

Democracy In America Timeline

Trace civic events and themes through U.S. History with this civic timeline. To further examine a particular time period, click on any of the dates that accompany an event to retrieve primary sources from our library that were published within a twenty year time-span of that date.

[1770](#) - Boston Massacre

This event illustrates the growing anti-Britain sentiment in the colonies, and was one of many events that influenced the emergence of the United States as a nation. In the few years before the American Revolution, the city of Boston was explosive with political differences: It was the hotbed of anti-British feeling, but also housed several thousand British troops. In March of 1770, some of these troops responded to an attack by local young men by firing back, killing five colonists. Crispus Attucks, an escaped slave, was among the five victims in the Boston Massacre. He is said to have been the first to fall.

[1770 - 1820](#) - Struggle for a National American Literature

While many Americans felt high national spirits and patriotism due to the military successes of the American Revolution, many were a lot less excited about the accomplishments of American literature. Many people felt that there was no such thing as a distinctive national American literature, because many writers were accused of just acting "British." American books met awful reviews in England (perhaps for very political reasons), and a lot of Americans were very self-conscious about an enormous desire for and imitation of British writing styles. They felt that a nation that identifies itself with civic pride and as separate from its colonizer should be able to launch its own writing identity. Part of the problem was that revolutionary colonial writers had been born British citizens, wore British fashions, had British friends, etc., so it was difficult to create a style apart from this. This situation was made even more thorny in that there was a lot of praise and reward for political and nation-building writing, but not for other types because America didn't have a very well established publishing system at that point. Many people believe that the "real" American Literature emerged only later in the early 19th century. However, such discussions are often subjective and frequently omitted some of the earlier popular works, especially those by women, which may not have been viewed then as "great" literature for various reasons. For instance, Susanna Rowson's *Charlotte Temple* (1791) was hugely successful. Earlier on in the colonial era, writers such as Anne Bradstreet, Anne Hutchinson, Sarah Kemble Knight and Phillis Wheatley were also very well known.

[1773](#) - Boston Tea Party

Colonists dumped a huge amount of imported tea into the Boston Harbor as a protest against British tax policies. These British policies were part of many British attempts to hold control over the increasingly resistant colonies. The Boston Tea Party was mainly organized by the Sons of Liberty, who boarded 3 ships in Boston Harbor. Some were

dressed, not very convincingly, as Mohawk Indians, and together they dumped loads of Darjeeling tea into the sea. John Adams, usually no fan of mob action, wrote of the overboard tea: "There is a dignity, a majesty, a sublimity, in this last effort of the patriots that I greatly admire." Many women took the lead in the boycott of various English goods, although their participation has only recently been acknowledged in historical texts.

1774 - First Continental Congress

The Continental Congresses were groups of leaders who got together and made decisions for the colonies during the period that they were fighting for independence from Britain. The First Continental Congress was organized largely to discuss what to do about the British "Intolerable Acts." The British Parliament had been increasingly angered over colonial uprisings—particularly the Boston Tea Party, and the "Intolerable Acts" were punishments against the colonies that were designed to help boost British control again. The men in the First Continental Congress, then, met secretly because they did not want the British to know that the colonies were uniting. Some argued, unsuccessfully, that the colonies could have freedom under British rule. They ended up making a list of basic rights they wanted and a list of complaints to send to King George III, and signed a petition demanding that the Intolerable Acts be repealed. John Adams thought the First Continental Congress was like a school for American leaders (it included men such as George Washington, Samuel Adams and Patrick Henry). Soon they were able to see past just their colony and start to think of all the colonies together as America. For instance, Patrick Henry remarked, "I am not a Virginian, but an American." The men adjourned the Congress on October 26, 1774 and decided to meet again in May of 1775 in Philadelphia if King George III did not repeal the Intolerable Acts.

1774 - First Shots of American Revolution

The first shots of the American Revolution. Free African American men fight with the Minutemen in the initial skirmishes of the Revolutionary War at Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts.

1775 - 1820 - American Revolution

The American Revolution ended two centuries of British rule for most of the North American colonies and created the modern United States of America. Differences in life, thought, and economic interests had formed between the colonies and the so-called mother country. Fighting erupted on Apr. 19, 1775, at Lexington and Concord, and was followed by the capture of Fort Ticonderoga from the British, the battle of Bunker Hill, and the unsuccessful colonial assault on Quebec (1775-76). The Continental Congress appointed George Washington to command the Continental army and, on July 4, 1776, adopted the Declaration of Independence. Many colonists, however, remained pro-British Loyalists. The surrender (Oct. 1781) of Gen. Cornwallis ended the fighting, and the Treaty of Paris (1783) recognized the U.S. as a nation. The Revolutionary era was both exhilarating and disturbing---a time of progress for some, dislocation for others. In the wake of the Revolution came events as varied as the drafting and ratification of the

Constitution of the United States of America and the rebellions of slaves who saw the contrast between slavery and proclamations of liberty.

1775 - Battle of Bunker Hill

One of the most important colonial victories early in the U.S. War of Independence. It was fought during the Siege of Boston (led by American troops against the British ones who were holding Boston during the U.S. War of Independence). It fueled the revolutionary cause and was particularly significant because, if the British weren't defeated, they might have been able to continue attacking south of Boston. In fact, George Washington was able to control this area and force the British to evacuate the area of Boston and its harbor. Plus, this victory at Bunker Hill boosted U.S. confidence.

1775 - Paul Revere's Famous Ride

Revere is a folk hero of the American Revolution, who, as the traditional legend goes, rode on horseback on the night of April 18, 1775, yelling, "The British are coming!" This was a warning to Boston-area residents that British troops were on the march, particularly in search of the Revolutionary leaders John Hancock and Samuel Adams. Because of Revere's warning, the Minutemen were ready the next morning at Lexington for the historic battle that some say launched the War of Independence. However, many have discounted this legend, saying at least that he wouldn't have said, "The British are coming!" because the colonists still viewed themselves as British. Despite the various controversies, the legend seemed to appeal to many (and was even made into a Longfellow poem) because it stirred great patriotic zeal for the colonial rebellion.

1776 - Thomas Paine publishes his pamphlet, "Common Sense"

This was a plea written in simple style for independence from the British King George III and the monarchical form of government. It was an important influence on the American Revolution, especially because it came in the form of a pamphlet--the most popular form of political literature of the day--and helped excite passions for revolutionary literature. Pamphlets thrilled patriots and threatened loyalists. Similar to drama, they were often read aloud in public to excite audiences. American soldiers read them aloud in their camps; British Loyalists threw them into public bonfires.

1776 - Declaration of Independence

Congress voted in favor of independence from Britain, and on July 4, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was approved. It announced, supposedly unanimously (New York abstained), the separation of 13 North American British colonies from Great Britain. It explained why "these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be Free and Independent States." Actually, the day on which final separation was officially voted was July 2, although the 4th, the day on which the Declaration of Independence was adopted, has always been celebrated in the United States as the great national holiday--the Fourth of July. Some of the phrases of the declaration have been very influential in various United States civic causes, especially the words that, "We hold these truths to be self-evident,

that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." The meanings and conclusions of these phrases have been highly debated, but also have given strength to groups fighting for more power within the United States. For instance, at the 1848 U.S. Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, New York, Elizabeth Cady Stanton read the "Declaration of Sentiments," a statement of grievances and demands patterned closely after the Declaration of Independence. It called upon women to organize and to petition for their rights, such as for suffrage, free speech, and equality in marriage, work, and education.

1776 - U.S. flag

The United States adopts a flag with thirteen alternating red and white stripes, and a blue field with thirteen white stars.

1777 - Articles of Confederation

Congress adopts the Articles of Confederation, which was the first U.S. constitution, and served as a bridge between the initial government by the Continental Congress of the Revolutionary period, and the federal government provided under the U.S. Constitution of 1787.

1783 - End of Revolution

The American Revolution ends, and the independence of the U.S. is recognized with the Treaty of Versailles.

1787 - Constitution

Formed in the Constitutional Convention of 1787 and ratified the following year, the Constitution of the United States formed the basis of the new national government. It established a republic balanced between the national government and the states. It began to function in 1789, replacing the Articles of Confederation. It contains a preamble, 7 articles, and 27 amendments. The Bill of Rights, comprising the first 10 amendments to the constitution, was added in 1791 to provide guarantees of individual liberties. There weren't many amendments to the Constitution after 1791. The brevity and generality of the language of the Constitution have made it adaptable to changing times. Over time the Constitution has been interpreted to mean radically different things. For instance, in *Plessy V. Ferguson* (1896), the Court held racial segregation constitutional, while in *Brown V. Board of Education* (1954), it found the opposite. Among the concepts long subject to reexamination and reinterpretation are states' rights, due process of law, and equal protection under the law.

1787 - "The Federalist" essays

Supporters of the Constitution, the Federalists, and opponents of the Constitution, the Antifederalists, fought fiercely in the press. These essays, published in book form, were

titled "The Federalist." Written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, "The Federalist" was the most organized, coherent effort to defend the Constitution.

1787 - Constitutional Convention

In U.S. history, this was the convention in which leaders drew up the U.S. Constitution. Abigail Adams asked her husband John (somewhat fruitlessly, as it turns out) to "remember the ladies," because women had minimal political and public access to power.

1788 - Ratification of the Constitution

1789 - George Washington is President

Born in 1732 into a Virginia planter family, he learned the morals, manners, and body of knowledge requisite for an 18th century Virginia gentleman. He pursued two intertwined interests: military arts and western expansion. At 16 he helped survey Shenandoah lands, and later fought the first skirmishes of what grew into the French and Indian War. From 1759 to the outbreak of the American Revolution, Washington managed his lands around Mount Vernon and served in the Virginia House of Burgesses. He was married to a widow, Martha Dandridge Custis. But like his fellow planters, Washington felt himself exploited by British merchants and hampered by British regulations. When the Second Continental Congress assembled in Philadelphia in May 1775, Washington, one of the Virginia delegates, was elected Commander in Chief of the Continental Army. On July 3, 1775, at Cambridge, Massachusetts, he took command of his ill-trained troops and embarked upon a war that was to last six grueling years. Finally in 1781 with the aid of French allies--he forced the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown. Washington became a prime mover in the steps leading to the Constitutional Convention at Philadelphia in 1787. When the new Constitution was ratified, the Electoral College unanimously elected Washington President. He did not infringe upon the policy making powers that he felt the Constitution gave Congress. When the French Revolution led to a major war between France and England, Washington refused to accept entirely the recommendations of either his Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, who was pro-French, or his Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, who was pro-British. Rather, he insisted upon a neutral course until the United States could grow stronger. To his disappointment, two parties were developing by the end of his first term. Worn out of politics, feeling old, he retired at the end of his second. In his Farewell Address, he urged his countrymen to forswear excessive party spirit and geographical distinctions. In foreign affairs, he warned against long-term alliances. Washington enjoyed less than three years of retirement at Mount Vernon, for he died of a throat infection December 14, 1799. For months the Nation mourned him.

1790 - 1840 - Second Great Awakening

In the decades following independence, the United States underwent widespread religious expression and church membership in a New England revival, the Second Great Awakening. People were increasingly moving away into smaller frontier communities, and lacking civic ties and responsibilities, many looked for connections with others through religion. In

uncertain times, people often turn to religion for comfort and order in their lives. It was a form of religious evangelism in which people believed in sin and hell, but also in the ability of people to save themselves from sinful behavior, especially with emotionally charged revivals, during which people would really let loose and speak in tongues and roll on the ground. Involved in activism, it also led to the founding of colleges and seminaries and to the organization of mission societies.

1791 - Bill of Rights

The Bill of Rights was amended to the U.S. Constitution. The first ten amendments to the Constitution, they limit governmental power and protect basic rights and liberties of individuals. The Bill of Rights include the following components:

1. separation of church and state
2. need for a regulated militia and right to bear arms. This right to bear arms referred not so much to all citizens, but for the right of "the people" as a group or as appointed militiamen.
3. no quartering of soldiers
4. no unreasonable search and seizures; no search without probable cause
5. prohibits criminal charges for death penalty without Grand Jury indictment
6. all criminals have right to a speedy public trial with an impartial jury
7. juries can be demanded for civil cases
8. no excessive bail or fines (except in cases such as murder, or when subject might flee)
9. these rights shall not deny other rights of people
10. powers given to the United States government and not prohibited to the states are reserved to the states or to the people

1793 - Fugitive Slave Law

Congress passed the first Fugitive Slave Law (the second would be in 1850, and would be repealed in 1864). This was a federal act demanding the seizure and return of escaped slaves. There was much opposition to this Act, especially in the North, and some states devised personal-liberty laws to allow fugitives to appeal their case in front of a jury. The underground railroad emerged partly as a result of this controversial act.

1797 - John Adams is President

Learned and thoughtful, John Adams was more remarkable as a political philosopher than as a politician. "People and nations are forged in the fires of adversity," he said, doubtless thinking of his own as well as the American experience. Adams was born in the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1735. A Harvard-educated lawyer, he early became identified with the patriot cause; a delegate to the First and Second Continental Congresses, he led in the movement for independence. During the Revolutionary War he served in diplomatic roles and helped negotiate the treaty of peace. From 1785 to 1788 he was minister to the Court of St. James's, returning to be elected Vice President under George Washington. When Adams became President, the war between the French and British was causing great difficulties for the United States on the high seas and intense partisanship among

contending factions within the Nation. Adams sent three commissioners to France, but in the spring of 1798 word arrived that the French Foreign Minister Talleyrand and the Directory had refused to negotiate with them unless they would first pay a substantial bribe. Adams reported the insult to Congress, and the Senate printed the correspondence, in which the Frenchmen were referred to only as "X, Y, and Z." The Nation broke out into what Jefferson called "the X. Y. Z. fever," increased in intensity by Adams's exhortations. The populace cheered itself hoarse wherever the President appeared. Never had the Federalists been so popular. Congress appropriated money to complete three new frigates and to build additional ships, and authorized the raising of a provisional army. It also passed the Alien and Sedition Acts, intended to frighten foreign agents out of the country and to stifle the attacks of Republican editors. Despite several brilliant naval victories, war fever subsided. Word came to Adams that France also had no stomach for war and would receive an envoy with respect. Long negotiations ended the quasi war. Sending a peace mission to France brought the full fury of the Hamiltonians against Adams. In the campaign of 1800 the Republicans were united and effective, the Federalists badly divided. Nevertheless, Adams polled only a few less electoral votes than Jefferson, who became President. On November 1, 1800, just before the election, Adams arrived in the new Capital City to take up his residence in the White House. On his second evening in its damp, unfinished rooms, he wrote his wife, "Before I end my letter, I pray Heaven to bestow the best of Blessings on this House and all that shall hereafter inhabit it. May none but honest and wise Men ever rule under this roof." Adams retired to his farm in Quincy. Here he penned his elaborate letters to Thomas Jefferson. Here on July 4, 1826, he whispered his last words: "Thomas Jefferson survives." But Jefferson had died at Monticello a few hours earlier.

