Forging the Republic: Revolution & the New Nation (1754-1820s)

Audio: In this lecture, I'm going to cover the major military and political challenges from the late colonial period on through the early years of the republic.

French & Indian War (1754-1763)

Audio: During the 17th and 18th Century, there were several wars that began in Europe and naturally spilled over into the colonies of those powers in the western hemisphere. And I'm going to cover the last and most significance of them which was the French and Indian War which turned out to be a subset of the broader Seven Years War which was which actually a global conflict. To some extent you could legitimately call it the first world war. In any case, as shown on the map on the left-hand side here from 1754, the 13 Colonies under British rule had been developing with their western and northern boundaries constrained by the French Colonial Empire. And it was not uncommon for the French to cultivate friendships with nearby Native American tribes to harass these British Colonies. This was always a source of tension and in 1754 a major war was about to breakout and I want to say a little bit about how it started, how it was fought, and ultimately its consequences in building us towards the American Revolution that will break out in the 1770s. Ironically, it was none other than George Washington who would play a central role in the outbreak of the French and Indian War. At the time he was what was called a provincial officer meaning rather than being a regularly commission British officer he wore a British uniform as an officer for the Virginia Colony. And at the time, you see here on the map at the left the area with the diagonal hash marks including the Ohio River Valley, this was territory disputed between Great Britain and France, and George Washington was tasked by the governor of Virginia with leading an expedition into the Ohio River Valley, not to look for trouble, certainly not to start a war, but to signal England's presence, to signal England's interest in that area. Actually, to some extent it was more the interest of the Virginia's governor and investors who were looking to expand into that territory and make a profit. The British Government was actually, really very reluctant to pick a fight with the French. But anyway Washington was tasked with what was essentially a diplomatic mission, to find any French forces that might be in the area and just to tactfully but firmly indicate both Virginia and England's interest in that part of the world. What ended up happening, to make a long story short, was that there was an incident in the spring of 1754 where Washington and his Indian allies ended up engaging a French expedition in a brief skirmish in which Washington took the French
force prisoner and Washington's Indian allies ended up slaughtering wounded French prisoners and Washington really lost control of the situation temporarily which did not reflect well on his leadership. The surviving French prisoners were allowed to return to their authorities and as this story got out it ended up being the flashpoint for the French and Indian War which helped then to bring on war in Europe and a global conflict. Now in fairness to George Washington, a major war was about to break out one way or another. Major alliances were being formed in Europe. The whole process was gradually in motion, so if it wasn't this incidence there would have been some other flashpoint that would have cropped up shortly thereafter. But I do bring this up because George Washington, while certainly nobody questioned his bravery but there was some concern among British authorities over how he'd handle this situation out in the Ohio River Valley at a place that was called Jumonville's Glen named after the French officer who was slaughtered by Washington's Indian allies. Today, it sits in Western Pennsylvania. So the French and Indian War gets underway and in its earliest stages, at least in North America, it goes rather well for the French. The British are a bit slow to adapt to a frontier style of fighting. As a matter of fact, to take us back to George Washington for a moment, eventually after Washington's expedition and into the Ohio River Valley, he ended up as a staff officer for a major British force that had been sent over from Europe to try to capture a French Fort in the vicinity of what is today, Pittsburgh. So it was heading back into the same disputed territory in the Ohio River Valley. And this force under the command of a British General Braddock ended up being ambushed by French and Indian forces. And although it was a British defeat, George Washington helped to keep it from being a complete rout. While having several horses shout out from underneath him in the midst of battle, Washington was able to organize British defenses after their commanding officer was killed and basically, make an orderly enough retreat that the entire British force was not slaughtered. But again, this is somewhat akin, if you're a baseball fan, to hitting 300 hundred on a team that finishes in the basement of your division. When you're performing well in a losing effort you're not going to get quite the same level of respect for it. But Washington will continue to serve in the Virginia militia during the war and gradually the war will go better for the British, in large part because the success of the Royal Navy makes it very difficult for the French to continue to bring troops and reinforcements across the Atlantic. So eventually, British forces with their Colonial American allies, fighting in their own units under overall British command, eventually this Anglo American partnership of British regulars and Colonial forces will ultimately win this war. One of the high points was the capture of Quebec shown there along the St. Lawrence River, one of the last major strongholds of the French. But this victory, in the French and Indian war, in many ways is actually going to complicate and ultimately poison relations between England and her 13 Colonies so it is going to be a bittersweet triumph. But just to finish covering the French and Indian war itself, by the time the conflict comes to an end in 1763 and a peace treaty is arranged to cover the entire Seven Years War on a global scale, what ends up happening as shown in the map on your right is that the French are essentially kicked off the mainland of the North American continent. Other than some fishing rights off of eastern Canada, the French have no more colonial possessions on the
mainland of North America. So it is of course, at the face of it a huge victory for the British Empire and certainly by extension it would seem to be a real benefit for the 13 colonies because they no longer have that French threat on their western and northern frontiers. But as I am about to cover, it is not quite that simple. And I should also mention in its relevance to this lecture on U.S. history that George Washington emerged from the French and Indian war, at the time he was Colonel Washington, but he emerged from the war rather frustrated because he never got the regular commission in the British Army that he wanted. That would definitely have been a step up from being a provincial or colonial officer. And he was never allowed into that rather aristocratic elite and that's something that would definitely chafe on him. And as a matter of fact, some historians say that as you look at all of the circumstances that gradually moved the colonies towards rebellion against England, if George Washington had gotten that commission that he wanted and had gone on to be a career officer in the British Army, it is certainly possible that he never would have become a patriot when the revolution broke out. In fact he might have been a loyalist and actually fought against the rebellion. Now there are many factors to consider there and I don't want to get off onto a tangent but I just throw that out there for some food for thought.

Slide 3

Text: Consequences of French & Indian War

- No French threat on the frontier to create a common enemy for colonists and British Empire
- Possibility of enhanced westward expansion for colonist – not welcomed in London
- Weakened relations between the Crown and the Thirteen Colonies thanks to a “culture clash” from military partnership

Audio: So let me turn to the significance of the French and Indian war as a factor moving this land down the road towards a rebellion against British authority. First of all to some extent, having a common enemy had given American colonists and British authorities a common cause, something to bind them together even if there were tensions on other levels. And now this overwhelming defeat of the French had to some extent removed the self-interest for these two groups to continue to cooperate with one another to at least the same degree as they had previously. And one of the issues that very quickly becomes a problem between many colonists and the British government is that with the 13 colonies growing so rapidly there was naturally a tremendous push for westward expansion. And there was a feeling that victory over the French now made that possible. As I'm going to be covering a little bit more in a moment, British politicians, the British crown generally had a different view on this subject. Because England had various trade agreements they were forming with Native American tribes on the frontier. Tribes that of course were not looking to have large numbers of white settlers pouring onto their lands. The British governments feeling that it was better to curb the expansion of the 13 colonies, keep
things peaceful on the frontier so that you could continue to have commercial arrangements with Native American tribes and also quite frankly, so that these 13 colonies would not grow so powerful that there would be more of an impulse towards independence. The colonies would be more controllable if they were not allowed to have this breakneck expansion. So this is one issue that's going to represent a real collision between colonial interests and those of the mother country. And for the final consequence of the French and Indian war, I'd like to return to the subject of the military culture of the 18th century and how it affected Anglo American relations during the French and Indian war. In European armies the officer corps was almost entirely composed of aristocrats. And in case that's not a term you deal with regularly, an aristocrat is just someone who holds a formal title bestowed upon him by a monarch. And there are various levels of aristocrats, barons, dukes, counts, etc. and I don't pretend to know the exact hierarchy there. But again, you look at European armies of the 18th century and their officer class is almost entirely made up of aristocrats. And not only were these officers aristocrats but they tended towards the higher levels of the upper class. And promotions in these armies typically had to be purchased which added to the sense of a class barrier in how European army structured themselves. And needless to say this was not a meritocratic arrangement. It often times was not so much about your actual performance that got you ahead but about having connections and having the appropriate funds to buy your next rank. Now the British were not quite as extreme in these practices as other nations but the trend hold in their case. So meanwhile let's go back to a provincial officer such as George Washington. Now someone like Washington represented the upper crust of colonial society to the extent that you could really say it had an upper crust. In colonial America those who were the elites were non as the gentry class. They did not have formal titles by and large because the few British aristocrats who came to the 13 colonies tended not to survive its harsher conditions. But the gentry class of colonial America aspired to emulate their British counterparts. But even your wealthiest colonials such as John Hancock of Massachusetts or George Washington of Virginia were equivalent in resources to only the very lowest level of the British aristocracy. They paled in comparison and frankly they knew it. They often felt as though they were treated as yokels or rubes by British regular officers of the more elite background. So you can add to what you know about Washington here, a certain feeling of inadequacy that the colonial gentry class just did not measure up to its British counterparts. Now meanwhile, if we shift to the other half of the army, if you will, if we shift to the lower ranks, I mean today we call them the enlisted ranks but since European militaries relied heavily on forcing its citizens into the army, I can't really call their lower ranks enlisted. I mean, some did volunteer but in many cases it was a coerced arrangement. So if we look at the lower ranks of the British army and its colonial counterparts, the situation was almost completely reversed. In the case of European militaries it was common to both higher mercenaries and scape of the dregs of your own society to fill your manpower needs. So prisoners and men passed out in taverns and brothels might well find themselves conscripted into their nation's army or navy. In the case of the British, again there were free and respectable commoners who enlisted in the military with a sense of nationalism but I would like you appreciate the significant extent to which the other
dynamics were at work. Those coerced individuals from the dregs of society. But conversely when you looked at the lower ranks in colonial units they were staffed by and large by individuals who were law abiding and modestly successful. So these colonials tended to be shocked by the behavior of British regulars and the discipline necessary to keep that group in line. The Red Coats as the British regulars were often called were known for disrespecting the Sabbath and curing at the drop of a hat, gambling incessantly and looking for opportunities to take advantage of colonial civilians. With this sort of element at work it was common for soldiers to be flogged and disciplined in other severe ways. So if British officers looked down upon their colonial counterparts, so too did colonial or provincial soldiers regard the average Red Coat as a heathen. So what I've summarized this as here on your slide is that there was a culture clash operating at both levels of the military chain of command. And that this culture clash even amidst an Anglo American victory in the French and Indian war, this culture class for those who served in these military units, it helped to heighten their sense that they did not have as much in common with each other as they thought. So a colonial veteran of this war may not feel quite the same affinity of the mother country by the time that his military experience was over.

Slide 4

Text: Prelude to Revolution

[Image of Boston Masacre]

Audio: With the next few slides, I'm going to try to summarize the causes of the American Revolution by looking at some key episodes that helped to move colonial Americans along a collision course with the British Empire. What you're looking at here in this slide is one of the more famous illustrations form the pre-revolutionary era. It was a woodcutting actually done by Paul Revere, a Boston silversmith, who also became a member of the Sons of Liberty. This was a patriotic society. It's Boston chapter was the most radical of the various Sons of Liberty chapters, and Paul Revere, of course, would make a famous ride to warn the Massachusetts countryside of the approach of British soldiers. He didn't make the longest or most significant ride in 1775, but he does end up being the most remembered of the individuals who performed that mission. So he occupies this special place, but what is depicted here is what patriots increasingly began to call the Boston Massacre, and today that label has really stuck. In many ways it does not qualify as a massacre, and I do want to talk about this event briefly because it is part of some of the folklore of US History. To set the stage a little bit, by the year 1770--so we're now about 7 years after the end of the French and Indian War--by 1770, the number of British troops in the Massachusetts city of Boston had risen to about 20% of the entire city's population, and this was in large part because Boston was rapidly getting the reputation for being the community where there was the most hostility to British rule, and, in fact, since Redcoats didn't make much money from their army pay, many of them were actually moonlighting by taking jobs to the local economy much to the consternation of native Bostonians, and tensions would come to a head in an incident in
March, 1770 that some have called the Boston Massacre. On March 5 of that year while it was still quite frigid in Boston with plenty of snow and ice on the ground the crowd or mob—you call it a mob if you're kind of taking the British point of view on this extent. You call it a crowd if you're taking the patriot view, but a mob or crowd had gathered outside of Customs House guarded by Redcoats, and this crowd or mob was angry and sort of looking for an opportunity to vent its frustration against the British. So there were verbal taunts being issued at the soldiers, and eventually snowballs were thrown, and the sentries called for reinforcements, so a somewhat larger body of troops arrived—not a huge number—but reinforcements arrived, and somebody rang the town fire bell to gather more Bostonians. So now the situation was beginning to escalate, and some of the snowballs that were being thrown at British soldiers contained rocks, which were beginning to injure the Redcoats. Now to this day there is no one universally accepted account of what happened next. Somehow British soldiers started shooting into the crowd. Now nobody really argues that they were completely unprovoked in doing so, but exactly how this crowd behaved, exactly to what extent they go the British into shooting or somehow antagonized them into shooting, we're never going to get a complete agreement on it to this day, but once the smoke had cleared from the British firing into the crowd, five people laid dead or dying with another eight wounded. So now the growing patriot cause of this rather radical movement, which, by the way, in 1770, just to step back for a moment, even many of the most frustrated Colonials looking at British rule are not yet talking about complete independence. You know, you'd really have to go to your most radical hard core to find anybody in 1770 who's already willing to really talk about that. For the most part, it was about trying to renegotiate what the colonies' relationship with England would be, but to remain somehow in the British Empire, just to do it under better terms, but now this patriot cause had martyrs, thanks to the Boston Massacre. Now the British did show some good judgment for once and allowed the British soldiers involved in this incident to be tried in Boston courts as a gesture of faith in the Colonial legal system. In other words, rather than just packing them on a ship, sending them back to England where they would get a friendlier trial, they were put on trial in Boston, and John Adams, one of the most respected attorneys in Massachusetts, agreed to defend the British soldiers. Now this was a tricky thing because obviously it was an unpopular cause in Boston, and John's own cousin, Samuel, was one of the leading members of the Boston Sons of Liberty chapter, and Samuel Adams was one of the leading figures trying to stoke up this incident to get the maximum political mileage out of it, and now his cousin is defending the British soldiers. Now John Adams was not a fan of British policy at this point, but he still at this point considered himself a loyal subject of King George III, and he was also a very firm believer in the rule of law. He felt that everyone deserves a trial and that this thing needed to be settled in the courts rather than in the streets, and so he did defend those British soldiers rather well, and most of them were acquitted, and only two were convicted, and they ended up, they were convicted of manslaughter, but they ended up only being branded on their thumbs rather than being put to death or sentenced to prison. So it was pretty much a victory for John Adams in court and a victory for the rule of law, and actually, even John's cousin, Samuel, felt that even though the
Sons of Liberty had in effect lost the trial, Bostonians were so upset that the British soldiers had gotten off easy, that someone like Sam Adams could argue that really in the big picture of things, this actually helped the patriot cause because now Bostonians were even more inflamed.

