

Primary Secondary Source Webquest

SOURCE 1

Quincy, February 13, 1818

The American Revolution was not a common event. Its effects and consequences have already been [an inspiration] over a great part of the globe. And when and where are they to cease?

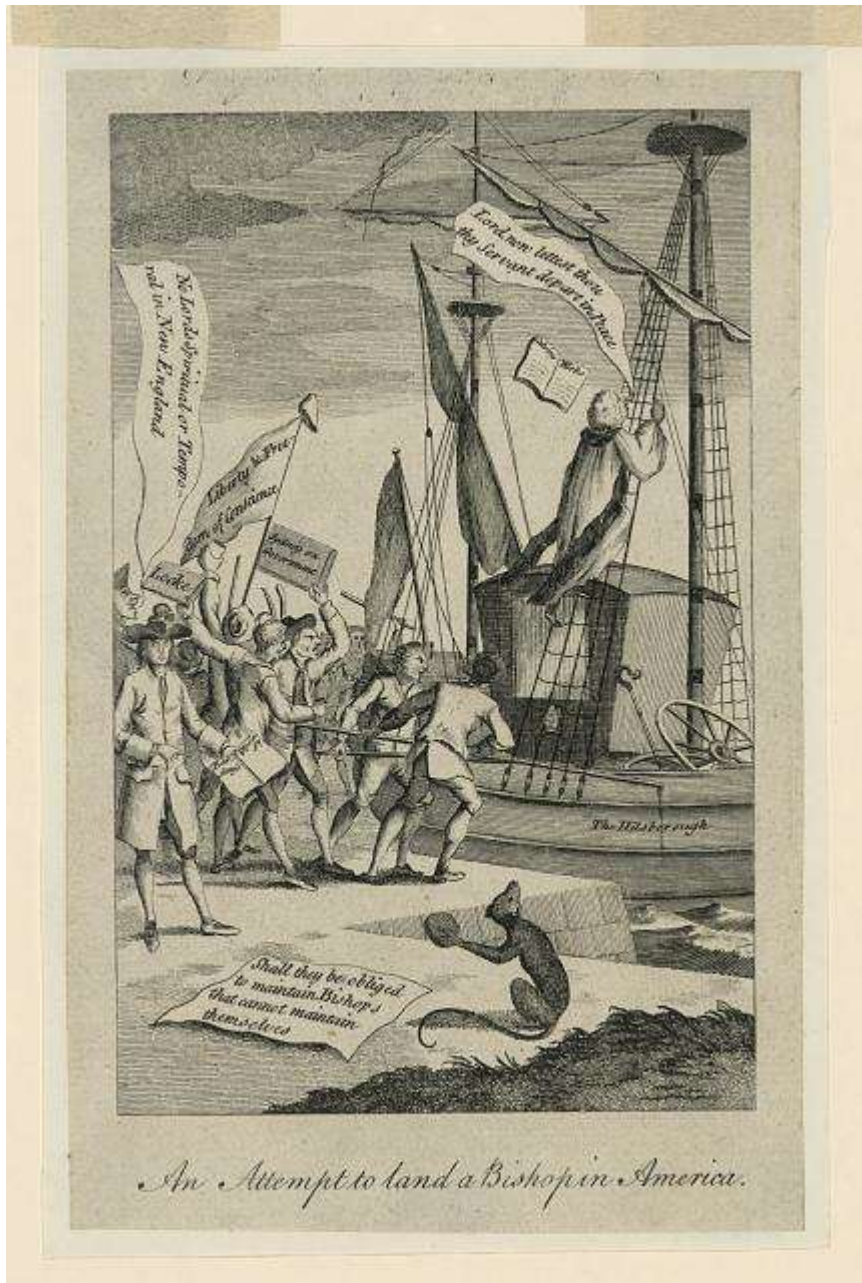
But what do we mean by the American Revolution? Do we mean the American war? The Revolution was effected before the war began. The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people. [It reflected] a change in their religious [beliefs about] their duties and obligations. While the king and all in authority under him were believed to govern, in justice and mercy according to the laws and constitutions derived to them from the God of Nature and transmitted to them by their ancestors, they thought themselves bound to pray for the king and queen and all the royal family and all [those in] authority under them, as ministers ordained by God for their good. But when [the people]

saw those powers . . . bent upon the destruction of all the securities of their lives, liberties, and properties, they thought it their duty to pray for the Continental Congress and all the thirteen state congresses. . . .

