II. JEFFERSON

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The Early Years

Chronology

Note: These dates are meant to give you a brief prologue to the actual content. Read over the chronology for each section, but all important dates will be mentioned in the text.

1735: Peter Jefferson, Thomas Jefferson's father, patented 1,000-acre tract, which became Monticello.

1743: Thomas Jefferson born at Shadwell, Virginia on April 13

1757 (age 14)**:** Peter Jefferson died

1760-2 (17-19)**:** Thomas Jefferson attended the College of William Mary

1762 (19)**:** Began study of law with George Wythe

1767 (24)**:** Admitted to practice law before General Court

1768 (25)**:** Leveling of Monticello mountaintop begun. Elected to House of Burgesses.

1770 (27)**:** Construction begun at Monticello. Shadwell burned. Moved to South Pavilion at Monticello.

1772 (29)**:** Married Martha Wayles Skelton. Daughter Martha born.

1774 (31)**:** Inherited 11,000 acres of land and 135 slaves from his father-in-law. Retired from legal **p**ractice**. Wrote "A Summary View of the Rights of British America".**

1775 (32)**:** Elected to Continental Congress.

Meet the Parents
Jefferson's parents were Peter Jefferson and Jane Randolph Jefferson. The Randolphs were one of the largest and most important families in Virginia, and, through his mother, Jefferson shared lineage with Robert E. Lee and John Marshall. In keeping with his distaste for artificial privileges, Jefferson scoffed at the Randolph lineage.
Peter Jefferson did not have a formal education, but he was accomplished nonetheless. A surveyor and cartographer, he was chosen to work with Joseph Fry— a William and Mary professor— to create what is now considered the first accurate map of Virginia (a copy of which can be seen in the Rotunda's Lower West Oval Room).
Jefferson was the eldest of his mother's two sons, and had six sisters. It's suspected that Jefferson's relationship with his mother was strained, especially after his father died in 1757, because he did everything he could to escape her supervision and had almost nothing to say about her in his memoirs.

Jefferson's early years
Thomas Jefferson was born on April 13, 1743. His birthplace, Shadwell, was a farm about two miles from the site of Monticello. Jefferson grew to stand 6' 2½" tall and

had sandy red hair and freckles. Peter Jefferson had an estate that had around 60 slaves, but much of Jefferson's boyhood was spent at a plantation called Tuckahoe, near present-day Richmond. When Jeffersons became the guardians of a late friend's young son, the family moved to Tuckahoe for a time to fulfill those familial duties. According to family lore, Jefferson's earliest memory was as a three-year-old boy "being carried on a pillow by a mounted slave" when the family moved from Shadwell to Tuckahoe. He boarded with James Maury—the local schoolmaster— to learn his Latin and Greek until 1760, when he entered the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg.

What were his experiences like at William and Mary?
At age 17, Jefferson matriculated at the College of William and Mary. In writing to his trustees to ask permission, he complained that he was incapable of working at home because of the constant visitors and activities. William and Mary suffered from problems of its own. It was a small school with only seven faculty members—including the College's president, and, with the exception of one, all were Anglican clergymen. Most day-to-day activities took place in one building, now called the Wren Building, which Jefferson did not view as hygienic or good in facilitating professor-student interaction. Everything happened in this one building, which meant when it burned, the entire school burned with it (this happened in 1705, 1859, and 1862). His complaints would drive many of his decisions and themes for the Academical Village decades later.
When enrolled, by all accounts he was an obsessive student, often spending 15 hours of the day with his books, 3 hours practicing his violin, and the remaining 6 hours eating and sleeping. The two chief influences on his learning were William Small, a Scottish-born teacher of mathematics and science, and George Wythe, the leading legal scholar in Virginia. From them, Jefferson developed a keen appreciation for supportive mentors, a concept he later institutionalized at the University of Virginia.
Small's tutelage of Jefferson opened a whole new world for the young student, and he welcomed Jefferson into an elite intellectual circle, which included Virginia governor Francis Fauquier. The men spent many evenings deep in conversation, and Jefferson would later remember that, in Williamsburg, he "heard more good sense, more rational and philosophical conversation, than in all my life besides."