1801 - Thomas Jefferson is President

Thomas Jefferson is largely known for gaining the immense Louisiana Territory for the infant Republic. This powerful advocate of liberty was born in 1743 in Virginia, inheriting from his father, a planter and surveyor, some 5,000 acres of land, and from his mother, high social standing. He studied at the College of William and Mary, then read law. In 1772 he married Martha Wayles Skelton, a widow, and took her to live in his partly constructed mountaintop home, Monticello. Freckled and sandy-haired, rather tall and awkward, Jefferson was eloquent as a correspondent, but he was no public speaker. In the Continental Congress, he contributed his pen rather than his voice to the patriot cause. As the "silent member" of the Congress, Jefferson, at 33, drafted the Declaration of Independence. In years following he labored to make its words a reality in Virginia. Most notably, he wrote a bill establishing religious freedom, enacted in 1786. Jefferson succeeded Benjamin Franklin as minister to France in 1785. His sympathy for the French Revolution led him into conflict with Alexander Hamilton when Jefferson was Secretary of State in President Washington's Cabinet. He resigned in 1793. Sharp political conflict developed, and two separate parties, the Federalists and the Democratic-Republicans, began to form. Jefferson gradually assumed leadership of the Republicans, who sympathized with the revolutionary cause in France. Attacking Federalist policies, he

opposed a strong centralized Government and championed the rights of states. As a reluctant candidate for President in 1796, Jefferson came within three votes of election. Through a flaw in the Constitution, he became Vice President, although an opponent of President Adams. When Jefferson assumed the Presidency, the crisis in France had passed. He slashed Army and Navy expenditures, cut the budget, eliminated the tax on whiskey so unpopular in the West, yet reduced the national debt by a third. He also sent a naval squadron to fight the Barbary pirates, who were harassing American commerce in the Mediterranean. Further, although the Constitution made no provision for the acquisition of new land, Jefferson suppressed his qualms over constitutionality when he had the opportunity to acquire the Louisiana Territory from Napoleon in 1803. During Jefferson's second term, he was increasingly preoccupied with keeping the Nation from involvement in the Napoleonic wars, though both England and France interfered with the neutral rights of American merchantmen. Jefferson's attempted solution, an embargo upon American shipping, worked badly and was unpopular. Jefferson retired to Monticello to ponder such projects as his grand designs for the University of Virginia. A French nobleman observed that he had placed his house and his mind "on an elevated situation, from which he might contemplate the universe." He died on July 4, 1826.

1803 - Louisiana Purchase

The area of Louisiana—which was enormous in 1803, compared to now-- was purchased from France, and was the greatest land bargain in U.S. history. The land doubled the size of the United States, taking up a huge slab of area stretching from the South to the North of the United States--from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains and from the Gulf of Mexico to the Canadian border. Thirteen states were carved from the Louisiana Territory. This land had been eyed and desired by many European colonizers for centuries, and France had gained control over the area with scattered settlements in the 17th and 18th centuries. The United States' gaining of the land greatly strengthened this country materially and strategically. It also compelled many people to move onto frontier land in westward expansion. (When, in the late 1800s, people felt as though the west was "covered," a lot of folks, and men especially, felt disappointed—as if part of the mystery and grandeur of the country had been sapped.)

1804 - 1806 - Lewis and Clark (and Sacajawea) Expedition

Lewis and Clark set off, at Jefferson's request, to explore the newly acquired area from the Louisiana Purchase, all the way to the Pacific. They were aided along the way by Sacajawea, a Native American woman who was an enormous asset in enabling them to navigate unfamiliar land and to communicate with diverse people. This expedition was a very significant event for the newly emerged nation, because they wanted to catalog and map lands that many considered critical for this nation, yet also "wild" and dangerous. All the participants, about 40 in number, had to undergo vigorous outdoor training beforehand, and had to learn all about plants, meteorology, celestial navigation, Indian sign language,

carpentry, gun repair, and boat handling, just to give contemporary people an idea of the sorts of skills involved. The journals told of many exciting and frightening adventures, such as accidents, sickness, grizzly bears and rattlesnakes, exposure, near starvation, and various encounters with Native Americans. At the end of the journey, Congress rewarded the officers and men of the military enterprise, but Sacagawea received no compensation for her services.

1809 - James Madison is President

Born in 1751, Madison was a student of history and government at Princeton as well as well-read in law. He participated in the framing of the Virginia Constitution in 1776, served in the Continental Congress, and was a leader in the Virginia Assembly. When delegates to the Constitutional Convention assembled at Philadelphia, the 36-year-old Madison took frequent and emphatic part in the debates. Madison made a major contribution to the ratification of the Constitution by writing, with Alexander Hamilton and John Jay, the *Federalist* essays. In later years, when he was referred to as the "Father of the Constitution," Madison protested that the document was not "the off-spring of a single brain," but "the work of many heads and many hands." In Congress, he helped frame the Bill of Rights. Out of his leadership in opposition to Hamilton's financial proposals, which he felt would unduly bestow wealth and power upon northern financiers, came the development of the Republican, or Jeffersonian, Party. During the first year of Madison's Administration, the United States prohibited trade with both Britain and France; then in May, 1810, Congress authorized trade with both, directing the President, if either would accept America's view of neutral rights, to forbid trade with the other nation. Napoleon pretended to comply. Late in 1810, Madison proclaimed non-intercourse with Great Britain. In Congress a young group including Henry Clay and John C. Calhoun, the "War Hawks," pressed the President for a more militant policy. The British impressment of American seamen and the seizure of cargoes impelled Madison to give in to the pressure. On June 1, 1812, he asked Congress to declare war. The young Nation was not prepared to fight; its forces took a severe trouncing. The British entered Washington and set fire to the White House and the Capitol. But still an upsurge of nationalism resulted. The New England Federalists who had opposed the war--and who had even talked secession--were so thoroughly repudiated that Federalism disappeared as a national party.

1812 - 1815 - The War of 1812

The war between the United States and Britain led to a feeling of increased United States nationalism and increasing separateness from European affairs. The Americans lost the war but won the negotiations at the end. James Madison is re-elected as President.

1813 - Tecumseh's Battle and Death

Tecumseh makes a stand and dies in the battle of the Thames. A noted military leader, he had planned a confederacy of tribes to resist U.S. takeovers of Native American land, but the defeat of his brother Tippecanoe ended the Native American military movement. Tecumseh had then fought alongside the British against the Americans in the War of 1812.

1814 - "Star-Spangled Banner"

The U.S. song "The Star-Spangled Banner" is written by Francis Scott Key (it begins with, "O say can you see"). Key was inspired by the sight of the American flag flapping at dawn, despite a British attack on a U.S. fort during the War of 1812. Its designation as the national anthem by executive order in 1916 was confirmed by an act of Congress in 1931.

1817 - James Monroe is President

James Monroe is generally known for declaring the Americas no longer subject to European colonization. Biography: On New Year's Day, 1825, at the last of his annual White House receptions, President James Monroe made a pleasing impression upon a Virginia lady who shook his hand: "He is tall and well formed. His dress plain and in the old style.... His manner was quiet and dignified. From the frank, honest expression of his eye ... I think he well deserves the encomium passed upon him by the great Jefferson, who said, 'Monroe was so honest that if you turned his soul inside out there would not be a spot on it.'" Born in Westmoreland County, Virginia, in 1758, Monroe attended the College of William and Mary, fought with distinction in the Continental Army, and practiced law in Fredericksburg, Virginia. As a youthful politician, he joined the anti-Federalists in the Virginia Convention which ratified the Constitution, and in 1790, an advocate of Jeffersonian policies, was elected United States Senator. His ambition and energy, together with the backing of President Madison, made him the Republican choice for the Presidency in 1816. With little Federalist opposition, he easily won re-election in 1820. In foreign affairs Monroe proclaimed the fundamental policy that bears his name, responding to the threat that the more conservative governments in Europe might try to aid Spain in gaining back its former Latin American colonies. Great Britain, with its powerful navy, also opposed reconquest of Latin America and suggested that the United States join in proclaiming "hands off." Monroe accepted Adams's advice. Not only must Latin America be left alone, he warned, but also Russia must not encroach southward on the Pacific coast. ". . . the American continents," he stated, "by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European Power." Some 20 years after Monroe died in 1831, this became known as the Monroe Doctrine.

1818 - U.S. Flag

The United States adopts the flag with thirteen stripes and many stars. (Today, the U.S. flag has 13 stripes, symbolizing the 13 original colonies, and 50 stars, for the 50 states.)

1819 - 1820 - Washington Irving's *Sketch Book* stories

1819-20 Washington Irving's *Sketch Book* stories were published, including "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow". These were significant in American civic pride in that his works were so popular that they were adapted for the stage, became oral tradition, and were viewed as "authentic" American legends by generations of Americans. Irving helped give the new nation a sense of history apart from that of Britain. In the

Sketch Book, Irving transforms the Catskill Mountains north of New York City into a magical, important region. The story of "Rip Van Winkle," about a man who fell asleep under a tree and slept for 20 years, is also a commentary on the revolutionary era. He eventually wakes to find the colonies had become independent. Irving chose other significant U.S. themes as subjects, including the exploration of North America, George Washington, and westward exploration.

1820 - 1860 - Romantic Period in American Literature

The literary romantic period in the United States was influenced by the earlier one in Europe, but the American version was connected to its period of national expansion and the search for a distinctive American voice in literature. This period marks, for many, when America was beginning to become identified with a distinctive literary voice. This was very important in the establishment of a new nation. Aspects that distinguish a country have as much to do with everyday culture than just with politics, and a lot of Americans were nervous that their literature just looked like British imitation, which was the last thing the newly emerged nation and former British colony desired. Romanticism referred to, in this country, praise for all "natural" things American, such as the mountains, deserts, and tropics of this country. Romantics also stressed democracy, individualism, and art and nature as inspiration (rather than the sciences, which had been dominant in enlightenment thought). The New England Transcendentalists like Emerson and Thoreau were inspired by romanticism.

1820 - 1840 - Cooper's Leather-Stocking Tales

Cooper's stories are particularly significant in American culture in that he wanted to identify the distinctiveness of the American land and frontier. Many view him as the first major U.S. novelist, and the Leatherstocking Tales are a series of adventures including novels like *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) and *The Deerslayer* (1841). His Leather-Stocking Tales are viewed as a great American frontier epic, concentrating on Indian tribes, great wars and westward migration during the period 1740-1804. He felt that the wilderness was rapidly disappearing, with different waves of Americans pushing westward and displacing Native Americans. Cooper also made famous the image of the American frontiersman in the character of Natty Bumppo, who was also a forerunner to other American cowboys and backwoods heroes. Based in part on the real life of American pioneer Daniel Boone, Bumppo was a peaceful man adopted by an Indian tribe. Both Boone and the fictional Bumppo loved nature and freedom. They constantly kept moving west to escape the oncoming settlers they had guided into the wilderness, and they became legends in their own lifetimes.

1820 - American Settlements in Texas

1820 During the 1820s the Mexican government offers to allow Americans to settle in Texas, hoping that a population of Americans in Texas will satisfy the Americans and keep them from attacking.

1823 - Monroe Doctrine

An important U.S. foreign policy in attempt to strengthen U.S. civic interests, it stated that the Western Hemisphere was closed to European future colonization, and that the U.S. would view European colonization in the western hemisphere as a hostile act against the United States. It also stated that the United States would not interfere in the affairs of European powers. However, as the United States' own imperialistic tendencies grew, the Monroe Doctrine was viewed with suspicion by Latin American countries, who associated it with the possible extension of U.S. takeovers.

1825 - "Great" American Literature is recognized genre

It is around this time period that the first supposedly "great" American literature emerged, with people like Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe, Walt Whitman, and Emily Dickinson growing in popularity.

1825 - John Quincy Adams is President

John Quincy Adams was the only President who was the son of a President. Serving under President Monroe, Adams was one of America's great Secretaries of State, arranging with England for the joint occupation of the Oregon country, obtaining from Spain the cession of the Floridas, and formulating with the President the Monroe Doctrine. In the political tradition of the early 19th century, Adams as Secretary of State was considered the political heir to the Presidency. But the old ways of choosing a President were giving way in 1824 before the clamor for a popular choice. Within the one and only party--the Republican--sectionalism and factionalism were developing, and each section put up its own candidate for the Presidency. Adams, the candidate of the North, fell behind Gen. Andrew Jackson in both popular and electoral votes, but received more than William H. Crawford and Henry Clay. Since no candidate had a majority of electoral votes, the election was decided among the top three by the House of Representatives. Clay, who favored a program similar to that of Adams, threw his crucial support in the House to the New Englander. Upon becoming President, Adams appointed Clay as Secretary of State. Jackson and his angry followers charged that a "corrupt bargain" had taken place and immediately began their campaign to wrest the Presidency from Adams in 1828. Despite hostility in Congress, Adams nevertheless plugged ahead and proclaimed a national program to develop highways and canals. In 1828, he broke ground for the 185-mile C & O Canal. Adams also urged the United States to take a lead in the development of the arts and sciences through the establishment of a national university, the financing of scientific expeditions, and the erection of an observatory. His critics declared such measures transcended constitutional limitations. After his defeat in the campaign of 1828, he was unexpectedly elected to the House of Representatives, and there for the remainder of his life he served as a powerful leader. Above all, he fought against circumscription of civil liberties.

1829 - Andrew Jackson is President

Andrew Jackson was the first populist president who did not come from the aristocracy. Jackson believed in a strong presidency and vetoed a dozen pieces of legislation, more than the first six presidents put together. Jackson also believed in a strong Union and this belief brought him into open opposition with Southern legislators, especially those from South Carolina. South Carolina thought the 1832 tariff signed by President Jackson was much too high. In retaliation, the South Carolina legislature passed an Ordinance of Nullification, which rejected the tariff and declared the tariff invalid in South Carolina. Jackson was as far from being a States' Righter as it was possible to be and issued a presidential proclamation against South Carolina. On the whole Congress supported Jackson's position on the issue and a compromise tariff was passed in 1833. The immediate crisis passed, but the incident was a precursor of the positions that would lead almost thirty years later to the War Between the States. Another major issue during Jackson's presidency was his refusal to sanction the recharter of the Bank of the United States. Jackson thought Congress had not had the authority to create the Bank in the first place, but he also viewed the Bank as operating for the primary benefit of the upper classes at the expense of working people. Jackson used one of his dozen vetoes, and the Bank's congressional supporters did not have enough votes to override him. The Bank ceased to exist when its charter expired in 1836, but even before that date the president had weakened it considerably by withdrawing millions of dollars of federal funds. Jackson's record regarding Native Americans has been increasingly viewed as highly problematic. During his first administration the Indian Removal Act was passed in 1830. The act forced Indians into land west of the Mississippi in return for evacuation of their tribal homes in the east. About 100 million acres of traditional Indian lands were cleared under this law. Two years later Jackson did nothing to make Georgia abide by the Supreme Court's ruling in Worcester vs. Georgia in which the Court found that the State of Georgia did not have any jurisdiction over the Cherokees. Georgia ignored the Court's decision and so did Andrew Jackson. In 1838-1839 Georgia evicted the Cherokees and forced them to march west. About twenty-five percent of the Indians were dead before they reached their new lands in Oklahoma. The Indians refer to this march as the "Trail of Tears" and even though it took place after Jackson's presidency, the roots of the march can be found in Jackson's failure to uphold the legal rights of Native Americans during his administration. During Jackson's presidential years two states were admitted to the Union (Arkansas in 1836 and Michigan in 1837) and the rulings of Roger Taney, one of his Supreme Court appointments, had an impact on American life long after Jackson's retirement. In 1836 Taney succeeded John Marshall as chief justice. One of Taney's early rulings gave permission for states to restrict immigration, while another destroyed a transportation monopoly in Massachusetts, establishing for the first time the principle in U.S. law that the public good is superior to private rights. But Taney is best known for his pro-slavery position in the Dred Scott case in 1857. Chief Justice Taney authored the majority opinion which refused to recognize that Congress had the authority to ban slavery in territory areas. In addition he said Blacks were "inferior" beings who had "no rights which the white man was bound to respect."