**Slide 5**

**Text:** Colonial Grievances

- Restrictions of westward expansion
- Taxation without representation
- Conspiracy theory that gradual enslavement politically was the British goal
- Inability to trade internationally
- Connections and social standing mattered more than merit

**Audio:** With this slide, I'm going to give a very brief summary of what was a far more complicated scenario. But I want to give you a sense of what sort of frustrations and grievances that Colonial Americans held during the 1760s and 70s that helped to bring on the war. One of them I had already alluded to in the context of the French and Indian War and that would be the issue of Westward Expansion. During the same year that the French and Indian War came to an end in 1763, the British Crown declared that there was to be no further westward expansion beyond what was then the Frontier line, essentially what is today the Appalachian Mountains. So for many colonists who had been expecting that a victory over the French would open up economic opportunity and prosperity with the ability to move west, the British Government for the reasons that I outlined a little while ago said absolutely not. Now, the British never really enforced its Proclamation of 1763, so plenty of Colonists went west anyway, but they did so without legal sanction and policy definitely was creating more tension in this regard. Secondly, and I'm sure this expression has often been mentioned in high school history classes, since the Colonists had no seats in the British Parliament back in England, British policy especially taxation policy was taking increasing amounts of their income without Colonists having any formal say, any vote in the process. And so the slogan that was often used was taxation without representation. And many historians say that if the British had just given Colonists a token number of seats in Parliament, you know maybe 25-30 seats, that would have gone a long way towards killing this as a source of frustration. But the British sort of stumble along. They allow that situation to fester. There are a variety of taxes. For example, the Stamp Act, the Tea Act, the Townsend Acts. There are a variety of British laws that are designed to raise revenue because the British Government had racked up huge debts in fighting the French and Indian War. And British authorities feel like look, that war ultimately protected the 13 colonies so Colonists need to pony up and you know, pony up their share. And frankly, these taxes never amounted to terribly large sums of money anyway. And the British often didn't have much luck collecting the taxes. But for many Colonists it was more the symbolism of the situation. The fact again they were not represented in Parliament. And also, the British had never previously taxed them directly like
this. And it just felt the rules were changing in a very dangerous way. And so taxation without representation helped to feed into the next point on this slide. Which is that gradually Colonists become more and more sensitive to the possibility that there is this insidious conspiracy out there. That what British authorities are gradually trying to do is to enslave the Colonists politically. That it certainly won't happen overnight because that would be too obvious, too controversial. But that with little steps here and there, this is the ultimate fate of the 13 colonies. For example, the land of Ireland as a British colony at this point in history had really been clamped down on quite harshly by the British Government. So for many Colonial Americans who read their newspapers, you know, they looked at what was taking place in Ireland, and they felt like Ireland is just in a more advanced stage of the kind of process that's being forced upon Americans here in this part of the world. So this conspiracy theory did gain a certain amount of traction. And learned Colonists who had studied, you know, the history of Political Philosophy and Government really felt that it was natural anyway. You know some of you have heard the expression absolute power corrupts absolutely. You know many Colonists to the extent that they thought about government, they really felt that government was at best a necessary evil and that political power has a natural ability to corrupt those who hold it. And so this made them particularly sensitive to British behavior. Another point as listed here on the slide is that because the colonies are obviously under British authority, the British can decide whom Americans trade with. And this limits your ability to, you know, to always get the best deal and maximize your profits because your trade has to benefit the mother country. So and to be fair to the British, Colonial Americans loved to be smugglers. I mean back when the French still had a large empire on the North American mainland, many New Englanders, for example, were smuggling with the French. And to some extent, this practice continued even after the French were defeated. But in any case, the inability to trade internationally, to trade freely was another source of frustration. And a final point that's important here is that if we look at the kind of Monarchial Society that Great Britain represented, and especially if you look back at life in the mother country in England, it was still very much a land where connections and social standing mattered more than your intelligence, mattered more than your performance in whatever your line of work might be. Now granted I mean Britain was, as far as major European countries go, Britain was the freest society of any of the major European powers. So ironically, the revolution that we're building towards here -- these Colonists are not going to rebel against the worst tyranny that Europe had to offer. They're actually going to rebel against the most progressive society at least among major European powers. Nevertheless, relatively speaking, the dominant values of British society were ones that made it difficult to achieve upward mobility. Because there was such a focus on, you know, your family name, the social class that you represented. There were all these expectations that those of a relatively higher class with were given a certain amount of respect and difference and they got all kinds of breaks that others did not enjoy. And this is increasingly frustrating to Colonial Americans. And so I think that's another important point that we have to consider.
Slide 6

Text: Boston as the Flashpoint

Audio: For this slide, I turn now to the year 1773 when the focus of British policy will be on the colonial consumption of tea, a very popular beverage. Obviously, popular with British society back home. The prime minister of England at the time, Lord North, was looking to bail out some friends who ran the floundering East India Company. So, British warehouses were filled with a surplus of about 17 million pounds of tea. So, parliament passed the tea act, whereby colonists could actually purchase this product more cheaply then before. But it also allowed the East India Company to bypass colonial merchants. In other words, to bypass the middleman in order to complete the sale of their product. So, even though this law actually made it cheaper for colonial Americans to buy one of their favorite beverages, at the time, and of course, it was an increasingly turbulent environment here. At the time, it seemed as thought the British government was trying to create an economic monopoly that may be instituted for the commodities as well. So, you know, today it was tea, tomorrow could be something else that was important. So, many colonists, and again the Sons of Liberty with leading the way, many colonies were taking offense over the tea act. So, as tea ships began to arrive in colonial harbors, merchants refused to accept them. Now in nearly all cases, the tea was quietly shipped backed to England, but I mentioned that Boston is going to be the flash point for the American Revolution. And here in Boston there would be a test of wills between Governor Thomas Hutchinson, who was a supporter of it and Samuel Adams, one of those members of the Sons of Liberty. While the captains of the tea ships wanted to return immediately when they saw angry Bostonians at the piers, Hutchinson refused to back down. He had two sons who were heavily invested in the East India Company. So, he let the ships stay. And on the night of December 16, 1773, a group of men disguised as Mohawk Indians, though nobody seriously believed that Native Americans had anything to do with this. But a group of men disguised as Indians, boarded three tea ships and threw more than 300 crates overboard smashing open the containers. Hundreds of Bostonians watched from the shore, but not one person was ever taken into custody for this crime. Now, many leading columnists were actually disappointed with the tea party for the destruction of private property because that threatens chaos. Especially if you're part of that colonial gentry class. Even if you don't like British policy, you also don't like the idea of people taking matters into their own hands either, especially common, potentially ignorant people. Even Ben Franklin, who's eventually going to be a leading patriot, urged Bostonians to pay for the destructed tea and just let bygones be bygones. But the tea party, as it was called, the Boston Tea Party, would end up serving as another one of those flash points because the British government would end up overreacting to the situation and overreact to this incident and create much sympathy for Massachusetts. Following the Boston Tea Party in 1774, parliament passed what were called the Coercive Acts. In the colonies, they tended to be called the Intolerable Acts. Acts which suggests
how people felt about them. For one thing, the Port of Boston, a major commercial center was closed until compensation could be secured for the lost tea. And so the economy of Massachusetts took a severe hit. The British also put in place a tougher rule of what was called the Quartering Act, which allowed British soldiers to actually commandeer colonial homes and live there. Families in some cases were kicked out and other cases you would be expected to tend to the British soldiers, to actually take care of them. You know to cook for them, and so forth. British troops accused of offences can now be tried in the mother country instead of locally. So, now, the willingness of the British to do what they had back a 1770 with the so-called massacre that there was another such incident, now, British soldiers would be going back to the mother country. And Thomas Hutchinson as, governor of Massachusetts, was replaced with a British officer, General Thomas Gage, and that of course was a signal that British authority was about to become much tougher. So, this obviously raised the political stakes of events in colonial America, and the political cartoon that you see here in your slide, is one that is obviously sympathetic to the patriot cause. It is showing -- it is personifying the city of Boston as this woman who was being groped, and you know a I apologize if this slide offends anybody. The political cartoons of the 18th century did tend to be pretty vulgar. But it's obviously showing Boston being forced to take its tea and being subjected to this very brutal British treatment. Now in response to the Coercive Acts, representatives from 12 of the 13 colonies, Georgia didn't attend just because there was -- there was an Indian uprising in Georgia, and Georgia officials were concerned that they needed the help of the British Empire to defeat these Indians, so they didn't want to make waves. But representatives of the other 12 colonies gathered in Philadelphia in September of 1774 as the first continental congress and they agreed to vote as colonies rather than individuals. And they basically took up to whole question of how to respond to this worsening situation. Now by a narrow margin, they voted against coming together as some sort of a union. So this was not going to be the moment to declare independence. But they did produce a declaration of American right, that included their claim that parliament can no longer interfere in the internal affairs of the 13 colonies. So, basically, they still considered themselves loyal subjects. They wanted to remain in the empire, but they wanted enough autonomy in their lives so that the crown's presence and parliament's presence would be negligible. They also talked about trying to team up to boycott British goods; basically hit the mother country in the pocketbook, so their policies would soften. And although the more radical members of the first congress, such as John Adams and his cousin Samuel and a number of other New Englanders, all though they were disappointed that the First Continental Congress didn't do more, King George III, was even more furious that it even went that far, and he ended up declaring Massachusetts to be in a state of rebellion, and he forbade all of the New England colonies from trading outside of the British empire. So, the situation is getting worse. But I do want you to keep in mind that as we get into 1774, 75, 76, the outbreak of the war, I would like you to appreciate that it is still a very divided colonial population. As a matter of fact, although, I've used the term American a number of times here, I want you to appreciate that not everyone who lived in the 13 colonies would have referred to him or herself as an American. Many would have been more likely to call
themselves colonists or call themselves a British subject and their loyalty was, you know, obviously steered in that direction. What historians estimate is that during this period from 71, 74, and 76, leading up to the declaration of Independence, The best estimate that scholars put together, is that about one third of the colonial population was loyal to the crown. One third were committed to some form of independence, and thus we loosely called them patriots. And there's another one third who were undecided. People who were either generally torn over the issues or maybe they were just kind of waiting to see which way the wind was blowing, kind of get a sense of who's going to come out to top in this impending conflict. And so I'd like you to appreciate that once this war gets under way here shortly, that it is to a large extent a Civil War, as well as a colonial rebellion against England. Because it's not just going to be British redcoats fighting against patriot soldiers. They're going to be loyalist militias. Where in some cases, neighbors were taking up arms against one another. They're also going to be German mercenaries call Hessians get involved. There were Native Americans on both sides, but mostly with the British. But, for now, I really want to emphasis this again -- that this is in large part also a Civil War and that's going to add a level of complexity to the American revolution that I want you to appreciate.