Related Quotes:
"We have in Virginia a college (William and Mary) just well enough endowed to draw out the miserable existence to which a miserable constitution has doomed it. It is moreover eccentric in its position, exposed to all bilious diseases as all the lower country is, and. therefore, abandoned by the public care, as that part of the country itself is in a considerable degree by its inhabitants." *1800*

"To William and Mary, as my alma mater, my attachment has been ever sincere, although not exclusive." *1824*

"All that is necessary for a student is access to a library, and directions in what order the books are to be read." *1790*

What were his experiences like as a practicing lawyer?
He read law with Wythe from 1762 to 1767 and then left Williamsburg to practice, mostly representing small-scale planters from the western counties in cases involving land claims and titles. Although he handled no landmark cases and came across as a nervous and somewhat indifferent speaker before the bench, he earned a reputation as a formidable legal scholar. He was a shy and extremely serious young man.

How did he first enter politics, and how did he balance his career as a statesman with private endeavors?
In 1768 he made two important decisions: first, to build his own home atop an 867-foot high mountain near Shadwell that he named Monticello (meaning *little mountain* in Italian) and, second, to stand as a candidate for the House of Burgesses. These decisions nicely embodied the two competing impulses that would persist throughout his life—namely, to combine an active career in politics with periodic seclusion in his own private haven. His political timing was also impeccable, for he entered the Virginia legislature just as opposition to the taxation policies of the British Parliament was congealing. Although he made few speeches and tended to follow the lead of the Tidewater elite, his support for resolutions opposing Parliament's authority over the colonies was resolute.

What was happening in his private life as he started a career in politics?
Around this time, Jefferson met **Martha Wayles Skelton**, a young widow, and they were married on January 1, 1772. He brought her—in the middle of a blizzard—to what would eventually become the hilltop community of Monticello, which at the time consisted of only one small outbuilding—the North Pavilion. The couple would have six children, but Jefferson would live to bury five of them and his wife; only Martha (Patsy) and Mary (Maria or Polly) survived to adulthood, and only Patsy outlived Jefferson.

How did Jefferson enhance his political image to become the young revolutionary we know him as today?
In 1774, he wrote the essay *A Summary View of the Rights of British America*, which was quickly published, though without his permission, and catapulted him into visibility beyond Virginia as an early advocate of American independence. The American colonies were tied to Great Britain, he believed, only by wholly voluntary bonds of loyalty to the king. His reputation thus enhanced, the Virginia legislature appointed him a delegate to the Second Continental Congress in the spring of 1775. He rode into Philadelphia—and into American history—on June 20, 1775, a tall and gangly young man with reddish blond hair, hazel eyes, and rock-ribbed certainty about the American cause. In retrospect, the central paradox of his life was also on display, for the man who the following year was to craft the most famous manifesto for human equality arrived in a very ornate carriage drawn by four handsome horses and accompanied by three slaves.

Declaring Independence

Chronology
1776 (33)**:** Drafted "Declaration of Independence." Elected to Virginia House of Delegates. Appointed to revise Virginia laws. His mother Jane Randolph Jefferson died.

1777 (34)**:** Drafted "Virginia Statue for Religious Freedom," passed 11 years later.

1778 (35)**:** Daughter Mary (Maria) born. Brickwork of first home (Monticello I) completed. Drafted "Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge"

1779-1781 (36-38)**:** Served as Governor of Virginia, in a time when there was no U.S. President.

1780 (37)**:** Daughter Lucy Elizabeth born. Began "Notes on the State of Virginia".

1781 (38)**:** British troops at Monticello. Daughter Lucy Elizabeth died.

1782 (39)**:** Wife Martha died giving birth to second Lucy Elizabeth. First house at Monticello substantially completed.

1783 (40)**:** Elected delegate to U.S. Congress.