[1830](#) - Regionalism

Another aspect of literature that helped give the United States a distinctive cultural—not just political—national voice was Regionalism, usually identified with later humorists like Mark Twain. This pre-civil war form of literature was influenced by oral tradition and also the American tales told around frontier villages and cowboy campfires, on riverboats, and in mining camps. They frequently entailed exaggeration, tall tales, boasting, and lots of comical words which were inspired by this frontier life. George Washington Harris is an example of a regionalist writer. A steamboat captain, he wrote comic stories in worlds of fantasy, involving bizarre happenings around camps, quilt meetings, horse races, and political gatherings.

1830 - First National Negro Convention

Forty African Americans from nine states attended this convention in Philadelphia, from which emerged a new organization, the "American Society of Free People of Colour" for improving their condition in the United States; for purchasing lands; and for the establishment of a settlement in the Province of Canada. This first meeting of the National Negro Convention would initiate a trend that would continue for the next three decades. The formation of another organization had been recommended -- one which would be called the "American Society of Free Persons of Labor." This group would branch out to several states and hold their own conventions. These, in turn, would lead to the formation of other organizations. The number of conventions, held at local, state, and national levels, blossomed to such a level that, in 1859, one paper would report that "colored conventions are almost as frequent as church meetings."

1830 - Underground Railroad

The "Underground Railroad" is established in the United States, and was a system in which slaves from the South escaped and tried to reach places of safety in the North or in Canada, in defiance of the Fugitive Slave Acts. Escaped slaves were secretly helped by sympathetic Northerners, black and white. It was not underground or a railroad, but was called the "underground railroad" because people followed certain routes of escape in darkness and disguise.

1830 - Indian Removal Act

Congress passes the Indian Removal Act promoted by President Andrew Jackson, which forced Native American tribes in the Southeast to abandon the lands they'd inhabited (that the United States desired) and move into unsettled western prairie land. Many Native Americans fought this dislocation, and many others resettled in western lands considered undesirable for the white folks. About 100,000 tribespeople were forced to march westward by the U.S. military in the 1830s, many in chains, and many died on the way. The trek of the Cherokee in 1838-39 became known as the infamous "Trail of Tears." The frontier began to be pushed aggressively westward in the years that followed, upsetting the "guaranteed" titles of the displaced tribes and further reducing their relocated areas.

1830 - Texan Immigration Limits

Mexico attempts to stop the immigration of Americans into Texas.

1831 - The Nat Turner Revolt in Virginia

Turner was a black American slave who led the most successful slave rebellion in U.S. history. Taught by his mother to fight slavery, Turner embraced religion and felt he was called upon by God to help others escape from slavery. Banding together with about 75 other African Americans, Turner killed the white man and family who 'owned' him and went on for two days and nights to kill about 60 white people. Eventually the state militia ended the revolt, and Turner was eventually hanged. This rebellion was critical and one of many acts by slaves to demand just treatment in the racially unjust civic society of the U.S. Though the rebellion led to harsher legislation against slaves (education, assembly, movement), it also put an end to the white Southern myth that slaves were content or too passive to revolt.

1836 - 1870 - Transcendentalist Movement

This mid-19th-century movement in New England literature and philosophy was part of a general turn in U.S. literature to build national civic pride with a distinctly "American" literary identity, because all "good" literature had been seen as European. Inspired by European romanticism, it was viewed as the beginning of an "American Renaissance" in literature. Transcendentalism was based on a belief in the unity of all creation, the natural goodness of people, and insight over logic for life's "truths." It attracted people like Emerson, Thoreau, and Margaret Fuller, and inspired Walt Whitman, Herman Melville, and Nathaniel Hawthorne. Transcendentalists were also very influential as leaders in reform movements for anarchy, socialism, and communism; suffrage for women; better conditions for workers; temperance; modifications of dress and diet; the rise of free religion; educational innovation; and other humanitarian causes.

1836 - The Alamo

Americans demand Texas from Mexico. The Mexicans attack the Alamo, and through battle the U.S. 'takes' Texas from Mexico.

1837 - Martin Van Buren is President

Rising from a background of machine politics in New York State, he gained national prominence as secretary of state and then Vice President in the administration of Andrew Jackson. As Jackson's most trusted adviser, he figured in the nullification crisis and the struggle over the Bank of the United States, and he emerged as a champion of Jacksonian democracy. Elected to the presidency in 1836 as Jackson's protégé, Van Buren was at once beset with economic woes arising from the Panic of 1837. Often belittled as being merely an expedient politician, he nevertheless could defend his principles with courage when put to the test. After he left office, his resolute opposition to the annexation of Texas--growing out of his antipathy to the extension of slavery and his fear of a war with Mexico--probably deprived him of the Democratic nomination in 1844.

1839 - Amistad

45 Africans abducted to be sold as slaves took over their captives on the Spanish ship, *Amistad*, killing the captain and cook, yet demanding that the navigator return them home. He navigated them instead to Long Island, where they eventually won their freedom in a case taken to the Supreme Court. After the three years this took, the 35 remaining people were secured passage home.

1840 - Margaret Fuller, Women's Activist

Margaret Fuller was an acclaimed United States writer who pushed for civic awareness in women's rights and social reform. The first professional woman journalist of note in America, Fuller wrote influential book reviews and reports on social issues such as the treatment of women prisoners and the insane. Fuller's *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* is the earliest and most American exploration of women's role in society. Overall, she emphasized that women should learn "self-dependence," because too often they are taught to depend on others (particularly men in marriage) for their well-being.

1840 - William Henry Harrison is President (for one month)

The oldest president up to that time to be inaugurated, he was also the first to die in office, surviving only one month. Harrison's fighting against Native Americans and treaty-making had made possible the Old Northwest for American settlement and established the reputation that led him to the presidency. He was the first presidential candidate to campaign actively for office. The "Log Cabin Campaign" of 1840, in which Harrison, a Whig, was pitted against the Democratic incumbent Martin Van Buren, was a spectacle of slogan and slander. Harrison was depicted as a simple frontier Indian fighter, living in a log cabin and drinking cider, in sharp contrast to an aristocratic champagne-sipping Van Buren. But before Harrison had been in office a month, he caught a cold that developed into pneumonia. On April 4, 1841, he died--the first President to die in office--and with him died the Whig program.

1841 - John Tyler is President

Dubbed "His Accidency" by his detractors, John Tyler was the first Vice President to be elevated to the office of President by the death of his predecessor. He established precedents important to later vice presidents in similar circumstances. Like Andrew Johnson, who succeeded Abraham Lincoln in 1865, Tyler served only a single term--the nearly full term remaining after the death of William Henry Harrison in 1841. And, like Johnson, he too was engaged in bitter struggles with rivals in Congress.

1843 - Sojourner Truth

African American abolitionist Sojourner Truth begins her career as a preacher, speaking out for abolition and women's suffrage. Very influenced by religious doctrine, she took tenets of Christianity which were often used to denigrate slaves and women, and used them in arguing persuasively for equal treatment.

1844 - Lowell Female Labor Reform Association

In Lowell, Massachusetts, the Lowell Female Labor Reform Association is founded by Sarah G. Bagley, who calls on women to join the struggle for a 10-hour day.

1845 -

John O'Sullivan coins term "manifest destiny." In the forming of the United States, this term implied that some religious force was rallying behind and even justifying the expanding of U.S. territories westward. Unfortunately, this also meant taking this same land away, usually forcibly, from people who were already there, but is an example of how religion could be used to justify very real human desires to take over areas such as present-day Texas, Oregon, New Mexico, and California.

1845 - James Polk is President

A very industrious president, Polk was unusually successful in accomplishing in a single four-year term his ambitious goals in both domestic and foreign policy. He is largely known for extending the nation's boundaries to the shores of the Pacific. The vigor with which he pushed the annexation of Texas, the settlement of the territorial dispute with Britain over Oregon, and the conquest of the Southwest through war with Mexico extended the territory of the United States to the Pacific and greatly strengthened presidential power. However, the acquisition of a vast area to the United States precipitated a bitter quarrel between the North and the South over expansion of slavery.

1846 - 1848 - Mexican-American War

War between Mexico and U.S., caused by the desire of the U.S. to take over lands that belonged to Mexico—particularly the U.S. annexation of Texas (Dec. 1845).

1848 - U.S. Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, New York

Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton organize the first U.S. Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, New York. The Convention passed resolutions addressing suffrage, free speech, and equality in marriage, work, and education. Women in the 19th century (and many diverse women long afterward) were denied the right to vote, barred from professional schools and most higher education, forbidden to speak in public and even attend public conventions, and unable to own property, and this convention was radical in this light. However, the women organizing the U.S. Women's Rights Convention were mainly white, middle to upper-class women whose concerns did not always extend to women of color, despite the fact that they were heavily indebted to the abolitionist movement in thinking about the civic rights denied many American citizens. The organizers drafted the "Declaration of Sentiments," a statement of grievances and demands patterned closely after the Declaration of Independence, which illustrates how this important early American civic document has been used by different groups in later years for civic rights.

1849 - Zachary Taylor is President

A career soldier who never voted, he served fewer than 500 days in the White House. Yet he significantly influenced political developments during the first half of 1850, when there was a domestic crisis and a grave possibility of civil war. Although long a slaveholder, Taylor was as much a Westerner as a Southerner. He was nationalistic in his orientation, seeking, above all, to preserve the Union.

1850 - Harriet Tubman

Harriet Tubman escaped from slavery and led hundreds of slaves to freedom. She was one of the most successful "conductors" on the railroad, despite huge rewards offered for her capture. She maintained military discipline among her followers, often forcing those ready to give up to continue by threatening them with a loaded revolver. She was a friend of many abolitionists, and John Brown refers to her in his letters as "one of the best and bravest persons on this continent--General Tubman as we call her."

1850 - Millard Fillmore is President

A power in New York state politics, he was the successful Whig candidate for Vice President in 1848 and became president on the death of Zachary Taylor in 1850. As chief executive he showed a lack of leadership, and he failed to secure the Whig presidential nomination in 1852. Then, running on the Know-Nothing ticket in 1856, he was roundly defeated.

1851 - Amelia Bloomer and Dress Reform

Amelia Bloomer becomes very involved (and is ridiculed for her involvement) in U.S. women's dress reform movement and introduces the costume that becomes known as "bloomers": pants under a short skirt. Many women involved in this movement saw it as critical to women's civic reform, because they felt that corsets and dresses made women unwell physically and also inhibited mental health.

1852 - *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

Harriet Beecher Stowe writes "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and in its first year outsells all other books including the Bible. It focused national (and European) attention on the cruelties of slavery, and in particular angered the North against the Fugitive Slave Act and stirred up animosity in the South. The book's impact was so great that when Abraham Lincoln met with Stowe at the beginning of the Civil War it is recorded that he said, "So *you're* the little woman who started this great war!"

1853 - Franklin Pierce is President

The youngest man up to his time to be elected president, Pierce was in office from 1853 to 1857, during a period of great national tension. After a triumphant early career that brought him to the U. S. Senate at the age of 32, he had "retired" in 1842 and confined his political activities to his native state of New Hampshire. A dashing war hero with no enemies, he was selected as a "dark horse" candidate for president by a badly divided democratic party. Pierce had only to make gestures toward expansion to excite the wrath

of northerners, who accused him of acting as a cat's-paw of Southerners eager to extend slavery into other areas. Therefore he aroused apprehension when he pressured Great Britain to relinquish its special interests along part of the Central American coast, and even more when he tried to persuade Spain to sell Cuba. But the most violent renewal of the storm stemmed from the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which repealed the Missouri Compromise and reopened the question of slavery in the West. This measure, the handiwork of Senator Stephen A. Douglas, grew in part out of his desire to promote a railroad from Chicago to California through Nebraska. Already Secretary of War Jefferson Davis, advocate of a southern transcontinental route, had persuaded Pierce to send James Gadsden to Mexico to buy land for a southern railroad. He purchased the area now comprising southern Arizona and part of southern New Mexico for \$10,000,000. Douglas's proposal, to organize western territories through which a railroad might run, caused extreme trouble. Douglas provided in his bills that the residents of the new territories could decide the slavery question for themselves. The result was a rush into Kansas, as southerners and northerners vied for control of the territory. Shooting broke out, and "bleeding Kansas" became a prelude to the Civil War. By the end of his administration, Pierce could claim "a peaceful condition of things in Kansas." But, to his disappointment, the Democrats refused to renominate him, turning to the less controversial Buchanan. Pierce returned to New Hampshire, leaving his successor to face the rising fury of the sectional whirlwind.

1854 - Kansas-Nebraska Act

The Kansas-Nebraska Act allows new territories to decide whether or not they will permit slavery, modifying the Missouri Compromise of 1820.

1854 - Chinese immigration

The arrival of 13,000 Chinese marks the beginning of large-scale immigration from China; Chinese workers are primarily employed in building the transcontinental railroad.

1857 - Dred Scott Case

The Supreme Court rules on the Dred Scott case, deciding that Dred Scott was still a slave, even though he was in free territory. The court also declares that no African American were citizens of the United States, which also meant they could not sue in a federal court. This decision also denied the power of Congress to restrict slavery in any federal territory. The decision sharpened the national debate over slavery.

1857 - Central Park and Civic Pride

Architects Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux design Central Park in New York City, hoping to 'improve' the morals and civic pride of Americans by building person-made nature in the middle of a bustling but polluted city. This was one of many late 19th-century attempts at reform, as the growth of cities was often seen as contributing to the deterioration of humanity.

1857 - James Buchanan is President

He took office at a time of sectional uproar over slavery. The nation was headed toward civil war, and he could not avert it. When war came, after his administration, Buchanan was a convenient scapegoat. Before assuming the presidency, Buchanan had achieved a laudable record of 40 years of public service as a state assemblyman, congressman, senator, minister to Russia, secretary of state, and minister to Great Britain. As president, however, his many domestic and foreign programs fell victim to the rising slavery controversy. Buchanan personally opposed slavery, but as a public official he felt bound to sustain it where sanctioned by law. Political enemies called him a "trimmer," but he took middle ground consistently as a matter of policy. What some considered vacillation was an expression of three fundamental convictions: (1) that only by compromise between the parts could a federal republic survive; (2) that citizens had to obey the law even when they thought it unjust; and (3) that questions of morality could not be settled by political action. Despite the secession movement, he succeeded in preventing hostilities between North and South, and he turned over to Lincoln a nation at peace with eight slave states still in the Union.

1858 - Gold Rush continues

Miners and settlers move into Colorado in search of silver, forcing more Mexican Americans from their land.

1859 - John Brown's Raid.

John Brown raided the federal arsenal at Harper's Ferry, Virginia (today located in West Virginia). Brown was a white American strongly opposed to slavery, and encouraged slaves and white men to join him in taking hostages at Harper's Ferry, because he felt this would help form a militant movement against slavery. Although his insurrection was overthrown and Brown was eventually hanged, his raid was highly publicized and helped build anti-slavery passion in the mounting Civil War years.

