

**CHAPTER SIX: THE NEW REPUBLIC:
AN AGE OF POLITICAL PASSION, 1789–1800**

READING AND STUDY GUIDE

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The adoption of the Constitution did little to lessen the divisions in America that had arisen during ratification.

The Federalist supporters of the Constitution splintered into two opposing groups. One side rallied around Alexander Hamilton, who became the chief theorist and driving force for an ambitious Federalist agenda. For Hamilton and his allies, the adoption of the Constitution was

simply the first step in creating a powerful central government. These new Federalists envisioned a future America as a great commercial empire that would, inspired by Britain's lead, develop a strong military and pursue economic development aggressively.

Opposing this bold agenda was a group that coalesced around Thomas Jefferson, who, with his friend James Madison, a former ally of Hamilton, helped define the core of the Republican opposition. This movement, while lacking the coherence and formal organization of a modern political party, battled its Federalist opponents on a wide range of political, economic, and constitutional issues.

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

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

Learning Objectives

After a careful examination of Chapter 6, students should be able to do the following:

1. Describe the degree of ethnic diversity in New England, the mid-Atlantic region, the South, and the West in 1789.
2. Describe the degree of religious diversity in New England, the mid-Atlantic region, the South, and the West in 1789.
3. Describe the characteristics of and attitudes toward the institution of slavery in the mid-Atlantic region, the South, and the West in 1789.
4. Describe the status of women in New England in 1789.
5. Describe the variations in political ideology in New England, the mid-Atlantic region, the South, and the West in 1789.
6. Describe the economies of New England, the mid-Atlantic region, the South, and the West in 1789.
7. Outline the provisions of the Bill of Rights.
8. Name the original executive departments and discuss the extent to which the president was able to exercise authority over them.
9. Outline the components of Hamilton's financial plan for addressing the public debt.
10. Explain the opposition to each point of Hamilton's financial plan and how resolution was eventually reached.

11. Distinguish between the terms *strict constructionist* and *broad constructionist*.
12. Explain the impact of the French Revolution on the emergence of the first political party system.
13. Identify Edmond Genêt and explain his impact on the growing tensions between Federalists and Republicans.
14. Explain the circumstances surrounding the Whiskey Rebellion, and discuss its impact.
15. Outline the provisions of Jay's Treaty and explain why it was poorly received in the United States.
16. Explain Spain's reasons for negotiating the Treaty of San Lorenzo.
17. Describe the events surrounding the election of 1796 and explain what was unusual about its outcome.
18. Describe the events surrounding the XYZ Affair.
19. Explain the Direct Tax of 1798 and describe its impact on factionalism in the United States.
20. List the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 and explain the provisions of each.
21. Understand the meaning of the terms *nullification* and *interposition* as they relate to Jefferson and Madison's Virginia and Kentucky resolutions.
22. Describe the circumstances surrounding Fries's Rebellion.
23. Comment on the Franco-American Accord of 1800 and how it reflected Adams's split from the Hamiltonian wing of the Federalist Party.
24. Explain how religion impacted the election of 1800.
25. Explain why Washington crushed the Whiskey Rebellion.

Key Terms & Definitions:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Alien and Sedition Acts Four laws designed to protect America from the danger of foreign and domestic subversion. The first three, the Alien laws, dealt with immigration and naturalization. The Sedition Act criminalized criticism of the federal government. (183)

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

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

Study Questions:

Why was the period after the adoption of the Constitution so politically contentious? (158)

Why did Madison shift his views on the need for a Bill of Rights? (160)

Why were some ardent Anti-Federalists not satisfied with the Bill of Rights? (161)

What were the main features of Hamilton's economic program? (162)

How does Hamilton's own life story help explain his particular vision for America's future? (163)

Why did Virginians, including Madison and Jefferson, oppose Hamilton's economic program? (164)

What did Madison and Jefferson gain by moving the location of the new capital to what is now Washington, D.C.? (165)

How did Hamilton and Jefferson differ in their interpretations of the phrase "necessary and proper?" (166)

What were the most important points of disagreement between Hamilton and Jefferson? (167)

What role did the partisan press play in the politics of the 1790s? (168)

Why did the Federalists oppose the Democratic-Republican societies? (169)

Why did Federalists become such ardent critics of the French Revolution? (170)

How did French ideas influence American political culture? (171)

Why did Republicans oppose Jay's Treaty? (172)

How did American and Indian views of the Treaty of Greenville differ? (173)

Why did the Whiskey Rebellion present such a problem for Republicans? (174)

Why did Federalist policy not work in Kentucky? (175)

How did fashion become politicized in the 1790s? (176)

How is virtue represented in Maria Crowninshield's allegory of female education? (177)

Why did Republicans oppose normalizing relations with St. Domingue? (178)

Why symbols does the artist use to represent the achievements of the arts and science in the new American nation? (179)

What advice did Washington offer the new nation in his Farewell Address? (180)

What visual elements does the artist use to represent the future of America in this painting of George Washington? (181)

What impact did the XYZ Affair have on American politics? (182)

Why did the Federalists believe that it was necessary to pass the Alien and Sedition Acts? (183)

What constitutional ideas were used to challenge the Sedition Act? (184)

Why did the Federalist political cartoon show Jefferson about to burn the Constitution? (185)

Which events of the 1790s helped inspire Gabriel's Rebellion? (186)

What were the chief political differences dividing Federalists from Republicans in 1800? (187)