

# **Democracy for All?:** **The Ages of Jackson, Cotton,** **and Social Reform**

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**Year 1**  
**History Unit 7**  
**Sourcebook**

## Lesson 1: The Missouri Compromise



*A map of the Missouri Territory, formerly Louisiana, by Matthew Carey, 1814  
(Library of Congress)*

**Why did the Missouri Compromise fail to end the national debate over slavery?**

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## Homework

### Missouri Compromise

Read the article “Missouri Compromise” on the History Channel website.

#### Document A

##### John Quincy Adams’ Letter

*John Quincy Adams was the secretary of state under President Monroe when the Missouri Compromise was passed, and he was later elected president himself. Below is an excerpt from a letter including his thoughts on the Missouri Compromise.*

I have favored this Missouri Compromise because I believed it to be all that could be done under the present Constitution, and because of my extreme unwillingness to put the Union at **hazard** [danger]. But perhaps it would have been a wiser as well as a bolder choice to have persisted in holding the restriction [of remaining a free state] upon Missouri, until the disagreement would have ended with a convention of the States to revise and amend the Constitution.

This would have produced a new Union of 13 or 14 States **unpolluted** [not made dirty, immoral] with slavery, with a great and glorious object to achieve—namely, that of rallying to their cause the other States for the universal emancipation of their slaves.

If the Union must be **dissolved** [broken apart], slavery is precisely the question upon which it ought to break. For the present, however, this conflict is laid asleep.

*Adams, John Quincy. Reflections on the Missouri Question. 1829. Courtesy of W.W. Norton, [www.norton.com](http://www.norton.com).*

#### Document B

##### Thomas Jefferson’s Letter to Congressman John Holmes

*Thomas Jefferson, who was by then an old man, wrote the following letter to Democratic-Republican Congressman John Holmes on April 22, 1820, following the passage of the Missouri Compromise.*

This important question, like a firebell in the night, awakened and filled me with terror. I considered it at once the destruction of the Union. The question is hushed indeed for the moment. But this Compromise is a **reprieve** [postponement] only, not a final decision.

Now that it has been created, this geographical line, representing a marked moral and political principle, will never be destroyed. And every new disagreement will mark that line deeper and deeper. ...

The end of that kind of **property** [referring to slavery], as it is misnamed, is a task which would not cost me a second thought ... but, as it is, we have the wolf by the ear, and we can neither hold him, nor safely let him go.

Justice is in one scale, and self-preservation [of the Union] in the other.

I regret that I will now die knowing that the useless sacrifices made by the generation of 1776 to earn self-government and happiness for their country will be thrown away by the unwise and unworthy passions of their sons, and that my only **consolation** [comfort] is that I will not live to weep over it.

If [those defending slavery] would but logically weigh the blessings they will throw away to keep slavery ... they would pause before they would commit this act of suicide to themselves, and **treason** [disloyalty] against the hopes of the world.

Courtesy of Library of Congress

## Document C

### John Calhoun's Speech on the Missouri Compromise

*John Calhoun, a South Carolina politician, was secretary of war for President Monroe. In 1850, decades after the passage of the Missouri Compromise, he gave a speech calling for its repeal. Below is an excerpt from that speech.*

How can the Union be saved?

There is only one way which it can with any certainty; and that is by a full and final settlement, on the principle of justice, of all the questions at issue between the two sections [the North and South].

The South asks for justice, simple justice, and lest she should not accept. She has no compromise to offer but the Constitution; and no surrender to make. She has already surrendered so much that she has little left to surrender. By satisfying the South, she could remain honorably and safely in the Union, and restore the harmony and **fraternal** [brotherly] feelings between the sections that existed before the Missouri issue. Nothing else can finally and forever settle the questions at issue, terminate the problem, and save the Union.

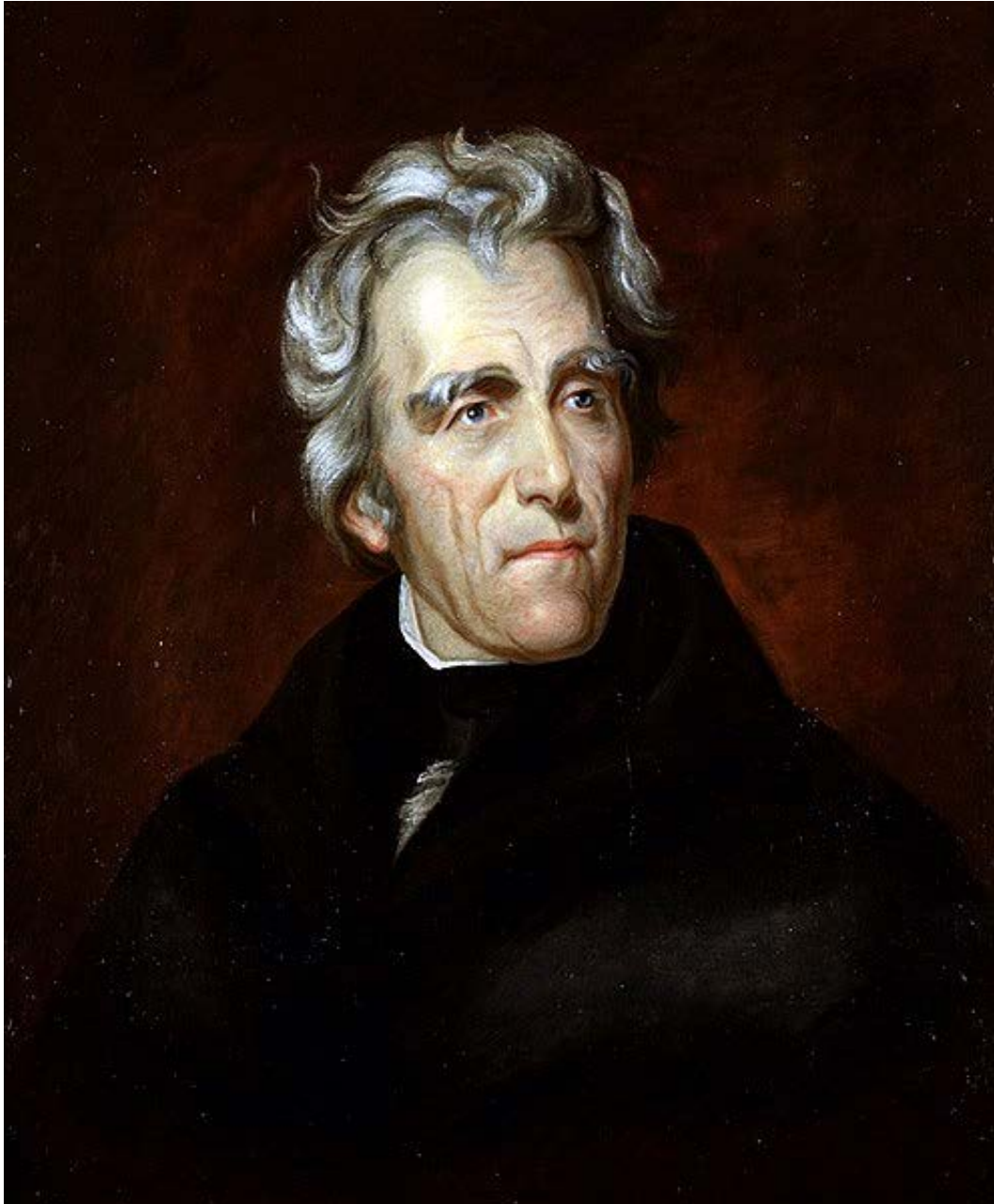
But can this be done? Yes, easily; not by the weaker party, the South—it can do nothing itself, not even protect itself—but by the stronger. The North only has to *want* to save the Union; to do justice by giving the South an equal right in the new territory. ... End debate of the slave question, and provide a protection in the Constitution using amendment to restore the power to the South to protect herself.

At all events, the responsibility of saving the Union rests on the North, and not on the South. The South cannot save it by any act of hers, and the North may save it without any sacrifice whatever.

If the question is not settled now, it is uncertain whether it ever can be.

*Calhoun, John. 1850. Courtesy of Bartleby.com*

## Lessons 2–4: Jacksonian Democracy



*Andrew Jackson, the seventh president of the United States (wikicommons)*

**To what extent did President Andrew Jackson promote democratic values?**

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**Homework**  
**Andrew Jackson**

*Read the article “Andrew Jackson” on the History Channel website.*

## Document A

### President Jackson and Elections

*The following text was adapted from historian Robert V. Remini's book Andrew Jackson: The Course of American Democracy, Volume III.*

Jackson believed that all offices must ultimately be under the absolute control of the people. According to Jackson, appointed officials should be rotated every four years and elected offices should be filled directly by a vote of the people. Jackson tried to abolish the Electoral College with a constitutional amendment and said the president should serve a single term. He also believed that senators should be directly elected by the people, rather than by state legislators.

