

OUTLINE

Chapter 6 The Revolution Within

This chapter covers the same time period as the previous chapter, but it focuses on how the American Revolution became more than a movement to separate from Britain. The Revolution also transformed American society by unleashing new ideas about what liberty meant and who should have it. The chapter examines the areas in which liberty was expanded by the Revolution and those areas where liberty remained limited.

INTRODUCTION

I. DEMOCRATIZING FREEDOM

II. TOWARD RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

III. DEFINING ECONOMIC FREEDOM

IV. THE LIMITS OF LIBERTY

V. SLAVERY AND THE REVOLUTION

VI. DAUGHTERS OF LIBERTY

INTRODUCTION

STORY:

Abigail Adams was a well-educated and articulate member of colonial society at the time of the American Revolution. Her husband, John Adams, was a leader in the revolutionary movement and later became the fourth president of the newly independent United States. The letters John and Abigail wrote to each other in the 17th c are a window on the events and ideas of the revolutionary generation. Abigail's "Remember the ladies" letter is one example of how the American Revolution, which began over the issue of taxation, opened up wider debates about liberty and rights. Professor Foner says "the struggle against Britain threw into question many forms of authority and inequality."



THEMES:

1. Through the processes of fighting to become independent from Britain, Americans developed new ideas about equality and democracy.
2. After 1776, the new states each drafted constitutions which reflected the on-going debates about equality and democracy.
3. Three areas in which the evolving ideas about democracy had a major impact were suffrage, religion, and economic opportunity.
4. The evolving ideas about democracy were not extended to slaves and Native Americans.

I. DEMOCRATIZING FREEDOM

FOCUS QUESTION: How did equality become a stronger component of American freedom after the Revolution?

A. The Dream of Equality

1. The Revolution unleashed public debates and political and social struggles that enlarged the scope of freedom and challenged inherited structures of power within America

a. Rejected was the principle of hereditary aristocracy

b. Inequality had been fundamental to the colonial social order

2. The Declaration of Independence's assertion that "all men are created equal" radically altered society

B. Expanding the Political Nation

1. The leaders of the Revolution had not intended this disruption of social order

2. The democratization of freedom was dramatic for free men

a. Artisans, small farmers, laborers, and the militia all emerged as a self-conscious element in politics

b. The prewar elite of Pennsylvania opposed independence

c. This left a vacuum of political leadership



filled by Paine, Rush, Matlack, and Young Pennsylvania's radicals attacked property qualifications for voting

C. The New Constitutions

1. All states wrote a new constitution and agreed that their governments must be republics
2. States disagreed as to how the government should be structured
 - a. Pennsylvania's one-house legislature
 - b. John Adams's "balanced governments" of two-house legislatures

D. The Right to Vote

1. The property qualification for suffrage was hotly debated
2. The least democratization occurred in the southern states whose highly deferential political traditions enabled the landed gentry to retain their control of political affairs
3. By the 1780s with the exceptions of Virginia, Maryland, and New York, a large majority of the adult white male population could meet voting requirements
4. Freedom and an individual's right to vote had become interchangeable

STUDY HINT

The new state constitutions show that Americans agreed on two things:

1. equality as an important goal
2. republican form of government

But the constitutions also show that not all American agreed on how to achieve these ideals.

STUDY HINT

You should be able to describe how suffrage expanded. Who had the right to vote and who did not have the right vote?



II. TOWARD RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

FOCUS QUESTION: How did religious liberty expand after the Revolution?

A. Separating Church and State

1. The drive to separate church and state brought together Deists with members of evangelical sects
2. The seven state constitutions that began with declarations of rights all declared a commitment to “the free exercise of religion”
3. Many states still had limitations on religious freedom
4. Thomas Jefferson’s “Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom” separated church and state
5. James Madison insisted that one reason for the complete separation of church and state was to reinforce the principle that the new nation offered “asylum to the persecuted and oppressed of every nation and religion”

B. The Revolution and the Churches

1. As religious liberty expanded some church authority was undermined
2. Thanks to religious freedom, the early republic witnessed an amazing proliferation of religious denominations

