• Odds favored the British army
  o Barely 1/3 of Americans actively supported the Revolution
  o Political stability was uncertain in America
  o Army was poorly supplied and inexperienced

• However, Americans had geographic home-field advantage & French alliance

• Resentment of British rule made colonists decentralize governments, giving more power to individual states than to a national body. Articles of Confederation only provided semblance of national authority; more focus was given to drafting state constitutions.
  o Realization that the Articles of Confederation were politically flimsy, Constitutional Convention was called in 1787.
  o Social and economic questions, in addition to political questions, were also raised.

The American Revolution

• Even though British had initial advantage, global military commitments were costly, the battlefield was an ocean away, Patriots were tenacious, political dissension in London

• Fighting was challenging for both sides.
  o Patriot militia lacked discipline so Washington whipped them into shape
  o Recruiting, supplying, equipping, training, paying soldiers

• Revolution had political, economic, and social effects.
  o New sense of nationalism
  o Unique system of self-governance
  o Traditional class and social relationships were upset
    • Lives of African Americans, women, and Indians were changed
  o Economic experimentation and social change

1776: Washington’s Narrow Escape

• First enormous British force gathered on Staten Island, New York on July 2, 1776 under General William Howe and Admiral Richard Lord Howe—same day that Congress voted for independence

Fighting in New York and New Jersey

• British goal in invading New York: sever New England from the rest of the rebellious colonies
  o Washington was determined to defend New York, a mistake. His army was not capable.
  o Battle of Long Island: new American army suffered defeat
  o Thomas Paine’s Common Sense bolstered the morale of Patriots.

• On Christmas night 1776 he led some 2,400 men across the icy Delaware River. At dawn, in Trenton, New Jersey, the Americans surprise-attacked 1,500 sleeping German mercenaries. Another victory was had at Princeton, where Americans repelled redcoats. Troops retreated to Morristown for the winter.
  o Morale significantly boosted

• Time became Washington’s greatest weapon; he would have to wear the British out. The only way to win would be not to lose. His troops would have to outlast those of Britain.
American Society at War

Choosing Sides

- Mobs of Patriots accused Tories (Loyalists)
- Opinion among the colonists concerning the war divided in three ways:
  - Patriots (Whigs)—largest, planter aristocrats
  - Loyalists (Tories)—concentrated in seaport cities, all walks of life, Anglican ministers, southern planters, backcountry farmers (Regulators)
  - Indifferent middle group
    - Similar divisions in British opinion
    - German mercenaries were hired because many British didn’t support the cause
- Loyalist militias were undependable by British
  - Loyalists either had to leave their homes and support British or face the wrath of Patriots.

Militia and Army

- American military men served two purposes:
  - Defending communities and helping augment Continental army. They preferred to ambush and engage in hand-to-hand combat rather than traditional formations. They were not as well organized and killed unnecessarily.
  - Continental army was, in contrast, was well-trained.
    - Troops were citizen-solders, mostly poor native-born Americans or immigrants who had been indentured servants or convicts.

Problems of Finance and Supply

- Congress found it difficult to supply the army; army agents took supplies directly from famers and gave certificates of promised future payment in return
  - Ready source of revenue was in the sale of Loyalist estates
  - Congress and the states fell short of funding the war’s cost and resorted to printing paper money
- Congress did a better job at providing munitions than at providing other supplies
  - 1777: Government arsenal in Springfield, Massachusetts was established
  - Most munitions were supplied by wartime captures or by importation from France
- On a given day, ¼ troops were unfit to fight, mostly due to smallpox
  - Threat of smallpox was so great to the war effort that Washington ordered mass vaccination at Morristown. After they became infected by the vaccine, they became immune. This was one of the greatest strategic accomplishments of the war.

1777: Setbacks for the British

- Divided counsels, overconfidence, poor communications, and indecision plagued British military planning in the campaigns of 1777.
- After General Cage, “Gentleman Johnny” Burgoyne took command. He proposed to bisect the colonies.
His men would advance south from Canada > another force would move easy from New York > a third force led by Howe would move up the Hudson from New York City

Washington sensed Howe’s purpose and allocated troops to New Jersey.

- At Brandywine Creek, Howe outmaneuvered Washington’s forces; British occupied Philadelphia
- Washington counterattacked at Germantown but British reinforcement under General Cornwallis repulsed them. Washington retreated to Valley Forge.

**Saratoga**

- General Burgoyne moved south from Canada and united with a force of Iroquois allies at Oswego. The combined force moved toward Albany.
  - Continental troops abandoned Fort Ticonderoga when Burgoyne arrived, since their numbers had dwindled during the winter. Congress assigned Horatio Gates as American commander.
    - At Oriskany, New York, a band of militiamen repulsed an ambush by Tories and Indians under St. Leger and gained time for General Benedict Arnold to bring 1,000 Continentals to the relief of Fort Stanwix.
      - The Indians deserted, Mohawk Valley was secured by Patriots.
    - In Bennington, Vermont New England militiamen led by Colonel John Stark decimated British party.
  - After two other victories, Burgoyne pulled back to Saratoga, and was outflanked by General Horatio Gates’ forces.