1859 - Last Slave Ship

The last slave ship arrives. During this year, the last ship to bring slaves to the United States, the Clothilde, arrived in Mobile Bay, Alabama.

1861 - Abraham Lincoln

Lincoln entered office at a critical period in U. S. history, just before the Civil War, and died from an assassin's bullet at the war's end, but before the greater implications of the conflict could be resolved. He brought to the office personal integrity, intelligence, and humanity, plus the wholesome characteristics of his frontier upbringing. He also had the liabilities of his upbringing--he was self-educated, culturally unsophisticated, and lacking in administrative and diplomatic skills. Sharp-witted, he was not especially sharp-tongued, but was noted for his warm good humor. Although relatively unknown and inexperienced politically when elected president, he proved to be a consummate politician. He was above all firm in his convictions and dedicated to the preservation of the Union. Lincoln was

perhaps the most esteemed and maligned of the American presidents. Generally admired and loved by the public, he was attacked on a partisan basis as the man responsible for and in the middle of every major issue facing the nation during his administration. Although his reputation has fluctuated with changing times, he was clearly a great man and a great president. He firmly and fairly guided the nation through its most perilous period and made a lasting impact in shaping the office of chief executive. Once regarded as the "Great Emancipator" for his forward strides in freeing the slaves, he was criticized a century later, when the Civil Rights Movement gained momentum, for his caution in moving toward equal rights. If he is judged in the historical context, however, it can be seen that perhaps his views were in advance of most liberal opinion.

[1862](#) - "Battle Hymn of the Republic" tune is written

Julia Ward Howe writes the lyrics to the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," which is sung to the tune of "John Brown's Body" and becomes the anthem of the Union army. Its first two lines are "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord / He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored".

[1862](#) - Slavery abolished in the District of Columbia

Congress abolished slavery in the District of Columbia -- an important step on the road for freedom for all African-Americans.

[1862](#) - The Homestead Act

The Homestead Act offers 160 free acres of land to settlers in territory once owned by Native Americans.

[1862](#) - African American men in Union Army

Congress allowed the enlistment of African American men in the Union Army. Some black units precede this date, but they were disbanded as unofficial. Some 186,000 men served; of these 38,000 died.

[1862](#) - Women in Civil War

U.S. women take the places of men in factories, arsenals, bakeries, retail shops, and government offices as the military draft creates severe labor shortages.

[1863](#) - Emancipation Proclamation

Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation took effect January 1, legally freeing slaves in areas of the South in rebellion, ending slavery in Confederate territory that is not yet under Union control.

[1863](#) - All African American Male Unit

The Fifty-Fourth Massachusetts Volunteers. On July 18, the Fifty-Fourth Massachusetts Volunteers -- the all-black unit of the Union army portrayed in the 1989 Tri-Star Pictures film *Glory* -- charged Fort Wagner in Charleston, South Carolina. Sergeant William H.

Carney becomes the first African-American to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor for bravery under fire.

1863 - Thanksgiving Day

President Lincoln sets aside the last Thursday in November as a national Thanksgiving Day in honor of the 1621 feast given by Pilgrims for the Wampanoags, who helped the early colony survive.

1865 - End of Civil War

American civil war ends, and the 13th Amendment is ratified, outlawing slavery.

1865 - The Freedmen's Bureau

On March 3, Congress established the Freedmen's Bureau to provide health care, education, and technical assistance to emancipated slaves. It could be seen as the first federal welfare program.

1865 - Ku Klux Klan formed

Ku Klux Klan forms in Tennessee, first of many secret terrorist organizations organized in the South for the purpose of reestablishing white authority through intimidating and violence against other ethnic groups—especially African Americans. It was established at the end of the Civil War in the South. Since the South lost, there was a desire among many people to 'invent' white pride for a very threatened white Southern morale. Unfortunately, KKK white pride only exists at the severe expense of all other groups deemed as not white (and these groups change over time).

1865 - Presidential Meeting for Black Suffrage

A black delegation led by Frederick Douglass met with President Andrew Johnson at the White House to advocate black suffrage. The president expressed his opposition, and the meeting ended in controversy.

1865 - 1877 - Reconstruction

Reconstruction was a period right after the Civil War in which the government made some attempts to help African Americans gain avenues to political, economic, and social equality after slavery. Many African Americans gained power through government channels, education, and other areas. However, it's unfortunately very difficult to totally change psychological attitudes of superiority and inferiority, and the South found ways to continue to struggle for white supremacy, such as with the repugnant Black Codes and the formation of the Ku Klux Klan, and many other violent uprisings against African Americans.

1865 - Andrew Johnson is President

He was elected vice president in 1864 and became president after the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. Johnson's administration was one of the most controversial in American history because of his Reconstruction policies aimed at restoring the Union after the Civil War. As a result, Johnson became the only president ever to be impeached, although he was subsequently acquitted. After Lincoln's death, President Johnson had proceeded with supposed reconstruction of the former Confederate States while Congress was not in session in 1865. He pardoned all who would take an oath of allegiance, but required leaders and men of wealth to obtain special Presidential pardons. By the time Congress met in December 1865, slavery was being abolished, but "black codes" were beginning to appear, which severely hurt African American reconstruction efforts. Radical Republicans in Congress moved vigorously to change Johnson's program. They gained the support of northerners who were dismayed to see Southerners keeping many prewar leaders and imposing many prewar restrictions upon Negroes. The Radicals' first step was to refuse to seat any Senator or Representative from the old Confederacy. Next they passed measures dealing with the former slaves. Johnson vetoed the legislation. The Radicals mustered enough votes in Congress to pass legislation over his veto--the first time that Congress had overridden a President on an important bill. They passed the Civil Rights Act of 1866, which established Negroes as American citizens and forbade discrimination against them. A few months later Congress submitted to the states the Fourteenth Amendment, which specified that no state should "deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law." All the former Confederate States except Tennessee refused to ratify the amendment; further, there were two bloody race riots in the South. Speaking in the Middle West, Johnson faced hostile audiences. The Radical Republicans won an overwhelming victory in Congressional elections that fall. In March 1867, the Radicals effected their own plan of Reconstruction, again placing southern states under military rule. They passed laws placing restrictions upon the President. When Johnson allegedly violated one of these, the Tenure of Office Act, by dismissing Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, the House voted eleven articles of impeachment against him. He was tried by the Senate in the spring of 1868 and acquitted by one vote.

1868 - Eight-Hour Work Days

Congress enacts an eight-hour work day for federal employees, but workers in private industry continue to work 10-12 hours or more per day.

1868 - African American Men in Legislature

The South Carolina House became the first and only legislature to have a black majority, with 87 African Americans to 40 whites. However, whites controlled the Senate and became a majority in the House in 1874.

1869 - First Transcontinental Railroad

The first transcontinental railroad is completed, connecting the East to the West; the last spike is hammered into place at Promontory, Utah.

1869 - Fifteenth Amendment

The 15th Amendment states that the right to vote will not be denied to anyone on grounds of race or previous condition of servitude; however, women are officially excluded.

1869 - Women's Suffrage organized

The National Women's Suffrage Association, led by Susan B. Anthony, is organized.

1869 - Ulysses S. Grant is President

Grant, the most capable of the Union generals during the Civil War, was a master strategist. He won the first major Union victories. President Abraham Lincoln staunchly defended him against critics and promoted him to command all Union forces. Grant accepted Gen. Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House. However, Grant had no disposition for political leadership, and as president (1869-1877) he scarcely attempted to control events. Grant presided over the Government much as he had run the Army. Indeed he brought part of his Army staff to the White House. Although a man of scrupulous honesty, Grant as President accepted handsome presents from admirers. Worse, he allowed himself to be seen with two speculators, Jay Gould and James Fisk. When Grant realized their scheme to corner the market in gold, he authorized the Secretary of the Treasury to sell enough gold to wreck their plans, but the speculation had already wrought havoc with business. Grant only at times bolstered Radical Reconstruction in the South with military force. After retiring from the Presidency, Grant became a partner in a financial firm, which went bankrupt. About that time he learned that he had cancer of the throat. He started writing his recollections to pay off his debts and provide for his family, racing against death to produce a memoir that ultimately earned nearly \$450,000. Soon after completing the last page, in 1885, he died.

1875 - Civil Rights Act

As part of Reconstruction of the South after the Civil War, Congress approved the Civil Rights Act, guaranteeing equal rights to African Americans in public accommodations, jury duty, and places of public amusement. However, the legislation was overturned by the Supreme Court in 1883.

1875 - Segregation in Railroad Cars

As part of a series of setbacks against southern Reconstruction, Tennessee passed a law requiring racial segregation in railroad cars. By 1907 all Southern states had passed similar laws. Even though slavery as an institution might have ended with the Civil War, racist attitudes, whether in the government or in private worlds, are much more difficult to abolish.

1875 - Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children

The "Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children" is formed.

1877 - Rutherford B. Hayes is President

He is usually recalled only for the disputed election of 1876 and as the Republican President who terminated Reconstruction in the South. He ended the Radical, or "Black," Republican program of supporting with federal troops the so-called carpetbag state governments in the South. In addition to working to try to heal the nation's war wounds, he took first effective steps toward a federal civil service system. He also pursued a sound monetary program and well-intentioned policies with respect to the newly freed blacks, American Indians, and other minorities.

1880 - 1900 - Soaring Immigration, Anxiety, and the Chinese Exclusion Act

The population of the U.S. rose dramatically between 1880-1900 (with more than a 50% gain) when the largest number of immigrants entered this country during this period. Most were from northern or western Europe, although in the last 5 years of the 19th century, a majority were from southern or eastern Europe. Americans grew increasingly uneasy at the rapidly changing population, and unfortunately especially uneasy toward the influx of more Mediterranean ethnicities, which seemed more 'different.' Racism and xenophobia mounted as many Americans protested continued immigration, and began to worry about the so-called purity of the 'white' race. Most immigrants were pressured to assimilate into United States culture in order to attempt to squash differences, but deeply held beliefs and customs many times only slightly changed shape, became more isolated, or more pronounced. An example of the increasing American anxiety against immigration was the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which banned the importation of Chinese labor for ten years (it was renewed for another ten years in 1892, and in 1902, Chinese immigration was still suspended.)

1881 - James A. Garfield is President

James Garfield was the second president shot in office, only 6 months after he'd taken office. As the last of the log cabin Presidents, James A. Garfield attacked political corruption and won back for the Presidency a measure of prestige it had lost during the Reconstruction period. As President, Garfield strengthened Federal authority over the New York Customs House, stronghold of Senator Roscoe Conkling, who was leader of the Stalwart Republicans and dispenser of patronage in New York. When Garfield submitted to the Senate a list of appointments including many of Conkling's friends, he named Conkling's arch-rival William H. Robertson to run the Customs House. Conkling contested the nomination, tried to persuade the Senate to block it, and appealed to the Republican caucus to compel its withdrawal. But Garfield would not submit: "This...will settle the question whether the President is registering clerk of the Senate or the Executive of the United States.... shall the principal port of entry ... be under the control of the administration or under the local control of a factional senator." Conkling maneuvered to have the Senate confirm Garfield's uncontested nominations and adjourn without acting on Robertson. Garfield countered by withdrawing all nominations except Robertson's; the Senators would have to confirm him or sacrifice all the appointments of Conkling's friends. In a final desperate move, Conkling and his fellow-Senator from New York resigned, confident that their legislature would vindicate their stand and re-elect them. Instead, the

legislature elected two other men; the Senate confirmed Robertson. Garfield's victory was complete. In foreign affairs, Garfield's Secretary of State invited all American republics to a conference to meet in Washington in 1882. But the conference never took place. On July 2, 1881, in a Washington railroad station, an embittered attorney who had sought a consular post shot the President. Mortally wounded, Garfield lay in the White House for weeks. Alexander Graham Bell, inventor of the telephone, tried unsuccessfully to find the bullet with an induction-balance electrical device which he had designed. On September 6, Garfield was taken to the New Jersey seaside. For a few days he seemed to be recuperating, but on September 19, 1881, he died from an infection and internal hemorrhage.

1881 - Chester Arthur is President

Chester A. Arthur, former machine politician, became a reformer in the Presidency. Avoiding old political friends, he became a man of fashion in his garb and associates, and often was seen with the elite of Washington, New York, and Newport. To the indignation of the Stalwart Republicans, the onetime Collector of the Port of New York became, as President, a champion of civil service reform. Public pressure, heightened by the assassination of Garfield, forced an unwieldy Congress to heed the President. In 1883 Congress passed the Pendleton Act, which established a bipartisan Civil Service Commission, forbade levying political assessments against officeholders, and provided for a "classified system" that made certain Government positions obtainable only through competitive written examinations. The system protected employees against removal for political reasons. Acting independently of party dogma, Arthur also tried to lower tariff rates so the Government would not be embarrassed by annual surpluses of revenue. Congress raised about as many rates as it trimmed, but Arthur signed the Tariff Act of 1883. Aggrieved Westerners and Southerners looked to the Democratic Party for redress, and the tariff began to emerge as a major political issue between the two parties. The Arthur Administration enacted the first general Federal immigration law. Arthur approved a measure in 1882 excluding paupers, criminals, and lunatics. Congress suspended Chinese immigration for ten years, later making the restriction permanent. Arthur demonstrated as President that he was above factions within the Republican Party, if indeed not above the party itself. Perhaps in part his reason was the well-kept secret he had known since a year after he succeeded to the Presidency, that he was suffering from a fatal kidney disease. He kept himself in the running for the Presidential nomination in 1884 in order not to appear that he feared defeat, but was not renominated, and died in 1886. Publisher Alexander K. McClure recalled, "No man ever entered the Presidency so profoundly and widely distrusted, and no one ever retired ... more generally respected."

1885 - Grover Cleveland is President

Grover Cleveland was the only President elected to two nonconsecutive terms. Cleveland won the Presidency with the combined support of Democrats and reform Republicans, the "Mugwumps," who disliked the record of his opponent James G. Blaine of Maine. A bachelor, Cleveland was ill at ease at first with all the comforts of the White House. "I must go to

dinner," he wrote a friend, "but I wish it was to eat a pickled herring a Swiss cheese and a chop at Louis' instead of the French stuff I shall find." In June 1886 Cleveland married 21-year-old Frances Folsom; he was the only President married in the White House. Cleveland vigorously pursued a policy barring special favors to any economic group. Vetoing a bill to appropriate \$10,000 to distribute seed grain among drought-stricken farmers in Texas, he wrote: "Federal aid in such cases encourages the expectation of paternal care on the part of the Government and weakens the sturdiness of our national character. . . ." He also vetoed many private pension bills to Civil War veterans whose claims were fraudulent. When Congress, pressured by the Grand Army of the Republic, passed a bill granting pensions for disabilities not caused by military service, Cleveland vetoed it, too. He angered the railroads by ordering an investigation of western lands they held by Government grant. He forced them to return 81,000,000 acres. He also signed the Interstate Commerce Act, the first law attempting Federal regulation of the railroads. In December 1887 he called on Congress to reduce high protective tariffs. Told that he had given Republicans an effective issue for the campaign of 1888, he retorted, "What is the use of being elected or re-elected unless you stand for something?" But Cleveland was defeated in 1888; although he won a larger popular majority than the Republican candidate Benjamin Harrison, he received fewer electoral votes.