What were Jefferson's primary contributions as a delegate to the Continental Congress?
Jefferson's inveterate shyness prevented him from playing a significant role in the debates within the Congress. John Adams, a leader in those debates, remembered that Jefferson was silent even in committee meetings, though consistently staunch in his support for independence. His chief role was as a draftsman of resolutions. In that capacity, on June 11, 1776, he was appointed to a five-person committee at the Second Continental Congress, which also included Adams and Benjamin Franklin, to draft a formal statement of the reasons why a break with Great Britain was justified—a document that would become the Declaration of Independence. Adams asked him to prepare the first draft, which he did within a few days. On July 3–4 the Congress debated and edited Jefferson's draft, deleting and revising fully one-fifth of the text. This is why he was not regarded by his contemporaries as the author of the Declaration, which was seen as a collective effort by the entire Congress. Indeed, he was not known by most Americans as the principal author until the 1790s.

How did Jefferson shape early American ideals of equality, freedom and democracy?
Jefferson later claimed while drafting the Declaration that he was not striving for "originality of principle or sentiment," only seeking to provide "an expression of the American mind"; that is, putting into words those ideas already accepted by a majority of Americans. This accurately describes the longest section of the Declaration of

Independence, which lists the grievances against George III. It does not, however, describe the following 55 words, which are generally regarded as the seminal statement of American political culture:

We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

Although Congress edited the document, they made no changes whatsoever in this passage, which over succeeding generations became the lyrical sanction for every liberal movement in American history.

Related quote: "I hold it that a little rebellion now and then is a good thing, and as necessary in the political world as storms in the physical." (1787)

How did Jefferson 's reforms of the Virginia legal code reflect his political vision?
He returned to the Virginia Assembly in October 1776 after the Second Continental Congress and immediately launched an extensive project for 3 main reforms of the state's legal code to bring it in line with the principles of the American Revolution.

1. The abolition of all remnants of feudalism that discouraged a broad distribution of property

2. Comprehensive educational reform that would assure access at the lowest level for all citizens and support at the highest levels for the most talented
He drafted the "Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge" in 1778.

3. Complete separation of church and state
He drafted the "Virginia Statue for Religious Freedom" in 1777.

Taken together, these legal reforms capture the essence of Jefferson's political philosophy, which was less a comprehensive body of thought than a visionary prescription. He regarded the past as a "dead hand" of encrusted privileges and impediments that must be cast off to permit the natural energies of individual citizens to flow freely. The American Revolution, as he saw it, was the first shot in what would eventually became a global battle for human liberation from despotic institutions and all coercive forms of government.

What was the "Virginia Statue for Religious Freedom" about?
Written in 1777, the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom profoundly illustrates Jefferson's belief that religion should be internalized and personal, not a matter of government orchestration. This document firmly identifies that government – in this case the Commonwealth of Virginia – had no right to impose religion upon its citizens or to favor one religion over another. Rather, individuals should be ensured freedom of choice

in religious thought. Though proposed in 1777, the final draft of the text was not approved by the General Assembly until 1786.

Related quotes: "*But it does me no injury for my neighbor to say there are twenty gods or no God. It neither picks my pocket nor breaks my leg."(1782)*

Why is the Statute significant?
The thoughts expressed herein continued to influence our nation's founders particularly in regard to the "Freedom of Religion" clause contained with the First Amendment (proposed 1789, ratified 1791). Jefferson's views toward religion likewise guided his establishment of the University of Virginia, most notably in placing the Rotunda, a perceived secular symbol, as the central focus of the Lawn. Unlike earlier universities, Jefferson did not want the pursuit of knowledge at the University of Virginia to be bounded by any particular religious ideology or affiliation. This document is also one of the three things Jefferson most wanted to be remembered by, because "Author of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedoms" appeared second on his epitaph**.**

What was the Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge about?
In this 1779 bill, Jefferson advocates for the Commonwealth of Virginia to adopt a public education system, in which students would receive free education and could advance educational levels based on their scholarly promise. Jefferson, doubtlessly influenced by his father Peter, a self-made man, believed that education should be a meritocracy. His system of providing education at the public expense was designed to allow the best to rise to the forefront of American politics and society, rather than the privileged elite.
Jefferson wanted all free children to receive a primary education for three years at "hundred schools"— called so not because of their number but because a hundred was a unit of land measurement. Besides the general revolutionary nature of proposing public education, advocating for any education for girls was a particularly radical view for the time. Only a handful of bright male students from each hundred school could continue on to the regional "grammar schools" which functioned similarly to secondary schools. After a few years, the best boy from each grammar school would receive a full state scholarship to William and Mary. By the 1810s this pinnacle atop his proposed educational pyramid would be replaced by the University of Virginia. It was only this uppermost stage (UVa) that Jefferson was able to eventually convince the state to fund.

