

Period 5: 1844-1877

In a Nutshell

As the nation expanded and its population grew, regional tensions, especially over slavery, led to a civil war — the course and aftermath of which transformed American society.

Key Concepts

Part 1

- A. The United States became more connected with the world, pursued an expansionist foreign policy in the Western Hemisphere, and emerged as the destination for many migrants from other countries
- B. Popular enthusiasm for U.S. expansion, bolstered by economic and security interests, resulted in the acquisition of new territories, substantial migration westward, and new overseas initiatives.
- C. In the 1840s and 1850s, Americans continued to debate questions about rights and citizenship for various groups of U.S. inhabitants.

Part 2

- D. Intensified by expansion and deepening regional divisions, debates over slavery and other economic, cultural, and political issues led the nation into civil war.
- E. Ideological and economic differences over slavery produced an array of diverging responses from Americans in the North and the South.
- F. Debates over slavery came to dominate political discussion in the 1850s, culminating in the bitter election of 1860 and the secession of Southern states.

Part 3

- G. The Union victory in the Civil War and the contested reconstruction of the South settled the issues of slavery and secession, but left unresolved many questions about the power of the federal government and citizenship rights.
- H. The North's greater manpower and industrial resources, the leadership of Abraham Lincoln and others, and the decision to emancipate slaves eventually led to the Union military victory over the Confederacy in the devastating Civil War.
- I. Reconstruction and the Civil War ended slavery, altered relationships between the states and the federal government, and led to debates over new definitions of citizenship, particularly regarding the rights of African Americans, women, and other minorities.

Significant Topics

1. Settlement of the American West

The desire for access to natural and mineral resources and the hope of many settlers for economic opportunities or religious refuge led to an increased migration to and settlement in the West. Westward migration was boosted during and after the Civil War by the passage of new legislation promoting Western transportation and economic development.

- a. Mormons

- b. California gold rush, 1849

- c. Homestead Act, 1862

- d. Pacific Railway Act, 1862

- e. Promontory Point, Utah, 1869

2. **Manifest Destiny**

Advocates of annexing western lands argued that Manifest Destiny and the superiority of American institutions compelled the United States to expand its borders westward to the Pacific ocean. The U.S. added large territories in the West through victory in the Mexican-American War and diplomatic negotiations, raising questions about the status of slavery, American Indians, and Mexicans in the newly acquired lands.

- a. Annexation of Texas, 1845

- b. Oregon Treaty, 1846

- c. Manifest Destiny

- d. Mexican-American War, 1846-48

e. Mexican Cession, 1848

f. Gadsden Purchase, 1853

3. **The Westward Movement's Effect on Hispanics and American Indians**

U.S. government interaction and conflict with Mexican Americans and American Indians increased in regions newly taken from American Indians and Mexico, altering these groups' economic self-sufficiency and cultures.

a. Mariano Vallejo

b. Sand Creek Massacre, 1864

4. **The United States and Asia**

U.S. interest in expanding trade led to economic, diplomatic, and cultural initiatives to create more ties with Asia.

a. Chinese trade

b. clipper ships

c. Commodore Matthew Perry

d. missionaries

5. **European Migration and American Nativism**

Substantial numbers of international migrants continued to arrive in the United States from Europe and Asia, mainly from Ireland and Germany, often settling in ethnic communities where they could

preserve elements of their languages and customs. A strongly anti-Catholic nativist movement arose that was aimed at limiting new immigrants' political power and cultural influence.

a. nativism

b. Know Nothings

6. **The Free-Soil and Abolitionist Movements**

The North's expanding manufacturing economy relied on free labor in contrast to the Southern economy's dependence on slave labor. Some Northerners did not object to slavery on principle but claimed that slavery would undermine the free labor market. As a result, a free-soil movement arose that portrayed the expansion of slavery as incompatible with free labor. African American and white abolitionists, although a minority in the North, mounted a highly visible campaign against slavery, presenting moral arguments against the institution, assisting slaves' escapes, and sometimes expressing a willingness to use violence to achieve their goals.

a. Free Soil Party

b. Underground Railroad, 1850-1860

c. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 1852

7. **Southern Defense of Slavery**

Defenders of slavery based their arguments on racial doctrines, the view that slavery was a positive social good, and the belief that slavery and states' rights were protected by the Constitution.

a. peculiar institution

b. slave codes

- a. King Cotton

- b. Antietam, 1862

- c. Vicksburg, 1863

- d. Gettysburg, 1863

- e. March to the Sea, 1864

- f. Appomattox Court House, 1865

12. **The Abolition of Slavery**

Lincoln and most Union supporters began the Civil War to preserve the Union, but Lincoln's decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation reframed the purpose of the war and helped prevent the Confederacy from gaining full diplomatic support from European powers. Many African Americans fled southern plantations and enlisted in the Union Army, helping to undermine the Confederacy. Lincoln sought to reunify the country and used speeches such as the Gettysburg Address to portray the struggle against slavery as the fulfillment of America's founding democratic ideals. The 13th Amendment abolished slavery, while the 14th and 15th amendments granted African Americans citizenship, equal protection under the laws, and voting rights.

- 1. Emancipation Proclamation, 1863

- 2. Gettysburg Address, 1863

- 3. 13th Amendment, 1865

4. 14th Amendment, 1868

5. 15th Amendment, 1870

6. black codes

7. Civil Rights Act of 1875

13. **Reconstruction, 1865-1877**

Efforts by radical and moderate Republicans to change the balance of power between Congress and the presidency and to reorder race relations in the defeated South yielded some short-term successes. Reconstruction opened up political opportunities and other leadership roles to former slaves, but it ultimately failed, due both to determined Southern resistance and the North's waning resolve. Segregation, violence, Supreme Court decisions, and local political tactics progressively stripped away African American rights, but the 14th and 15th amendments eventually became the basis for court decisions upholding civil rights in the 20th century.

a. Radical Republicans

b. Charles Sumner

c. Thaddeus Stevens

d. Impeachment of President Andrew Johnson, 1868

e. Freedman's Bureau, 1865-1872

f. Black Reconstruction

g. Hiram Revels

h. Blanche K. Bruce

i. Robert Smalls

j. carpetbagger

k. scalawag

l. Ku Klux Klan

m. Redeemers

n. Compromise of 1877

14. African Americans during and after the Reconstruction Era

Southern plantation owners continued to own the majority of the region's land even after Reconstruction. Former slaves sought land ownership but generally fell short of self-sufficiency, as an exploitative and soil-intensive sharecropping system limited blacks' and poor whites' access to land in the South.

1. sharecropping (tenant farming)

15. Women's Rights during the Reconstruction Era

The women's rights movement was both emboldened and divided over the 14th and 15th amendments to the Constitution.

- a. Susan B. Anthony

- b. Victoria Woodhull