1886 - Mounting Labor Agitation

While industrialization brought prosperity for many people, it also brought about dangerous working conditions and very long hours for many workers. Many workers felt more or less like part of the machinery of factories--just one of the masses and invisible to the few higher-ups. Partly because of these issues, many United States citizens began to rally for workers' rights. For instance, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) was founded in Columbus, Ohio, with 25 trade unions participating; labor leader Samuel Gompers was elected president. Elsewhere, in Haymarket Square in Chicago, a bomb exploded after police broke up a meeting of labor leaders protesting the unfair treatment of strikers at the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company. Seven police and four workers died; 70 police were wounded.

1886 - U.S. Receives the Statue of Liberty

The United States received the Statue of Liberty as a gift from France and situated it in the New York harbor. France gave it to the United States for friendship, and in honor of the 100-year anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Here are the words engraved on the tablet held by the statue: "Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses, yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!" Of course, these words were somewhat ironic, given the immigration exclusion acts, but nevertheless the statue was symbolic of the freedom that many immigrants hoped was in store for them in the United States.

1889 - Benjamin Harrison is President

Nominated for President on the eighth ballot at the 1888 Republican Convention, Benjamin Harrison conducted one of the first "front-porch" campaigns, delivering short speeches to delegations that visited him in Indianapolis. As he was only 5 feet, 6 inches tall, Democrats called him "Little Ben"; Republicans replied that he was big enough to wear the hat of his grandfather, "Old Tippecanoe." In the Presidential election, Harrison received 100,000 fewer popular votes than Cleveland, but carried the Electoral College 233 to 168. Although Harrison had made no political bargains, his supporters had given innumerable pledges upon his behalf. When Boss Matt Quay of Pennsylvania heard that Harrison ascribed his narrow victory to Providence, Quay exclaimed that Harrison would never know "how close a number of men were compelled to approach... the penitentiary to make him President." Harrison was proud of the vigorous foreign policy which he helped shape. The first Pan American Congress met in Washington in 1889, establishing an information center which later became the Pan American Union. At the end of his administration Harrison submitted to the Senate a treaty to annex Hawaii; to his disappointment, President Cleveland later withdrew it. Substantial appropriation bills were signed by Harrison for internal improvements, naval expansion, and subsidies for steamship lines. For the first time except in war, Congress appropriated a billion dollars. When critics attacked "the billion-dollar Congress," Speaker Thomas B. Reed replied, "This is a billion-dollar country." President Harrison also signed the Sherman Anti-Trust Act "to protect trade and commerce against unlawful restraints and monopolies," the first Federal act attempting to regulate trusts. The most perplexing domestic problem Harrison faced was the tariff issue. The high tariff rates in effect had created a surplus of money in the Treasury. Low-tariff advocates argued that the surplus was hurting business. Republican leaders in Congress successfully met the challenge. Representative William McKinley and Senator Nelson W. Aldrich framed a still higher tariff bill; some rates were intentionally prohibitive. Harrison tried to make the tariff more acceptable by writing in reciprocity provisions. To cope with the Treasury surplus, the tariff was removed from imported raw sugar; sugar growers within the United States were given two cents a pound bounty on their production. Long before the end of the Harrison Administration, the Treasury surplus had evaporated, and prosperity seemed about to disappear as well. Congressional elections in 1890 went stingingly against the Republicans, and party leaders decided to abandon President Harrison although he had cooperated with Congress on party legislation. Nevertheless, his party renominated him in 1892, but he was defeated by Cleveland. After he left office, Harrison returned to Indianapolis, and married the widowed Mrs. Mary Dimmick in 1896. A dignified elder statesman, he died in 1901.

1890 - 1930 - American Literature and Social Protest

In 1860, most Americans lived on farms or in small villages, but by 1919 half of the population was concentrated in about 12 cities. Problems of urbanization and industrialization appeared: poor and overcrowded housing, unsanitary conditions, low pay (called "wage slavery"), difficult working conditions, and inadequate restraints on business. Toward the end of the 19th century, many different groups in the U.S. were actively banding together for reform, fighting for women's rights, labor, and African American rights. Social protest was becoming increasingly visible in American literature, especially

toward the end of the century, when social inequality and economic hardship were particularly pressing issues. Inequality between the genders appears in works like Kate Chopin's daring novel *The Awakening* (1899), about a young married woman with attractive children and an indulgent and successful husband who gives up family, money, respectability, and eventually her life in search of self-realization. Especially in the 1890s, an undercurrent of social protest had coursed through American literature, welling up in the naturalism of Stephen Crane and Theodore Dreiser and in the clear messages of the muckraking novelists. Later socially engaged authors included Sinclair Lewis, John Steinbeck, John Dos Passos, Richard Wright, and the dramatist Clifford Odets. They were linked to the 1930s in their concern for the welfare of the common citizen and their focus on groups of people -- the professions, as in Sinclair Lewis's archetypal Arrowsmith (a physician) or Babbitt (a local businessman); families, as in Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*; or urban masses, as Dos Passos accomplishes through his 11 major characters in his U.S.A. trilogy.

1893 - Chicago World's Fair, or the World's Columbian Exposition

During the last years of the 19th century, there were many World's Fairs in which nations could proudly display their inventions and accomplishments. The Chicago World's Fair was the most lucrative of them all, and gave the United States a chance to celebrate and advertise its gilded age accomplishments. Special trains called "Exposition Flyers" whirled Americans from all over the country to Chicago at new, daring speeds. Once they arrived at the enormous display of elaborate neo-classical buildings, many were amazed at the dazzling light display (many hadn't witnessed electricity before—certainly not on such a grand scale), and sites like a ferris wheel, as well as huge numbers of technological, educational, and entertainment displays. However impressive it was, many African Americans strongly criticized the exposition's neglect of African American accomplishments.

1893 - Grover Cleveland is President (Second Term)

Elected again in 1892, Cleveland faced an acute depression. He dealt directly with the Treasury crisis rather than with business failures, farm mortgage foreclosures, and unemployment. He obtained repeal of the mildly inflationary Sherman Silver Purchase Act and, with the aid of Wall Street, maintained the Treasury's gold reserve. When railroad strikers in Chicago violated an injunction, Cleveland sent Federal troops to enforce it. "If it takes the entire army and navy of the United States to deliver a post card in Chicago," he thundered, "that card will be delivered." Cleveland's blunt treatment of the railroad strikers stirred the pride of many Americans. So did the vigorous way in which he forced Great Britain to accept arbitration of a disputed boundary in Venezuela. But his policies during the depression were generally unpopular. His party deserted him and nominated William Jennings Bryan in 1896. After leaving the White House, Cleveland lived in retirement in Princeton, New Jersey. He died in 1908.

1894 - Pullman Railway Strike and Eugene Debs

When the Pullman Railway company cut wages by 25% in 1893 (due to the Panic of 1893), it did not reduce housing or spending costs for all the workers living in the Pullman Company town near Chicago. As a result, the American Railway Union went on strike, and its president, Eugene Debs, called for a nationwide boycott of all Pullman cars. Many strikers emerged in support all over the country, and the protest was only ended when President Cleveland sent federal troops to Chicago. Debs was sentenced to six months in prison, which only ironically exposed him to books critiquing capitalism (which he saw as largely responsible for worker oppression), and fueled his establishment of the Socialist Party in the United States in 1898.

1896 - Plessy vs. Ferguson

In Plessy vs. Ferguson, the Supreme Court ruled that "separate but equal" facilities for African Americans were constitutional. The ruling marked the start of the Jim Crow era of legalized segregation, and marked an enormous setback in the goals for Reconstruction after the Civil War. Facilities that were separate were never equal, evidenced by the markedly different racial educational, living, and economic opportunities. This dangerous decision was not overturned until nearly half a century later with Brown vs. the Board of Education--the 1954 Supreme Court landmark case against racially segregated schools. It declared the "separate-but-equal" educational facilities damaging and unconstitutional.

1896 - National Association of Colored Women's Clubs formed

Black women gather in Washington, D.C. to form the NACWC, or the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs (which lasted nearly a century until 1992). They were following a tradition among many African American women of forming clubs to promote self-expression and also self-determination of African Americans, because the political, social, and economic discrimination against black Americans made life experiences very different for blacks than whites. By 1895, Jim Crow laws were unfortunately well established in the South, and they relegated African Americans to inferior living opportunities and general second-class citizenship. Black women in this club critiqued, in addition to overt racial oppression, the discrimination they felt the country leveled against African American women. In particular, they critiqued the sexual stereotypes that depicted black women as inherently sexual and immoral, in contrast to the supposed 'purity' of white women. Such stereotypes usually exist only to draw blame away from the group in power, which tended, in this case, to be white men (and women). In addition, such racial stereotypes only helped justify the widespread raping of black women by white men. The NACWC was also concerned with African American health care, literacy and environmental circumstances. Key leaders included Ida B. Wells, who critiqued education and also became a staunch antilynching crusader. Mary Church Terrell, president of the NACWC was active in education and politics, and sought to promote the moral, intellectual, industrial, and social growth of African Americans.

1897 - William McKinley is President

Under William McKinley the Nation gained its first overseas possessions. When McKinley became President, the depression of 1893 had almost run its course and with it the extreme agitation over silver. Deferring action on the money question, he called Congress into special session to enact the highest tariff in history. In the friendly atmosphere of the McKinley Administration, industrial combinations developed at an unprecedented pace. Newspapers caricatured McKinley as a little boy led around by "Nursie" Hanna, the representative of the trusts. However, McKinley was not dominated by Hanna; he condemned the trusts as "dangerous conspiracies against the public good." Not prosperity, but foreign policy, dominated McKinley's Administration. Reporting the stalemate between Spanish forces and revolutionaries in Cuba, newspapers screamed that a quarter of the population was dead and the rest suffering acutely. Public indignation brought pressure upon the President for war. Unable to restrain Congress or the American people, McKinley delivered his message of neutral intervention in April 1898. Congress thereupon voted three resolutions tantamount to a declaration of war for the liberation and independence of Cuba. In the 100-day war, the United States destroyed the Spanish fleet outside Santiago harbor in Cuba, seized Manila in the Philippines, and occupied Puerto Rico. "Uncle Joe" Cannon, later Speaker of the House, once said that McKinley kept his ear so close to the ground that it was full of grasshoppers. When McKinley was undecided what to do about Spanish possessions other than Cuba, he toured the country and detected an imperialist sentiment. Thus the United States annexed the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico. In 1900, McKinley again campaigned against Bryan. While Bryan inveighed against imperialism, McKinley quietly stood for "the full dinner pail," and he won. His second term, which had begun auspiciously, came to a tragic end in September 1901. He was standing in a receiving line at the Buffalo Pan-American Exposition when a deranged anarchist shot him twice. He died eight days later.

1898 - Spanish-American War

On April 28, the U.S.S. Maine mysteriously blows up in Havana Harbor; President William McKinley declares war against Spain, beginning the Spanish-American War. Within the year, Spain signs the Treaty of Paris, giving up its claim to Cuba and ceding Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines to the United States.

1900 - International Ladies Garment Workers Union

Workers, primarily immigrant women, organize the International Ladies Garment Workers Union to improve conditions for seamstresses, many of whom work up to 14 hours a day and earn no more than \$2.50 a week.

1901 - Theodore Roosevelt is President

With the assassination of President McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, not quite 43, became the youngest President in the Nation's history. He brought new excitement and power to the Presidency, as he vigorously led Congress and the American public toward progressive reforms and a strong foreign policy. He excited audiences with his high-pitched voice, jutting jaw, and pounding fist. "The life of strenuous endeavor" was a must for those

around him, as he romped with his five younger children and led ambassadors on hikes through Rock Creek Park in Washington, D.C. As President, Roosevelt held the ideal that the Government should be the great arbiter of the conflicting economic forces in the Nation, especially between capital and labor, guaranteeing justice to each. Roosevelt emerged as a "trust buster" by forcing the dissolution of a great railroad combination in the Northwest. Other antitrust suits under the Sherman Act followed. Aware of the strategic need for a shortcut between the Atlantic and Pacific, Roosevelt ensured the construction of the Panama Canal. His corollary to the Monroe Doctrine prevented the establishment of foreign bases in the Caribbean and arrogated the sole right of intervention in Latin America to the United States. He won the Nobel Peace Prize for mediating the Russo-Japanese War, reached a Gentleman's Agreement on immigration with Japan, and sent the Great White Fleet on a goodwill tour of the world. Some of Theodore Roosevelt's most effective achievements were in conservation. He added enormously to the national forests in the West, reserved lands for public use, and fostered great irrigation projects.

1903 -1950 - Women's Trade Union League

As the first national association dedicated to organizing women workers, the Women's Trade Union League (WTUL) worked to unite women from all classes to work toward better, fairer working conditions. It came into existence partly because the American Federation of Labor (AFL), a major organized labor group, had no intention of including women within its ranks. Therefore, the WTUL was founded by labor leaders such as Mary Kenney O'Sullivan, Leonora O'Reilly, Lillian Wald, and Jane Addams. A major goal was to provide working women with educational opportunities while also striving to improve working conditions. The organization fought for an eight-hour workday, the establishment of a minimum wage, the end of night work for women, and the abolition of child labor. During the garment industry strikes of 1909 through 1911, League members marched side by side with striking workers and helped set up strike funds. Some of the wealthier members boycotted the clothing manufacturers who refused to settle with strikers. Following the disastrous 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Company factory fire in New York City, League members conducted a four-year investigation of factory conditions that helped establish new regulations. By the mid-1920s the League's leadership had passed from the hands of affluent middle-class women to women with working-class backgrounds. During the late 1920s, however, and continuing through the Great Depression, the League suffered serious financial problems that permanently weakened the organization. In 1950 it was dissolved.

1905 - African American Niagara Movement

African-American intellectuals and activists organize the Niagara Movement at a meeting near Niagara Falls, New York. Led by W.E.B. DuBois and Monroe Trotter, delegates demand the abolition of any laws that result in racial distinctions. The Niagara Movement was the forerunner of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (the NAACP).

1905 - Industrial Workers of the World founded

In Chicago, Eugene Debs founds the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW or wobblies), a radical labor organization that tries to establish union control over production. The organization has some success among miners and migratory workers in western states.

1905 - Food and Meat Acts

Congress passed the Pure Food and Drugs Act, and the Meat Inspection Act, because the conditions surrounding the factory production of food were often wretched. Americans were increasingly frightened of the unsanitary conditions of stockyards and the meat-packing industry, largely in reaction to Upton Sinclair's investigative novel, *The Jungle*. The irony is that Sinclair wrote this book not so much to protest what went on Americans' plates, as much as how badly the immigrant workers were treated. He later commented, "I aimed at the public's heart and by accident I hit it in the stomach."

1909 - NAACP founded

Founded by W.E.B. DuBois, the interracial National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) sought to fight the massive inequalities and overarching racism that African Americans faced in the United States. In particular, they fought segregation and discrimination in housing, education, employment, voting, and transportation, and to ensure African Americans their constitutional rights.