The colonies had grown up under constitutions of government so different; there was so great a variety of religions; they were composed of so many nations; their customs, manners, and habits had so little resemblance; and their [interaction] had been so rare and their knowledge of each other so imperfect that to unite them in the same principles . . . and the same system of action was certainly a very difficult enterprise. The complete accomplishment of it, in so short a time and by such simple means, was perhaps a singular example in the history of mankind. Thirteen clocks were made to strike together—a perfection of mechanism which no artist had ever before effected.

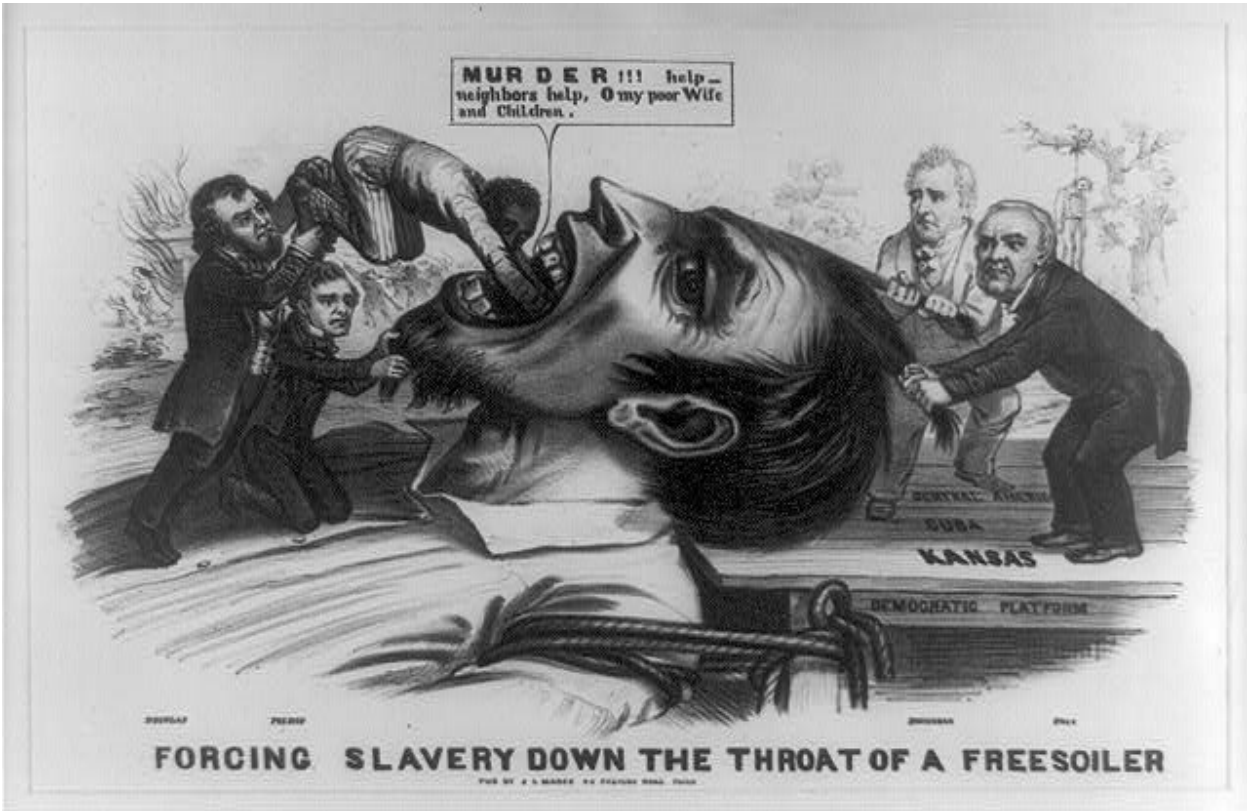
Source: John Adams to Hezekiah Niles, 13 February, 1818. *Manuscript #1814, Revolutionary War Collection*. Reprinted by permission of the Maryland Historical Society Library, Manuscripts Division, Baltimore, Maryland.

SOURCE 2



An Attempt to land a Bishop in America.

Source 3



SOURCE 4



SOURCE 5

Source 5 - Tindall & Shi

Long before Christopher Columbus accidentally discovered the New World in his effort to find a passage to Asia, the tribal peoples he mislabeled "Indians" had occupied and shaped the lands of the Western Hemisphere. The first people to settle the New World were nomadic hunters and gatherers who migrated from northeastern Asia during the last glacial advance of the Ice Age, nearly 20,000 years ago. By the end of the fifteenth century, when Columbus began his voyage west, there were millions of Native Americans living in the Western Hemisphere. Over the centuries, they had developed stable, diverse, and often highly sophisticated societies, some rooted in agriculture, others in trade or imperial conquest.