**Alliance with France**

- In 1776 the French took their first step toward aiding the colonists, sending 14 ships with military supplies
- Victory at Saratoga led to the signing of two treaties:
  - The Treaty of Amity and Commerce: France recognized the United States and offered trade concessions
  - The Treaty of Alliance: First, if France entered the war, both countries would fight until American independence was won; Second, neither would conclude true peace without formal consent of the other first obtained; Third, guaranteed the other’s possessions in America.
    - Spain entered the war as an ally of France, but not the United States—to take territories back
  - Fighting spread to the Mediterranean, Africa, West Indies, and high seas

**1778: Both Sides Regroup**

- After British defeat at Saratoga, Lord North new that the war was unwinnable but the king refused to let him resign.
  - On March 16, 1778, House of Commons repealed Townshend tea duty, Massachusetts Government Act, and Prohibitory Act. Congress refused to negotiate until independence was recognized.
  - Sir Henry Clinton replaced Howe and was ordered to evacuate Philadelphia.
- Washington’s army was stationed at Valley Forge and suffered greatly.
Washington employed a Prussian soldier, Friedrich Wilhelm, baron von Steuben, to discipline his troops.

Washington confronted Clinton’s troops in New Jersey at battle of Monmouth Court House. Outcome was indecisive > Washington took position in the north White Plains.

**Actions on the Frontier**

- **George Roger Clark** took Kaskaskia (present-day Illinois) by surprise and avoided the British, under Colonel William Hamilton, who had allied with frontier Tories and Indians. Clark then took Cahokia (what is now St. Louis) and Vincennes (present-day Indiana), British retook Vincennes but took it back by surprise attack.

- American expedition in western Pennsylvania to destroy Iroquois: Iroquois were led by Mohawk Joseph Brant. Sent by Washington, General John Sullivan defeated and destroyed Iroquois once and for all.

- In Kentucky territory, Daniel Boone and company held off an assault of Indians at Boonesboro. Carolina forces burned Cherokee towns and destroyed corn.
  - By weakening the major Indian tribes along the frontier, the American Revolution cleared the way for a rapid settlement of the trans-Appalachian West.

**The War in the South**

- At the end of 1778, British focus shifted to South. General Clinton wanted to muster Loyalist power in Savannah.
  - Loyalist forces were always less than estimated.
  - British forces were so harsh that even Loyalists rebelled.

**Savannah and Charleston**

- British forces invaded Savannah and overwhelmed Patriots.
- General Clinton and General Cornwallis launched amphibious attack against American force led by General Benjamin Lincoln on the Charleston peninsula. Lincoln forfeited Charleston—the biggest single loss of America. Horatio Gates was summoned to reclaim Charleston but was repelled.

**The Carolinas**

- Southern colonies were more important because they produced staple crops and naval stores.
- Sir Tarleton and Patrick Fergunson overreached themselves by mobilizing Tories in an effort to subdue Whigs.
  - American militiamen caught Tories on Kings Mountain: the turning point for the war in the South. By proving that British were not invincible, small farmers were emboldened to join guerrilla bands.
  - General Nathanael Greene was assigned to southern battlefield. He sent troops under General Daniel Morgan to take out Cornwallis’ headquarters.
    - The Americans attacked redcoats at Guilford Courthouse, inflicted major damage, and withdrew. Cornwallis retreated to North Carolina. Greene joined forces with local guerrillas, attacked, and was repelled. British in the south were limited to Charleston and Savannah.
    - Cornwallis moved north to Virginia. Benedict Arnold, who was there, betrayed Americans and joined the British. Major John André, a messenger spy, was captured and ended Arnold’s plot to sell out Americans.
Yorktown

- Arnold and Cornwallis joined forces in Virginia.
- British lost control of Chesapeake Bay due to French navy. In 1780, 6,000 French troops landed in Rhode Island.
- Admiral de Grasse was about to arrive with massive French force at Chesapeake, thus prompting Washington to move there with the French army at Rhode Island.
  - Cornwallis was soundly defeated.
- Cornwallis sued for peace after American forces (under Alexander Hamilton) and French forces felled British lines. Cornwallis surrendered.

Negotiations

- Lord North resigned.
- The Continental Congress named a five-man commission to negotiate peace. Only three members were active: John Adams, John Jay, Benjamin Franklin.
- French relation with Spain complicated matters since Spain demanded Gibraltar from Britain.