*Robert V. Remini, Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Democracy, Vol. III, 1984, p. 342*

*The chart below was retrieved from the Census Bureau's Historical Statistics of the United States, Part 2 and illustrates a random sample of state electors from between 1816 and 1836.*

Methods of Electing Presidential Electors: 1816 to 1836						
P: by the people; L: by state legislature; N/A: not admitted as states yet						
	1816	1820	1824	1828	1832	1836
<b>New Hampshire</b>	P	P	P	P	P	P
<b>Massachusetts</b>	L	P	P	P	P	P
<b>Connecticut</b>	L	P	P	P	P	P
<b>New York</b>	L	L	L	P	P	P
<b>Delaware</b>	L	L	L	L	P	P
<b>Georgia</b>	L	L	L	P	P	P
<b>Vermont</b>	L	L	L	P	P	P
<b>Louisiana</b>	L	L	L	P	P	P
<b>Indiana</b>	L	L	P	P	P	P
<b>Illinois</b>	L	P	P	P	P	P
<b>Alabama</b>	N/A	L	P	P	P	P
<b>Maine</b>	N/A	P	P	P	P	P
<b>Missouri</b>	N/A	L	P	P	P	P

*(Data retrieved from Historical Statistics of the United States, U.S. Department of Commerce)*

## Document B

### President Jackson and Political Appointments

*President Jackson supported a patronage system that gave him power to remove government officials who had been appointed by past presidents. During the first 18 months of his term, he removed almost 10 percent of these officials. The following letter was written by President Jackson to Congress on December 8, 1829.*

The duties of all public officials are so plain and simple that men of intelligence are readily qualified for their performance; and I believe that more is lost by keeping the same men in these offices than is gained by their experience. I submit, therefore, to your consideration, that **integrity** [*honesty, trustworthiness*] of the government would be better secured by extending the law which limits government appointments to four years. In a country where offices are created solely for the benefit of the people, no one man has any more right to these offices than another. These offices were not created to provide jobs to particular men at the public expense. No individual wrong is, therefore, done by removing them, since neither [an] appointment to nor [guarantee to] stay in the office is their right.

*Jackson, Andrew. December 8, 1829. Courtesy of Miller Center, University of Virginia, MillerCenter.org.*

*The following text is adapted from historian Robert Remini's book The Life of Andrew Jackson.*

Secretary of State [Martin] Van Buren offered Jackson a bit of advice about the appointment of the collector of the Port of New York. This was a very sensitive and important position. Fifteen million dollars passed through the port of New York every year. If any office needed a man of the highest integrity, it was this one. So when Van Buren learned that Jackson intended to appoint Samuel Swartwout, he almost collapsed.

Not only did Swartwout have criminal tendencies, but New Yorkers hated him. Van Buren warned Jackson that Swartwout's appointment would "not be in line with public opinion, the interest of the Country, or the credit of the administration." Unfortunately, Jackson refused to listen because Swartwout had been a loyal supporter of Jackson's campaign. In time, Swartwout stole \$1,222,705.09.

*Remini, Robert. The Life of Andrew Jackson. 1988*



## Document C

### President Jackson and Indian Removal

*President Jackson delivered the message below about the Indian Removal Act to Congress on December 8, 1829. In 1830, Congress passed the act, which gave President Jackson power to make treaties with Indian tribes that would provide land in a new Indian territory if the native nations agreed to move west from their homelands.*

The Indian tribes within the limits of some of our states have become of interest and importance. By persuasion and force, they have been made to move from river to river and mountain to mountain, until some of the tribes have become extinct and others have only remnants left. ...

I suggest creating a large district west of the Mississippi to be guaranteed to the Indian tribes for as long as they will live on it. Each tribe will have its own control over the portion assigned for its use. ... This [movement of people] should be **voluntary** [*only by choice*]. It would be cruel and unjust to force the Indians to abandon the graves of their fathers and seek a home in a distant land.

*Jackson, Andrew. December 8, 1829. Courtesy of Miller Center, University of Virginia, MillerCenter.org.*

*The Cherokee nation challenged the Indian Removal Act before the Supreme Court, which ruled that the Cherokee had a right to their own nation within Georgia. President Jackson ignored this ruling and used the U.S. Army to force the Cherokee and other nations west along a route now called the Trail of Tears. The excerpt below was written by John G. Burnett, a private in the army who participated in Indian removal.*

I saw the helpless Cherokees arrested and dragged from their homes, and driven away at **bayonet** [*a knife attached to a gun*] point. And in the chill of a drizzling rain on an October morning I saw them loaded like cattle or sheep into six hundred and forty-five wagons and started toward the west. ... On the morning of November the 17th we encountered a snow storm with freezing temperatures and from that day until we reached the end of the fateful journey on March the 26th, 1839, the sufferings of the Cherokees were awful. The trail of the exiles was a trail of death. They had to sleep in the wagons and on the ground without fire. And I have known as many as twenty-two of them to die in one night of pneumonia due to poor treatment, cold and exposure. ...

*Burnett, John G. Courtesy of National Archives, Archives.gov.*

## Document D

### President Jackson and the National Bank

*The Second Bank of the United States was rechartered in the Senate on June 11, 1832, (by a vote of 28-20) and in the House on July 3, 1832 (by a vote of 107-85). On July 10, 1832, President Jackson vetoed the national bank charter and issued the message below to Congress.*

I sincerely regret that I see none of the changes to the national bank charter before me that are necessary, in my opinion, to make it **compatible** [match] with justice, with good policy, or with the Constitution of our country. ... The present Bank of the United States enjoys almost a monopoly on banking and foreign and domestic exchange.

More than a fourth of the stock is held by foreigners and the rest is held by a few hundred of our own citizens, mostly from the richest class. Of the twenty-five directors of this bank, only five are chosen by the Government and twenty by citizen stockholders. ... It is easy to believe that great evils to our country might flow from such a concentration of power in the hands of a few men separated from the people.

Is there no danger to our liberty and independence from a bank that has so little to bind it to our people? It is unfortunate that the rich and powerful too often bend the acts of government to their selfish purposes.

*Jackson, Andrew. July 3, 1832. Courtesy of Miller Center, University of Virginia, MillerCenter.org.*

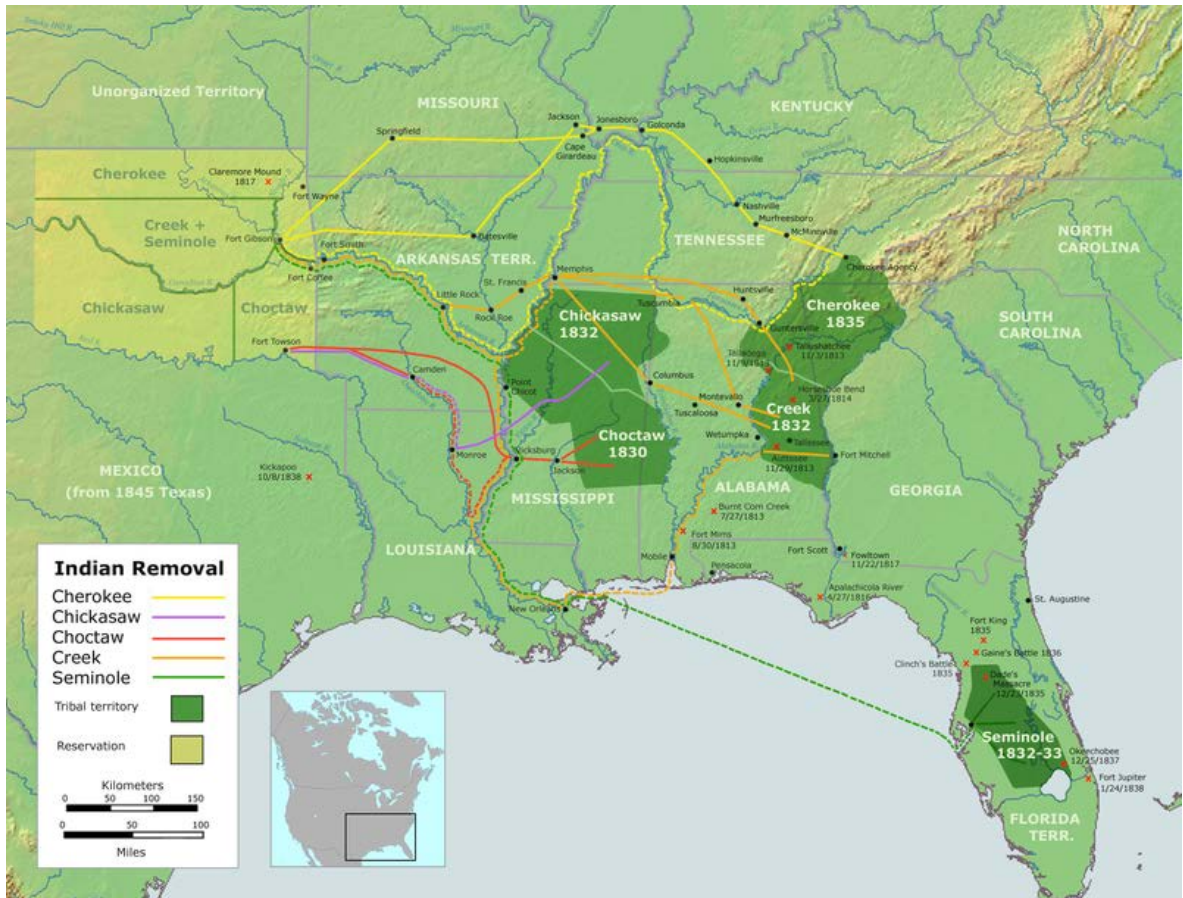
*On July 11, 1832, Senator Daniel Webster gave the following response to President Jackson.*

The President is as much bound by the law as any private citizen, and can no more **contest** [challenge] its validity than any private citizen. He may refuse to obey the law, and so may a private citizen; but both do it at their own peril, and neither of them can settle the question of its validity. The President may say a law is unconstitutional, but he is not the judge. Who is to decide that question? The judiciary alone possesses this right. ... If we depart from the observance of these principles, the executive power becomes at once purely **despotic** [tyrannical]; for the President ... may either execute or not execute the laws of the land, according to his sovereign pleasure. ...

That which is now claimed by the President is in truth nothing less, and nothing else, than the old power asserted by the kings of England in the worst of times. ... There never before was a moment in which any President would have been tolerated in asserting such a claim to despotic power.

*Webster, Daniel. July 11, 1832. Courtesy of TeachingAmericanHistory.org.*

## Lesson 5: American Indian Removal and Resistance



Map of the Trail of Tears (Wikimedia)

How did Native Americans respond to federal Indian removal policies?