STUDY HINT

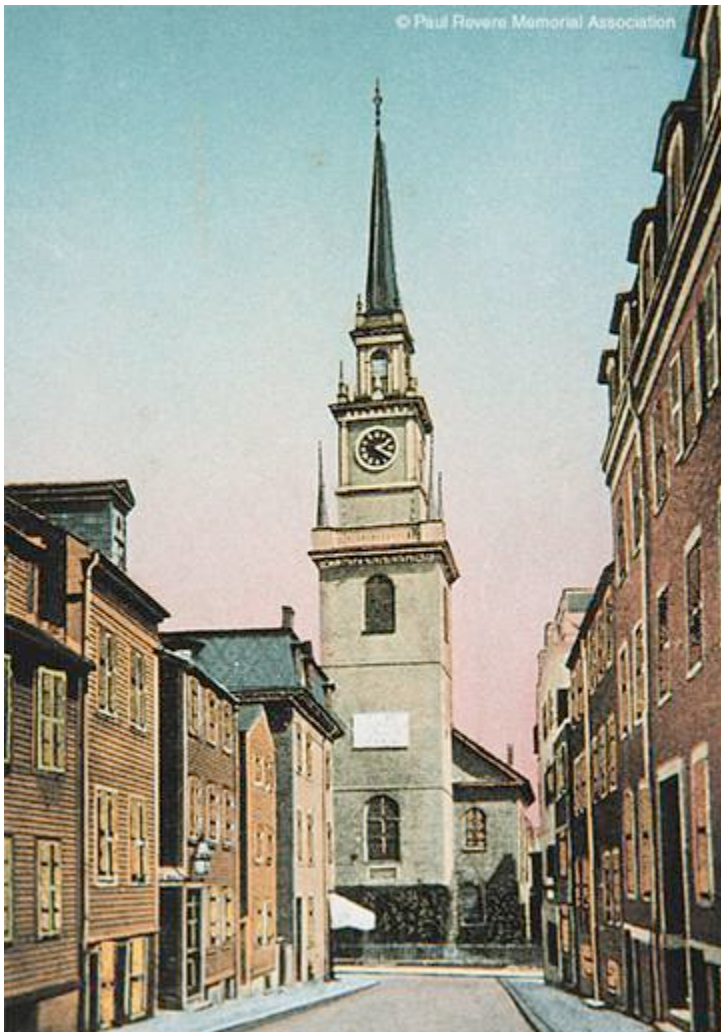
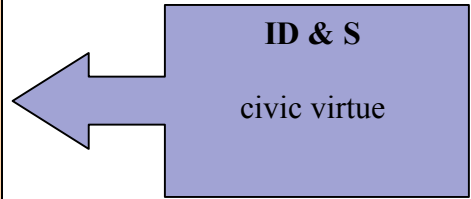


The purpose behind separating church and state was to protect and expand religious freedom not to keep religion from influencing the government.



C. A Virtuous Citizenry

1. Despite a separation of church and state, public authority continued to support religious values
2. Leaders wished to encourage virtue—the ability to sacrifice self-interest for the public good



III. DEFINING ECONOMIC FREEDOM

FOCUS QUESTION: How did economic freedom change after the Revolution?

A. Toward Free Labor

1. The lack of freedom inherent in apprenticeship and servitude increasingly came to be seen as incompatible with republican citizenship
2. By 1800, indentured servitude had all but disappeared from the United States
 - a. The distinction between freedom and slavery sharpened

B. The Soul of a Republic

1. Equality was the very soul of a republic
2. To most free Americans “equality” meant equal opportunity, rather than equality of condition
3. Thomas Jefferson, and others, equated land and economic resources with freedom

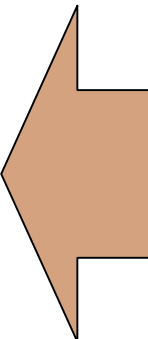
C. The Politics of Inflation

1. The war produced inflation and some Americans took matters into their own hands

D. The Debate over Free Trade

1. Congress urged states to adopt measures to fix wages and prices

STUDY HINT

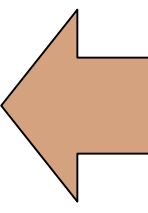


How people earned a living became an important part of the expanding concept of freedom. By 1800, America had two systems of labor:

1. free labor, in which people had the freedom to chose where and when to work
2. slave labor in which had no choice.



STUDY HINT



New ideas about freedom influenced not just the issue of work, but also of how economic activity, like monetary policy and trade, should be conducted.

2. Smith's argument that the "invisible hand" of the free market directed economic life more effectively and fairly than governmental intervention offered intellectual justification for those who believed that the economy should be left to regulate itself



IV. THE LIMITS OF LIBERTY

FOCUS QUESTION: How did the Revolution bring a loss of freedom for Indians?

A. Colonial Loyalists

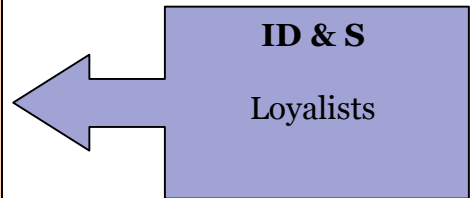
1. Loyalists remained loyal to the crown
 - a. Estimated 20 to 25 percent of Americans were Loyalists
2. Some Loyalists ethnic minorities feared that local majorities would infringe on their freedom to enjoy cultural autonomy

B. The Loyalists' Plight

1. The War for Independence was in some respects a civil war among Americans
2. War brought a deprivation of basic rights to many Americans
 - a. Many states required residents to take oaths of allegiance to the new nation
3. When the war ended, as many as 100,000 Loyalists were banished from the United States or emigrated voluntarily