1909 - William Howard Taft is President

Distinguished jurist, effective administrator, but poor politician, William Howard Taft spent four uncomfortable years in the White House. Large, jovial, conscientious, he was caught in the intense battles between Progressives and conservatives, and got scant credit for the achievements of his administration. Progressives were pleased with Taft's election. "Roosevelt has cut enough hay," they said; "Taft is the man to put it into the barn." Conservatives were delighted to be rid of Roosevelt--the "mad messiah." Taft recognized that his techniques would differ from those of his predecessor. Unlike Roosevelt, Taft did not believe in the stretching of Presidential powers. He once commented that Roosevelt "ought more often to have admitted the legal way of reaching the same ends." Taft alienated many liberal Republicans who later formed the Progressive Party, by defending the Payne-Aldrich Act which unexpectedly continued high tariff rates. A trade agreement with Canada, which Taft pushed through Congress, would have pleased eastern advocates of a low tariff, but the Canadians rejected it. He further antagonized Progressives by upholding his Secretary of the Interior, accused of failing to carry out Roosevelt's conservation policies. In the angry Progressive onslaught against him, little attention was paid to the fact that his administration initiated 80 antitrust suits and that Congress submitted to the states amendments for a Federal income tax and the direct election of Senators. A postal savings system was established, and the Interstate Commerce Commission was directed to set railroad rates. In 1912, when the Republicans renominated Taft, Roosevelt bolted the party to lead the Progressives, thus guaranteeing the election of Woodrow Wilson. Taft, free of the Presidency, served as Professor of Law at Yale until

President Harding made him Chief Justice of the United States, a position he held until just before his death in 1930. To Taft, the appointment was his greatest honor; he wrote: "I don't remember that I ever was President."

1911 - Triangle Shirtwaist Fire

The Triangle Shirtwaist Company fire in New York City resulted in the deaths of 146 female workers. Many exit doors had been locked in the factory, because the owners wanted to prevent women from taking breaks or leaving unsupervised. However, this effort to patrol for the good of the company ended up being deadly for its workers who were unable to escape the fire. Many jumped to their deaths. As a result, some protective legislation was passed for workers.

1913 - Suffragette Demonstrations

More than 2,000 suffragettes march down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C., while angry crowds of men spit at them and jeer.

1913 - Woodrow Wilson is President

Like Roosevelt before him, Woodrow Wilson regarded himself as the personal representative of the people. "No one but the President," he said, "seems to be expected ... to look out for the general interests of the country." He developed a program of progressive reform and asserted international leadership in building a new world order. In 1917 he proclaimed American entrance into World War I a crusade to make the world "safe for democracy." He was nominated for President at the 1912 Democratic Convention and campaigned on a program called the New Freedom, which stressed individualism and states' rights. In the three-way election he received only 42 percent of the popular vote but an overwhelming electoral vote. Wilson maneuvered through Congress three major pieces of legislation. The first was a lower tariff, the Underwood Act; attached to the measure was a graduated Federal income tax. The passage of the Federal Reserve Act provided the Nation with the more elastic money supply it badly needed. In 1914 antitrust legislation established a Federal Trade Commission to prohibit unfair business practices. Another burst of legislation followed in 1916. One new law prohibited child labor; another limited railroad workers to an eight-hour day. By virtue of this legislation and the slogan "he kept us out of war," Wilson narrowly won re-election. But after the election Wilson concluded that America could not remain neutral in the World War. On April 2, 1917, he asked Congress for a declaration of war on Germany. Massive American effort slowly tipped the balance in favor of the Allies. Wilson went before Congress in January 1918, to enunciate American war aims--the Fourteen Points, the last of which would establish "A general association of nations...affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike." After the Germans signed the Armistice in November 1918, Wilson went to Paris to try to build an enduring peace. He later presented to the Senate the Versailles Treaty, containing the Covenant of the League of Nations, and asked, "Dare we reject it and break the heart of the world?" But the election of 1918 had shifted the balance in Congress to the Republicans. By seven votes the

Versailles Treaty failed in the Senate. The President, against the warnings of his doctors, had made a national tour to mobilize public sentiment for the treaty. Exhausted, he suffered a stroke and nearly died. Tenderly nursed by his second wife, Edith Bolling Galt, he lived until 1924.

1917 - WWI

America enters WWI on April 6th.

1918 - End of WWI

World War I ends, and President Wilson's Fourteen Points for peace are adopted by Germany and the Allies as the basis for negotiations. The Fourteen Points include the establishment of a League of Nations to ensure lasting peace, freedom of the seas, the removal of economic barriers between nations, the reduction of armaments, and the autonomy of nations previously under Austrian or German control.

1919 - Prohibition

Prohibition, in the Eighteenth Amendment to the U.S. constitution, outlawed the sale of alcohol. However, prohibition was mainly strictly enforced in areas sympathetic to it, especially small towns. It was repealed in 1933. Incidentally, it is speculated that the gaining of prohibition was one of the major factors leading to suffrage for women in 1920. Women, especially white, middle-class women, were strong advocates for prohibition (often because husbands controlled finances and spent too much drinking, or were absent because of drinking. However, this was probably related to the rising stress of industrial jobs for men). Their prohibition advocacy, therefore, made women seem "fit" for the vote.

1920 - Nineteenth Amendment: Women's Suffrage

Women's Suffrage guaranteed that all United States women had the right to vote. The issue of women's lack of voting rights increasingly became a heated issue in the mid-19th century, particularly as women agitating against slavery began to recognize gendered as well as racialized discrimination in this country. A famous and significant gathering for women's suffrage was called the Seneca Falls Convention, in July 1848. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and others issued a declaration that called for women's right to suffrage as well as to educational and employment opportunities. The text of the 19th Amendment reads, "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

1920 - Red Scare

A "Red Scare" results in nationwide raids by federal agents, who arrest those accused of being anarchists, Communists, and labor agitators.

1920 - Harlem Renaissance

From 1920 until about 1930 an unprecedented outburst of creative activity among African Americans occurred in all fields of art, and was largely associated with Harlem, the black

community situated uptown in New York City. Beginning as a series of literary discussions in Manhattan and Harlem, this African-American cultural movement became known as "The New Negro Movement" and only later as the Harlem Renaissance. More than a literary movement and more than a social revolt against racism, the Harlem Renaissance exalted the unique cultures of African Americans and redefined African-American expression. African Americans were encouraged to celebrate their heritage and to become "The New Negro," a term coined in 1925 by sociologist and critic Alain LeRoy Locke. One of the factors contributing to the rise of the Harlem Renaissance was the great migration of African-Americans to northern cities between 1919 and 1926. Black urban migration, combined with trends in American society as a whole toward experimentation during the 1920s, and the rise of radical black intellectuals — including Locke, Marcus Garvey, founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), and W. E. B. Du Bois, editor of *The Crisis* magazine — all contributed to the particular styles and unprecedented success of black artists during the Harlem Renaissance period. Black American jazz swept the United States by storm, and jazz musicians and composers like Duke Ellington became stars beloved across the United States and overseas. Bessie Smith and other blues singers presented frank, sensual, wry lyrics raw with emotion. Black spirituals became widely appreciated as uniquely beautiful religious music. Ethel Waters, the black actress, triumphed on the stage, and black American dance and art flourished with music and drama. In literature, writers, such as Langston Hughes, James Weldon Johnson, Zora Neale Hurston, Nella Larson, and Claude McKay achieved notoriety.

1921 - Immigration Act

The Immigration Act of 1921 restricted the entry of Southern and Eastern Europeans into the United States. Efforts to include Mexicans in the restrictions were blocked by supporters of the agriculture business in the Southwest.

1921 - Sanger's American Birth Control League

The American Birth Control League was founded by Margaret Sanger. Sanger founded the birth control movement in the United States and was an international leader in the field. (She originated the term "birth control."). Working as an obstetrical nurse in New York's lower east side, she had seen the relationships between poverty, uncontrolled fertility, high rates of infant and maternal mortality, and deaths from botched illegal abortions. These observations influenced Sanger to be an active feminist who believed in every woman's right to avoid unwanted pregnancies, and she devoted herself to removing the legal barriers to publicizing the facts about contraception. She also worked to distribute contraception, so that women across different economic classes could have access to birth control and thus control over their lives.

1921 - Warren G. Harding is President

Before his nomination, Warren G. Harding declared, "America's present need is not heroics, but healing; not nostrums, but normalcy; not revolution, but restoration; not agitation, but adjustment; not surgery, but serenity; not the dramatic, but the dispassionate; not experiment, but equipoise; not submergence in internationality, but sustainment in triumphant nationality...." A Democratic leader, William Gibbs McAdoo, called Harding's speeches "an army of pompous phrases moving across the landscape in search of an idea." Their very murkiness was effective, since Harding's pronouncements remained unclear on the League of Nations, in contrast to the impassioned crusade of the Democratic candidates, Governor James M. Cox of Ohio and Franklin D. Roosevelt. Thirty-one distinguished Republicans had signed a manifesto assuring voters that a vote for Harding was a vote for the League. But Harding interpreted his election as a mandate to stay out of the League of Nations. He won the Presidential election by an unprecedented landslide of 60 percent of the popular vote. Republicans in Congress easily got the President's signature on their bills. They eliminated wartime controls and slashed taxes, established a Federal budget system, restored the high protective tariff, and imposed tight limitations upon immigration. By 1923 the postwar depression seemed to be giving way to a new surge of prosperity, and newspapers hailed Harding as a wise statesman carrying out his campaign promise--"Less government in business and more business in government." Behind the facade, not all of Harding's Administration was so impressive. Word began to reach the President that some of his friends were using their official positions for their own enrichment. Alarmed, he complained, "My...friends...they're the ones that keep me walking the floors nights!" Looking wan and depressed, Harding journeyed westward in the summer of 1923, taking with him his upright Secretary of Commerce, Herbert Hoover. "If you knew of a great scandal in our administration," he asked Hoover, "would you for the good of the country and the party expose it publicly or would you bury it?" Hoover urged publishing it, but Harding feared the political repercussions. He did not live to find out how the public would react to the scandals of his administration. In August of 1923, he died in San Francisco of a heart attack.

1923 - Calvin Coolidge is President

As President, Coolidge demonstrated his determination to preserve the old moral and economic precepts amid the material prosperity which many Americans were enjoying. He refused to use Federal economic power to check the growing boom or to ameliorate the depressed condition of agriculture and certain industries. His first message to Congress in December 1923 called for isolation in foreign policy, and for tax cuts, economy, and limited aid to farmers. He rapidly became popular. In 1924, as the beneficiary of what was becoming known as "Coolidge prosperity," he polled more than 54 percent of the popular vote. In his Inaugural he asserted that the country had achieved "a state of contentment seldom before seen," and pledged himself to maintain the status quo. In subsequent years he twice vetoed farm relief bills, and killed a plan to produce cheap Federal electric power on the Tennessee River. The political genius of President Coolidge, Walter Lippmann pointed out in 1926, was his talent for effectively doing nothing: "This active inactivity suits the mood and certain of the needs of the country admirably. It suits all the business

interests which want to be let alone.... And it suits all those who have become convinced that government in this country has become dangerously complicated and top-heavy...." Coolidge was both the most negative and remote of Presidents, and the most accessible. He once explained to Bernard Baruch why he often sat silently through interviews: "Well, Baruch, many times I say only 'yes' or 'no' to people. Even that is too much. It winds them up for twenty minutes more." But no President was kinder in permitting himself to be photographed in Indian war bonnets or cowboy dress, and in greeting a variety of delegations to the White House. Both his dry Yankee wit and his frugality with words became legendary. His wife, Grace Goodhue Coolidge, recounted that a young woman sitting next to Coolidge at a dinner party confided to him she had bet she could get at least three words of conversation from him. Without looking at her he quietly retorted, "You lose." And in 1928, while vacationing in the Black Hills of South Dakota, he issued the most famous of his laconic statements, "I do not choose to run for President in 1928." By the time the disaster of the Great Depression hit the country, Coolidge was in retirement. Before his death in January 1933, he confided to an old friend, ". . . I feel I no longer fit in with these times."

1924 - More Immigration Restrictions and Rising Mexican Immigration

The U.S. government established a law allowing the annual immigration of any nationality to be only 2 per cent of the number of that nationality that were residents in the U.S. in 1890. As the Immigration Act of 1924 halted the flow of other immigrant groups, border stations begin to arrange for the formal admission of Mexican workers, collecting tax on each person. Standards were established to exclude people deemed poor, mentally or physically ill, or "morally undesirable." Because no immigration quotas existed for Mexicans, more than 89,000 entered the United States on permanent visas, establishing 1924 as the peak year for Mexican immigration.

1928 - Ruling Against Mexican-American Children's Segregation

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that schools could not segregate Mexican-American children on the basis of race.

1929 - Stock Market Crash and Great Depression

On October 29, the stock market crashed, triggering the Great Depression. Lasting until about 1939, with the start of U.S. involvement in WWII, the depression was the longest and most severe one ever experienced by the industrialized Western world. Half of the banks closed, and most people failed to retrieve any savings they'd had. Unemployment reached new heights. Many people who lived far beyond the depression never again trusted banks, and sometimes appeared unusually frugal or wary to following generations.

1929 - Herbert Hoover is President

Son of a Quaker blacksmith, Herbert Clark Hoover brought to the Presidency an unparalleled reputation for public service as an engineer, administrator, and humanitarian. After capably serving as Secretary of Commerce under Presidents Harding and Coolidge,

Hoover became the Republican Presidential nominee in 1928. He said then: "We in America today are nearer to the final triumph over poverty than ever before in the history of any land." His election seemed to ensure prosperity. Yet within months the stock market crashed, and the Nation spiraled downward into depression. After the crash Hoover announced that while he would keep the Federal budget balanced, he would cut taxes and expand public works spending. In 1931 repercussions from Europe deepened the crisis, even though the President presented to Congress a program asking for creation of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to aid business, additional help for farmers facing mortgage foreclosures, banking reform, a loan to states for feeding the unemployed, expansion of public works, and drastic governmental economy. At the same time he reiterated his view that while people must not suffer from hunger and cold, caring for them must be primarily a local and voluntary responsibility. His opponents in Congress, who he felt were sabotaging his program for their own political gain, unfairly painted him as a callous and cruel President. Hoover became the scapegoat for the depression and was badly defeated in 1932. In the 1930's he became a powerful critic of the New Deal, warning against tendencies toward statism. In 1947 President Truman appointed Hoover to a commission, which elected him chairman, to reorganize the Executive Departments. He was appointed chairman of a similar commission by President Eisenhower in 1953. Over the years, Hoover wrote many articles and books, one of which he was working on when he died at 90 in New York City on October 20, 1964.

1932 - Dust Bowl

The Dust Bowl was an ecological and human disaster in the southwestern Great Plains region of the United States in the 1930's. It was caused by misuse of land and years of sustained drought. Farmland became useless, and hundreds of thousands of people were forced to leave their homes. As the land dried up, great clouds of dust and sand, carried by the wind, covered everything and led to the phrase "Dust Bowl." It lasted about a decade. Much was learned about cultivation in dryland ecosystems. Because of these new cultivation methods, subsequent droughts in this region have had less impact.

1933 - New Deal Policies

The heart of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, the National Industrial Recovery Act, encourages fair business practices by providing for a minimum wage, limiting the length of a work day, and prohibiting child labor.