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## Homework

### The Indian Removal Act

Read the essay “The Indian Removal Act” on the Newsela website.

## Document A

### Memorial of the Cherokee Nation

*The following text was adapted from the “Memorial of the Cherokee Nation,” a message sent from the Cherokee nation of Georgia to the U.S. Congress and reprinted in the Niles Weekly Register on August 21, 1830.*

We are aware that some of you believe it will be for our advantage to remove [us] beyond the Mississippi. We think otherwise. Our people all think otherwise. Thinking that it would be fatal to our future, our people have sent their memorial to Congress, challenging the necessity of a removal. ...

We wish to remain on the land of our fathers. We have a perfect and original right to remain without interruption. ... But if we are forced to leave our country, we see nothing but ruin before us. The country west of the Arkansas territory is unknown to us. The far greater part of that region is badly supplied with food and water, and no Indian tribe can live as **agriculturalists** [farmers] without these articles. All our neighbors would speak a language totally different from ours and practice different customs. It contains neither the scenes of our childhood, nor the graves of our fathers.

Shall we be forced by a civilized and Christian people [referring to the United States], with whom we have lived in perfect peace for the last 40 years, and for whom we have willingly bled together in war, to bid goodbye to our homes, our farms, our streams, and our beautiful forests?

No. We are the invaders of no man’s rights—we have robbed no man of his territory—we have taken no man’s authority, nor have we violated any one of his unalienable rights. How then shall we give the right of another people to our land by leaving it forever?

*Memorial of the Cherokee Nation. August 21, 1839. Courtesy of Cherokee Nation, Cherokee.org.*

## Document B

### Worcester v. Georgia, 1832

*Congress took no action to protect the Cherokees’ independence in Georgia. As a result, the Cherokee nation challenged the Indian Removal Act in the Supreme Court in Worcester v. Georgia. The following excerpt was adapted from Chief Justice John Marshall’s opinion in the case and explains the court’s majority decision.*

The Cherokee nation is a distinct community, occupying its own territory ... in which the laws of Georgia have no force. The Acts of Georgia are **repugnant** [conflict with] to the Constitution, laws, and treaties of the United States. They interfere forcibly with the relationship between the United States and the Cherokee Nation, which, according to the settled principles of our Constitution, are not a power of the states and are only a power of the federal government.

*Marshall, John. Majority decision in Worcester v. Georgia. 1832. Courtesy of Cornell Law School, Law.Cornell.edu.*

*The following quote is President Jackson's rumored, though unconfirmed, response to the Supreme Court's decision in Worcester v. Georgia. Jackson ignored the ruling and used the U.S. military to force the Cherokee to move west.*

John Marshall has made his decision, now let him enforce it!

### **Document C** **The Seminole Wars**

*Read the article "The Seminole Wars" on the Seminole Nation Museum website.*

### **Document D** **Elias Boudinot's Letter to Chief John Ross**

*The letter below was written in 1837 by Elias Boudinot, a Cherokee who signed the Treaty of New Echota, which gave away Cherokee land to the federal government. The letter was written to Chief John Ross, the recognized leader of the Cherokee, who opposed Indian removal.*

Look at our people! They are miserable! Look, my dear sir, around you, and see the progress that **vice** [*sin*] and immorality have already made! See the misery!

If the dark picture that I have described here is true, can we see a brighter possibility ahead? In another country, and under other circumstances, there is a **better prospect** [*possibility*]. Removal, then, is the only solution, the only *practical* solution. Our people may finally rise from their ashes to become prosperous and happy again, and a credit to our race. I would say to my countrymen, fly from your life here that is destroying our nation.

What is *your* [John Ross'] plan of relief? It is dark and gloomy beyond description. You want the Cherokee to live according to the laws of Georgia, no matter how unfair they are? Instead of fixing the evil, you would tie our people down in the chains of slavery. The final result for our race under those circumstances is too **revolting** [*disgusting*] to think of.

Take my word, it is the sure end of our race if you succeed in preventing the removal of your people. There will come a time when there will be few of us left as reminders of this brave and noble race. May God protect us from such a destiny.

*Boudinot, Elias. 1837. Courtesy of Stanford History Education Group.*

## Lesson 6: King Cotton and American Slavery



The First Cotton Gin by William Sheppard, published in Harper's Weekly, 1869 (Wikimedia)

**How did the cotton economy change  
American slavery in the 19th century?**



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## Homework

### What Was the Second Middle Passage?

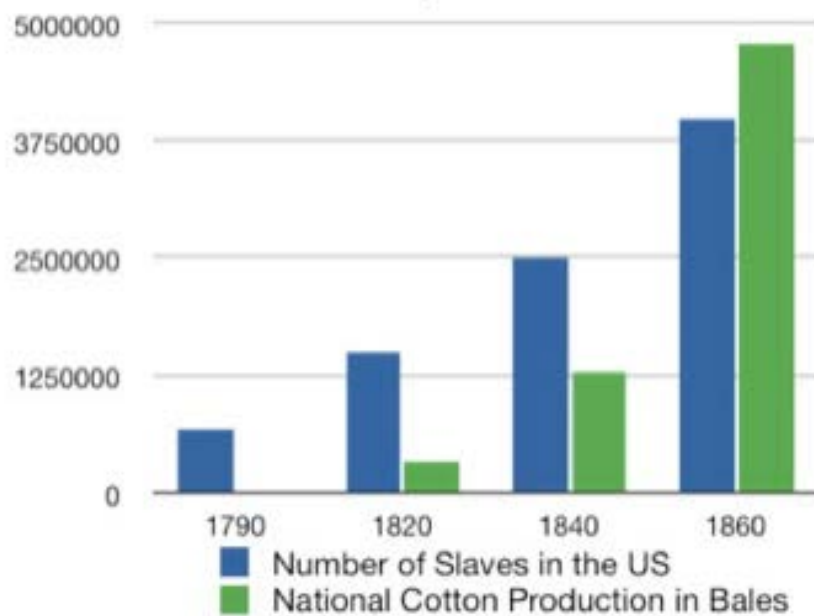
Read the article “What Was the Second Middle Passage?” by historian Henry Louis Gates Jr. on the PBS website.

## Document A

### Growth of Slavery and Cotton in the United States

Beginning in the 1760s, textile mills in Europe and New England radically increased the demand for cotton to produce clothing and other goods. In 1794, Eli Whitney patented the cotton gin, which made it easier to separate cotton fiber from cottonseed. Without a cotton gin, a person could clean 1 pound of cotton in a single day. With a cotton gin, a person could clean 50 pounds in a single day.

From 1790 to 1860, cotton production in the United States skyrocketed by more than 1,500 percent. After 1820, cotton represented a majority of U.S. exports.



(Wikimedia)

**Document B**  
**The Second Middle Passage**

*Congress banned the import of slaves in 1808. At the time, the upper South — the northernmost states of the South, such as Virginia and North Carolina — had an agricultural depression, causing regional demand for slave labor to drop. Instead of trading crops, slaveholders in the upper South forced the people they enslaved to have children, then broke up and sold the families “to the lower South for profit.*

*Levi D. Shelby Jr. conducted the below interview with former enslaved child Mingo White sometime between 1936 and 1938 as part of the Federal Writers Project. White was in his 90s at the time.*

I was born in Chester, South Carolina, but I was mostly raised in Alabama. ... When I was about four or five years old, I was loaded in a wagon with a lot more people in it. Where I was being taken, I didn't know.

I was told there were a lot of slave speculators in Chester to buy slaves for some folks in Alabama. I remember that I was taken up on a stand and a lot of people came around and felt my arms and legs and chest and asked me questions. Before we were taken to the trading post, we were told to tell everybody that asked that we'd never been sick in our life. We had to tell all sorts of lies for our Master or else take a beating.

I was just a little thing, taken away from my mother and father just when I needed them most. ... My father and mother were sold from each other, too, at the same time as I was sold.

*White, Mingo. The Federal Writers Project. 1936-1938. Courtesy of Stanford History Education Group.*



**Document C**  
**Excerpt from Solomon Northup**

*Although the cotton gin made cotton cleaning more efficient, no machine was invented during this period to quicken cotton picking. Despite an absence of new technology, cotton picking per person also increased during this time, at a rate of 2.1 percent per year, due to what historian Edward Baptist called “the ‘whipping machine’ system.” Baptist used this term to refer to the fact that masters and drivers used violence to force slaves to work harder and faster.*

*Solomon Northup was a free New Yorker when he was kidnapped and sold as a slave in 1841. In the excerpt below, he describes forced labor on a Louisiana cotton plantation.*