The Native American cultures were, of course, profoundly affected by the arrival of peoples from Europe and Africa. They were exploited, enslaved, displaced, and exterminated. Yet this conventional tale of conquest oversimplifies the complex process by which Indians, Europeans, and Africans interacted. The Indians were more than passive victims; they were also trading partners and rivals of the transatlantic newcomers. They became enemies and allies, neighbors and advisers, converts and spouses. As such they fully participated in the creation of the new society known as America.

The Europeans who risked their lives to settle in the New World were themselves quite diverse. Young and old, men and women, they came from Spain, Portugal, France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Italy, and the various German states. A variety of motives inspired them to undertake the transatlantic voyage. Some were adventurers and fortune seekers, eager to create kingdoms of God in the New World. Still others were convicts, debtors, indentured servants, or political or religious exiles. Many were simply seeking higher wages and greater economic opportunity. A settler in Pennsylvania noted that "poor people (both men and women) of all kinds can here get three times the wages for their labour than they can in England or Wales."

Yet such enticements were not sufficient to attract enough workers to keep up with the rapidly expanding colonial economies. So the Europeans began to force Indians to work for them. But there were never enough of them to meet the unceasing demand. Moreover, they often escaped or were so obstreperous that several colonies banned

their use. The Massachusetts legislature did so because Indians were of such a "melicious, surly and revengeful spirit; rude and insolent in their behavior, and very ungovernable."

Beginning in the seventeenth century, more and more colonists turned to the African slave trade for their labor needs. In 1619 white traders began transporting captured Africans to the English colonies. This development would transform American society in ways that no one at the time envisioned. Few Europeans during the colonial era saw the contradiction between the New World's promise of individual freedom and the expanding institution of race slavery. Nor did they reckon with the problems associated with introducing into the new society peoples they considered alien and unassimilable.

The intermingling of peoples, cultures, and ecosystems from the three continents of Africa, Europe, and North America gave colonial American society its distinctive vitality and variety. In turn, the diversity of the environment and climate led to the creation of quite different economies and patterns of living in the various regions of North America. As the original settlements grew into prosperous and populous colonies, the transplanted Europeans had to fashion social institutions and political systems to manage growth and control tensions.

At the same time, imperial rivalries among the Spanish, French, English, and Dutch produced numerous intrigues and costly wars. The monarchs of Europe had a difficult time trying to manage and exploit this fluid and often volatile colonial society. Many of the colonists, they discovered, brought with them to the New World a feisty independence that led them to resent government interference in their affairs. A British official in North Carolina reported that the residents of the Piedmont region were "without any Law or Order. Impudence is so very high [among them], as to be past bearing." As long as the reins of imperial control were loosely applied, the two parties maintained an uneasy partnership. But as the British authorities tightened their control during the mid-eighteenth century, they met resistance, which became revolt, and culminated in revolution.