1933 - Franklin D. Roosevelt is President

Franklin D. Roosevelt led the Nation through the Great Depression and World War II. Assuming the Presidency at the depth of the Great Depression, Franklin D. Roosevelt helped the American people regain faith in themselves. He brought hope as he promised prompt, vigorous action, and asserted in his Inaugural Address, "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself." He was elected President in November 1932, to the first of four terms. By March there were 13,000,000 unemployed, and almost every bank was closed. In his first "hundred days," he proposed, and Congress enacted, a sweeping program to bring

recovery to business and agriculture, relief to the unemployed and to those in danger of losing farms and homes, and reform, especially through the establishment of the Tennessee Valley Authority. By 1935 the Nation had achieved some measure of recovery, but businessmen and bankers were turning more and more against Roosevelt's New Deal program. They feared his experiments, were appalled because he had taken the Nation off the gold standard and allowed deficits in the budget, and disliked the concessions to labor. Roosevelt responded with a new program of reform: Social Security, heavier taxes on the wealthy, new controls over banks and public utilities, and an enormous work relief program for the unemployed. In 1936 he was re-elected by a top-heavy margin. Feeling he was armed with a popular mandate, he sought legislation to enlarge the Supreme Court, which had been invalidating key New Deal measures. Roosevelt lost the Supreme Court battle, but a revolution in constitutional law took place. Thereafter the Government could legally regulate the economy. Roosevelt had pledged the United States to the "good neighbor" policy, transforming the Monroe Doctrine from a unilateral American manifesto into arrangements for mutual action against aggressors. He also sought through neutrality legislation to keep the United States out of the war in Europe, yet at the same time to strengthen nations threatened or attacked. When France fell and England came under siege in 1940, he began to send Great Britain all possible aid short of actual military involvement. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Roosevelt directed organization of the Nation's manpower and resources for global war. Feeling that the future peace of the world would depend upon relations between the United States and Russia, he devoted much thought to the planning of a United Nations, in which, he hoped, international difficulties could be settled. As the war drew to a close, Roosevelt's health deteriorated, and on April 12, 1945, while at Warm Springs, Georgia, he died of a cerebral hemorrhage.

1935 - Social Security Act

Due to the depression, the Social Security Act established a fund for pensions and unemployment compensation, providing some long-range employment security to American workers for the first time in history.

1935 - 1943 - Works Progress Administration (WPA)

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) was a work program for the unemployed created under President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal. It provided useful work for millions of victims of the Great Depression, many of whom were concerned about preserving skills as well as self-respect. During its eight-year existence the WPA put some 8.5 million people to work (over 11 million were unemployed in 1934) at a cost to the federal government of approximately \$11 billion. Many structures were built, such as public buildings, bridges, parks, and airports. Also created under the WPA were The Federal Arts Project, Federal Writers' Project, and Federal Theater Project. These projects employed thousands of artists, writers, and actors in such cultural programs as the creation of art work for public buildings, the documentation of local life, and the organization of community theaters. Historians have reaped the benefits of these cultural productions, which ironically would

not have been produced without a depression (for instance, invaluable interviews with former slaves have contributed immensely to African-American history). In 1939 the Works Progress Administration altered its name to Work Projects Administration, and in 1943, with the virtual elimination of unemployment by a wartime economy, the WPA was terminated.

1938 - House Committee on Un-American Activities

Congress establishes the House Committee on Un-American Activities to investigate Communist, Fascist, Nazi, and other organizations seen as subversive.

1939 - WWII begins and U.S. neutral

Adolf Hitler's invasion of Poland begins World War II; President Franklin D. Roosevelt declares U.S. neutrality.

1941 - 1945 - Women and Work

Women enter the work force in the millions as men go off to war. Rosie the Riveter becomes their symbol, because she's an image representing the physical strength of women.

1942 - Civil Rights Protests Organized

African-American and white advocates of direct, nonviolent action organize the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) in Chicago. Sit-ins begin at Stoner's Restaurant.

1945 - End of Holocaust Concentration Camps

Starting at the end of WWI, the German Nazi party gained considerable power. By WWII, it was responsible for the concentration camp imprisonment and death of approximately 2.7 million Jewish people, as well as homosexuals and dissenting clergy.

1945 - Pearl Harbor and U.S. Entry into WWII

Japan attacks Pearl Harbor on December 7, pulling the United States into World War II.

1945 - End of WWII

Germany surrenders to the Allies in May. After dropping atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the United States accepts Japan's surrender in August, ending World War II. The United Nations is formed in San Francisco.

1945 - Harry S. Truman is President

During his few weeks as Vice President, Harry S. Truman scarcely saw President Roosevelt, and received no briefing on the development of the atomic bomb or the unfolding difficulties with Soviet Russia. Suddenly these and a host of other wartime problems became Truman's to solve when, on April 12, 1945, he became President. He told reporters, "I felt like the moon, the stars, and all the planets had fallen on me." As President, Truman made some of the most crucial decisions in history. After consultations

with his advisers, Truman ordered atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Japanese surrender quickly followed. In June 1945 Truman witnessed the signing of the charter of the United Nations, hopefully established to preserve peace. He then presented to Congress a program known as the Fair Deal, proposing the expansion of Social Security, a full-employment program, a permanent Fair Employment Practices Act, and public housing and slum clearance. In 1947 as the Soviet Union pressured Turkey and threatened to take over Greece, he devised aid in the form of the Truman Doctrine. The Marshall Plan, named for his Secretary of State, stimulated economic recovery in war-torn western Europe. In June 1950, the Communist government of North Korea attacked South Korea. Truman kept the war a limited one, rather than risk a major conflict with China and perhaps Russia. Deciding not to run again, he retired to Independence; at age 88, he died December 26, 1972, after a stubborn fight for life.

1947 - Jackie Robinson

Jackie Robinson becomes the first African American in major league baseball when he signs with the Brooklyn Dodgers.

1951 - Red Scare and Julius and Ethel Rosenberg

Julius and Ethel Rosenberg are convicted of selling top-secret nuclear information to the Soviet Union and are later executed. This was during the mounting Red Scare in the United States, in which any people suspected of sympathizing or being in cahoots with communists were severely punished. This was because there was a growing, overwhelming fear of the spread of communism during this post WWII period. China had turned to communism, and the Soviet Union was seen to be growing in nuclear power as well.

1953 - Dwight D. Eisenhower is President

Bringing to the Presidency his prestige as commanding general of the victorious forces in Europe during World War II, Dwight D. Eisenhower obtained a truce in Korea and worked incessantly during his two terms to ease the tensions of the Cold War. He pursued the moderate policies of "Modern Republicanism," pointing out as he left office, "America is today the strongest, most influential, and most productive nation in the world." After WWII, he became President of Columbia University, then took leave to assume supreme command over the new NATO forces being assembled in 1951. Republican emissaries to his headquarters near Paris persuaded him to run for President in 1952. "I like Ike" was an irresistible slogan; Eisenhower won a sweeping victory. Negotiating from military strength, he tried to reduce the strains of the Cold War. In 1953, the signing of a truce brought an armed peace along the border of South Korea. The death of Stalin the same year caused shifts in relations with Russia. New Russian leaders consented to a peace treaty neutralizing Austria. Meanwhile, both Russia and the United States had developed hydrogen bombs. With the threat of such destructive force hanging over the world, Eisenhower, with the leaders of the British, French, and Russian governments, met at Geneva in July 1955. The President proposed that the United States and Russia exchange blueprints of each other's military establishments and "provide within our countries

facilities for aerial photography to the other country." The Russians greeted the proposal with silence, but were so cordial throughout the meetings that tensions relaxed. Suddenly, in September 1955, Eisenhower suffered a heart attack in Denver, Colorado. After seven weeks he left the hospital, and in February 1956 doctors reported his recovery. In November he was elected for his second term. In domestic policy the President pursued a middle course, continuing most of the New Deal and Fair Deal programs, emphasizing a balanced budget. As desegregation of schools began, he sent troops into Little Rock, Arkansas, to assure compliance with the orders of a Federal court; he also ordered the complete desegregation of the Armed Forces. "There must be no second class citizens in this country," he wrote. Eisenhower concentrated on maintaining world peace. He watched with pleasure the development of his "atoms for peace" program--the loan of American uranium to "have not" nations for peaceful purposes. Before he left office in January 1961, for his farm in Gettysburg, he urged the necessity of maintaining an adequate military strength, but cautioned that vast, long-continued military expenditures could breed potential dangers to our way of life. He concluded with a prayer for peace "in the goodness of time." Both themes remained timely and urgent when he died, after a long illness, on March 28, 1969.

1954 - Brown vs. the Board of Education

The 1954 Supreme Court landmark case against racially segregated schools, it declared the "separate-but-equal" educational facilities unconstitutional, and in doing so overruled the "separate but equal" doctrine of the infamous 1896 decision in Plessy vs. Ferguson during the Reconstruction era. The "Brown" in the case title referred to an African-American third-grader named Linda Brown from Topeka, Kansas, who had to ride the bus five miles to school each day, although a public school was located only four blocks from her house. The school wasn't full and the little girl met all of the requirements to attend, but she was not admitted because African Americans were barred from enrolling in white children's schools. An experiment specifically designed for this case helped point to the devastating psychological effects of segregation and race consciousness. Black children were shown virtually identical dolls, with the only difference being skin color (one was black and one white). The children overwhelmingly preferred the white dolls, identifying them as "nice" and more attractive, while identifying the black dolls as less attractive and "bad." Brown vs. the Board of Education is viewed as a landmark Civil Rights case.

1955 - Montgomery Bus Boycott

Rosa Parks was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama, sparking the modern Civil Rights Movement. She had refused to relinquish her seat on a public bus to a white man--a violation of the racial segregation ordinances in Montgomery, Alabama. Martin Luther King Jr. then led a boycott of Montgomery buses. The December 5 boycott of the bus system continued until shortly after December 13, 1956, when the United States Supreme Court outlawed bus segregation in the city.

1957 - Sputnik and USSR./U.S. rivalry

The Soviet Union launches Sputnik 1, the first artificial satellite in space. Also, the Office of Education's study of education in the USSR shows an emphasis on scientific and technical education far ahead of that in U.S. schools. These accomplishments were daunting to many in the U.S., who were worried about the USSR's nuclear power in the Cold War period, and were worried that it was surpassing this country in general areas as well, such as education and technology.

1960 - The Pill is Available to Women

When the birth control pill was introduced in 1960, it was a major medical achievement that rewrote the future of women, family, and national life. For the first time in history, it became possible for a woman to safely and effectively control childbearing, and thus their own choices and livelihood, by taking a pill.

1960 - Civil Rights Sit-Ins

African-American Sit-ins in Greensboro, North Carolina, initiated a wave of similar protests throughout the South to force the desegregation of lunch counters and other public places.

1961 - John F. Kennedy is President

On November 22, 1963, John F. Kennedy was killed by an assassin. Kennedy was the youngest man elected President; he was also the youngest to die. His Inaugural Address offered the memorable phrase, "Ask not what your country can do for you--ask what you can do for your country." As President, he set out to redeem his campaign pledge to get America moving again. His economic programs launched the country on its longest sustained expansion since World War II; before his death, he laid plans for a massive assault on persisting pockets of privation and poverty. He wished America to resume its old mission as the first nation dedicated to the revolution of human rights. With the Alliance for Progress and the Peace Corps, he brought American idealism to the aid of developing nations. But the existence of communism remained a threat to U.S. interests. Kennedy's attempt to overthrow the regime of Fidel Castro was a failure. Soon thereafter, the Soviet Union renewed its campaign against West Berlin. Kennedy replied by increasing the Nation's military strength, including new efforts in outer space. Confronted by this reaction, Moscow, after the erection of the Berlin Wall, relaxed its pressure in central Europe. Instead, the Russians now sought to install nuclear missiles in Cuba. Kennedy imposed a quarantine on all offensive weapons bound for Cuba. While the world trembled on the brink of nuclear war, the Russians backed down and agreed to take the missiles away. Kennedy now contended that both sides had a vital interest in stopping the spread of nuclear weapons and slowing the arms race--a contention which led to the test ban treaty of 1963. For many Americans, his administration thus saw the beginning of new hope for both the equal rights of Americans and the peace of the world.

1963 - Lyndon B. Johnson is President

On November 22, 1963, when Kennedy was assassinated, Johnson was sworn in as President. First he obtained enactment of the measures President Kennedy had been urging

at the time of his death--a new civil rights bill and a tax cut. Next he urged the Nation "to build a great society, a place where the meaning of man's life matches the marvels of man's labor." In 1964, Johnson won the Presidency with 61 percent of the vote and had the widest popular margin in American history--more than 15,000,000 votes. The Great Society program became Johnson's agenda for Congress in January 1965: aid to education, attack on disease, Medicare, urban renewal, beautification, conservation, development of depressed regions, a wide-scale fight against poverty, control and prevention of crime and delinquency, removal of obstacles to the right to vote. Millions of elderly people found succor through the 1965 Medicare amendment to the Social Security Act. Under Johnson, the country made vast explorations of space. For instance, three astronauts successfully orbited the moon in December 1968. Nevertheless, two overriding crises had been gaining momentum since 1965. Despite the beginning of new anti-poverty and anti-discrimination programs, there was unrest and rioting in black ghettos. President Johnson steadily exerted his influence against segregation and on behalf of law and order, but there was no early solution. The other crisis arose from Viet Nam. Controversy over the war had become acute by the end of March 1968, when he limited the bombing of North Viet Nam in order to initiate negotiations. At the same time, he startled the world by withdrawing as a candidate for re-election so that he might devote his full efforts, unimpeded by politics, to the quest for peace. When he left office, peace talks were under way; he did not live to see them successful, but died suddenly of a heart attack at his Texas ranch on January 22, 1973.

1965 - *The Feminine Mystique* and the Feminist Movement

Betty Friedan published *The Feminine Mystique* and helped spark the modern feminist movement, especially among white middle-class women. In the book, Friedan argues that women in the Cold War period were pressured unfairly to be perfect housewives, and did not have the same opportunities as men. Since that period, *The Feminine Mystique* has been criticized for overexaggerating the extent to which 1950s women were able to work in purely domestic roles, and for generalizing about all women from a white middle class point of view. Nevertheless, this book struck a chord with a lot of women and helped to facilitate feminist changes.

1965 - Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech

In August, more than 250,000 people participate in the March on Washington; Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivers his famous "I Have a Dream" speech.

1965 - U.S. Involvement in Vietnam begins

As the United States sends combat troops to Vietnam, nationwide student protests begin. U.S. forces number 184,000 by the end of the year. One day after Kennedy's assassination, President Johnson reaffirms the U.S. commitment to defeat the Communists who have recently overthrown the government in South Vietnam; he authorizes clandestine operations against North Vietnam.

1966 - Civil Rights Act

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, gender, creed, or ethnic background and establishes affirmative action programs to remove discrimination in advertising, recruitment, hiring, job classification, promotion, wages and conditions of employment.

1966 - Malcolm X Assassinated

Malcolm X is assassinated. Malcolm X was born Malcolm Little, but changed his name in a symbolic attempt to remove a last name which was inherited from the system of slavery. Malcolm X was a pivotal African American leader for black rights. He argued for black pride through voluntary black separatism, because he believed that African Americans had received enough injustices from white society, and needed to separate to gain strength and solidarity. He converted to the Nation of Islam, and later talked about the need to unite across races. However, there came to be much dissension among the Nation of Islam, and many believe that Malcolm X was assassinated by men in the group. Other people argue that the FBI was behind his death.