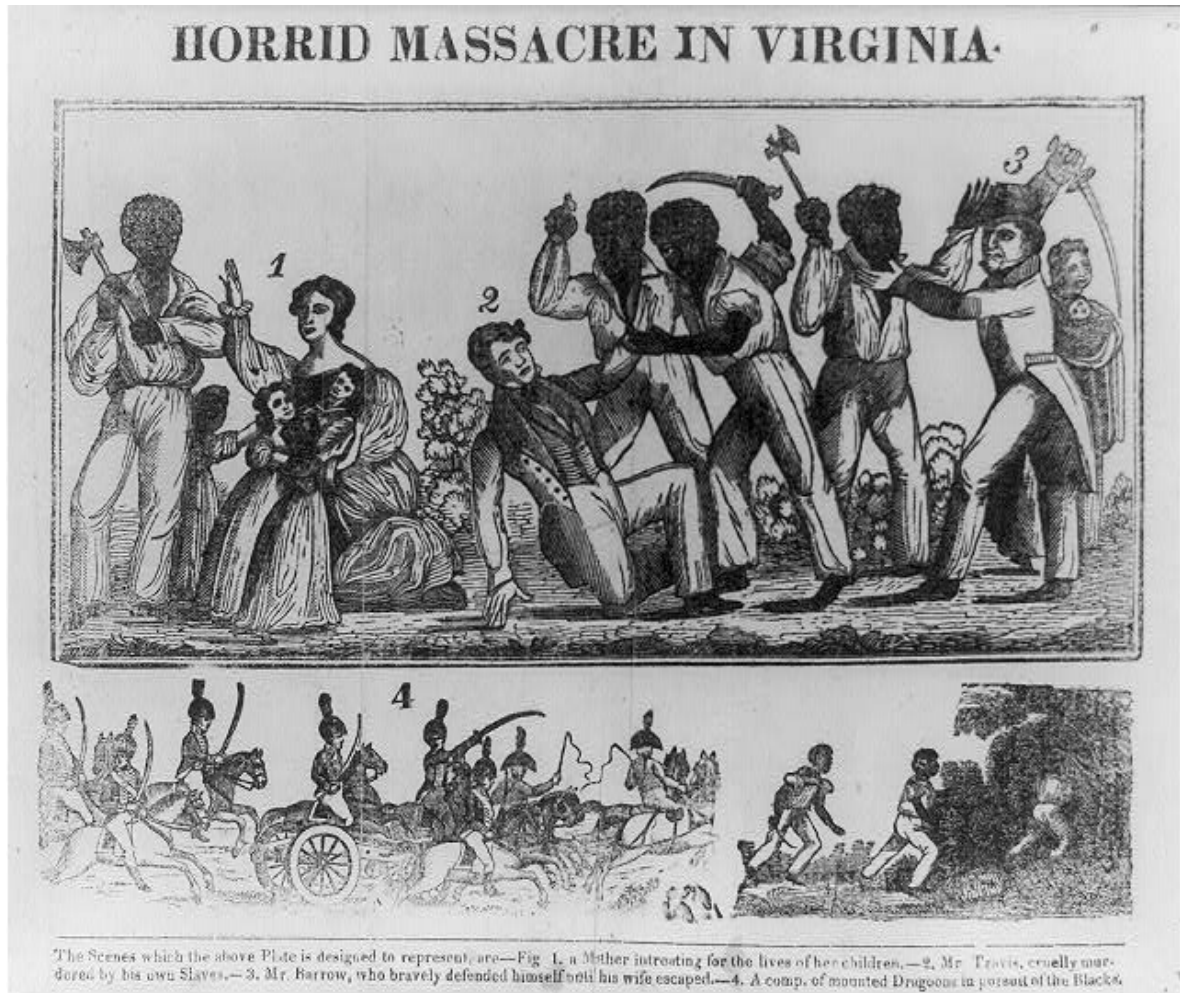
The enslaved field hands are required to be in the cotton field as soon as it is light in the morning, and, with the exception of ten or fifteen minutes given them at noon to swallow their allowance of cold bacon, they are not permitted to be a moment idle until it is too dark to see. When the moon is full, they oftentimes labor till the middle of the night. They do not dare to stop even at dinner time, nor return to the quarters, however late it may be, until the order to halt is given by the slave driver.

The day’s work over in the field, the baskets are “toted,” or in other words, carried to the gin-house, where the cotton is weighed. No matter how tired and weary he may be—no matter how much he longs for sleep and rest—a slave never approaches the gin-house with his basket of cotton with anything but fear. If it falls short in weight—if he has not performed the full task expected of him, he knows that he will suffer. And if he has exceeded it by ten or twenty pounds, in all probability his master will expect the next day’s task to do the same.

So, whether he has too little or too much, his approach to the gin-house is always with fear and trembling.

*Northup, Solomon. 1841. Courtesy of National Archives, Archives.gov.*

## Lesson 7: Enslaved People's Resistance



Horrid Massacre in Virginia, illustrating Nat Turner's rebellion, 1831 (Wikimedia)

**How did enslaved African Americans resist slavery throughout the 19th century?**

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## Homework

### Enslaved People's Resistance

*Read pages 382 through 384 in the textbook History Alive! The United States Through Industrialism.*

## Document A

### Christianity and Slave Spirituals

*Enslaved African Americans carried with them many of the traditions of their ancestors in Africa. However, many of these traditions were deemed a threat to order on the plantations and banned. Over time, enslaved African Americans were introduced to Christianity. Christianity appealed to enslaved African Americans, who were attracted to the messages of peace and justice and saw themselves in the struggles of biblical figures like Moses and the slaves in Egypt. Eventually, African traditions and Christian beliefs fused together, forming a unique culture. This culture became a place of refuge from slavery and a way to passively resist their masters; by practicing their religion in secret and singing spirituals, they were defying the will of their masters.*

*Historians believe that these slave spirituals took on a second purpose: to serve as coded guidance for enslaved African Americans escaping to freedom. The following spiritual, "Go Down, Moses," was used by Harriet Tubman, who escaped slavery herself before helping many others escape to the North.*

Go down Moses  
Way down in Egypt land  
Tell all pharaohs to  
Let my people go!

When Israel was in Egypt land  
Let my people go!

Oppressed so hard they could not stand  
Let my people go!

So the God said: go down, Moses  
Way down in Egypt land  
Tell all pharaohs to  
Let my people go!

So Moses went to Egypt land  
Let my people go!

*Go Down Moses. Courtesy of Library of Congress.*

## Document B

### The Confessions of Nat Turner

*After his capture and arrest on October 30, 1831, Nat Turner was imprisoned in the Southampton County jail, where he was interviewed by Thomas R. Gray, a Southern physician. Out of that interview came Turner's "confession." Gray described Turner as extremely intelligent but also a fanatic. Below is an excerpt from Gray's record of Nat Turner's confession.*

In my childhood, a circumstance occurred which made an impression on my mind, and laid the groundwork of that enthusiasm which has terminated so fatally to many, both white and black. ... [My mother and others believed] I surely would be a prophet, as the Lord had shown me things that had happened before my birth. And my mother and grandmother [said] I was intended for some great purpose. ...

[Years later] I was placed under an overseer, from whom I ran away, and after remaining in the woods thirty days, I returned. ... But the reason of my return was, that the Spirit appeared to me and said I had my wishes directed to the things of this world, and not to the kingdom of heaven, and that I should return to the service of my earthly master. ...

And on the 12th of May, 1828, I heard a loud noise in the heavens, and the Spirit instantly appeared to me and said the Serpent was loosened, and Christ had laid down the yoke ... and that I should take it on and fight against the Serpent. ... And immediately on the sign appearing in the heavens. ... I communicated the great work laid out for me to do, to four in whom I had the greatest confidence (Henry, Hark, Nelson, and Sam). ...

Since the commencement of 1830, I had been living with Mr. Joseph Travis, who was to me a kind master, and placed the greatest confidence in me; in fact, I had no cause to complain of his treatment to me. On Saturday evening, the 20th of August, it was agreed between Henry, Hark, and myself, to prepare a dinner the next day for the men we expected, and then to concert a plan. ...

It was quickly agreed we should commence at home (Mr. J. Travis) on that night; and until we had armed and equipped ourselves, and gathered sufficient force, neither age nor [gender] was to be spared.

Turner, Nat. 1831. Courtesy of PBS.org.

## Document C

### Freedom Suits

*Sojourner Truth became the first black woman to sue a white man and win her case when she sued for the freedom of her enslaved son. Truth had escaped slavery years earlier, in 1828.*

*The following is an excerpt from a Missouri law passed in 1807, allowing enslaved Americans to sue for their freedom. From 1807 until the Civil War, more than 300 people held in slavery sued for their freedom. Although not all of them won their cases, “freedom suits” became a potentially legal way of securing freedom.*

AN ACT to allow persons held in slavery to sue for their freedom. ...

1. It shall be lawful for any person held in slavery to petition the general court ... as a poor person and state the grounds on which their claim to freedom is founded. If, in the opinion of the court, the petition contains sufficient reason to allow their involvement, the court shall [hear the case] of the person being held as a slave.
2. The court ... may allow a charge of assault and false imprisonment to be brought in the name of the person claiming freedom against the person who claims this person as a slave. ...
3. And the court shall assign that the person suing for freedom shall not be taken nor removed from the [region], nor be [punished] because of his or her application for freedom. ...
4. ... And the court, on a **verdict** [*decision*] in favor of the person suing for freedom, may pronounce a judgment of liberation from the defendant or defendants, and all persons claiming by, from, or under, him, her, or them.

Missouri Law, 1807. Courtesy of Secretary of State of Missouri, [s1.SOS.MO.gov](http://s1.SOS.MO.gov).

## Lesson 8: The First Age of Reform



*Illustration of the Methodist Revival movement in the United States, 1840 (Wikimedia)*

**How did social movements during the First Age of Reform hope to change 19th-century society?**

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## Homework

### “The First Age of Reform”

*The following was adapted from historian Ronald G. Walters’ essay “The First Age of Reform,” published by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History.*

“In the history of the world,” Ralph Waldo Emerson declared in 1841, “the doctrine of Reform had never such scope as at the present hour.” Not much of a participant in causes himself, Emerson was writing about the remarkable growth of reform movements from roughly 1815 until the Civil War in 1861, movements that are still striking to historians for their energy, variety, and occasionally, strangeness. Even the idea of a reformer that emerged during this period was relatively new.

The first, and the largest, of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century reform movements was a campaign against alcoholic beverages, arising shortly after 1800. It is commonly called the temperance movement. By the 1840s, a portion of the movement advocated a legal ban on alcoholic beverages, known as Prohibition.