SOURCE 6



President Truman and the Fair Deal

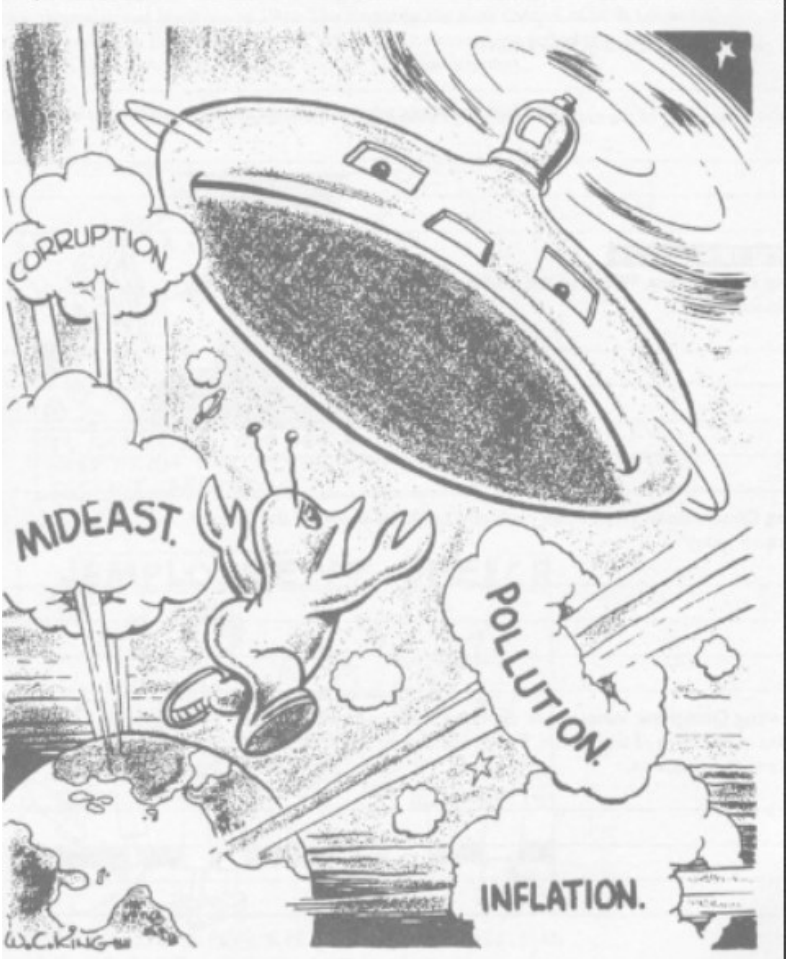
When President Harry S. Truman took office, he said, "Every individual has the right to expect from his government a fair deal." Truman's Fair Deal became a program to extend the reforms of the New Deal. It called for increased social security benefits, public housing, and a national health-insurance program. The national mood had changed, however, as the cartoon below indicates.

Study the cartoon below, then answer the questions that follow.



News Item: President Requests More Powers

SOURCE 8



SOURCE 9



SOURCE 10

One of the real threats to America's future place in the world is a citizenry which duly elects to be entertained and not informed. From the time the typical citizen arises and looks at his morning newspaper until he turns off his radio or television set before going to bed, he has unwittingly cast his vote a hundred times for entertainment or for education. Without his knowing it, he has helped to determine the very character of our three most important media of communication—the press, radio, and television. . . .

What is the evidence? Let's look first at television. To appreciate the extent to which entertainment has taken over this medium, one should glance over the newspaper listings of the programs for just one week. Or, better still, study the popularity ratings of all shows on TV. The variety shows, mysteries, comedies, Westerns completely dominate the lists. You'll find only a handful of shows which I would describe as truly informational.

. . . And perhaps here I need to make myself clear on one point. I am not in any sense opposed to entertainment shows. The American public cannot be crit-

icized for its love of entertainment. That is one of our more attractive qualities as a people. I do wish to argue strenuously, however, that there should be a better balance between entertainment and education.

The situation in respect to radio programs is essentially the same as in the case of television. In the entire history of this medium not one serious, educational show has ever reached top rating.

. . . The newspaper itself has had to make great concessions to this ever growing demand on the part of the public to be entertained. Within the last two decades the number of comic strips printed daily and Sunday has increased by many times. And don't for one minute assume that only children read them. . . .

It is the daily experience of polltakers to discover how little high school and college graduates as a group know about. . . issues which affect not only their pocketbooks but their very lives. Even simple matters of geography which should have been learned in grade school remain a mystery. . . . In fact, a good many college students and former students cannot take an outline map of the United States and put their finger on the state of Illinois.

Source: George Gallup. *Vital Speeches of the Day*, Vol. 19, May 15, 1953. Reprinted by permission of Vital Speeches of the Day.

SOURCE 11

***Source 11 - The Mayflower Beer Run**

At least according to one Pilgrim, the reason the Mayflower stopped on the shores of Massachusetts rather than Virginia as they had originally planned was because they were running out of beer. Beer was considered an important part of ones daily diet in those days especially on long ocean journeys because it was less likely than water to be contaminated.

When a storm blew the Pilgrims off course on their way to Virginia, one Pilgrim entered into his journal "We could not take further time for further search or consideration, our victuals being much spent, especially our beere." As soon as the Pilgrims set foot on land, they immediately got to work on a new batch of brew.

SOURCE 12

***Source 12 - Myth: George Washington was the First President of the United States**

Fact: While George Washington was our first president elected under the current Constitution, he was not the first president of the United States.

In 1781, the last of the thirteen original colonies ratified the Articles of Confederation. Not long after, the Congress unanimously elected John Hanson of Maryland as President with the title "President of the United States in Congress Assembled". Even George Washington himself referred to Hanson as "the president" at the time. Congress elected six more presidents before the current Constitution was ratified making Washington actually the 8th president.