**Slide 7**

**Text:** Proverbial “Shot Heard ‘Round the World” – Lexington Green – Apr 1775

[Image of colonial battle]

**Audio:** By the Spring of 1775, Red Coats and British ships had returned to Boston in large numbers. They did not venture much beyond the city itself because towns in the countryside had militias largely hostile to British forces. In April 1775, General Thomas Gage in Boston received some intelligence that propelled him to action. Two leading members of the Sons of Liberty, Sam Adams and John Hancock were supposed to be in the Town of Lexington, while other Patriot radicals had amassed gun powder and weapons at the nearby Town of Concord. So the British set out as secretly as they could to travel more than 20 miles from Boston to achieve the dual objective of capturing Patriot leaders and essentially disarming the movement. But the Sons of Liberty had an excellent spy network in Boston and were able to alert surrounding communities. Two riders, Paul Revere and William Dawes spread the word. Dawes actually covered far more ground than Revere but the poetry of the following century celebrated Revere's role and thus our historical memory has been forever affected. As depicted here on your slide, at dawn on April 19th, roughly 700 British troops arrived at Lexington Green, green just being the town center in New England communities. John Adams -- excuse me -- Samuel Adams and John Hancock were long gone so the British didn't get them but there were about 70 militia men, also known as Minute Men, named for their readiness for action. And they stood on the other side of the Green, opposing this British force. Now the odds were clearly against the Colonials and their work was essentially done merely by showing up and forcing the British to slow down by
settling into a combat formation. As the Minute Men were beginning to disperse peacefully, someone's musket went off, now it may well have been an accident, began much like with the Boston Massacre, we don't have one guaranteed, rock solid account of what happened, whether somebody tripped over their weapon, you know, was it a British soldier, was it a Minute Man, we don't know. But in this tense environment, once that shot went off, the proverbial shot heard round the world, as it was referred to in poetry, British soldiers opened up with a volley and a bayonet charge that left eight dead and ten wounded. Not huge casualties but now blood was being shed in a form of military conflict. So what happened at Lexington Green, I mean it was just this skirmish, it was brief. The Minute Men dispersed and the British soldiers continued on towards Concord but now the stakes had been raised with the shedding of blood. The British did continue on to Concord where Colonials held one side of the north bridge. The bridge created a choke point that temporarily nullified the British manpower advantage. There was an exchange of gunfire back and forth. There were 14 casualties on the British side, casualties meaning a combination of dead and wounded. And now it was about noontime, these British soldiers had been on the move since the wee hours of the morning, their commander on the scene was very concerned about how long it was going to take them to get back to Boston. And of course he knew he was going to be marching through hostile territory to get there. So the Red Coats decided not to continue attacking Concord and instead to march back to Boston. So their dual mission failed, they didn't get the Patriot leaders, they didn't get the supplies. As the British marched back to Boston, their route was along a sunken road that afforded many opportunities for sharp shooters to snipe away from inside buildings, behind trees, walls, et cetera. And of course this was not the gentlemanly European style of warfare to which the British were accustomed and they were frustrated as they began to take casualties. In some cases, British soldiers charged into homes, looking for combatants and were none too careful about determining someone's guilt. The Patriots also exaggerated British misbehavior in this episode as well. In any case, by the time that the British forces returned to Boston, they had suffered over 250 casualties and now of course the countryside was up in arms. Now at this moment, you still have not had a Declaration of Independence by the 13 Colonies, you've had two skirmishes at Lexington and Concord that had certainly started a local conflict but would it spread beyond New England. And I should mention, by the way, that not just Massachusetts but the other New England colonies of Connecticut, New Hampshire and Rhode Island, they were all -- they all had substantial Patriot sentiments, they were supplying troops into the Boston area so, you know, basically the British Empire was at war with New England but would the conflict spread further? Would all 13 Colonies get onboard? That was not clear at this point here but obviously it's one of the most symbolic moments in what becomes U.S. history when you look back at the events of Lexington Green and Concord in April of 1775.

Slide 8

Text: Declaration of Independence
Audio: In response to the incidents of Lexington and Concord, in May 1775, a Second Continental Congress was convened in Philadelphia, with some of the same delegates who had been at the previous congress as well as quite a few newcomers. There were many delegates outside of New England, who were still not prepared to wage full war on Britain and declare independence, but there was an increasing recognition that some sort of defensive measures had to be taken. Now, one of the leaders among the New Englanders was John Adams. And again, this is ironic. Here was the man who defended British soldiers after the incident of 1770. He actually had subsequently been offered a rather cushy position working for the crown that would have set him up financially for the rest of his life. It would have been perfect for having social connections in British society. But he turned it down, and he became increasingly disenchanted with British policy and he was now among the leading patriots. John Adams called for the creation of what he referred to as a continental army to represent to the security needs of all of the colonies, and he had a very shrewd idea. When it came time to decide who would command this army, the general assumptions around the room in the Second Continental Congress is that, of course, it would be a New Englander. After all it was the New England colonies who were pushing for a war. They were the radicals in this equation. But John Adams knew that in order for this cause of independence to stick, he had to encourage other colonists outside of New England to get involved. And Virginia was essentially the largest and most powerful colony at the time. And so while many thought that John Hancock of Massachusetts, the wealthiest man in the colonies, would ask to become this commanding officer, instead John Adams nominated none other than Colonel Washington of Virginia who was a delegate of this convention. In fact, he was there in uniform and he was basically ready-made for the role. And going back to what I said about the French and Indian war, Washington's military record was actually nothing incredible. I mean it was decent, and again nobody had questioned his bravery. But the thing of it is, there was no one else who had commanded more troops at one time then he had. I mean, there was no one else with more experience to lead an entire war effort. I mean, even Washington himself was not a perfect candidate, but sort of like the expression in the land of the blind man, the one-eyed man is king. And to some extent, that is what we see here with George Washington being selected. So, he becomes the head of the continental army, which is now being organized outside of Boston, basically trying to pin down the British inside that city. And so George Washington and John Adams are increasingly becoming partners in this enterprise. And at the same time that the Second Continental Congress was voting George Washington a general. Another major clash was taking place between New Englanders and the British Empire, and that's the battle of Bunker Hill. That took place overlooking the Boston Harbor. To make a long story short I hope, militia men from all of over the New England colonies had quietly fortified a position overnight that commanded much of the Boston Harbor. Breed's Hill was actually the elevation closest to the fighting, although nearby Bunker Hill had stuck as the title of this incident. As daylight arrived, the British were shocked to discover that rebels had been digging
all night and had a definitive position that stretched to the top of Breed's Hill, down to the shoreline. About 2,200 British troops were disembarked nearly to deal with the threat. They were commanded by General William Howe. Amidst blistering heat in the summer of 1775, I should have mention this was June, British soldiers in their wool uniforms that were about 50 pounds a piece marched in tight formation towards the patriotic defense. In many cases, this meant marching up a tall hill through tall grass. Because muskets were notoriously inaccurate, the European style of combat was to mass soldiers together, so that you can guarantee at least some concentration of firepower. There was also a gentlemanly code of behavior that came into play here as well. European battles were supposed to be highly structured affairs where armies met on open plains and formation and traded a few volleys before the noise and smoke reached levels of total chaos and someone's lines broke. So, you were supposed to fire on moss when ordered to by your officers. Believe it or not it was considered advantageous to let your enemy have the first volley and officers would hold a parley before the battle that reminds me a little bit of a coin flip before a football game. In the strictest sense. 18th century European warfare was not about inflicting casualties. The main goals were taking the field of battle and winning honorably. Maximizing casualties likely meant that your own numbers would be exceptionally high, but Bunker Hill was not going to be a European style engagement. The rebels were to the best there ability using whatever fortifications and other cover they had this first British attack up the hill was repulsed with heavy casualties. The second attack met with the same result. Now facing the third try, General Howe ordered his men to shed their jackets and packs. They would make a bayonet charge this time instead of halting the volley with their muskets. A bayonet was basically just a blade that you could attach to a rifle or musket to the weapon making it more compatible with hand-to-hand combat. Now, meanwhile, the rebels were running low on gun power and for the most part did not have bayonets or swords. Some rebels were reduced to throwing stones. The third attack did break through the colonial lines, but the casualties at the end of his engagement favored the defenders. The British suffered 1,054 dead and wounded, while the rebels had casualties of about 400. Basically, the British Empire could not afford to many more victories like this one. The battle of Bunker Hill had several consequences, British commanders would be more cautious in the future, which made it harder for them to achieve the kind of decisive victories that they so sorely needed Politically, it was much harder to take out any sort of middle ground now between patriots or loyalists or patriots a British crown when you've shed too much bloodshed. In July of 1775 when the news of Bunker Hill reached the Second Continental Congress, the congress tried to some extent to have it both ways with London. On the one hand, a olive branch petition was sent to King George III as a gesture of conciliation. Apparently he never read it. But the congress also issued a declaration of causes and necessity of taking up arms. This document rejected independence, but it stated a willingness to fight for British rights, rather than accept what the members as of congress saw as slavery. The king declared all 13 colonies to be in rebellion once he read the declaration of causes and necessity of taking up arms. Now, it will continue to take some time. But finally by July of 1776, so another year, almost a year after Bunker hill. The Second Continental Congress will finely be
at a point where it can take a unanimous vote of independence and one of its members who bears so much responsibility and praise for making that happen was none other than John Adams of Massachusetts. And for many years, he was sort of a forgotten founding father, even though he eventually became the second president of The United States. But in 2008, HBO put together a wonderful series on his career. Some of you may have seen it. I strongly recommend it for anyone who hadn't. And John Adams was really the behind the scenes maneuverer. He was the primary force behind the patriot cause in the Second Continental Congress. He knew that he had to get all of states to simultaneously vote or independence. The majority was not going to be good enough, that all thirteen clocks had to strike as one, and as one person put it. Then ultimately in July of 1776, the Second Continental Congress took that momentous vote, and here you see a famous portrait of their proceedings. And finally in July of 1776, you now officially had all of the colonies taking up arms defending the British empire, although again keep in mind at least a third of that colonial population has actually decided to remain loyal to the crown, and there's another one third that's hanging in the balance.

**Slide 9**

**Text:** Strategic Overview of War

[Map of the battles of The American Revolution, 1775-1781]

**Audio:** This slide summarizes the military engagements of the American War for Independence and I don't have time to take you blow by blow through all of them but let me just try to provide you a big picture of the conflict. First of all, to bring us up to the moment of July 1776 when independence was declared, you'll notice that the British eventually left the city of Boston in March of 76. This was after the Patriots had pulled off a pretty remarkable feat. They had captured a British Fort in today what is upstate New York near the border with Vermont, a Fort called Ticonderoga where British defenses had been very lacks in their security and Patriots had captured a fair number of large artillery pieces and they were able to lug those cannons across mountains, across frozen lakes and get them down to Boston to help George Washington in his siege of that city. And General Howell, once he saw those cannon commanding the harbor and threatening his ships, he decided to leave and temporarily went up to Canada. However, by the time that the Patriots are voting for independence in Philadelphia in July of 76, the British are gathering the largest Navel armada that the western hemisphere had ever seen up until that point in history and they are gathering it outside of New York City for a major military campaign to try and break the back of this rebellion. And so I'm going to be talking about the New York campaign here in a moment. But first with the next slide I'm going to give you the big picture of the Patriots strategy in trying to win this war.

**Slide 10**

**Text:** Patriot Battle Plan
• Win a war of attrition by wearing down British
• Not necessary to win battles and occupy much territory
• Use guerrilla tactics with small units and skirmishes and quick retreats with armies
• Avoid conventional, 18th Century style engagements that favored British
• Took some setbacks for this strategy to be accepted

Audio: What the patriots gradually figured out, and I really want to emphasize the idea of it being a gradual process -- It took some real setbacks, some really tough lessons learned to get to this place. But what George Washington and other patriot leaders gradually figured out was that they could win this war without triumphing in major battles and without necessarily occupying much territory. All they had to do was to win what we call a war of attrition. And you win a war of attrition by just wearing down your opponent. I guess, to use a sports analogy, you might call it winning ugly because in many cases, you know, you may lose more battles than you win. And, by the way, in terms of major battles, the patriots did lose more than they won. George Washington personally lost more battles than he won. Again, you may see much of your territory occupied by the enemy, but as long as you can keep forces in the field as a symbol of resistance, as a symbol of hope, and thus compel your enemy to have to keep chasing you, to keep trying to destroy every last vestige of your military presence, then you can potentially wear that enemy down. You can get your foe to the point where he decides in a cost benefit analysis that whatever's to be gained from winning this war is not worth the expense. And it takes a long time. This conflict won't officially come to an end until 1783. The major fighting will be done in late 1781, but it's going to take that long. But the British eventually will decide that it's just not worth it any longer. So how did the patriots do this? Well, what George Washington eventually learns with his continental army is to use skirmishes and quick retreats. I mean certainly when he has the most advantageous circumstances he can really try to win a major battle, and he did win a number of them, but otherwise just keep your enemy chasing you. Engage them briefly, and then melt away. Force them to keep chasing you. And where you have smaller units, use gorilla tactics. In other words, use small unit hit and run raids. Rely upon your stealth. Rely upon the fact that you know the territory better than that of your enemies. In certain parts of the thirteen colonies are now -- We'll start calling them the thirteen states -- gorilla tactics worked particularly well. Some of you may have heard of the South Carolina patriot leader Francis Marion who was known as the swamp fox for his tactics. The Mel Gibson character in the movie "The Patriot" is partially based upon that individual. And, conversely, if you're trying to win a war of attrition what you don't want to do is to give the British their typical style of battle because, let's face it, in most cases the British are going to outnumber you, their troops are going to be better trained, they're going to be better equipped. So unless you have unique circumstances in your favor, you want to avoid conventional set piece eighteenth century style battles that are naturally going to favor the British. Now, again, there will be some moments when the patriots actually recognize that fighting a more conventional engagement will work. When we get to the final battle of the war at Yorktown, Virginia, because of the major advantages held by the
patriots, they could do things in a European style. But for much of the war they were not in that kind of position. So I'm going to run through some of the military highlights of the war, but just keep in mind this overall battle plan. Not giving the British the kind of war that they wanted. For the most part, the patriots succeeded in that respect.

