

Source 1

“The...rise of American democracy was an extraordinary part of the most profound transformation in modern history...

The American Revolution had proved more egalitarian¹ in its outcome than many of its leaders had hoped or expected it would be in 1776.... Portions of the [people] once largely excluded from the exercise of power were now among the people’s governors. Efforts to rein in the egalitarian impulse had faltered.... [But] democracy’s achievements were fragile...and its future far from guaranteed....

[After 1800,] by beating back [the Federalists], the Jeffersonian ascendancy opened up the political system.... The filters on democracy created by the Framers [of the Constitution] were proving porous, while the suppression of democracy sought by the Federalists in the 1790s was thoroughly discredited.”

Source: Sean Wilentz, historian, *The Rise of American Democracy: Jefferson to Lincoln*, 2005

Source 2

“[After the American Revolution] elite men from [many] states...create[d] a new national government designed to be a stronger barrier against democracy.... Ordinary folk continued to resist.... But they remained unable to mobilize in ways that would bring the changes they wanted....

It would be an enduring victory for the elite. Although the Federalists both fell politically and personally, the system they created to check democracy has lasted.... Although the Democratic-Republicans rode to power...across the nation by promising to restore the popular vision of the Revolution,...most Democratic-Republican leaders...were content to leave the bulk of the Federalist system in place.... To these men, ‘reform’...did not mean pulling down the barriers to democracy that they had helped to create.”

Source: Terry Bouton, historian, *Taming Democracy: “The People,” the Founders, and the Troubled Ending of the American Revolution*, 2007

1: equal

1. Respond to parts A, B, and C.

- A.** Briefly describe one major difference between Wilentz’s and Bouton’s historical interpretations of early United States politics.
- B.** Briefly explain how one event or development from 1789 to 1820 not directly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Wilentz’s argument about early United States politics.
- C.** Briefly explain how one event or development from 1789 to 1820 not directly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Bouton’s argument about early United States politics.

Answer either Question 3 or Question 4.

3. Respond to parts A, B, and C.

- A.** Briefly describe one political debate in British North America from 1763 to 1783.
- B.** Briefly describe one effect of the ratification of the United States Constitution from 1789 to 1800.
- C.** Briefly explain how one group responded to debates about federal government power from 1800 to 1840.

Question 3 or 4

Directions: Answer either Question 3 or Question 4.

3. Respond to parts a, b, and c.

- a. Briefly describe one United States government policy from 1783 to 1840.
- b. Briefly explain one similarity OR difference in how two groups responded to political change in the United States from 1783 to 1840.
- c. Briefly explain how one historical development from 1840 to 1860 contributed to regional divisions.

“As [the American Revolution] unfolded . . . many white colonists . . . began to fashion themselves ever more urgently as a people under the threat of enslavement by the mother country’s colonial authorities. . . . The irony of their posture, when real-life slavery was legal in all the American colonies, was noted during the time and has been analyzed almost endlessly ever since. . . .

“. . . [Enslaved African Americans] immediately saw a connection between their situation and the metaphorical ‘enslavement’ that white colonists said they were trying to escape. Some sensed that the looming colonial conflict might benefit them, and hoped that all the talk about liberty would be a contagion spreading to all parts of society.”

Source: Annette Gordon-Reed, historian, *The Hemingses of Monticello*, study of a family of enslaved people held by Thomas Jefferson, 2008

“The [American] Revolution transformed American political culture by allowing large numbers of people who had previously been excluded from politics to come forward, to speak up, and to shape the flow of events. . . . Within an eighteenth-century context in which political power revolved around figures claiming authority simply as a result of bloodlines, this was a radical development.

“. . . Managing the imperial conflict opened new opportunities for local men who suddenly found themselves in charge of organizing and policing resistance. . . . The newly empowered actors were neither owners of large plantations nor prosperous merchants. . . . Most people who . . . accepted demanding posts in local government would have remained obscure individuals in a colonial society had not the Revolution intervened, presenting unanticipated challenges and responsibilities. . . .

“During the course of this evolving political crisis, a colonial rebellion gave birth to a genuine revolution.”

Source: T. H. Breen, historian, *The Will of the People: The Revolutionary Birth of America*, 2019

1. Using the excerpts, respond to **parts a, b, and c**.

- a. Briefly describe one major difference between Gordon-Reed’s and Breen’s interpretations of the American Revolution.
- b. Briefly explain how one specific event or development from 1763 to 1800 not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Gordon-Reed’s interpretation.
- c. Briefly explain how one specific event or development from 1763 to 1800 not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Breen’s interpretation.