Another of these national antebellum reform movements was a new, more radical antislavery movement, which emerged by the early 1830s. Although relatively small in numbers, post-1830 abolitionists included African Americans and white Americans, men and women. For some, slavery had to be ended immediately, not gradually. These abolitionists condemned slaveholders as sinners. This position had little appeal outside the free states, and even there, abolitionists faced enormous hostility. In the face of this opposition, some abolitionists instead supported gradual abolition and payment to slaveholders in return for emancipating the people they enslaved. Some even believed that freed African Americans could not peacefully live in white America. These Americans supported a colonization movement to transport free black Americans and emancipated slaves to Africa. Abolitionists disagreed on their goals, but their passion shaped political debates over slavery as the nation headed toward secession and civil war.

But to focus only on the antebellum reform movements that attract the most attention in textbooks is to belittle the explosion of reform movements Emerson observed. From a present-day perspective, some of these seem more like fads than reforms, but that can be misleading. Consider the case of Sylvester Graham, a Presbyterian minister and temperance lecturer, who, by 1832, had become convinced that bad diets, alcohol, and poor hygiene threatened the body and spirit. A terrible **cholera epidemic** [*a common illness at the time*] in 1832 gave him an audience for his belief that a plain vegetarian diet without spices, coffee, or tea was the key to good health. Graham’s approach—memorialized in a cracker—promised individuals that they could perfect themselves physically. For him, the focus of reform was not on the condition of others, such as enslaved people and drunkards, but on one’s *self*.

Among those who differed with Graham in that respect were men and women who dealt with issues that remain unsolved still today, including poverty, crime and prisons, public education, and world peace. Reformers addressed the issues in ways radically different from today’s approaches. In the name of reform, for instance, antebellum states built prisons and asylums for the mentally ill. The initial goal was not to isolate criminals and the insane from society, although they certainly did that, but to remake them into model citizens. Later generations attacked these institutions by the 20<sup>th</sup> century, again in the name of social reform.

As one might expect from the diversity of movements, they had different beginnings—but there were some common patterns. They frequently looked less like a unified movement and more like a collection of organizations, with disagreements and different audiences and goals. The majority of reformers also relied on voluntary associations, local groups sometimes connected to a national

organization and all dedicated to one common purpose. European observers, including French writer

Alexis de Tocqueville, described with some surprise this American habit of joining voluntary associations. These associations could serve different purposes, from religious to social and almost anything in between.

Explaining why reform movements emerged in the antebellum United States is no simple task. Their spread came from a combination of changes in American life that, when taken together, shaped these movements. At the most basic level, reform movements require people who believe that human effort can—and should—change things. That has not always been the case. In their optimism about change, reformers were heirs of shifts in human thought: a new belief in reason and argument and its power to remake the world, a belief shown by the American and, shortly after, French revolutions.

Antebellum reformers were also inspired by an early-19<sup>th</sup>-century religious movement called the Second Great Awakening. Leaders of this Christian movement often encouraged believers to engage in social reform. That did not mean all reformers came from this new evangelical Christian movement. Older groups, like the Quakers and Unitarians were well-represented in reform movements. And some evangelicals, and especially southern Christians, were unsupportive of antislavery work. Religion, nonetheless, gave reform a new moral urgency.

Economic, demographic, and technological changes also shaped antebellum reform. Although the United States remained a mostly rural and small-town nation at this time, its cities were growing after 1820. These cities had the people and resources that reform organizations required for national work. Urban growth produced a new middle class that had the money necessary to engage in reform. And among these middle class members were educated women who had been denied a public voice, except in religious and new reform activities. These women were the backbone of many causes. And finally, by the 1830s, improvements in printing technology and transportation—notably canals, steamboats, and eventually railroads—made it much less expensive for reformers and their messages to travel over wider distances.

Walters, Ronald G., *The First Age of Reform*. (The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History)



## Revival Sermons and the Second Great Awakening

*The following is adapted from the Reverend Jedediah Burchard's 1835 revival sermon. Burchard preached in a familiar yet colorful and emotional style, common of the Second Great Awakening. Despite the protests of more conservative ministers who preached in a calm, subdued way, Burchard believed that strong emotions and calling forth sinners to beg forgiveness for their sins was necessary in order to change individuals and congregations.*

Christians! You who **profess** [*claim*] to believe that sinners face **eternal damnation** [*the afterlife in hell*], you must get back the free spirit of God in your own hearts, or they will never, never, never be converted!

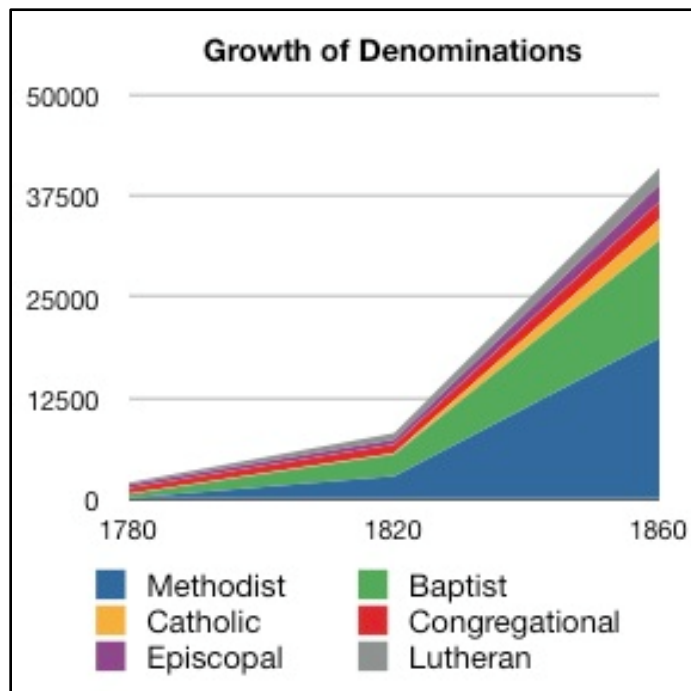
Your only hope is in the Spirit of God.

You can't talk to sinners without it, any more than I can. I wouldn't have come all the way here to Burlington to try and have these poor lost sinners converted, unless I had supposed that the Holy Spirit was here!

This is the very course you ought to take, my friends. Give your hearts right up to God your Heavenly Father, and he cannot refuse you salvation!

*Burchard, Jedediah. 1835. Courtesy of TeachUSHistory.org.*

*The chart below shows the number of Americans in Christian congregations by decade.*



*(Conrad Zbikowski, Wikimedia)*

**Station 1: Temperance**  
**Temperance**

*Watch the video “The Absolute Shall” from Ken Burns’ documentary Prohibition on the PBS website.*

## Station 2: Education Reform

### Horace Mann

*Until the mid-19th century, the United States did not have many public schools. Other than religious schools or private schools for the wealthy, few children attended school. Horace Mann was the supervisor of education for Massachusetts and worked to promote public schools and to support teachers. By 1850, most states in the North and western frontier had established free public schools. Even so, these public schools often did not educate women or African Americans.*

*Below is an excerpt from Mann's 12th annual report as Massachusetts supervisor of education.*

Education, beyond all other human **devices** [systems], is the great equalizer of men—the balance-wheel of social **machinery** [society]. I do not mean that it builds morality as much as it teaches men to oppose the oppression of their fellow-men.

But I mean that it gives each man the independence and ability to resist the selfishness of other men. It does better than to take away the poor's hostility towards the rich; it prevents being poor.

The spread of education will open a wider area over which social feelings will expand; and, if this education should be universal and complete, it would do more than all things else to **obliterate** [destroy] **factitious distinctions** [social divisions] in society.

*Mann, Horace. 1848. Courtesy of Genius.com.*

### Station 3: Prison Reform Dorothea Dix

*Dorothea Dix hoped to reform conditions in American prisons. In particular, Dix hoped to reform the prison system for **debtors** [people who owe money], the mentally ill, and children. By her death in 1887, all states had abolished debtors prisons, many states had established more mental hospitals, and many states had created separate systems for children.*

*Below is an excerpt of Dix's petition to the Massachusetts state legislature.*

If I **inflict** [cause] pain upon you, and move you to horror, it is to **acquaint** [make familiar] you with suffering which you have the power to **alleviate** [make better], and make you hasten to the relief of the victims of legalized barbarity. ...

I come as the advocate of helpless, forgotten, insane and idiotic men and women; of beings, sunk to a condition from which the most unconcerned would start with real horror; of beings wretched in our Prisons. ...

I proceed, Gentlemen, briefly to call your attention to the present state of Insane Persons confined within this Commonwealth, in cages, closets, cellars, stalls, pens! Chained, naked, beaten with rods, and lashed into obedience!

*Dix, Dorothea. 1843. Courtesy of National Center for Biotechnology Information, U.S. National Library of Medicine, NCBI.NLM.HIN.gov.*

#### **Station 4: Colonization Colonization**

*The American Colonization Society was founded in 1816 by Reverend Robert Finley. The goal of the organization was to help free black people move back to Africa.*

*Secretary of State Henry Clay spoke to the American Colonization Society in 1827, declaring his support for the movement. Below is an excerpt from that speech.*

There is a moral strength in the idea of returning to Africa her children, whose ancestors have been torn from her by fraud and violence. Transplanted in[to] a foreign land, they will carry back to their native soil the rich fruits of religion, civilization, law and liberty. May it not be one of the great designs of the Ruler of the universe to transform [the] original crime [of slavery] into a blessing to that unfortunate part of the globe?

*Clay, Henry. 1827. Courtesy of AbrahamLincolnOnline.org.*

*In 1832, abolitionist leader William Lloyd Garrison published the pamphlet Thoughts on African Colonization. Below is an excerpt from that pamphlet.*

I blame the leaders of colonization for feeling so indifferent to the moral, political and social advancement of free African Americans in this, their only real home. Men should be as free as the birds in choosing the time when, the way how, and the place to which they shall migrate. Far different is the case of our African American population—they are “forced to turn volunteers.”