Related quotes: *"You see, I am an enthusiast on the subject of the arts. But it is an enthusiasm of which I am not ashamed, as its object is to improve the taste of my countrymen, to increase their reputation, to reconcile them to the rest of the world, and procure them its praise."1785"*

Why is the Bill significant?
The bill fits within a period in the mid-late 1770s when Jefferson published a large amount, even for his prolific self, of documents reflecting his political ideology. The bill served as a way for Jefferson to introduce and advocate for his ideas in Virginia politics. Radical in its suggestion that education moves from a private to a public system, the bill

was never passed. Most counties in the state did not institute public education systems until nearly 100 years later.

What led Jefferson to leave the dreaded occupation of politics?
At the end of what was probably the most creative phase of his public career, personal misfortune struck in two successive episodes. Elected governor of Virginia in 1779, he was caught off-guard by a surprise British invasion in 1781 against which the state was defenseless. His flight from approaching British troops was described in the local press, somewhat unfairly, as a cowardly act of abdication. (Critics would recall this awkward moment throughout the remainder of his long career.) Then, in September 1782, his wife died at the age of 33 after a difficult delivery in May of their sixth child (his dear comrade). These two disasters lead him to declare that he would never again desert his family for his country, although he would later renege on this promise.

What effect did Martha's death have on Jefferson? (This is a really romantic story)
Jefferson wrote that this "single event wiped out all my plans, and left a blank which I have not the spirits to fill up." He would never remarry. He would describe the ten years that he lived with his wife Martha as ten years of "uncheckered happiness," despite the grief of their children's untimely deaths. One story that does justice to the nature of Jefferson and Martha's loving relationship is this: On her deathbed, Martha couldn't gather the strength with which to speak her last words. Instead, she took a quill pen in hand, and in the softest, fading, handwriting wrote out a passage from their favorite novel: *Tristram Shandy* by Laurence Sterne. The Passage read**:** *Time wastes too fast: every letter I trace tells me with what rapidity of life follows my pen, the days and hours of are flying over our heads like clouds of a windy day never to return - more every thing presses on* – At that moment, she passed away. But Jefferson would take her pen in hand, and in his strong, firm handwriting he'd finish from memory- *and every time I kiss thy hand to bid adieu, every absence which follows it, are preludes to the eternal separation which we are shortly to make!* The piece of paper on which this was written was found years later, after Jefferson himself had passed away. Folded and unfolded so many times that it was virtually falling apart, held together by a lock of Martha's hair. He'd carried it in his breast coat pocket for almost 45 years**.**

Jefferson and Slavery

1764 (21)**:** Inherited 20 slaves from his father

1774 (31): Inherited 170 slaves from his father-in-law

1776 (33): Attempts to put a passage in the Declaration blaming the slave trade on George III.

1781 (38)**: Writes "Notes on the State of Virginia."**

1789 (45)**:** Returns to the U.S. and backs away from a leadership position on slavery.

1826 (83): Died having owned over six hundred slaves

Sources for Jefferson's Views on Slavery
Jefferson's views on slavery changed over the course of his lifetime. Remember, this is a dynamic narrative of a man struggling to justify the exploitative system that built his wealth. In 1781, Jefferson wrote and published his only book: *Notes on the State of Virginia*. This book was part travel guide, part scientific treatise, and part philosophical meditation. *Notes* contained an extensive discussion of slavery, including a graphic description of its horrific effects on both blacks and whites, a strong assertion that it violated the principles on which the American Revolution was based, and an apocalyptic prediction that failure to end slavery would lead to "convulsions which will probably never end but in the extermination of one or the other race." It also contained the most explicit assessment that Jefferson ever wrote of what he believed were the biological differences between blacks and whites, an assessment that exposed the deep-rooted racism that he harbored throughout his life. Jefferson judged blacks as "much inferior" to whites "in reason."