**Slide 11**

**Text:** Most Desperate Hour for Patriots – Trenton – Dec 1776

[Image of painting of Washington crossing the Potomac]

**Audio:** As I cover the next few slides it might help to take a quick look back at the map, to keep everything straight here. And I apologize that it's not going to be entirely easy to follow. But I mentioned a few moments ago that by the mid to late summer of 1776 it was clear that the next major fighting was going to take place in the vicinity of New York City. And George Washington had about 20,000 men under his command in New York City, with a total of about 30,000 British soldiers, not to mention the British Navy, facing him. Now for various geographical reasons New York City was almost impossible to defend, because it had so much coastline, there were so many places the British could put troops ashore, and the Patriots weren't going to be able to respond very quickly; that Washington knew he could not defend the city properly, and he would have preferred not to have even tried. But the Continental Congress, and of course Washington answered to those congressional leaders, they didn't want him to just give up on this major city. They wanted him to make a real show of defending it. And so this was 1 case where Washington was forced to fight a more European style engagement in what became known as the New York campaign, of the summer and on into the fall of 1776, was just an unmitigated disaster for George Washington. And these are his first real battles as a commanding officer, because things had stayed relatively quiet in the Boston area before the British had left. And so Washington experiences a series of defeats in the vicinity of New York City and a little farther north, that lead to large numbers of his soldiers being captured, killed, deserting; such that by the time that you get into the winter of 1776 Washington has lost New York City, the Patriot cause has been, to some extent, discredited and demoralized. And in the 18th century with technology being what it is, typically you don't really fight in the winter. An army will try to find the most comfortable spot that it reasonably can to just kind of hole up until the spring. So Washington was in Pennsylvania near the border with New Jersey, basically licking his wounds, and by December of 1776 I would argue that the Patriot movement was at its very lowest point. Some of Washington's senior officers were talking about replacing him. Washington himself was deeply depressed, having a hard time maintaining his usual composure and fortitude. His army had dwindled to just a few thousand men from what it had originally been, about 20,000 in the New York campaign, and many of these soldiers had short term re-enlistment, or excuse me, short term enlistment contracts that were about to run out at the end of the year. And it was clear that the vast majority of them were just getting ready to go home, and that there weren't many
new recruits that were going to be coming in any time soon. So this entire Patriot movement was in real danger of being extinguished here in late 1776. And it was at this moment that Washington took the biggest gamble of the entire war. Not too far away, in New Jersey, in the town of Trenton, there was a garrison of German mercenaries from the province of Hesse in Germany, so that these soldiers were called Hessians. The British were in the habit, as were all major European powers, of hiring foreign mercenaries to do some of their fighting for them. And the Hessians actually had a reputation for being particularly cruel and blood thirsty, and not always respecting the rules of warfare. In any case, what Washington decided to do was to use the occasion of the Christmas holiday, when he knew it was natural that your guard would be down, that many soldiers would be celebrating. What he decided to do was to try to sneak his force across the Delaware River, which was, in a month like December, was in pretty bad shape. It may not have been quite as bad as this painting depicts here with the floating chunks of ice and so forth, but conditions were pretty frigid. And Washington's plan was to sneak his small force across the Delaware River, surprise the Garrison at Trenton, and capture it's valuable supplies. Washington goes ahead, pulls this off, apparently he was rallying his men, exhorting them, walking with them every step of the way. This is one of his finest moments of leadership, and he ends up achieving the element of surprise at Trenton. There was a brief engagement, actually not a single Patriot soldier lost his life. And there were a small number of Hessians killed, the rest of them surrendered, a good 900 men ended up surrendering to Patriot forces, and all of their supplies fell into the hands of George Washington. In terms of the military balance of power, the victory at Trenton was not a big deal because the British crown could just turn around and hire some more mercenaries. But in terms of giving the Patriot movement a shot in the arm, a psychological boost, an emotional boost, the victory at Trenton was huge. And Washington followed it up shortly thereafter with a victory at Princeton New Jersey with a portion of his army. But in any case, this is going to really revitalize the Patriot movement. It will help recruitment, and don't get me wrong - the Patriot movement still has some tough times ahead, but December of '76 was when the flame was the closest to being extinguished, and Washington rolled the dice and was able to keep it alive. In a final irony of the battle for Trenton, the Hessian commander at Trenton, a Colonel Johann Rall, actually there had been an attempt to contact him the night before the attack. A loyalist spy, who knew enough of Washington's plans to know that Trenton was a target, had actually tried to get an audience with this Hessian Colonel who was enjoying a Christmas party inside a private home in Trenton. And this spy came to the door and was trying to get an audience with the Colonel, to tell him what he knew. But they wouldn't let him in, and so they told him just write down your message on a note and we'll get it to him. Well Rall never bothered reading that note, and it was actually found on his dead body the next day, after he had been mortally wounded and passed in this fight. So it's another one of those factors that makes you appreciate just how close the Patriot movement came to being unsuccessful here. But instead it has now become the stuff of ages, when we look back at U.S. history.
Text: French Join the Patriots – Keyed by Victory at Saratoga – Oct 1777

[Image of Patriots and French troops on the battlefield]

Audio: As I said a moment ago, the victory of Trenton did not really affect the military balance of power, but I now want to turn to the first major Patriot victory that does. And let me be clear upfront, this battle does not involve George Washington. There were other Continental Army units up and down the 13 states that were not under Washington's field command. They were under his overall authority but they were part of separate armies, separate units under different commanders. And so, with that in mind, I'd like turn our attention to the Fall of the 1777. It's at this point that the British come up with a plan that they think will be decisive in winning this war. They recognized that the greatest Patriot settlement is located in the New England. So, if they can somehow quarantine or lock off New England from the rest of the 13 colonies or states, then they can sort of keep that "virus," if you will, contained and deal with it. And so, in order to cut off New England, what they decided they have to do and it may help again to refer back to the map while I'm talking about some of this, they decided that they have cut off New England by taking control of the entire Lake Champlain-Hudson River Valley, between British Canada and New York City. Now, the British hold New York City, they took it successfully in that New York campaign that I mentioned and they hold Canada. Now, the Patriot's basically lie in between. And so the British come up with a three-pronged plan that they think will cut off New England from the rest of the colonies. One army under the command of a General John Burgoyne would start moving south from Canada, start coming down Lake Champlain and eventually down the Hudson River Valley. A smaller force would cross the great lakes and try to come across sub state New York from the west. And meanwhile, general house army in New York City would begin to move northward up the Hudson River Valley, so that was the plan. And they would gradually converge on Patriot forces, deal them a crushing blow and that this would turn to tight. Now, had that plan actually been put into effect, it is quite possible that it would have been successful. But for a variety of reasons, advance will take a different course. One thing that helps the Patriots in this war is that Senior British commanders oftentimes did not communicate and cooperate well with each other. They had their own petty rivalries and sometimes, just the limited technology from communication allowed forces that were not in close proximity to one another to fail to keep in touch and coordinate their actions. Basically, what happened was General Howe decided to go chase after George Washington down in Pennsylvania instead of contributing to this plan. And he did capture Philadelphia which was the Patriot capital and sure, that was embarrassing and it was the more lousy and Washington had to spent a tough winter at the place called Valley Forge in Pennsylvania where once again, his army went down to a couple thousand men and conditions were brutal. But by not cooperating with the larger British clan, Howe would left the door open for the Patriots to score a major victory, because Burgoyne's army moving south will end up being met by a pretty sizable Patriot force in the vicinity of Saratoga, New York which is upstate in that particular land. And meanwhile, that expedition that was supposed to come in from the west, it was defeated in New York, so it seems
to be part of the equation. So what was supposed to be a three-pronged attack turned into a single prong and General John Burgoyne had to move down through the New York wilderness making no better progress than about a mile or two a day because his troops had to often knock down trees in order to keep their massive army moving along. They had supply trains, they have brought along some of the officers wives, they'd also brought along prostitutes for some of the men, to make the long story short, they were slow moving force. When they began to run low in supplies, they sent a forging party end of every month and ended up being defeated at a battle in southern Vermont. So, by the time he met up with the main Patriots forces at Saratoga, Burgoyne was not in great shape. And he ended up being dealt in decisive defeat and was forced to surrender what was left to his army. More than 5,000 prisoners were taken by the Patriots. The battle of Saratoga was the first time that an entire British army had been defeated by the Patriots in this war. And one of the main heroes of Saratoga ironically was a very promising Patriot general named Benedict Arnold. A man however, who will eventually become the biggest trader in US history up to this point. And I'm not going to go into all the details here but basically, Arnold will increasingly feel as though he is not getting the full respect for his accomplishments which by the way were significant. And he will eventually decide to turn on his country and try to give the British key advantage. Basically, later in the war, he becomes the commandant of a fort at West Point, New York. And he tries to arrange for that fort to be left in poor defenses so that the British can take it and his plot will be sniffed out at the last minute. Arnold will escape to join the British, but the rest of his life will be pretty miserable, and he does go down in history as this nation's biggest traitor. However, he was also one of its key contributors to this victory at Saratoga. And there is unnamed memorial to him at the Saratoga battlefield today. Again, unnamed because obviously there's a reluctance to give a man like that, [inaudible] after what he did to his country. But to get back to Saratoga, US officials including John Adams had been in France for some time trying to persuade British traditional enemy to join the war on the Patriots side. Now, the French had already quietly been providing some supplies and financial assistance to the Patriots. But now, the, you know, US officials were aiming for a full partnership with France. Now, the French Monarchy was not interested in the values of the American Revolution. It was a more repressive society than that of England. Certainly, all this talk about equality and independence was rather dangerous for the French monarch to French aristocracy. But as the old expression goes, "The enemy of my enemy is my friend" and the French saw an opportunity to weaken the British Empire. Perhaps to pick up some colonies and other parts of the world not North America, but if the French could join this war and they were successful in defeating the British, the British would have come to the bargaining table on their terms. But the French wanted to make sure that this Patriot movement really had a chance of winning. And so the French Monarchy had sort of been sitting on the fence kind of waiting to see what would happen. When news arrived of this victory at Saratoga, that ended up being the decisive moment that led the French Monarchy to officially join this war as a full military partner of the Patriot movements, so that's a huge development. And so, once the French join this conflict, it's pretty unlikely that the British are going to be able to win this conflict. However, that doesn't
necessarily mean they're going to lose any time soon either. So, I mean, it was still something of a danger that this conflict would just be a stalemate that might go on for some long period of time, but certainly, a very positive development for the Patriots in October '77.

**Slide 13**

**Text:** Final Victory – Yorktown – Oct 1781

[Image of British surrender]

**Audio:** After the defeat at Saratoga, the British turned to a strategy that they probably should've embraced from the outset, and that was to concentrate their military operations in the south. Why? Because this was really the region where you had the highest concentration of Royalists. So the British could count on them, the relatively best support network. But it wasn't until after the Saratoga defeat that they finally did this. Now initially, the southern campaign for the British went rather well. They captured what had been a Patriot stronghold at Charleston, South Carolina. They won a number of victories, really forcing the Patriots to rely more on guerilla operations for a period of time. But eventually George Washington was able to spring a trap upon the British. The main British army in the South was commanded by General Edward Cornwallis, who eventually, after operations in the Carolinas, decided to head northward to Yorktown, Virginia, which lay along the coast of the Chesapeake Bay area. And Washington had finally convinced French soldiers who had been stationed in North America to get into the fight. The French had sent over an army that had basically been sitting in Rhode Island and not doing a whole lot of anything for months. Washington, with the help of one of his staff officers, the Marquis de Lafayette, a French officer, Washington was able to get the French to move, so that Washington and this French army quietly made their way down to Yorktown to lay siege to British defenses there. Now, Cornwallis in part had picked Yorktown because he knew, with his back to the sea, he could count on the Royal Navy to protect him. And usually the British Navy performed quite well against the French. But in this particular case, in September of 1781, as Washington and the French were closing in, a French fleet arrived offshore of the Yorktown area –- I should say, offshore of the entrance to Chesapeake Bay, and drove away the British naval forces in that vicinity. So now Cornwallis had lost his naval support so that when Washington and the French troops closed in, the British now found themselves outnumbered about two to one. There was a total of about 16,000 French and American forces at Yorktown against roughly half that number of British defenders, who ended up nearly surrounded at Yorktown. So by October of 1781, the Franco-American siege has reached a point where Cornwallis feels as though he can't really hold out any longer, and he decides to seek terms of surrender from George Washington. Now, Cornwallis was a very proud aristocrat. When the time came to surrender at Yorktown, it was traditional in the military culture at the time that the commanding officer on the losing side hands over his sword to the commanding officer on the victorious side. But Cornwallis didn't respect Washington enough to want to give him that honor, so he sent out
one of his generals to do it. Washington, not about to be slighted, therefore, had one of his own subordinate officers accept the sword, rather than do it himself. I'm just trying to throw in a little bit of an anecdote here. So a British army surrenders at Yorktown after a prolonged seige. And so once again, like Saratoga, you have an entire British Army being defeated. And fortunately for Washington, the British surrendered before their reinforcements arrived. It was only a day or so after the defeat at Yorktown that another British fleet with reinforcements showed up at the entrance to Chesapeake Bay. So if Cornwallis had decided to hold out just a bit longer, the tide of battle might well have been turned. But timing is everything and it certainly worked out well for the Patriots. And the Battle of Yorktown ends up being the last major battle of the War for Independence. Once news reached England of this crushing defeat, the British House of Commons, their lower House of Parliament, voted against continuing the war. And not long thereafter, the British Prime Minister resigned and negotiations began for a peace settlement. And although that treaty will not be signed until 1783, in terms of the war itself, the intensity of hostilities will die down. So the Battle of Yorktown, ultimately, this is the major victory that brings the war to an end. And as the story goes, as the British forces were surrendering, their band played a nursery rhyme called "The World Turned Upside Down." And certainly for many who supported the British empire in this war, it had to feel that way on this day in October of 1781: literally, a world turned upside down. The most powerful nation and empire in the world humbled by a conglomeration of its colonies. It was really -- it was an upset of monumental proportions.

