1798

XYZ Affair
American negotiators reject French demands for a bribe as a condition for peace treaty

Alien and Sedition Acts
Congress enacts a series of new acts to control aliens and punish attacks on the government

Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions
Madison and Jefferson draft resolutions protesting the Sedition Act and asserting the right of the states to check unconstitutional acts of the federal government



1800

Jefferson elected president
Peaceful transfer of power from Federalists to Republicans

Key Terms

electoral college A group of electors appointed by each state who had the responsibility of picking the president. 160

Bill of Rights The first ten of the original twelve amendments to the Constitution, which included protections for basic individual liberties and protections for the states. 161

Republicans An opposition movement led by Jefferson and Madison that opposed Federalists' efforts to create a more powerful centralized government. 162

assumption of the state debts Hamilton's scheme for the federal government to take over any outstanding state debts. 164

Bank of the United States A bank chartered by the federal government. The Bank served as a depository for government funds, helped bolster confidence in government securities, made loans, and provided the nation with a stable national currency. 166

Democratic-Republican Societies A new type of political organization informally allied with the Republicans whose function was to help collect, channel, and influence public opinion. 169

Jay's Treaty Diplomatic treaty negotiated by Federalist John Jay in 1794. According to the terms of the treaty, Britain agreed to compensate America for cargoes seized in 1793–1794 and promised to vacate forts in the Northwest Territory. However, America failed to win acceptance of the right of neutral nations to trade with belligerents without harassment. 172

Whiskey Rebellion The armed uprising of western Pennsylvania farmers protesting the Whiskey excise in 1794 was the most serious test of the new federal government's authority since ratification of the Constitution. 173

XYZ Affair The furor created when Americans learned that three French officials, identified in diplomatic correspondence as "X," "Y," and "Z," demanded a bribe from America's diplomats as the price of beginning negotiations. 182

Alien and Sedition Acts Four laws designed to protect America from the danger of foreign and domestic subversion. The first three, the Alien laws, dealt with immigration

and naturalization. The Sedition Act criminalized criticism of the federal government. 183

states' rights The theory that the Constitution was a compact among the states and that the individual states retained the right to judge when the federal government's actions were unconstitutional. 185

Gabriel's Rebellion A slave insurrection in Richmond, Virginia, that drew together free blacks and slaves in a plot to seize the Richmond arsenal and foment a slave rebellion. 186