1967 - NOW (National Organization of Women) founded

The National Organization for Women (NOW) is founded, working toward equal rights for women. The National Organization for Women was established by a small group of feminists who were dedicated to actively challenging sex discrimination in all areas of American society but particularly in employment. Its major concern during the 1970s was passage of a national Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution, but the amendment surprisingly failed to gain ratification in 1982. Among the issues that NOW addresses are child care, pregnancy leave, and abortion and pension rights.

1969 - Richard M. Nixon is President

Although overall known for the Watergate scandal, Nixon's accomplishments while in office included revenue sharing, the end of the draft, new anticrime laws, and a broad environmental program. He also appointed Justices of conservative philosophy to the Supreme Court. One of the most dramatic events of his first term occurred in 1969, when American astronauts made the first moon landing. Some of his most acclaimed achievements came in his quest for world stability. During visits in 1972 to Beijing and Moscow, he reduced tensions with China and the USSR. His summit meetings with Russian leader Leonid I. Brezhnev produced a treaty to limit strategic nuclear weapons. In January 1973, he announced an accord with North Vietnam to end American involvement in Indochina. In 1974, his Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, negotiated disengagement agreements between Israel and its opponents, Egypt and Syria. Within a few months, his administration was embattled over the so-called "Watergate" scandal, stemming from a break-in at the Watergate Hotel offices of the Democratic National Committee during the 1972 campaign. The break-in was traced to officials of the Committee to Re-elect the President. A number of administration officials resigned; some were later convicted of offenses connected with efforts to cover up the affair. Nixon denied any personal

involvement, but the courts forced him to yield tape recordings which indicated that he had, in fact, tried to divert the investigation. Faced with what seemed almost certain impeachment, Nixon announced on August 8, 1974, that he would resign the next day, and he did.

1973 - Vietnam Cease-Fire

Vietnam War cease-fire signed, but the U.S. doesn't evacuate Vietnam until 1975.

1973 - Roe vs. Wade

The Supreme Court decision of Roe vs. Wade overturned state laws restricting the right to an abortion, and gave women the right to choose whether or not to carry a child to term.

1974 - Gerald Ford is President

In the aftermath of Nixon's Watergate scandal, his Vice President, Gerald Ford, was succeeding the first President ever to resign. As President, Ford tried to calm earlier controversies by granting former President Nixon a full pardon. Ford established his policies during his first year in office, despite opposition from a heavily Democratic Congress. His first goal was to curb inflation. Then, when recession became the Nation's most serious domestic problem, he shifted to measures aimed at stimulating the economy. But, still fearing inflation, Ford vetoed a number of non-military appropriations bills that would have further increased the already heavy budgetary deficit. During his first 14 months as President he vetoed 39 measures. His vetoes were usually sustained. Ford continued as he had in his Congressional days to view himself as "a moderate in domestic affairs, a conservative in fiscal affairs, and a dyed-in-the-wool internationalist in foreign affairs." A major goal was to decrease taxes on big business. In foreign affairs Ford acted to maintain U.S. power after the collapse of Cambodia and South Vietnam. Preventing a new war in the Middle East remained a major objective; by providing aid to both Israel and Egypt, the Ford Administration helped persuade the two countries to accept an interim truce agreement. Further, President Ford and Soviet leader Leonid I. Brezhnev set new limitations upon nuclear weapons. President Ford lost the 1976 election to his Democratic opponent, former Governor Jimmy Carter of Georgia.

1977 - Jimmy Carter is President

As president, Carter worked hard to combat the continuing economic woes of inflation and unemployment. By the end of his administration, he could claim an increase of nearly eight million jobs and a decrease in the budget deficit, measured in percentage of the gross national product. Unfortunately, inflation and interest rates were at near record highs, and efforts to reduce them caused a short recession. In domestic achievements, Carter dealt with the energy shortage by establishing a national energy policy and by decontrolling domestic petroleum prices to stimulate production. He prompted Government efficiency through civil service reform and proceeded with deregulation of the trucking and airline industries. He sought to improve the environment. He expanded the national park system to protect 103 million acres of Alaskan lands. To increase human and social services, he

created the Department of Education, bolstered the Social Security system, and appointed record numbers of women, African Americans, and Hispanics to Government jobs. In foreign affairs, in the Middle East, through the Camp David agreement of 1978, Carter helped bring amity between Egypt and Israel. He succeeded in obtaining ratification of the Panama Canal treaties. Building upon the work of predecessors, he established full diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China and completed negotiation of the SALT II nuclear limitation treaty with the Soviet Union. There were setbacks, however. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan caused the suspension of plans for ratification of the SALT II pact. The seizure as hostages of the U. S. embassy staff in Iran dominated the news during the last 14 months of the administration. The consequences of Iran's holding Americans captive, together with continuing inflation at home, contributed to Carter's defeat in 1980. Even then, he continued the difficult negotiations over the hostages. Iran finally released the 52 Americans the same day Carter left office. After leaving the White House, Carter returned to Georgia, where in 1982 he founded the nonprofit Carter Center in Atlanta to promote peace and human rights worldwide. The Center has initiated projects in more than 65 countries to resolve conflicts, prevent human rights abuses, build democracy, improve health, and revitalize urban areas. He and his wife, Rosalynn, still reside in Plains.

1981 - Ronald Reagan is President

On January 20, 1981, Reagan took office. Despite being shot by a would-be assassin, he recovered and managed the presidency through his re-election in 1984. Reagan achieved mixed results. The administration's efforts to reduce spending for social programs and increase defense spending created controversy. Critics charged that his deregulation created hazards to public health and safety. During his first term, the president sought to shift dozens of federal programs to the state and local levels, yet many complained that promised federal aid to implement the programs was inadequate. Reagan's domestic program during his second term focused on tax reform. Late in 1986 the Senate joined the House to pass a major tax bill that reduced the number of tax rates, removed millions of low-income persons from the tax rolls, and eliminated most deductions. One focus of the administration from the beginning was a conservative agenda of social issues ranging from opposition to abortion to support for mandatory prayer in the public schools. Much of the social agenda of the conservative fundamentalist supporters of the president was adopted by the executive branch, but Reagan had little success in gaining its acceptance by Congress. In foreign policy, Soviet-U.S. relations were generally chilly during Reagan's first term, and Reagan referred to Moscoe as the "evil empire." The Reagan-proposed Strategic Defense Initiative contributed to continuing tensions. A cordial 1985 meeting with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in Geneva began a warming trend. In 1987 the two leaders signed a historic treaty in Washington that would eliminate their intermediate-range nuclear forces. Several times Reagan took military action. In October 1983 he ordered the invasion of the Caribbean island of Grenada, alleging that Americans there were in jeopardy and that the country had become a potentially dangerous Cuban-Soviet military base. Reagan's other long-standing foreign-policy initiative was to assist anti-Communist guerrillas, known as contras, in thwarting alleged Soviet-Cuban inroads into Nicaragua. It became

apparent that Reagan's real goal was to eliminate communism in Central America, but when the government and the contras signed a cease-fire in 1988, this objective appeared unrealistic. The most damaging foreign-policy event for President Reagan was the Iran-contra affair. Late in 1986 the administration admitted that it had been secretly selling arms to Iran, with some of the profits possibly going to the guerrillas in Nicaragua. Reagan claimed that he had not been informed, or could not remember being informed, of the Iran-contra link by national security adviser Vice Admiral John Poindexter or his aide, Lt. Col. Oliver North. The two policies--selling arms to Iran in apparent exchange for hostages and sending arms to Nicaragua--triggered multiple investigations. Although Reagan's role in the affair could not be determined precisely, Congress concluded that he had failed to "take care that the laws be faithfully executed." Poindexter, North, and others were indicted in the affair in 1988.

1989 - George Bush is President

President Bush launched a successful campaign largely based on his pledge: "Read my lips. No new taxes." However, in 1990 Bush acknowledged that new or increased taxes were necessary, and his popularity ratings fell immediately. Bush and Congress reached a compromise on a budget package that increased the marginal tax rate and phased out exemptions for high-income taxpayers. His popularity among Republicans never fully recovered, and the compromise plan reduced the size of the deficit only marginally, despite Bush's claim that it was the toughest deficit reduction package ever approved. Bush's 1992 State of the Union address offered a plan for economic growth that called for a moratorium on new government regulations on business, a cut in the capital gains tax, and the elimination of numerous domestic programs he deemed undeserving of federal funding. He also endorsed a health-insurance tax credit for poor families and a tax credit for first-time home buyers. Congress adopted some of his proposals, but Bush vetoed the final bill because it raised taxes on the wealthy. By late 1992 he had cast 35 vetoes, none of which was overridden. The streak ended in October 1992 when Congress, urged on by consumers, overrode his veto of a bill that reversed portions of a law barring local governments from regulating cable-television fees. In 1991 Bush's nomination of Clarence Thomas to the supreme court ignited a controversy. Thomas was an African American man with strong conservative views. Some women's and civil rights organizations opposed the nomination. Bush characteristically remained steadfast in his support, even after a former member of Thomas's staff, law professor Anita Hill, accused the judge of sexual harassment in nationally televised hearings. Nevertheless, Thomas was confirmed, 52-48. Bush received strong support from the public for his handling of foreign affairs. The defeat of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua concluded a long, sometimes covert, effort by Reagan and Bush to unseat them. Bush met separately with South Africa's reform-minded president, F. W. de Klerk, and with the newly freed black nationalist leader Nelson Mandela. By supporting sanctions against the South African government, Bush appeared to help speed the dismantling of its system of racial separation. His administration lifted the sanctions in 1991 after concluding that the requirements imposed by Congress had been met. Bush relied on force to settle accounts with Panama's strongman Gen. Manuel Noriega. In

December 1989 Bush ordered troops into Panama and forced Noriega from power. Noriega surrendered, was brought to trial in a U.S. court, and was convicted of a series of charges. After China's rulers brutally crushed massive student demonstrations in the spring of 1989, Bush maintained communication with the leadership, angering human rights activists. A series of summits with Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev resulted in the signing of treaties on arms reductions and agreements on other issues. When, in December 1991, the Soviet Union dissolved into a loose confederation of independent republics and several unaffiliated states, Bush quickly recognized the new states and sought a rapprochement with Yeltsin, now president of Russia. In the spring of 1992 Bush and Yeltsin agreed to substantial cuts in nuclear weapons. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 provided Bush's most serious crisis, resulting in the Persian Gulf War. Bush cited the unprovoked invasion of defenseless Kuwait, Iraq's desire to control a large portion of the world's oil reserves, and Iraq's growing nuclear-weapons potential as justification to involve the U.S. in expelling Iraq from Kuwait. Many suspect that U.S. economic interests were largely influential as well, particularly as the Kurds were largely abandoned after Iraq's withdrawal. The Bush administration held extensive discussions with Canada and Mexico that resulted in the approval of a draft North American Free Trade Agreement in 1992. On November 3, 1992, Bush lost the popular vote for presidency to Bill Clinton by a 43% to 38% margin.

1993 - Bill Clinton is President

William J. Clinton, at 46 the youngest man elected President since John F. Kennedy, came to the White House pledging to end the era of drift and deadlock and begin a new season of American renewal. In an address before Congress on the 29th day of his Presidency, he outlined a bold strategy to lift the economy through increased public and private investment while cutting \$500 billion from the Federal deficit. The next day he began promoting his "new direction" to the people through television appearances and rallies, thus by-passing entrenched special interests in Washington. The tactic was a reprise of his successful campaign, using modern communications to brush aside Democratic challengers and best a Republican incumbent. Clinton was elected Arkansas attorney general in 1976, then went on to win the governorship in 1978. He lost in his try for a second term, but he regained the office four years later and served as governor until 1992. That year Clinton defeated George Bush and third-party candidate Ross Perot for the Presidency. Clinton and his running mate, Tennessee's Senator Albert Gore, Jr., then 44, represented a new generation in American political leadership. For the first time in 12 years both the White House and Congress were held by the same party. In domestic affairs, Clinton signed into law measures to revitalize the economy and renew the American community. To boost living standards and create jobs, he won Congressional approval of a massive deficit reduction plan, a barrier-breaking trade agreement with Mexico, aid to Russia, and tax cuts for small businesses and the working poor. He also signed the Brady Bill, which required a waiting period for gun purchases. Other initiatives included the national service law to put Americans to work restoring their communities; the Family and Medical Leave Act to protect the jobs of parents who must care for sick children; reform of public education with

the adoption of his GOALS 2000 bill; a new national health care plan and welfare reform; and a get-tough program against crime and violence. The recovering U. S. economy and a tour of Europe ending in a Moscow summit buoyed Clinton's leadership at the end of his first year. In his 1994 State of the Union Address he declared that the Nation "is growing stronger, but it must be stronger still."

President Clinton appointed Janet Reno as the first woman Attorney General.

2001- George W. Bush is President

Vice President Gore was the clear choice to succeed President Clinton. Governor Bush of Texas the son of President Bush, was the choice of the Republican establishment. Bush was challenged for the nomination by Senator John McCain of Arizona. When Bush won a bitterly fought primary in South Carolina he became the presumptive nominee. Throughout the campaign polls showed the race very close. Bush initially stumbled but regained his momentum during the three debates. The Republicans effectively defined the game of expectations. When Bush did better than expected he won the debates. When election night came the results were so close that neither candidate was declared the winner. Gore won the nationwide popular vote but outcome of a recount in Florida would have determined the results of the Electoral vote. The initial numbers in an election marked with a number of irregularities had given Bush a Florida lead of less than 1,000 votes. The Supreme Court intervened and stopped the recount thus giving the election to Bush. 51% of eligible voters turned out on Election Day.

On 11 September, terrorist airplanes destroy the World Trade Centre in New York and damage the Pentagon in Washington DC. The following month US and coalition forces launch a 'war on terrorism' with an attack on Afghanistan, targeting Taliban forces and Al-Qaeda terrorist groups.

National Museum of the American Indian established on the mall in Washington DC.

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Creation Date: 2/21/2000 Last Updated: 8/2007

2003 – Invasion of Iraq

On March 20 the United States, backed by British forces and smaller contingents from Australia, Spain, Poland and Denmark invaded Iraq. Four countries participated with troops during the initial invasion phase, which lasted from March 20 to May 1. These were the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, and Poland. 36 other countries were involved in its aftermath. The invasion marked the beginning of the Iraq War.

(Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Invasion_of_iraq, Retrieved 9/2/2009)

2007 – On January 4th Nancy Pelosi was sworn in as Speaker of the House of Representatives – the first woman to hold this title.

2008 – Barack Obama is elected President

On November 4, then-junior United States Senator from Illinois, defeated Republican Senator John McCain to become the first African American President of the United States. Several other unique aspects of the campaign included the election of the first Roman Catholic Vice President and the first Presidential race between two sitting US Senators. The 2008 presidential race was also the first time the Republican Party nominated a woman to run as Vice President (then – Governor of Alaska Sarah Palin).

(Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2008_presidential_campaign, Retrieved 9/02/2009)

2009 – On January 21 Hillary Clinton was sworn in as Secretary of State. On this day she resigned from her seat in the US Senate and became the first Former First Lady to serve in the United States Cabinet.

(Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hillary_clinton, Retrieved 9/02/2009)