Slide 14

Text: Problems Within Patriot Movement

- Slavery question – more slaves won their freedom serving with British than among Patriots
- Class tensions – commoners wanted more of a voice than gentry class was generally willing to allow
- State authorities often uncooperative with Washington and Continental Congress

Audio: Although we naturally tend to glorify the Patriot movement in this country, and it's certainly not my intention to tear them down, I do want to mention some of its tensions, some of its difficulties just to give you a fuller historical picture. One point that doesn't show up here on the slide is, if I could just get back to the Patriot battle plan for a moment, please appreciate that it's very difficult to win a war of attrition the way the Patriots did, because think what it does to the morale of your soldiers and your other supporters when you are losing more battles than you win, when you're spending much of your time retreating, when you're watching much of your territory get occupied. Obviously all of that weighs on you. An army likes to feel a sense of momentum, just like a sports team. And when your strategy involves often being content with losing, even if that losing serves a larger purpose, that's not easy. Some other problems within
the Patriot movement, I want to turn a moment to the slavery question. I've found with students that it often blows their minds to discover that there were more slaves who won their freedom by serving in the British military in this war than by serving among the Patriots. Many Patriot slave owners were not willing to give their "property," as they saw it, the opportunity to win their freedom by serving in Patriot military units. Now, certainly in states that didn't have many slaves, places like New England, it was far easier if either you were a slave who wanted your freedom, or if you were a free Black citizen of those areas, certainly again, there were African-Americans who served in Patriot military units and contributed to this victory. But the British actually had a more widespread policy of offering freedom if you served with them. And they treated African-Americans in their ranks very badly. Let me be clear about that. But ultimately more African-Americans won their freedom on the British side. Another problem within the Patriot movement that sort of foreshadows political problems in putting this new country together, I had mentioned many slides ago that there was a kind of unofficial aristocracy in colonial America. They called themselves the Gentry Class. And again, while they certainly were nowhere near as powerful as their British counterparts, men like Thomas Jefferson, George Washington; they did aspire to sort of direct this colonial society. And what ends up happening is that during this war, because it is a war fought against privilege, it is a war fought against the monarchy, many of the common colonial citizens who fought in the Patriot movement, they feel like -- this is an important phrase to take down in your notes -- that it's not just a war for home rule, but a war to see who will rule at home. I'll say that again. It's not just a war about home rule. "Home rule" referring to whether or not the colonies dictate their own affairs. But it's also a question of who will rule at home. In other words, once the British government is out of the picture and independence is a reality, then how open is this society going to be politically for the participation of all of its people? Where are those boundaries going to be drawn? Will the Gentry Class just kind of replace the British government and British authority and carry on very neatly? Or will there be others getting into the mix as well? And so I'm going to be coming back to these class tensions as we move along here. And a final point on problems within the Patriot movement, one reason why George Washington was such a miracle-worker in keeping the war effort going was that he had a very weak Continental Congress that could never get him nearly as much as he needed, and he often found state authorities unwilling to be completely cooperative with him, because state authorities could only see their little piece of the war effort and were not as focused on the big picture as Washington was. And so when we appreciate George Washington, it wasn't so much for the Xs and the Os of the battlefield, if you will. It's not so much for him as a tactician as it was for the way that, number one, he was an incredible leader, the way he presented this model of self-sacrifice that naturally drew soldiers to him and made them want to be loyal to him and to serve him and to do their part. And also the way he had to act as part-diplomat, part-politician. He had to try to deal with Congress, to deal with state leaders, to deal with foreign officers, to pull all of these different groups together to keep the war effort going. That's really where his genius lay in the prosecution of the war.
Slide 15

Text: Treaty of Paris (1783)

[Map of the states and territories in 1783]

Audio: To turn back to some geography for a moment, shown here on this map, this new United States ends up doing very well in the peace treaty that brought the war to an end. The 1738 Treaty of Paris gave the new United States boundaries that extended as far north as the Great Lakes, as far south as, you know, basically the mouth of the Mississippi River and as far west as the Mississippi River. I should say, let's say as far south as Florida, as far west as the Mississippi Rover, as far north as the Great Lakes. So all of this blue territory that you see here to the west, in addition to the original 13 Colonies, this becomes part of the new United States. So obviously for those interested in westward expansion, there's a great deal of potential embodied in this agreement. And the last thing I'll say about the Treaty of Paris, and to me this is a little bit amusing, a little bit serious, one reason why U.S. officials were able to get such a good deal is that they cut a separate piece with England instead of staying on board with the French. In other words, the French got into this fight hoping that they could concessions from England at the end because of their partnership with America. In other words being that when you go to negotiate, you know, you should stick together with your allies, present a united front to your enemy and get the best deal that you can. But U.S. officials were, you know, quietly told by the British that if they were willing to cut a separate piece, they could get a great deal which would then allow the British to play hardball with the French on their own differences. Now that's exactly what U.S. negotiators did and at least for this country, it worked out very well. For the French, they ended up spending quite a bit of money on a war that in some ways even helped to bring along their own revolution in 1789 and the downfall of their monarchy, at least temporarily.

Slide 16

Text: Weaknesses of Articles of Confederation

- No chief executive of any significance
- No ability for national government to tax or set trade policy
- No high court of the land
- Unanimous consent required to amend Articles
- In effect, a recipe for chaos

Audio: Even while the War for Independence had still been in progress, Patriots had created a new political system to try to run their country, even while attempting to defeat the British Empire. And this system doesn't get a great deal of press today, because it won't last very long. But its weaknesses will help to lead into the constitutional system that we do use today. So I do need to cover this previous system. It was called the Articles of Confederation. "Confederation"
is basically a political science term for "a very loose alliance of states." So it's no coincidence that when we get to the Civil War, the Southern states that left the Union, they call themselves the Confederate States of America, because they believed in only a loose alliance of states, a weak national government. But anyway, let's go back to the area here of the 1770s and '80s. The Articles of Confederation both during the war and for a number of years thereafter, they represented the law of the land. And they were pretty much a disaster. Why? Well, I've tried to summarize it here on the slide. For one thing, you had no chief executive of any real significance. There was no president, no prime minister. There was no one strong executive authority that you could look to to enforce laws, to provide leadership on national security. So in that respect, it was a pretty poor arrangement. This national government under the Articles of Confederation also had no ability to tax, which made it very difficult to raise revenue. It also couldn't set trade policy for all 13 states. So if you were a foreign country that wanted to do business in America, it was very easy to pit different states against each other for your own benefit, because there was no centralizing authority on this issue. There was no high court for the entire land. There was no equivalent of what today we would call our Supreme Court. The only national institution was this Continental Congress. And if you wanted to amend the Articles of Confederation because you felt there were problems with it, which clearly there were, all 13 state delegations had to agree to do it. It took unanimous consent to make any significant changes to the Articles of Confederation. And it would be very difficult to get all 13 groups on board with this. So you were basically doomed to failure. So as I've indicated here, this entire system was a recipe for chaos, and especially as we get into the post-war years of the 1780s, there is plenty of chaos. I'll give you one quick example. In the state of Massachusetts, there had been heavy debts run up by the state government during the war. And after the war was over, the state legislature decided to try to pay those debts off in a hurry by raising those taxes drastically in that state. And taxes were primarily based on owning land. So for farmers, who tend to need a great deal of acreage to make their living, this tax ended up hitting farmers unusually hard, many of whom didn't have much cash and couldn't really pay these taxes. So out in Western Massachusetts, the situation got so bad that about 1,200 men, many of them veterans of the war -- so these were former Patriots who had sacrificed for their country -- they now formed this ragtag army behind the leadership of a former Continental Army officer named Daniel Shays. And they basically rebelled against the government of Massachusetts. They tried to seize a weapons arsenal in the western part of the state. They had to be put down by the state militia. There were a number of people killed. The thing broke up fairly quickly once the militia got involved, but it was still a very ugly symbolic episode. If it's getting to the point where a state has to take action against a large number of veterans, what does that say about how well this country is progressing through independence, into its post-war years, trying to achieve some stability? Obviously things were not going well. And so events like this in Massachusetts helped to create a consensus among political leaders to hold a convention to make at least some changes to the Articles of Confederation. Now, how drastic those changes would be, it depended upon to whom you talked. But one Virginia leader by the name of James Madison had in mind a complete overhaul of the
Articles of Confederation. And he was the driving force behind putting together a new political gathering in Philadelphia. This would be the Constitutional Convention in 1787. And it's to that that I will turn next.

**Slide 17**

**Text:** Constitutional Convention, May- Sep 1787

- Consensus around establishing what scholars call a republican regency – essentially protecting the people from themselves
- Slavery question put off through 3/5 Compromise and ban on international slave trade after 1808
- Large state/small state differences settled with two-house Congress as we know it today