*Garrison, William Lloyd. Thoughts on African Colonization. 1832. Courtesy of University of Virginia, UTC.IATH.Virginia.edu.*

## Station 5: Abolition Abolitionists

*The following text was adapted from the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History.*

Abolitionists wanted to end slavery, but they did not always agree about how to do it. Some abolitionists tried to inspire slaves to rise up in revolt. Others wanted to find a peaceful way to end slavery immediately. Still others wanted to give slaveholders time to develop farming methods that didn't rely on slave labor. From its earliest days, both black and white Americans worked in the abolition movement. Black activists often kept their distance from their white counterparts. One African American journalist remarked, "As long as we let them think and act for us ... they will outwardly treat us as men, while in their hearts they still hold us as slaves."

In 1831, a deeply religious white man, William Lloyd Garrison, started a fiery abolitionist newspaper, *The Liberator*. Braving the disapproval of many Northerners, Garrison demanded the immediate freeing of all enslaved people. "I will be as harsh as truth," he wrote. "I will not retreat a single inch—and I will be heard!" Angry proslavery groups destroyed Garrison's printing press and burned his house.

Some abolitionists, like Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth, were former slaves. Truth had always been strongly spiritual and had preached throughout the North at religious meetings and on street corners. When she met Douglass and Garrison, their enthusiasm inspired her to speak out loudly about slavery. An outstanding speaker, Truth argued that God would end slavery peacefully.

Many women were inspired by religious reform movements to become involved in the fight against slavery. Like other abolitionists, they sometimes faced violence. When Angelina Grimke spoke against slavery, an antiabolition mob threw stones at her. When she kept speaking, they burned the building she was speaking in.

*Davis, David Brion, Slavery and Anti-Slavery. (The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History)*

### Angelina Grimke: On Slavery

*The following is an excerpt from Angelina Grimke's speech at Pennsylvania Hall.*

As a Southerner, I feel that it is my duty to stand up here tonight and **bear testimony** [be a witness] against slavery. I have seen it—I have seen it. I know it has horrors that can never be described. I was brought up under its wing: I witnessed for many years its destructiveness to human happiness. It is admitted by some that the slave is not happy under the worst forms of slavery. But I have never seen a happy slave.

Women of Philadelphia! Allow me, as a Southern woman, to call you to come to this work. Men may settle this at the ballot-box, but you have no such right; it is only through petitions that you can reach the Legislature. It is therefore your duty to petition.

*Grimke, Angelina. 1838. Courtesy of Users.WFU.edu.*

## Lesson 9: Women's Rights



*Suffragettes Elizabeth Cady Stanton (left) and Susan B. Anthony (right) (wikimedia)*

**Why did American women begin fighting for their rights in the mid-19th century?**

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## Homework

### Seneca Falls and Women's Rights

*The following text was adapted from the essays "The Legal Status of Women, 1776–1830" and "The Seneca Falls Convention: Setting the National Stage for Women's Suffrage" by historians Marylynn Salmon and Judith Wellman, respectively.*

#### The Legal Status of Women, 1776–1830

State law, rather than federal law, governed women's rights in the early United States. This meant that rights depended on where a woman lived and the particular social circumstances in her region of the country. In every state, the legal status of free women depended on marriage. Unmarried women had the legal right to live where they pleased and to support themselves in any job that did not require a license or a college degree, each of which were restricted to men. Single women could agree to contracts, buy and sell real estate, and own personal property. ...

Marriage changed a woman's legal status dramatically. When women married, as the vast majority did, they still had some legal rights but no longer had **autonomy** [*independence, control*]. Instead, they found themselves in positions of almost total dependency on their husbands, a condition the law called coverture. Coverture was based on the belief that a family functioned best if the male head of a household controlled all its assets. As a result, a married woman could not own property independently of her husband unless they had signed a special contract. ...

Political rights were given to men based on property in the early republic, but gender alone was the basis for women's exclusion from voting or holding office. Simply put, men with property had the right to vote in the early national period but women, no matter how wealthy, did not, even though women paid the same taxes as men. ...

#### The Seneca Falls Convention: Setting the National Stage for Women's Suffrage

On July 19 and 20, 1848, about 300 people met for two hot days and candlelit evenings in the Wesleyan Chapel in Seneca Falls, New York, for the first formal women's rights convention ever held in the United States. Sixty-eight women, supported by 32 men who signed a list "in favor of the movement," declared:

*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men and women are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.*

Sound familiar? It should, for these women's rights advocates patterned their Declaration of Sentiments directly on the Declaration of Independence. Although the convention became best known for its demand for women's right to vote, the Declaration of Sentiments covered a wide agenda, asserting that women should have equality in every area of life: politics, the family, education, jobs, and religion. ... As the first women's rights convention, Seneca Falls began the organized women's rights movement in the United States. Philosophically, the Declaration of Sentiments tied women's rights to the country's belief in natural human rights, bringing local support for women's rights into a clear and united movement that challenged Americans everywhere to include women in the great American democratic experiment. ...



By the 1830s, pockets of reformers, influenced by late-18th-century republican ideals and Christian values, argued for a woman's right to speak out on moral and political issues. In the 1830s and early 1840s, local abolitionist groups, with many female members, provided the foundation for the women's rights movement of the late 1840s.

Local groups took their cues from national leaders. In her influential *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and the Condition of Woman*, Sarah Grimké declared that "whatever is *morally* right for a man to do, is *morally* right for a woman to do." Her sister, a fellow abolitionist, Angelina Grimké, asked, "Are we aliens because we are women? Are we without citizenship because we are the *mothers, wives, and daughters* of a mighty people?" The Grimké sisters were not the only women's rights advocates to speak out clearly in the 1830s and '40s. Lucy Stone began to devote much of her lecturing to women's rights, and Abby Kelley organized women's antislavery fairs. The ones held in western New York paved the way for the Seneca Falls convention. ...

But it was the Seneca Falls convention, the brainchild of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, that brought national attention to the issue of women's rights specifically. The two women had met in London, where the newlywed Stanton and the Quaker minister Mott were attending the World Anti-Slavery Convention. When the convention decided to exclude all the American female delegates, Stanton and Mott decided "to hold a convention as soon as we returned home, and form a society to advocate the rights of women." Although it took eight years to put their plans into action, the result was the Seneca Falls Women's Rights Convention of 1848.

This convention, hurriedly organized and attended mostly by people from the immediate area, started a major national debate. Newspapers across the country picked up the story. Press reaction to the convention varied widely. One editor thought it was "a most insane and ludicrous **farce** [joke]." Some editors, however, praised the meeting. The *St. Louis Daily Reveille* declared that "the flag of independence has been hoisted for the second time on this side of the Atlantic."

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, never one to be modest, called the women's movement the "greatest rebellion the world has ever seen." The ideals expressed in the Declaration of Sentiments—that "all men *and women* are created equal"—spoke powerfully to Americans and people around the world because they reflected universal ideals of human equality. Such ideals belonged not only to Elizabeth Cady Stanton or to one upstate New York village. They belonged to Americans everywhere.

"Women's Suffrage": History Now 6 (Spring 2006)  
"Women's Suffrage": History Now 7 (Spring 2006)

## Declaration of Sentiments

*Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott organized the first conference to address women's rights and issues in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848. The declaration of the Seneca Falls Convention was signed by 68 women and 32 men.*

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. ... Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse **allegiance** [loyalty] to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government. ...

The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and **usurpations** [*taking away power*] on the part of man toward woman, having as its goal the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her.

He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the **elective franchise** [*right to vote*].

He has forced her to submit to laws, in the creation of which she had no voice.

He becomes, in marriage, for all intents and purposes, her master—the law giving him power to take away her liberty, and to administer punishment.

He closes against her all the avenues to wealth and distinction which he considers most honorable to himself. As a teacher of religion, medicine, or law, she is not known.

He has given to the world a different code of morals for men and women, by which **moral delinquencies** [*crimes*] which exclude women from society are not only tolerated, but deemed insignificant to men.

He has tried, in every way that he could, to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to take away her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead a dependent and miserable life.

Now, in view of this entire disenfranchisement of one-half the people of this country—in view of the unjust laws above mentioned, and because women do feel themselves attacked, oppressed, and **fraudulently** [*dishonestly*] deprived of their most sacred rights, we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of the United States.

*The Declaration Sentiments, Seneca Falls Conference. 1848.  
Courtesy of Stanford History Education Group.*

**Group 1: Elizabeth Cady Stanton**  
**Document A**  
**Elizabeth Cady Stanton**

*Read the biography of Elizabeth Cady Stanton on Biography.com.*

**Document B**  
**Elizabeth Cady Stanton: Speech at the Women's Suffrage Convention**

*Elizabeth Cady Stanton had long argued that the Bible and organized religion helped deny women their full rights. Stanton gave the following speech at the Women's Suffrage Convention in Washington, D.C., in 1868.*

I urge a sixteenth amendment, because 'manhood suffrage,' or a man's government, is civil, religious, and social disorganization . . . .

Men have taken power in society thus far; they have . . . overpowered women everywhere, crushing out all the higher qualities in human nature, until we know only a little of true manhood and almost nothing of true womanhood, for it has scarce been recognized as a power until within the last century. Society is the reflection of man himself, uninfluenced by woman's thought; we feel man's hard iron rule in the church, the state, and the home . . . .

To keep up in society, woman must be as near like man as possible, reflect his ideas, opinions, virtues, motives, prejudices, and vices. She must respect his laws, though they take away all of her inalienable rights . . . .

She must look at everything from its monetary value, or she is a romancer. She must accept things as they are and make the best of them. To mourn over the miseries of others, the poverty of the poor . . . all this would be emotional. To protest against the bribery and corruption of public life would be seen as nonsense.