C. The Indians' Revolution

1. American independence meant the loss of freedom for the Indians
2. Indians were divided in allegiance during the War for Independence

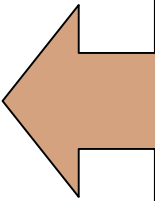


3. The British and Americans were guilty of savagery toward the Indians during the war

D. White Freedom, Indian Freedom

1. To many patriots, access to Indian land was one of the fruits of American victory
 - a. But liberty for whites meant loss of liberty for Indians
2. The Treaty of Paris marked the culmination of a century in which the balance of power in eastern North America shifted away from the Indians and toward white Americans
3. “Freedom” had not played a major part in Indians’ vocabulary before the Revolution but now freedom meant defending their own independence and retaining possession of their land

STUDY HINT



You should be able to describe the impact of the American Revolution on Native Americans.

V. SLAVERY AND THE REVOLUTION

FOCUS QUESTION: What was the impact of the Revolution on slavery?

A. Slavery and Freedom

1. During the debates over British rule, “slavery” was invoked as a political category
 - a. Britain was a “kingdom of slaves” while America was a “country of free men”
2. James Otis wrote of universal freedom, even for blacks
3. The irony that America cried for liberty while enslaving Africans was not lost on everyone
 - a. Edmund Burke
 - b. Dr. Samuel Johnson

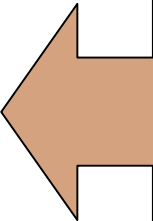
B. Obstacles to Abolition

1. Some patriots argued that slavery for blacks made freedom possible for whites
2. For government to seize property, including slaves, would be an infringement on liberty

B. The Cause of General Liberty

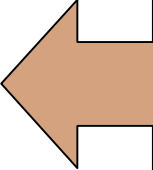
1. By defining freedom as a universal entitlement rather than a set of rights specific to a particular place or people, the Revolution

STUDY HINT



You should be able to describe how the idea of liberty, which was so central to the American Revolution, did not cause most white Americans to think that slavery should be ended.

STUDY HINT



You should also be able to describe how a few people did use the idea of liberty to argue for an end to slavery.

inevitably raised question about the status of slavery in the new nation

- a. Samuel Sewall's *The Selling of Joseph* (1700)
- b. Benjamin Rush's warnings

C. In Quest of Freedom

- 1. The language of liberty echoed in slave communities, North and South
- 2. "Freedom petitions" were presented by slaves in New England in the early 1770s
- 3. Many blacks were surprised that white America did not realize its rhetoric of revolution demanded emancipation
- 4. Poet Phillis Wheatley and poems by black slaves often spoke of freedom

D. Fighting for Liberty

- 1. George Washington accepted black recruits after Lord Dunmore's proclamation
 - a. 5,000 blacks enlisted
 - b. Some slaves gained freedom by serving in place of an owner
- 2. Siding with the British offered slaves far more opportunities for liberty

F. The First Emancipation

- 1. For a brief moment, the revolutionary upheaval appeared to threaten the continued

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Phillis Wheatley

STUDY HINT

You should be able to describe what role slaves played in the War of Independence.

existence of slavery

2. Between 1777 and 1804 every state north of Maryland took steps toward emancipation
3. Abolition in the North was a slow process and typically applied only to future children of current slave women

G. Free Black Communities

1. After the war, free black communities came into existence
2. Despite the rhetoric of freedom, the war did not end slavery for blacks



VI. DAUGHTERS OF LIBERTY

FOCUS QUESTION: How did the Revolution affect the status of women?

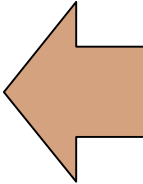
A. Revolutionary Women

1. Many women fought during the war in various capacities
 - a. Deborah Sampson
 - b. Molly Pitcher
 - c. Ladies' Association
2. Within American households, women participated in the political discussions unleashed by independence

B. Gender and Politics

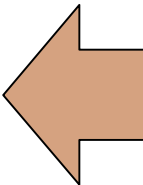
1. The winning of independence did not alter the law of family inherited from Britain
2. In both law and social reality, women lacked the essential qualification of political participation
3. Many women who entered public debate felt the need to apologize for their forthrightness
4. Most men considered women to be naturally submissive and irrational and therefore unfit for citizenship

STUDY HINT



You should be able to describe some of the ways in which women participated in the War of Independence.

STUDY HINT



You should be able to identify some of the ways in which the Revolution **did** and **did not** change women's status in society.

C. Republican Motherhood

1. Women played a key role in the new republic by training future citizens
2. The idea of republican motherhood reinforced the trend toward the idea of “companionate” marriage

D. The Arduous Struggle for Liberty

1. The Revolution changed the life of virtually every American
2. America became a beacon of hope to those chafing under Old World tyrannies

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republican
motherhood