**Audio:** From May to September of 1787, there were 55 delegates to this Constitutional Convention who hashed out a new basis for a system of government in this country. And they kept their proceedings secret because they didn't want public passions on one side or another to affect the final product that they were putting together. They wanted to be able to deliberate amongst themselves, really try to operate in the realm of ideas, not letting popular passions and intrigue get involved. And then once they had a finished product, they would put it before the American people, not that all the American people were going to vote on it, but some of them would be able to. And of course, today, this process of producing the Constitution is enshrined in our history as one of these incredible moments, and certainly in many respects it was. The final product produced in Philadelphia will be the most progressive political document of its time. It certainly has its faults, and we're going to point out some of them, but it really helped to make this country a beacon to the rest of the world and give others a sense of what was truly possible in creating an ideal political society. Now, let me turn to some of the key issues that had to be hashed out in creating this Constitution. I'll start with the third point on my slide. Obviously when discussing what kind of political institutions would be created, there was a concern among smaller states that their voice had to be equally as loud as those from larger states with advantages in population. So the compromises worked out bear a great deal of resemblance to what you know of today as our national government. Of course, we have a two-house Congress. The upper house, the Senate, has equal representation for all states. Two senators, whether you're as small as Rhode Island or as large as Virginia, or of course, years down the road, as large as California or Alaska. Everybody gets two seats in the Senate. The lower house of Congress, the People's House, the House of Representatives, is based on population. And it is the lower house that has the greater control over the finances of the country. So the idea being that's the People's House; their representatives go up for re-election every two years, so they're more answerable to the public and therefore they have more control over the purse strings. Because senators have a term of six years, they are given more authority over foreign policy, because that is seen as a process that is more deliberative. It's better to have more experienced individuals in place there.
So that's basically how things are divided. It was also decided, of course, to create a Supreme Court that would have the ultimate authority in determining the constitutionality of all laws in this country. It was also considered very important at the Constitutional Convention to establish branches of government that would each have some ability to check up on each other. Again, recognizing that political power has this incredible ability to corrupt you, everyone has to be accountable to somebody else. So you know from high school civics or even junior high civics, we have our three branches of government: the executive, legislative and judicial. They all various ways of checking up on each other. A president can veto a law from Congress with enough votes. Congress can turn around and override that veto. Supreme Court can strike down a law passed by Congress and signed by the president. The two houses of Congress can remove a president if there are high crimes and misdemeanors for which he's convicted. I'm just giving you a few examples here of what we call the checks and balances that allow our branches of government to check up on each other. The slavery question -- of course, there's so much talk that goes into what was or was not done in Philadelphia on that question. The original Constitution does not use the word "slave" or "slavery" anywhere. There are some oblique references to property, and that's really where you see slavery being covered. By and large, the delegates to the Constitutional Convention, including the Southern delegates, were pretty embarrassed about the existence of slavery, but the prevailing feeling was that in order to get all 13 states on board and join this Union, slavery could not be allowed to be potentially the make-or-break issue that might cause this to be a union of only eight or nine states, instead of 13. So the only ways in which slavery was dealt with was, number one, by saying that 20 years after this Constitution goes into effect -- that is, in 1808 -- the United States will no longer participate in the international slave trade. Now, that said nothing about the buying and selling of slaves domestically. But it was a step in the right direction, I suppose. The other way in which slavery was dealt with was that a slave was considered to be three-fifths of a person in determining representation in Congress for those states that had slaves, because basically Southern states wanted to count slaves as a full individual so they'd get more seats in the House. States with little or no slaves did not like that, because they felt it was unfair. If you're not going to let someone be a citizen, why do they get to affect your population total? So the compromise was three-fifths. And that is it. By and large, what the founders hoped was that they could create medium to long-term conditions that would make slavery impractical, so that it would gradually die out. And so they only took steps to that extent. The final point that I want to make from this slide, and this is a pretty important one -- and again, it may be a little bit of a shock, depending upon what you've learned about the Revolution and the Constitution already -- by and large, the delegates to this convention came from an elite background. And as much as they were celebrating liberty, they were also very worried that the country might be growing up too fast. That you had many relatively uneducated, ignorant people who were only thinking about all the new rights and benefits that they had with freedom and independence, rather than the responsibilities of citizenship that came with it. And they were afraid that many of these new citizens were going to be selfish, they were going to be petty, they were going to be irresponsible, and that ultimately
this young republic would not survive. And please keep in mind, this was a very fragile US republic in the late 1780s. So what the delegates of the convention generally agreed upon was that this Constitution had to be set up in a way that essentially protected the people from their worst instincts and sort of looked over them and guided them until such time as they could better run their own lives. Now, that sounds very paternalistic and to some extent it absolutely was. But let me try to explain in more detail what I mean. In a monarchical society, there is a term -- we call it a regent -- where, let's say you have a king or queen who dies on the throne, and the heir to the throne may only be a child, may only be an infant or not be old enough to make responsible, adult decisions. In that case, what they do is they take an older, trusted advisor called a regent, and that individual basically runs the country through that young monarch until the monarch reaches an age of maturity where he or she can take things over themselves. Well, what the delegates to the... Constitutional Convention want to do is to make the Constitution into the regent for this country. And I'm calling it a republican regent for the following reason. Now here, "republican" does not refer to a political party. Eventually there will be Republican parties in this nation's history; we're not there yet. But republicanism with a small "R" refers to a political culture, a culture that had developed in British history and so many Americans, especially learned Americans, were familiar with it at the time. And one of the essential features of republicanism was that, whether you're an office-holder or just an everyday citizen, you need to be focused on the common good of your nation, that whatever your particular self-interest might be based on your background, your religion, your occupation, your social class, whatever the case may be, you're supposed to set all of that aside and subsume it in the name of the common good. Well, the problem is, most of the delegates to this convention who are from the Gentry Class, they don't think that your average American is ready to really look out for the common good. They don't think that they're focused and responsible and mature enough to do that. So the idea is, "Let's create a Constitution that basically acts as a republican regent for the American people until they're properly educated to take over more of the reins of power themselves. And so let me give you one example of this republican regency in operation. The way that we elect a president, even for the most part still today, is a product of this mindset of a republican regency. A president is not elected by the popular vote of the American people. And as a matter of fact, there wasn't even a popular vote taken in this country until 1824. So we're going to have a number of presidential elections without one in the early years of this nation. But instead, we have this kind of mysterious body called the Electoral College, where each political party -- well, we didn't have political parties at first either. But basically there are slates of electors. Now today, these electors are associated with political parties. Originally they were just picked by state leaders. And they actually vote on who becomes president. So on election night these days -- I mean, sure, you'll see the popular vote being kept track of by the major networks, but of course it's the Electoral vote that really determines who becomes president. Each state has a number of electoral votes equal to the total of their senators and their members of the House of Representatives. So obviously the big states carry more electoral votes. But whoever gets the majority of the electoral votes becomes president. Well, the original Constitution and its
delegates anticipated that these electors were going to be elites, and therefore, the sort of people that they would vote for president would be the "right sort of people," and therefore, the Electoral College was originally designed as a way to filter the popular will and to elect somebody responsible, and to some extent, to keep that decision out of the hands of the American people. Now today, the Electoral College is much more of a formality. Political parties choose electors, more just as kind of a neat thing to reward you for years of service to the party or something. And I don't want to get too deep in the weeds here, but this strange way we have of electing a president is a product of an original concern that the American people were growing up too fast. So one thing I'd like you to appreciate about the Constitutional Convention is that, to a large extent, it was about limiting the rate of growth of democracy rather than facilitating the spread of democracy. I'll say that again. To a large extent, the Constitutional Convention was about limiting the rate of growth of democracy rather than facilitating the spread of democracy. And that can be a little bit of a mind-blower until you start to study this period in detail.

Slide 18

**Text:** Ratification Debate

- Federalists vs. Anti-Federalists
- Liberty vs. Order – Where is proper equilibrium?
- Argument by James Madison in Federalist #10
- Federalists win the day with promise of national Bill of Rights

**Audio:** Once the delegates to the Constitutional Convention had put together their final product, it was now up to the individual states to vote on it. You know, they each held their own Constitutional Convention with delegates that would vote on whether not to approve this product. And it was basically an all or nothing choice. You either accepted the entire constitution as is, or you had to send everybody back to the drawing board to take potentially several more months to put something together. And, if nine of the 13 states voted in favor of the constitution, then it would become the law of the land. And, over a period of some months, there was a debate over whether or not to accept this product as it was originally created. And the two sides that emerged in this debate call themselves the federalist and the anti-federalist. Federalism as a political science term, just refers to a system where, while your national government has certain overarching authority for the entire country, you also have some sort of a state--series of state governments that retain certain powers all to themselves. In other words, unlike a monarchical society or even in a parliamentary system, where that national government has complete overall authority in a system of federalism, you're separating things out between the state and the national level. And that's the political system that the United States has had since this constitution went into effect. So, the federalist are the once who want to keep the constitution as it was originally created. The anti-federalist are the ones that want some degree of change. I mean some of them are just completely appalled of the entire document. But basically, they're
the opponents of the constitution. And, I'd like to mention that one way that you can boil down so many of the issues that were considered in Philadelphia. And frankly, so many of the issues that we still grapple with today as a political society, is how we balance two very necessary qualities against one another. And those qualities are liberty and order. Now, if you step back and think about it for a second, again, we need both of these components of a healthy society. Obviously, we want the liberty to be able to pursue our own course in life, to follow our dreams, to feel like there weren't artificial impediments to what we're trying to do with ourselves, to better ourselves, and so forth. But at the same time, I mean, ever since human beings have first bonded together, we need a certain amount of order as well. I mean, we need boundaries. You know, we don't all want to be constantly having to defend ourselves against the potential of some form of attack. So, you know, we found it convenient to come together to, you know, to figure out collective ways to protect ourselves and to establish certain guidelines for behavior and to enforce them. So, we obviously, also need a degree of order. But both of these qualities can be abused. I mean, there is such a thing as too much liberty. I mean, too much liberty can lead to chaos. And arguably, that was the problem for this country for much of the 1780s. But of course, too much order can lead to some kind of a police state, it can lead to fascism in its most extreme cases. So, you know, you want to find a healthy equilibrium between the two. Well, I would suggest to you that the founders had to deal with this in a very difficult way. And political leaders ever since then are often trying to balance these two qualities. And I'm going to come back to that a little bit more in a future slide. Now, one of the leading federalists was James Madison of Virginia who had done so much to put the Constitutional Convention together in the first place. And, he and two of his allies, John Jay of New York and Alexander Hamilton of New York had written more than 100 essays lumped together in what was called The Federalist. And all of these essays were basically designed to promote the original constitution in one way or another. And probably the most famous of these essays was number ten. Because one of the arguments of anti-federalist, and they were sort of looking at world history up to this point in world history. No large republic had ever survived, had ever been able to hold itself together, accomplish its goals, they'd always disintegrated into something more corrupt. And James Madison was trying to argue that the very size and the very diversity of this new nation was going to be at saving grace. Because with so many different interest out there, with so many different political and social, and economic perspectives out there, there was no way that anyone faction, that anyone narrow minded interest was ever going to be able to dominate this country because it was just too diverse. I mean, you were going to have to be willing to compromise, you were going to have to be willing to find common ground with other groups if you were going to reach any sort of consensus on how to move this country forward. So, that would prevent the United States from becoming corrupt like other republics the world history had over the centuries. Now, the federalist ultimately win this debate, they get their constitution. Number of the votes were pretty close in certain states but no state voted against the constitution. But one of the strongest arguments that were made--that was made by anti-federalist was that, there was no Bill of Rights in this new constitution. Now, each state had their own Bill of Rights and their
own state level constitutions but there was no national Bill of Rights in the constitution. So, James Madison promised that if anti-federalist could get behind the constitution and allow it to become the law of the land, the first thing he would do when this system went into effect would be to draw up a national Bill of Rights. And sure enough, when he became a member of the Congress from the State of Virginia, James Madison put together the first ten amendments to the constitution that we collectively call our Bill of Rights. And so, that ultimately settles things that we use to a degree and this new constitutional system goes into effect.

**Slide 19**

**Text:** Election of George Washington

[Image of painting of George Washington]

**Audio:** When it comes time in 1788 for the first presidential election under this new Constitutional system, there's really no doubt who's going to triumph. The Electoral College votes unanimously for George Washington to become the first President of the United States. And I just want to say a little bit more about Washington before moving on here. There were a couple of moments after the war was over in the 1780s when officers in the Continental Army were very frustrated and rightfully so because they had back pay owed to them, and in some cases going back years, that this new weak Articles of Confederate government had not been able to get them yet. And amidst all this chaos and instability a number of Continental Army veterans were beginning to talk about maybe having some sort of a coup and taking over this government and steering America in a new direction. Whenever George Washington heard about that sort of talk, he always did his best to put a stop to it. George Washington believed that it was fundamental not only that there be civilian control of the military but also that the rule of law had to be supreme. World history was full of examples of victorious generals who come home from battle and then take over the governments of their particular societies. And let's face it, at the end of the war for independence there was no bigger hero in this new country than George Washington, and certainly if he had wanted to become some kind of maybe you would call it an American king, or some kind of a dictator, some kind of a strong man, there would have been a considerable amount of public sentiment for doing it. And frankly, you know, monarchy was still the most common political system around the world. But George Washington, at the height of his power at the end of the war, resigned his commission in the Continental Army and retired to his plantation at Mount Vernon in Virginia, and he waited to be called back by the people. And frankly, as far as we can tell, if Washington had never been called back, that would not have bothered him too much. He had spent years away from his home, away from his wife; he was old enough by 1788 that living in retirement focusing on his own pursuits would not have bothered him at all. But the people called him back and he felt honor bound to answer that call. And so he was elected, through this newfangled Electoral College, as our nation's first chief executive.
Emergence of Rudimentary Political Parties

- Federalists led by John Adams and Alexander Hamilton
- Favored loose interpretation of Constitution
- Desired strong national government
- Order prioritized over liberty
- Pro-British foreign policy
- Self-styled “aristocrats”
- Ceased to be national force after Adams presidency (1797-1801)