The Treaty of Paris

- France and Spain gave up on Gibraltar and reached an armistice with Britain.
- Great Britain recognized USA independence.
- Florida passed back to Spain.
- Page 235

The Political Revolution

Republican Ideology

- The conventional British model of mixed government sought to balance monarchy, aristocracy, and common people and thereby protect individual liberty.
- Because of the more democratic nature of their society, Americans knew that they must devise new political assumptions and institutions.
  - Ideas such as contract theory of govt., sovereignty of the people, separation of powers, natural rights persisted
  - Republican government was a radical departure from the norm and required virtue of the people

State Constitutions

- Political experimentation occurred at the state level in the form of written constitutions. People were sovereign and delegated limited authority to govt. States also initiated bill of rights guaranteeing specific freedoms.
  - Reservoir of ideas was created.
- First state constitutions:
  - Colonial govts with elected governors and senates
  - Separation of powers
Bill of rights that protected free speech, petition rights, trial by jury, self-incrimination
Increased power of legislatures

The Articles of Confederation

- Arts of Confed became effective in March, 1781.
- Congress was intended as a collective substitute for the monarch, not necessarily as legislature/representatives.
  - Powers:
    - Foreign affairs
    - War and peace
    - Disputes between states
    - Coinage
    - Postal service
    - Indian affairs
    - No courts or power to enforce
- Nine states had to deal with measures dealing with war, treaties, coinage, finances, and military
- Unanimous approval needed to levy tariffs and for amendments
- No executive or judicial; no administrative head, no courts

Articles of Confederation POSITIVES
- Northwest Ordinance of 1787
- Ended war
- Did not interfere with Adam Smith’s free trade

Articles of Confederation NEGATIVES
- States even taxed each other
  - Weak Congress; treaties couldn’t be enforced, no authoritative power, power given to state govts.
  - Weak legislature; taxes and amendments required unanimous consent

The Social Revolution
- Many laboring folk hoped that the Revolution would remove, not reinforce, the elite’s traditional political and social advantages.

Equality and its Limits
- New political opportunities led more ordinary citizens to participate in government.
- Property qualifications for voting were lowered
- Universal suffrage was never granted
- All state legislatures seized Tory estates.
- Unsettled areas were used for bonuses to war veterans

The Paradox of Slavery
- Before the Revolution, only Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania halted slave importation. After Independence, all states halted it except Georgia. South Carolina reopened it later
- Most African Americans were Loyalist. British had promised freedom to slaves and indentured servants.
Lord Dunmore, royal governor of Virginia, recruited slaves for Loyalist cause. He was defeated and fled. Before he could return to England, smallpox struck and nearly half of the former-slave troops died.

- In response to British recruitment of American slaves, Washington allowed blacks to join American forces. Georgia and South Carolina refused to allow blacks to serve in army.
  - Slaves who served the cause of independence won their freedom and in some cases, got bounties. However, British recruitment was a greater instrument of freedom.
  - The Vermont Constitution of 1777 specifically forbade slavery. The Massachusetts Constitution on 1780 proclaimed “inherent liberty” for all. New York lagged until 1799 in granting freedom to mature slaves born after enactment of its constitution, but an act of 1817 set July 4, 1827 as the date for emancipation of all remaining slaves.
- South of Pennsylvania, emancipation was not appreciated.
  - Thomas Jefferson’s Notes on the State of Virginia says that even he could not bring himself to emancipate slaves.
  - Slaves, especially in upper South, earned freedom through their own actions and by running away. Runaways found refuge in growing black communities in the north.

The Status of Women

- Women in the colonies remained essentially confined to domestic sphere.
- Few had access to formal education. No vote, preach, or ability to hold office.
- Women could usually own property and execute contracts but usually had no legal rights over children.
  - Divorces were difficult to obtain.
- The Revolution offered women new opportunities and engendered in many a new outlook.
  - Women supported armies through various roles
    - Handling supplies
    - Serving as couriers
    - Working as camp followers—cooking, cleaning, nursing
    - Some even served in army when their husbands collapsed (Margaret Corbin, Molly Pitcher, Deborah Sampson)
  - Most women retained domestic outlook. Judith Sargent Murray’s On the Equality of the Sexes stressed that women were perfectly capable outside the domestic sphere.
  - Abigail Adams demanded that unlimited power not be put in the hands of men or else ladies will rebel.
- The legal status of women did not improve dramatically as a result of the Revolution
  - Married women in most states still forfeited control of property to husbands.
  - Women gained no permanent political rights.
  - Voting was temporarily allowed to qualified land-owning women by New Jersey Constitution but was later denied.

Freedom of Religion

- Toleration of dissent > Revolution > complete freedom of religion and separation of church and state
- Anglican Church was vulnerable due to association with the crown and because dissenters outnumbered Anglicans in all states except Virginia.
  - All but Virginia eliminated tax support for churches.
The course that religion would take in the United States: pluralistic and voluntary rather than state-supported and monolithic.

Methodists came together in a general conference under Bishop Francis Asbury. The Anglican Church, rechristened Episcopal, gathered in a series of meetings that by 1789 had united the various dioceses in a federal union; in 1789 the Presbyterians also held their first general assembly. Catholic Church also emerged under bishop John Carroll.

The Emergence of an American Culture

- Sense of common nationality
  - Annual celebration on July 4th established by John Adams.
    - Day that the Declaration of Independence was adopted.

America’s Destiny

- The first nation not rooted in antiquity.
- Initial sense of mission.
  - A new mission called America to lead the world toward greater liberty and equality.