



Introduction

The *Gale Encyclopedia of U.S. History: Government and Politics* traces the development of the government of the United States from the European powers that explored and colonized the New World beginning in the fifteenth century—and the native people they displaced—to the present day. In eleven chronological chapters, *Gale Encyclopedia of U.S. History: Government and Politics* presents four hundred entries about the people, institutions, laws, and social movements responsible for the evolution of the U.S. government.

Each of the chapters in *Gale Encyclopedia of U.S. History: Government and Politics* covers a specific period in American history and is designed to be compatible with the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) High School U.S. History Curriculum Standards, as well as textbooks and lesson plans based on those standards.

Each chapter is divided into the following sections:

Introduction: Provides an overview of the historical era and the social changes underway at that time.

How They Were Governed: Describes the institutions, doctrines, and procedures responsible for regulating public life in the Americas throughout its history. From U.S. government agencies to electronic voting machines, the function and origins of each subject is explained, as are its social repercussions.

Important Figures of the Day: Provides biographies of major political figures, social advocates, leaders, lawmakers, and antagonists, with a view to how each inspired social change or government policy.

Political Parties, Platforms, and Key Issues: Focuses on political life, including the ideas, events, and organizations that drive the government and political change. America's political parties and factions lead this section, with major and minor parties described and placed in historical context.

Current Events and Social Movements: Describes events outside of government that had profound repercussions on American politics, including natural disasters, wars, scandals, religious movements, and groups bent on social reform.

Legislation, Court Cases, and Trials: Describes the body of law, including acts of Congress and Supreme Court decisions. Each case, trial, or statute demonstrates the evolution of American lawmaking and reflects the social transformations taking place at the time.