Related Quote: *"never yet could I find that a black had uttered a thought above the level of a plain narration."*

What is the *Notes on the State of Virginia* document about?
The document was intended to be an overview of the geography, people, customs, and laws of Virginia. In many places, however, Jefferson used the book to advocate for some of his political ideals. Jefferson discusses his views on slavery, emancipation, and his perceived differences between the black and white races. His views on the subject of slavery are complex, inspired by enlightenment thought and influenced by his role as a slave-holding, aristocratic Virginian. (For example, Jefferson prohibited the ownership of slavery at UVa, while simultaneously owning slaves himself and using slave labor to construct the Academical Village.) As an advocate for legal equality, Jefferson wrestled with the idea of whether blacks and whites were inherently equal. Jefferson approached the issue from a *pseudo-scientific perspective*, noting how it was difficult to tell whether his perceived differences in whites and blacks were because of the demeaning institution of slavery, or had a natural cause. In a time when many writers claimed blacks were

subhuman, Jefferson believed blacks and whites were both human, but that there was a strong likelihood the races represented slightly different species of human. He believed the supposed black race to be biologically "inferior to the whites in the endowments both of body and mind." "In general, their existence appears to participate more of sensation than reflection," he wrote in Query 14 of *Notes.*

Jefferson believed that slavery was a gross violation of the principles celebrated in the Declaration of Independence. In his *Notes*, he proposes a gradual abolition of slavery, radical for his time and place. However, Jefferson believed that blacks and whites could never harmoniously live under a single government, due to the memory of the injustice of slavery. As a result, Jefferson proposed reestablishing African-Americans in Africa or the Caribbean after emancipation. Because such a massive deportation was a logistical and economic impossibility, the unavoidable conclusion was that, though slavery was wrong, ending it, at least at present, was inconceivable. That became Jefferson's public position throughout the remainder of his life.

Why is the book significant?
This document is the clearest exposition of Jefferson's views on slavery early in his political career that is available. It is also the best representation of his most progressive views, with quotes that illustrate that he truly believed that the institution of slavery would eventually be abolished. This is also the only book that Jefferson ever got published, despite being a writer and a bibliophile.

Did Jefferson believe that slavery should be abolished?
This is not a question that has a "yes" or "no" answer. Early in his career, Jefferson had taken a leadership role in pushing slavery onto the political agenda in the Virginia assembly and the federal Congress. In the 1760s and '70s, like most Virginia planters, he endorsed the end of the slave trade, but not slavery in general (Virginia's plantations were already well stocked with slaves, so ending the slave trade posed no economic threat and even enhanced the value of the existent slave population.) In his original draft of the Declaration of Independence, he included a passage, subsequently deleted by the Continental Congress, blaming both the slave trade and slavery itself on George III. Unlike most of his fellow Virginians, Jefferson was prepared to acknowledge that slavery was an anomaly in the American republic established in 1776.

How did Jefferson's view on Slavery change over time?
His two most practical proposals came in the early 1780s: a gradual emancipation scheme by which all slaves born after 1800 would be freed and their owners compensated and a prohibition of slavery in all the territories of the West as a condition for admission to the Union. By the time of the publication of *Notes***,** then, Jefferson's record on slavery placed him among the most progressive elements of southern society. Dating the onset of a long silence is inevitably an imprecise business, but by the time of his return to the United States in 1789 Jefferson had backed away from a leadership position on slavery. The ringing denunciations of slavery presented in *Notes* had generated controversy, especially within the planter class of Virginia, and Jefferson's deep aversion to controversy made him withdraw from the cutting edge

of the antislavery movement once he experienced the sharp feelings it aroused.

Jefferson's position on the subject caused a further retreat from any leadership role in ending the "peculiar institution" later in his life. In 1819, during the debate in Congress over the Missouri Compromise, he endorsed the expansion of slavery into all the western territories, precisely the opposite of the position he had taken in the 1780s. Though he continued to insist that slavery was a massive anomaly, he insisted even more strongly that it was wrong for the federal government to attempt any effort at emancipation. In fact, he described any federal intrusion in the matter as a despotic act analogous to George III's imperial interference in colonial affairs or Hamilton's corrupt scheme to establish a disguised form of monarchy in the early republic. His letters to fellow Virginians during his last years reflect a conspiratorial mentality toward the national government and a clear preference for secession if threatened with any mandatory plan for abolition.