Audio: As George Washington became president and his administration begun to administer the affairs of the country, one of his hopes was that this country would never have political parties. Growing out of his knowledge of English history, Washington looked at political parties as selfish factions. As groups that had trouble looking out for the common good of their--of the country because they were too focused on their own self interest. And, for most of Washington's first term, you didn't really have political parties yet in America. But certainly, by the beginning of his second term of office, it was cleat that political parties were taking shape. Now, by modern standards, they were very rudimentary, not nearly as organized, as disciplined, elections were not being held, and campaigns were not being waged at the same way they are today. So, they don't bear a tremendous resemblance to what you might be accustomed to today when you look at Democrats and Republicans. But before Washington's time and office was through, this party did have--I mean this country did have two political parties. One group call themselves the Federalist and they did have a fair amount of continuity with the Federalist of that debate over ratifying the constitution. The other group that I'll get to in a moment call themselves the Republicans sometimes they also call themselves Democratic Republicans and I know that's getting confusing into terminology. This first Republican Party was not today's Republican Party. It was a very different group. I'm going to get to that here in a moment. George Washington himself, I mean, most scholars do not think of him as being a member of a political part. He did tend to side with the Federalist much of his administration consisted of Federalist but Washington himself really in my opinion and certainly many of the scholars feel this way did not have an allegiance to one party or another. But I want to just briefly outline what these parties stood for because it gives us a sense of the major political issues of their time. The Federalist Party had has its two most prominent leaders, John Adams who became the first Vice President of the United States and then eventually the second President. And also Alexander Hamilton who became the nation's first Secretary of the Treasury and he was a very visionary thinker. Some refer to him as the father of modern conservatism in this country. The Federalist were the party of a strong national government. Therefore, they like the idea of a very loose interpretation of the constitution because the constitution has a clause that says "That every power that's not specifically delegated to the national government resides with the states". So, if you're going to take a very strict
interpretation of the constitution that's going to limit what your national government wants to do. The Federalist are operating from the opposite perspective. They really feel that the national government needs to provide a strong sense of direction to the country, economically, militarily, so they like that idea of a strong national government. Also, back to that whole liberty versus order dichotomy that I brought up a moment ago, the Federalist are more concerned about order than they are about liberty. This is not to suggest that they're already sort of a fascist, but they just felt that again, the political class in this country needed to provide more direction for the American people. So, the Federalist actually like to refer to themselves as aristocrats. That may seem a little bit strange 'cause I've already told you, the revolution had been fought against privilege. It had been fought against the world of Monarchy and Aristocracy. So, why would you think you were going to votes in this new independent America by calling yourself an aristocrat. I know that sounds strange. And in some respects, the Federalist are a little behind the times here. But they really felt that one of the advantages of colonial America had been that everybody sort of knew their place and they knew their responsibilities. And they knew how they were tied to others. And it was easier to get them to work together than it seems to be today in this new independent America where everybody is kind of splintering off in different directions doing their own thing. So, they kind of like that idea, that certain elites would still be looked upon to provide guidance. To, you know, to not to be literally aristocrats but to provide some of that same oversight of this new America. So, Federalist didn't mind to some extent referring to themselves as aristocrats. They also favored the British in foreign policy. Now, a little background on this, please understand that from the early 1790s until 1815 when Napoleon suffered his final defeat in Waterloo, the British and the French were almost continuously at war. They were the super powers of the world at--during this era of history. And, for a new country like America, it was very difficult not to get caught in the middle of that struggle. Both France and England were putting a great deal of pressure on America to trade with them but also potentially to become military partners in this wars that were--again almost continually taking place during these years. And the Federalist felt that it was better to at least tilt towards England if not have a stronger partnership with them. Now, the Federalist are going to be a rather short-lived party at least in terms of being a national force. During John Adams presidency which follows George Washington, so it will run from 1797 to 1801. The Federalist are basically going to implode. And I'm going to say a little bit in a moment about what causes that to happen to them. But the only president that we'll end up seeing in office will be John Adams. So, I'll now turn to the other party.

Slide 21

Text: Emergence of Rudimentary Political Parties (continued)

- Republicans led by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison
- Favored strict interpretation of Constitution
- States’ rights party
• Pro-French foreign policy
• Self-styled “democrats”
• Favored by agricultural interests vs. industrially- and commercially-oriented Federalists

**Audio:** On the other side of the isle, so to speak, you have the Republican or Democratic Republican party. Two of their most notable leaders were Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, both of Virginia. Thomas Jefferson was this country's first Secretary of State. I'd mentioned James Madison was the author of the Bill of Rights and also the driving force behind the Constitutional Convention. Both of these men will eventually be President, saw Jefferson as the country's third president and Madison as the fourth. The Republicans were pretty much the opposite of the Federalists in each of the major points that I've already mentioned. Again, they liked the Constitution to be interpreted very strictly because that left most of the power in the hands of the states. The Republicans were very concerned about an over-arching, corrupt, national power. You know the memory of the Revolution and King George III and Parliament, all very fresh in their minds, so they liked the idea of states retaining a great deal of autonomy for themselves. They also liked to refer to themselves as 'small D-Democrats', so again not the Democratic Party, but just a commitment to democracy in general. They liked to see themselves as more of the people's party; more out for the common man. Now, I don't want to muddy the water too much. When you look at Republican leaders, they tended to be every bit as elitists as Federalist leaders. But at least in terms of the rhetoric that they were putting out there and the way that they were running campaigns, they did tend to do a better job of appealing to common Americans. And so in this whole Aristocrat versus Democrat debate, they're going to end up getting the upper hand. The Republicans also tended to favor agricultural interests in this country versus the Federalists being more behind industrial and commercial interest. Now, again I'm taking quite a bit of history and really distilling it down to some brief comments here. Let me turn to foreign policy for a moment. Beginning in 1789, the French had the biggest revolution of their nation's history. A revolution that would take so many twists and turns that by 1815, with the final defeat of Napoleon, they'd actually go back to being a monarchy. French society would be going through all sorts of turmoil. They'll have multiple constitutions, multiple factions coming to power. The Republican Party initially celebrated the French Revolution of 1789 and none more so than Thomas Jefferson himself, who had spent quite a bit of time in France. As he put it, every American should have two countries, his own and France. He really felt that Americans should adopt the French Revolution. See the French Revolution as an extension of Americas own spirit of 1776. The problem was, as some of you have probably learned already, the French Revolution took a very ugly turn several years in. There was the so called Reign of Terror, when the guillotine was used as a form of political execution for about 30,000 French citizens who were beheaded merely because of their social class and their political beliefs. The French Revolution got incredibly violent and brutal at certain stages, which was kind of embarrassing to Republicans like Jefferson. But in any case, Republicans wanted to sort of embrace France as the wave of the political future and favor the French over the British. So, you
could look at almost every major issue and these two very young, rudimentary parties, they had opposite positions. But it's going to be the Republicans that put many more Presidents into office. Jefferson, Madison, James Monroe and eventually even the son of John Adams, John Quincy Adams, will all be Presidents who represent this Republican Party.

Slide 22

Text: XYZ Affair & Quasi-War with France

[Image of political cartoon]

Audio: I had mentioned a little while ago that the Federalist Party will implode rather quickly during the presidency of John Adams. And I want to use some aspects of his presidency to make a larger point about the political history of America. While John Adams was president - again the French and the British were at war with each other - and both France and England were desperate for military manpower, especially in their navies where life was particularly harsh and you had high rates of desertion, which meant that the kind of discipline you enforced on your sailors was just ridiculously cruel. And therefore, what both England and France were in the habit of doing was to what was called "impress" American sailors into their own navies. It's basically a form of kidnapping. If you were a French or British warship that saw an American merchant vessel or maybe even a smaller American warship on the high seas, you basically forced it to heave to and allow a boarding party to inspect your crew. And French or British officers would claim that "Oh yes," you know, "These individuals over here, they're deserters from our navy. We need to take them back." Now in some cases there legitimately were European deserters who ended up on U.S. warships. But in plenty of other cases, this was just a trumped up way to get manpower for your fleet. And because America didn't have much of a navy at this point, there wasn't a great deal that this country could do about it and it was very embarrassing. Now at different moments, the French were the bigger violators with impressments and other times it was the British. While John Adams was president, it happened to be the French who were the bigger offenders. And it was getting to the point where many Americans were calling for war with France. And if you think about it, if John Adams represents the pro-British political party in this country, then obviously there would be plenty of support among its own people to just go ahead, follow the popular mood and have a war with France. And that this would be a great way to guarantee that John Adams gets a second term for himself as well because the Electoral College to some extent is going to respond to popular pressure in a sense of who is in favor with the American people. And that could very well be John Adams. To make things worse, when U.S. officials try to negotiate with the French over these outrageous practices in what was called the XYZ Affair, the French demanded a bribe before they would even talk to U.S. officials. And they also demanded a huge loan for their country. All the while, they're violating U.S. sovereignty on the high seas. Now John Adams, again if all he wanted to think about was his own political future, then the easiest thing he could have done would have
been to ask Congress to declare war on France. And he would have gotten quite a bit of public support for doing so. But Adams rightfully recognized that this country did not need to get caught up in a European war and that it was only going to be detrimental to the country's long term interest to do this. So he wanted to try to use diplomacy to work things out with the French. And he asked his vice president who happened to be his biggest rival - Thomas Jefferson - as the original Constitution had a strange system for electing presidents and vice presidents. If you finished second in the Electoral College voting for president, you became vice president. So this creates a scenario where potentially your biggest enemy could become the Number 2 player in your administration. And that's exactly what happened with Adams and Jefferson here. So Adams figures, what Thomas Jefferson - a republican - well he doesn't want war with France. They're the pro-French party. So he asks his vice president, you know "Will you help me seek a diplomatic solution here?" Well to his face, Jefferson you know basically gives him some lip service and ends up doing nothing because Jefferson was more concerned about the right political circumstances to get him elected as the next president which is exactly what happened. So Jefferson paid a scandal-mongering journalist to write false stories about the president and did nothing with his own influence to try to help out Adams. Now Adams did keep the United States out of an official war with France. Unofficially, we did build up our navy and had what was called a "quasi war" with France. It was only a naval encounter. U.S. warships did engage with French vessels on the high seas to protect U.S. sailors against impressments, but it was not an all out war. They were just a series of some naval engagements. So John Adams you know did what was right and ultimately did get a diplomatic settlement with France, but in the process by the time he got to diplomatic settlement his term was almost over. And so he didn't get the political benefit for it and he ended up being defeated for reelection. But in the spirit of that small armed republicanism, he did what he really thought was best for the country. And I think what most people can objectively say was the best for the country. And he was willing to go ahead and sacrifice his own career to do so. And the slide here just shows a political cartoon that much like the one with Boston being mistreated by the British, this one has the French mistreating the United States in the spirit of the XYZ Affair and the impressment of U.S. sailors.

Slide 23

Text: Louisiana Purchase – 1803

[Map of Louisiana Purchase]

Audio: After John Adams was defeated in his reelection bid, the third President of the United States of course was Thomas Jefferson of Virginia who would serve two terms. And probably his greatest accomplishment as president was securing a massive expansion of the US western frontier. In 1803, at the time when Napoleon Bonaparte of France was strapped for cash, Jefferson was able to buy from the French a significant chunk of territory beginning with the area we now call Louisiana and extending in the generally northwestern direction here to encompass
today what is much of the Midwest and the far west of the United States. This was the so-called Louisiana Territory. And Jefferson got it relatively cheap, given the amount of territory that we're talking about here. And so, with so many Americans looking to continue to expand the country, the Louisiana Purchase is really going to open the door. And Jefferson's vision behind making this purchase was that he was hoping that large numbers of families would fill up this land so that instead of having a western frontier containing a relatively small number of plantations, you know, with wealthy families owning huge tracks of land, instead, he was hoping that the American frontier would fill up with numerous small farms. Because he believed that being a small farmer, and he was called the Yeoman farmer back in the day, that being a small farmer was the best formula for the maximum number of Americans to become responsible citizens, because that was the easiest way for people to become their own boss, to have that dignity that comes from, you know, owning your own land, being responsible for your own economic operations that this really gave you a stake in the future of the country. So if you wanted to sort of condition people to make responsible political choices and to really work for the betterment of the nation, you know, you've got to make them stakeholders, you've got to give them that shot, that true independence. And that, you know in his mind, the best way to do that was to open up this western frontier for, you know, large numbers of these small operations, small farming operations to take root. So that was the essence of his vision. Technically, the president by himself is not supposed to be able to cut a deal like this. But Jefferson was afraid that he get resistance in Congress and that the whole process would be slowed down. So a man who normally wants the constitution obeyed to the letter, that strict construction, that's what those Republicans are part of, he actually violated that principle in 1803 in order to get what he saw as a very good deal for the country. And certainly in the grand scheme of things, it was a very good deal. It was technically illegal for the president to do it by himself but I guess it will work out in the end. Now, towards the end of Jefferson's presidency, he is going to be a very unhappy man in office because now the impressment issue on the high seas is going to be worst than ever, and this time it's the British who are the main offenders. And basically by the time Jefferson leaves office, war with England is looming. There are unresolved differences left over from the revolution, there are disputes over the boundary between Canada and the United States. There are disputes over the impressment of sailors. Other British have also been stirring up trouble on the western frontier with Native American tribes. And meanwhile, there are some ambitious US politicians and other citizens who want to push the country even further west and have their eyes on Canada among other places. And so, all of these is about to culminate in the second war with England. So by the time Thomas Jefferson leaves office, he is going to be feeling the weight of that burden. The last thing I'll say about Thomas Jefferson, and I want to come back to his relationship with John Adams. I don't know that there's a bigger irony in US history than what I'm about to share with you. I've already mentioned John Adams is a federalist, Jefferson is a Republican. They were huge political rivals in their time. They had originally been friends, they eventually--their relationship was very strained by their political differences. But once both of them had retired from politics, they begin writing to each other and bending fences
a bit. And ironically, these two men died not only on the same day but the same day of the same year. And that day happened to be July 4th, which of course had become the nation's birthday. Thanks to the Declaration of Independence. So, you know, if you were going to script the life of these men, you know, taking into account all of their accomplishments, you know, you just wouldn't have—you couldn't have scripted it any better than that. They leave us on the same day and it's the nation's birthday. And of course, because they were, you know, one is in Virginia, one is in Massachusetts so I mean they were not aware of the precise condition of the other person at the moment that each passed. But it's just--It's a little bizarre, very ironic, I just thought I would throw that in there.