We ask for the right to vote for women, as the first step toward the recognition of that essential element in government that can only secure the health, strength, and prosperity of the nation. Whatever is done to lift woman to her true position will help to bring about a new day of peace and perfection for humanity . . . . If our civilization calls for an extension of the suffrage, surely a government of the most virtuous educated men and women would better represent the whole and protect the interests of all than could the representation of either man or woman alone.

*Stanton, Elizabeth Cady. Speech at the Women's Rights Convention. 1868.  
Courtesy of the History Place, HistoryPlace.com.*

**Group 2: Susan B. Anthony**  
**Document A**  
**Susan B. Anthony**

*Read the article “Susan B. Anthony” on the Newsela website.*

**Document B**  
**Susan B. Anthony: On Voting**

*The following speech was given by Susan B. Anthony after her arrest for casting an illegal vote in the presidential election of 1872.*

Friends and fellow citizens: I stand before you tonight accused of the supposed crime of having voted at the last presidential election, without having a lawful right to vote. It shall be my work this evening to prove to you that by voting, I committed no crime, but simply exercised my citizen's rights. These are the rights guaranteed to me and all United States citizens by the National Constitution. These rights are beyond the power of any state to deny.

The preamble of the Federal Constitution says: We, the people of the United States. ... It was we, the people. It was not we, the white male citizens or not even we, the male citizens; but we, the whole people, who formed the Union. And we formed this union, not just to give the blessings of liberty to others, but to secure them for ourselves. We formed it not just for half of ourselves and half of our children. We formed it for all our nation's future citizens. And it is a downright mockery to talk to women of their enjoyment of the blessings of liberty while they are denied the use of the only means to secure them provided by this democratic-republican government—the voting ballot.

To women, this government has no just powers derived from the consent of the governed. To women, this government is not a democracy. It is not a republic. It is a hateful aristocracy; a terrible, corrupt government run by a few men. It is the most hateful aristocracy ever established on the face of the globe. It is a government of wealth, where the rich govern the poor. A government where the educated govern the ignorant, or even one where the **Saxon** [*white man*] rules the African, might be endured. But this is a government based on a person's gender. It makes fathers, brothers, husbands, and sons, the rulers over mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters of every household. It ordains all men as kings, and all women as their subjects.

In their dictionaries, Webster, Worcester, and Bouvier all define the word citizen to be a person in the United States. They say a citizen [can] vote and hold office.

The only question left to be settled now is: Are women persons? And I hardly believe any of our opponents will have the nerve to say they are not. Being persons, then, women are citizens; and no state has a right to make any law, or to enforce any old law, that shall limit their privileges or protections. Therefore, every discrimination against women in the constitutions and laws of the several states is today null and void, precisely as is everyone against black Americans!

*Anthony, Susan B. 1872. Courtesy of the History Place, HistoryPlace.com.*

**Group 3: Sojourner Truth**  
**Document A**  
**Sojourner Truth**

*Read the article “Sojourner Truth” on the History Channel website.*

**Document B**  
**Sojourner Truth: “Ain’t I a Woman?”**

*In 1851, Sojourner Truth gave the following speech — unscripted — at the Ohio Women’s Rights Convention. Though slavery in the United States ended within her lifetime, women were not given the vote until 1920, about 40 years after her death.*

Well, children, where there is so much racket there must be something out of place. I think that between the negroes of the South and the women at the North, all talking about rights, the white men will be in a fix pretty soon. But what’s all this here talking about?

That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud-puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain’t I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me! And ain’t I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man — when I could get it — and bear the lash as well! And ain’t I a woman? I have borne 13 children, and seen most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother’s grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain’t I a woman?

Then they talk about this thing in the head; what’s this they call it? [*member of audience whispers, “intellect”*] That’s it, honey. What’s that got to do with women’s rights or negroes’ rights? If my cup won’t hold but a pint, and yours holds a quart, wouldn’t you be mean not to let me have my little half measure full?

Then that little man in black there, he says women can’t have as much rights as men, ‘cause Christ wasn’t a woman! Where did your Christ come from? Where did your Christ come from? From God and a woman! Man had nothing to do with Him.

If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all alone, these women together ought to be able to turn it back, and get it right side up again! And now they is asking to do it, the men better let them.

*Truth, Sojourner. “Ain’t I a Woman?” 1851. Courtesy of the National Park Service.*

**Group 4: Harriet Hunt**  
**Document A**  
**Harriet Hunt**

*Read the article “The Medical Practitioner Who Paved the Way for Women Doctors in America” on the Newsela website.*

**Document B**  
**Harriet Hunt on Harvard Medical School**

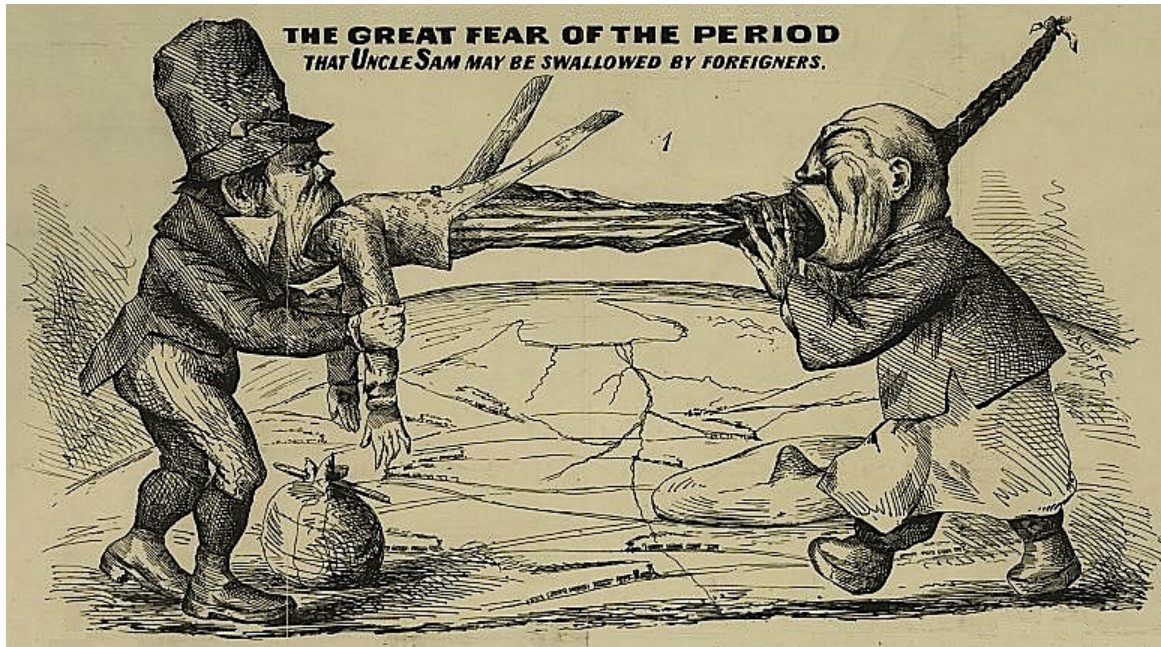
*The following text was adapted from Harriet Hunt’s autobiography, Glances and Glimpses; Or, Fifty Years’ Social, Including Twenty Years’ Professional Life, published in 1856. The excerpt below concerns Hunt’s attempt to apply to Harvard Medical School.*

I well knew that the conservatism of Harvard would blind the trustees, professors, etc., to the importance of recognizing [a] woman as a physician. I knew they would have a childish fear of looking truth in the face, and establishing a **precedent** [*example for the future*] which might bring into comparison, if not into conflict, masculine and feminine minds. I knew it required more **magnanimity** [*brave kindness*], more freedom, more generosity, and a deeper sense of justice, than I supposed existed at Harvard, to acknowledge by such a step, that [the] mind was not sexual. ... When I sat down to write [my letter of application], it really seemed to me **farcical** [*ridiculous*], to ask whether a woman, who had been practicing medicine many years—a mind thirsting for knowledge, bestowed on all sensible and insensible male applicants—might be allowed to share the privilege of drinking at the fountains of science, a privilege which would not impoverish them, but make me rich indeed. ...

[Despite my application, I was not admitted to Harvard.] The facts are on record—when civilization is further advanced, and the great doctrine of human rights is acknowledged, this act will be recalled, and wondering eyes will stare, and wondering ears be opened, at the semi-barbarism of the middle of the nineteenth century.