Slide 24

Text: War of 1812 (1812-1815)

[Map of battles during the War of 1812]

Audio: While James Madison of Virginia was serving as the fourth president of the United States, that war with England will come. Textbooks call it the War of 1812. It really, in many ways, was an uninspiring conflict on both sides. It was basically fought to a draw. But when you're taking on the most powerful empire in the world, if you survive, you can basically call it a victory. And so we do sort of put the War of 1812 in the win column when we look back on our national history. But in terms of what actually took place on the high seas, on the battlefields, it was fought to stand still. And in some respects, it was pretty embarrassing for the United States, as indicated here on the map, at one point, a British naval and marine expedition actually captured the nation's capital of Washington, DC. James Madison had to flee one heck of hurry. The White House and certain other public buildings were partially burned. So it's always embarrassing when you lose possession of your capital. We also attempted several invasions of Canada that were a complete failure. On the other hand, there were a fair number of naval engagements that were very successful for the United States when you look back at the exploits of the young US navy and its marines. You know, certainly, you can find some proud moments here in the War of 1812. But in a final irony of the war, its last major battle was technically fought after a piece treaty had already been signed in Europe. But because it takes a number of weeks for that news to cross the Atlantic, the British had gone ahead and had invaded the New Orleans area. In fact, the United States was very fortunate that for much of the time that this war was being fought, Napoleon was still running loose in Europe. And so the British, to some extent, were fighting with one hand tied behind their back because they were still dealing with Napoleon in their own neck of the woods. But after Napoleon's final defeat, the British sent over a battle hardened army with plenty of experience from fighting in Europe that landed to the vicinity of New Orleans to try to take control of that area, which among other things would cutoff US commerce down the Mississippi River. What happened next is really quintessentially American kind of story. US forces had to rush to put together some kind of a defense against the
British. They were outnumbered and really were really very much the classic underdogs. The US commander at New Orleans was a general by the name of Andrew Jackson who is about to become a household name in American history. Now, he did have some regular US troops under his command, but he basically had to put together this hodgepodge, this motley crew, if you will, of others who were willing to fight the British. He had militiamen from places like Kentucky and Tennessee. He had free blacks from the New Orleans area that signed up. He had French pirates or privateers who normally were breaking US laws and resisting US authority, but they hated the British more than they hated America or hated its legal system so they teamed up to fight against England. He pulls together all of these forces and manages to fight a successful defense against the British, who use very European style tactics, while Jackson uses tactics more appropriate to this frontier region of the United States. And he ends up winning the huge victory at the battle of New Orleans. And again, technically, pieces have already been negotiated. But what this victory at New Orleans does is it allows Americans to put a little more of a spin on the overall conflict. And it's a little easier to see the War of 1812 as a victory when the engagement at New Orleans was through. But again, technically, the war was already over. I guess one of the things is an anecdote. I mentioned the British took Washington, DC temporarily. They then moved on to try to take Baltimore. And they were met by US forces in artillery at Fort McHenry, in Baltimore Harbor. And there was massive artillery engagement that ensued. One American citizen, Francis Scott Key was being temporarily detained for the British warship. And looking through a portal on a vessel, he was able to watch this artillery barrage back and forth. And using the tune from an old British drinking song, he composed "The Star-Spangled Banner" what eventually became our national anthem. And he composed it while watching this artillery battle in Baltimore Harbor. So if nothing else, we got that from the War of 1812. By the way, we also, for those of you are familiar with the USS Constitution, this framed warship that was nickname Old Ironsides. Today, it sits in Charleston Harbor in Massachusetts near Boston. Old Ironsides has some of its exploits in the War of 1812, as well. When the war was over, it actually didn't really officially settle any of the differences between Britain and America, but both sides basically just agreed to stop fighting. And gradually, US relations with England improved quite a bit as we continue through the 19th century.

**Slide 25**

**Text:** Missouri Compromise – 1820

[Map of the Missouri Compromise]

**Audio:** I would like to come back to the slavery question once more in this lecture because there was a moment in 1820 that was a real sign of things to come for this country. As shown here on the map, you can see that there was an equal number of slave states and free states as the year 1820 began. And growing out of Jefferson's Louisiana Purchase, one part of that territory, what was now Missouri, was ready to become a state in the Union. And a majority of Missouri
residents had voted for a constitution that allowed slavery. So Missouri was petitioning to come into the Union as a slave state, a state where slavery would be legal. The problem is there was a very delicate equilibrium of power in Washington at the time. Again, there were an equal number of slave states and free states. So there was uneasy kind of peace between the two sides. If Missouri was to come in as a slave state, it would upset that balance of power. And so there were enough politicians in free states against Missouri coming in that it basically paralyzed the US Congress and threatened to really allow -- threatened to disallow a great deal of business from getting done. In that environment, a compromise was reached. I haven't mentioned it yet in this lecture but what was originally Massachusetts actually included all of what is today the state of Maine. And so Henry Clay in particular who was a member of the House of Representatives from Kentucky. Henry Clay who was emerging as a leader in Congress came up with the idea of why not split away this northern part of Massachusetts, today what we call Maine and bring that in as a free state because you know the slavery is essentially dead there. I mean there's no great public round swell [phonetic] to make this a slave territory. So we'll bring Maine in as a free state to counterbalance the fact that Missouri is coming in as a slave state and meanwhile to try to ensure that we never end up with this kind of problem again, because obviously the rest of the Louisiana Purchase still needs to be dealt with. You know you see this blue territory up here, for example. You know at some point residents of that area are going to want to come in as states too and we don't want to have keep refighting this battle. So it was established in the Missouri Compromise that with the exception of Missouri itself, the rest of territory north of the 36, 30 line on the map which you see here. That the rest of that blue territory north of that line could -- would have to come in with a ban on slavery. Meanwhile, this Arkansas territory to the South, that would be open to the possibility of slavery. So this turned out to be a big band-aid fix, if you will. It kind of got the Congress and got the American nation past this immediate deadlock over slavery but it many ways, again this is a sign of problems to come. And it's going to get increasingly difficult to maintain that equilibrium of power as the United States grows. As one historian put it, as this country was expanding so rapidly during the first half of the 19th century, it basically got a case of territorial indigestion because every time the country expands whether it's because of war with Mexico or negotiating territory with England, the Louisiana Purchase, whatever the case may be, it keeps resurfacing the slavery question and all of its related issues. But I did want to mention this because this is one of those key moments that is gradually taking the country down a path towards civil war.

**Slide 26**

**Text:** Rise of Andrew Jackson

[Image of the Battle of New Orleans]

**Audio:** Politically speaking, as this country moved into the 1820s and '30s, its single most dominant figure without question was Andrew Jackson. And here, this is the depiction of his
victory at the Battle of New Orleans. He also had quite a bit of experience in campaigns against Native American tribes and some historians have referred to his policies as genocide, that he was that brutal. In any case, in terms of American politics, much of the American political system of the 1820s and '30s will revolve around this man himself. He'll have one political party built around him personally and to a large extent, the opposition party will define itself very much against him. So I mean, really, for his generation, I mean, he is the George Washington of his time in terms of being that most dominant figure. And I find it ironic to compare Washington and Jackson a little bit, I mean, they are both Southerners, they were both slaveholders. Jackson spent most of his adult life in what became Tennessee. But if we could sort of alter the boundaries of time and space and have a President George Washington meet a President Andrew Jackson, which, of course, would not have been possible, Washington had passed away in 1799. But if we could imagine a President Washington meeting a President Jackson, I think Washington would have been [inaudible] by what Jackson symbolized. But I go back to Washington for a second, he was very much trying to be the proper English gentleman, very much about civility, about manners to a painstaking degree, about repressing the emotions and self-sacrifice, and do not make any spectacle out of yourself about being very humble. And Andrew Jackson, while certainly a very bright man, Jackson came from an entirely different background. Technically, he may not even have been born in the United States. There's a little bit a dispute. He may have been born on a ship coming over from England, but he grew up on the frontier of what was then South Carolina. He, as a teenager, ended up imprisoned by the British and had a scar on his face and neck from a British officer sabre from fighting them when they came into his home. He was a man who was involved the numerous duels. As an adult, he also publically horsewhipped at least one man. He killed a number of men in his duels. He was an inveterate gambler. He had a very controversial reputation by the time he got involved in politics between his personal behavior, between his treatment of Native Americans in military campaigns. He was just--he was sort of man whom George Washington would have found very uncouth. Jackson was a gentleman of sorts, I mean, he eventually, you know, eventually reached the US senate. He practiced law a bit, I mean, he was--he eventually became a wealthy man, but he was really a gentleman of the frontier. He was a gentleman of the fringes of American civilization rather than growing up in what was then one of, you know, the most premier colonies of the British Empire. So he wasn't part of the upper crust, the way Washington had been, even if Washington's upper crust wasn't the complete British upper crust. And so I do think that a medium between these two men would have left Washington feeling like what has the country come to, that this is the man they elected president in 1828. So I did want to say a little bit about him, and I'm going to continue to do so with the next slide.

**Slide 27**

**Text:** Political impact of Jackson

- Democratic Party and its eventual opposition initially built around him
• Signified rise of the common man and necessity to cater politics towards the public
• Took everything in politics personally
• Used more vetoes than all previous presidents combined
• Made the presidency a more powerful institution than most Founders anticipated

Audio: So, to wrap up this lecture, I'd like to turn now to the political impact of Andrew Jackson. First of all, the Democratic Party, same party that we're familiar with today, was originally built around the leadership and the policy positions of Andrew Jackson. The Democratic Party was created in the anticipation of the Presidential Election of 1828. Jackson had also run on 1824 but had been defeated. There was a political realignment and a coalition was formed behind him that would triumph in 1828, and this would create the modern Democratic Party as we know it today, not that--I mean some of its values have changed but it is the same organization. And in fact, it's the longest continually running party in Western history. And eventually, a party known as the Whigs to be covered in the future lecture will be built around apposition to Andrew Jackson. They'll call him King Andrew. They felt that he abused the power of his office. To go down to the last point on my slide, Andrew Jackson will really expand the power of the presidency and one way we can measure that is that to use the veto power more frequently than all of his predecessors combined. For the most part in the years leading up to Jackson's presidency, the general feeling among Americans, especially those of whom were active in politics, was that Congress should be the dominant political institution in this country. Andrew Jackson will begin a long process of changing the way we perceive our national government such that certainly today, the tendency is to really see the president as the focal point, to see the executive branch as the main mover in our national government. And certainly, other presidents will contribute to that, Abraham Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, and others. But Andrew Jackson will make this early contribution. Just to say a few more things about him, being from very common humble origins himself, he's really going to signify the rise of the common man. And the need to make sure that even if in your heart of hearts you're an elitist, you better campaign and behave publicly as though you're interested in the common man. And one way that Jackson symbolized the rise of the common man is that on Inauguration Day, he basically opened up the White House to anybody who wanted to come in and shake his hand and have some free liquor and party it up. And, seriously, crowds of people basically trash the White House. You know, wiping their hands on the drapes, taking souvenirs that they weren't supposed to, you know, trampling mud on the floors and spitting their tobacco wherever they felt like it. And again, for many people, I mean this was practically Sodom and Gomorrah. But it really symbolized the new political realities at that time. I will also say about Andrew Jackson, he took everything personally. You know, we'd like to think that all of our elected officials at some level can separate themselves that is their own personal prejudices, passions, self interest, or whatever, that they can separate those elements from the execution of their job. Andrew Jackson had a very difficult time doing that. And in his defense while he was running for the presidency in 1828, his wife Rachel ended up falling into poor health and dying.
And, she had been absolutely ravaged by Jackson's enemies and the press because it came out that she hadn't technically been divorced from her previous husband before she married Andrew Jackson. And so, I mean, and back in the day, I mean, basically nothing was off limits in American politics. So, I mean, you could, you know, you could refer to her character, you could refer to her sexuality, I mean, you can make the most ugly sort of charges about someone like a candidate's wife. And so, he really felt that the way that she was ravaged and oppressed contributed to the decline of her health and her death. And so, he really came into office with some pin of a chip on his shoulder. But be that as it may, with the first popular vote being taken in 1924 and then the rise of a man like Andrew Jackson to become a two-term president, it's very clear now that political campaigns are becoming more active, again, not active by today's standards but more active and that political parties are making the more concerted effort to tailor their message to the average American citizen. Candidates typically like to claim they were born in a log cabin. Whether that's really true or not, there's a real emphasis on making sure you've got plenty of free flowing alcohol at political events. And I have to say that in an age before baseball, politics really was the national past time here in the 1820's, 30's, 40's. I think that's a good way to look at it and voter turn out was incredible. And we'd love to have this sort of turn out that you'd see back here in this era of time.

**Slide 28**

**Text:** Recommended Primary Sources for Papers & Other Assignments

- Novanglus essay by John Adams (1775)
- “Give me Liberty or Give me Death” speech by Patrick Henry (1775)
- Common Sense and The American Crisis essays by Thomas Paine (1776)
- Declaration of Independence (1776)
- Farewell Address by George Washington (1796)

**Slide 29**

**Text:** Primary Sources (continued)

- Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom by Thomas Jefferson (1786)
- Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions by James Madison and Thomas Jefferson (1798-1799)
- Monroe Doctrine (1823)
- U.S. Supreme Court decision in Cherokee Nation v. the State of Georgia (1831)