*Hunt, Harriet. Glances and Glimpses; Or, Fifty Years’ Social, Including Twenty Years’ Professional Life. 1856. Courtesy of Internet Archives, Archive.org.*

## Lesson 10: Immigration and Nativism



*A lithograph entitled The Great Fear of the Period That Uncle Sam May Be Swallowed by Foreigners, mid-1860s (Wikimedia)*

**Why did the American nativist movement rise in the mid-19th century?**



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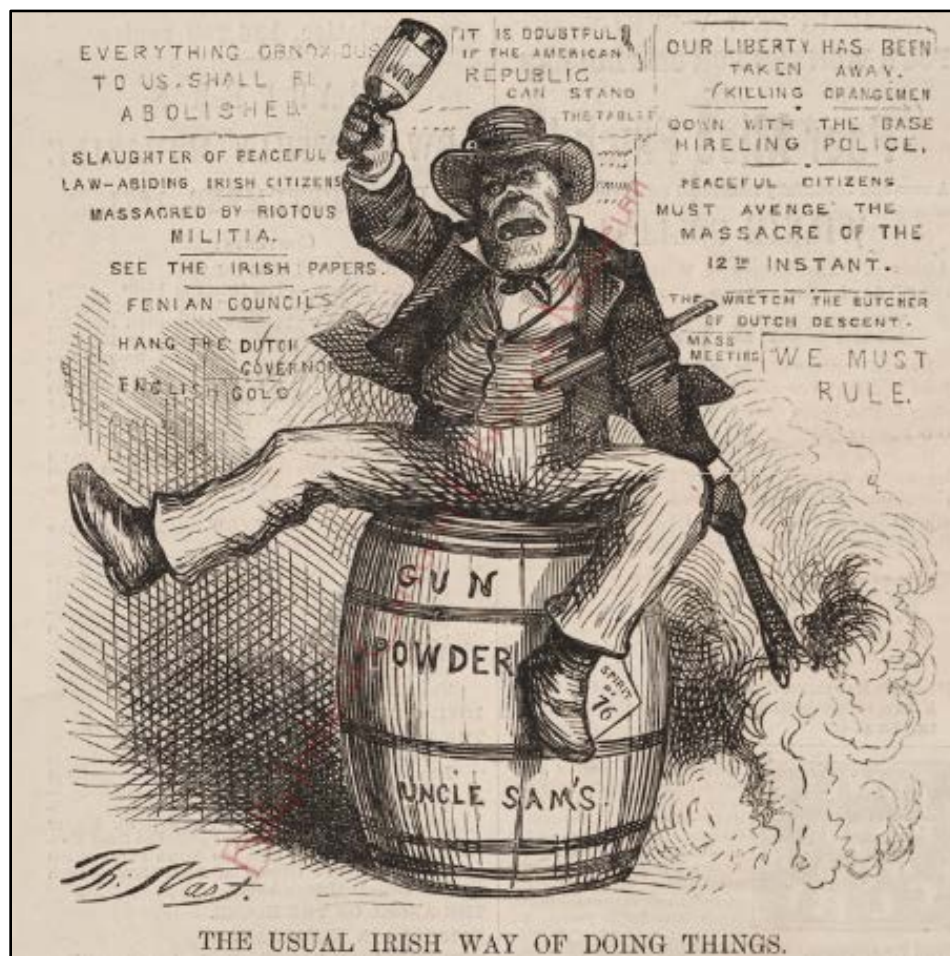
## Homework

### Immigration and Nativism

Read the articles "The History of European Immigrants in the United States" and "The Irish Immigrant Experience" on the Newsela website.

### *The Usual Irish Way of Doing Things*

The political cartoon below was created by Thomas Nast in 1871.



(The Ohio State University, University Libraries)



**Document A**  
**New York Times Editorial**

*Many Irish immigrants coming to the United States were Catholic, a religion that differed from the Protestant Christian groups leading the Second Great Awakening.*

*The following excerpt is from a letter to the editor published in the New York Times on June 20, 1854.*

In this country, Nativism has lately been used to designate the beliefs of a large class of Americans who would take special advantage from the fact of their having been born on this soil, and would exclude foreigners fearing that they may prove **inimical** [*harmful*] to the country.

Should the present **agitation** [*protest, action*] succeed in putting aside the Irish influence, the Republic or cause of liberty everywhere would not be damaged; on the contrary, it is even desirable that the Irish influence should be excluded from the offices of our Government.

This is not said through hatred of the Irish by any means, but the authority that is exercised over the Irish is dangerous to our institutions. Our Irish population appear to be willing and blind instruments of their [Catholic] clergy.

*Letter to the Editor of The New York Times. June 20, 1854. Courtesy of The New York Times.*

**Document B**  
**Know-Nothing and American Crusader**

*The following was adapted from an article that appeared in a Boston newspaper, the Know-Nothing and American Crusader, on July 22, 1854.*

THINGS WHICH ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIESTS AND ALL TRUE ROMAN CATHOLICS HATE

1. They HATE our Republic, and are trying to overthrow it.
2. They HATE our Flag, and they grossly insult it.
3. They HATE the liberty of the Press.
4. They HATE the liberty of speech.
5. They HATE our Public School system.
6. They HATE the Bible, and would blot it out of existence if they could!
7. They HATE Protestants, and are sworn to exterminate them from our country and the earth.
8. They HATE all rulers that do not swear allegiance to the Pope of Rome.
9. They HATE to be ruled by Americans, and say "WE WILL NOT BE RULED BY THEM!"

10. They HATE to support their own paupers and they are left to be supported by the tax paying Americans.
11. They HATE, above all, the “Know-Nothings,” who are determined to rid this country from their cursed power.

—UNCLE SAM

*The Know-Nothing and American Crusader. July 22, 1854.  
Courtesy of Stanford History Education Group.*

### **Document C** **German Immigrants**

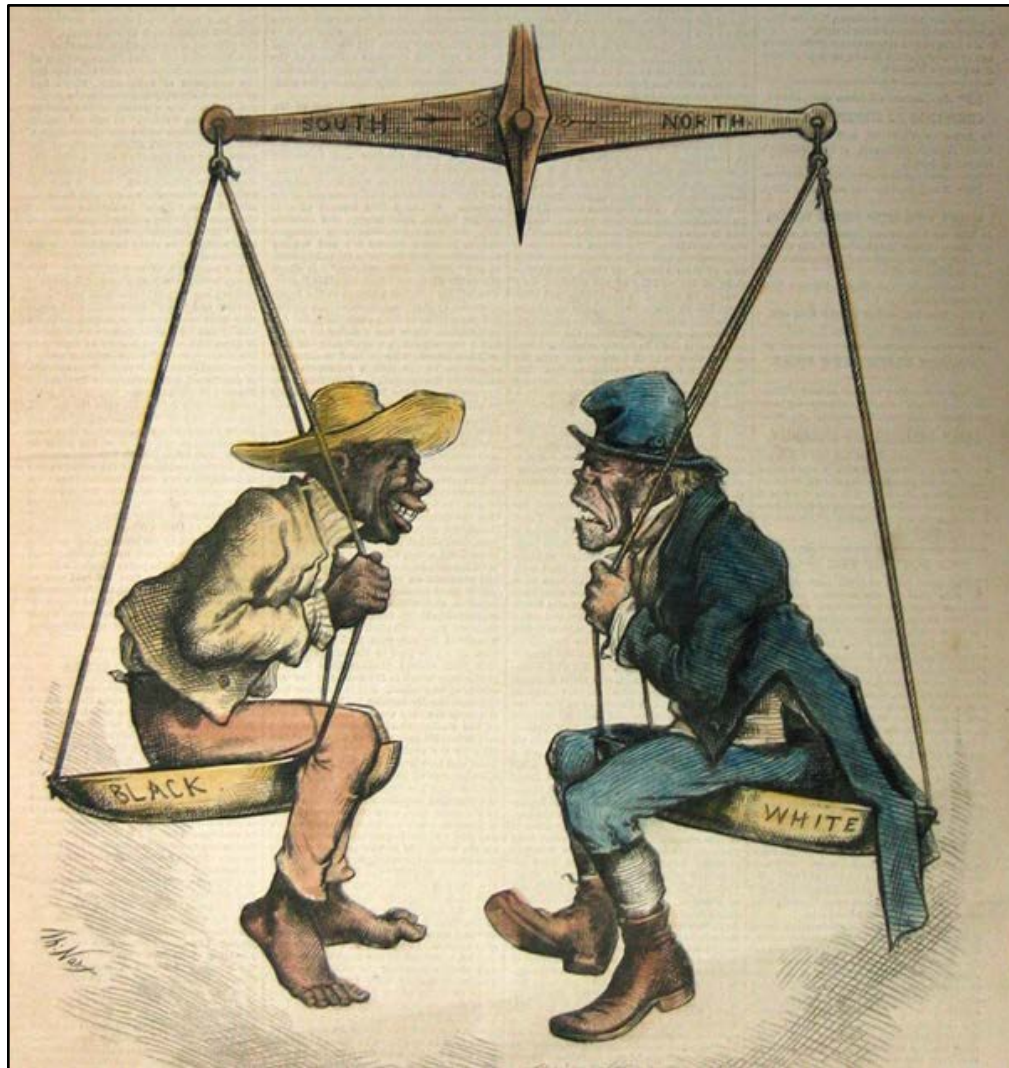
*The political cartoon below, published by the Know-Nothing Party in the 1850s, depicts an Irish immigrant (left) and a German one (right) holding a ballot box. German and Irish immigrants were stereotyped for heavy consumption of alcohol.*



*The barrel on the left says “whiskey” while the barrel on the right says “lager bier”; both are types of alcohol. (Stanford History Education Group)*

**Document D**  
***The Ignorant Vote***

*The cartoon below, The Ignorant Vote, was created by Thomas Nast in 1876. It uses racist caricatures common at the time to illustrate a black Southern man and an Irish immigrant in the North as a leprechaun.*



(Stanford History Education Group)

## Document E

### Irish Immigrant Labor

*The following excerpt was adapted from historian David Roediger's book Wages of Whiteness, published in 1991.*

Irish-Americans workers ... [were sometimes] used as substitutes for slaves within the South. Gangs of Irish immigrants worked ditching and draining plantations, building levees to prevent the overflow of rivers and sometimes clearing land because of the danger of death to valuable slave property (and, as one account put it, to mules) in such work. ... One Southerner explained the use of Irish labor on the grounds that: "[Slaves] are worth too much to be risked here; if the Paddies [Irish] are knocked overboard ... nobody loses anything."

Irish youths were also likely to be found in the decreasing ranks of indentured servants from the early national period [early 1800s] through the Civil War. In that position, they were sometimes called "Irish slaves" and more frequently "bound boys."

*Roediger, David. Wages of Whiteness. 1991 Courtesy of Stanford History Education Group.*

*The cartoon below was created by Frederick Burr Opper and published in the magazine Puck in 1883.*



THE IRISH DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE THAT WE ARE ALL FAMILIAR WITH.

*The caption reads, "The Irish declaration of independence that we are all familiar with," as an Irish cook shakes her first at a non-Irish woman. (Stanford Education Group)*