Related quote: *"But, as it is, we have the **wolf by the ear**, and we can neither hold him, nor safely let him go. Justice is in one scale, and self-preservation in the other." (1820)*

What were some of Jefferson's rationalizations for his evolving stance on slavery?
Public Opinion: After all of Jefferson's emancipation plans were rejected in Virginia, he became hesitant to present his views to a constituency that he felt was both ungrateful and unwilling to hear them. After 1784, Jefferson was not only representing Virginia, but the nation as a whole. He felt that this expanded responsibility in public office ultimately constricted his actions. Another aspect of his reasoning was that pushing the issue, at a time when the country was unable to accept it, would be counterproductive and "would only be disarming myself of influence" in national and state policy. But he claimed that when he saw "an occasion…in which I can interpose with decisive effect. I shall certainly know and do my duty with promptitude and zeal." If this opportunity never presented itself within his own life-span, Jefferson felt emancipation could be left safely as a task for the next generation.

The Sectional Dangers of Slavery: For Jefferson, the preservation of the fragile republic was always his primary goal as a public servant. In 1820, Jefferson said that the Missouri Compromise woke him like a "fire bell in the night," and sounded to him ominously like the "knell of the union." The Compromise allowed Missouri to enter the Union as a slave state, under the stipulation that Maine be admitted as a free state. In response to the Compromise, Jefferson reversed his earlier desire to keep slavery from the Western territories. Instead, he decided that self-determination should determine the existence of slavery in each new state. He decided that unrestricted extension of slavery to new territories would more widely distribute the slave population, leading to an amelioration of the slaves' condition and their eventual emancipation. This view of the beneficial effects of the diffusion of slavery over wider territory may seem far-fetched, but it was not an uncommon one at the time.

Past the Time Allotted: In 1825, the Scottish reformer Francis Wright was visiting Monticello and she took the opportunity to solicit Jefferson's help with a small-scale plan for emancipation. Wright had taken the assurances of liberty and equality in Jefferson's *Declaration of Independence* at face value, and thus was committed to extend these rights to women and African-Americans. She asked Jefferson's help to found a colony in Tennessee where whites and blacks would live and work in racial harmony, and where blacks would experience gradual emancipation. Jefferson encouraged her effort, but he replied, "At the age of 82, I do not permit myself to take part in any new enterprises, even for the bettering of the condition of man…" But for the past 16 years of his retirement, he had been working tirelessly for the bettering of the condition of *white* men with the founding of the University of Virginia. Perhaps he felt that public education, especially in his native state, was another means to help bring about the eventual eradication of slavery. But this does not explain his continued public silence over abolition, even after he had left public office. It is possible he feared the profession of these views would jeopardize his reputation in Virginia, and thus endanger his plans for the University, which he considered the last public service he could render his country. Lastly, a Fear of Rebellion argument persisted after the American Revolution, a movement based on rising up against oppressors and taking land by force. The worry was that if slaves were freed in America, what would stop them from fighting and killing whites for the land too? This is thought to be a reason why Jefferson supported the Liberia movement.

How did Jefferson personally interact with his slaves?
Jefferson owned, on average, about 200 slaves at any point in time, and slightly over 600 over his lifetime. To protect himself from facing the reality of his problematic status as plantation master, he constructed a paternalistic self-image as a benevolent father caring for what he called "my family." Justifying that he and his slaves were the victims of history's failure to proceed along the enlightened path, he saw himself as the steward for those entrusted to his care until a better future arrived for them all. In the meantime, his own lavish lifestyle and all the incessant and expensive renovations of his Monticello mansion were *wholly dependent* on slave labor. He later also heavily relied on slave labor to construct the University of Virginia.

Did he ever free any of his slaves?
Whatever silent thoughts he might have harbored about freeing his slaves because of the perverseness of the institution never found their way into the record. (He freed only five slaves, all members of the Hemings family.) Some scholars say that the slaves were likely freed in order to care for an older relative. His mounting indebtedness rendered all such thoughts superfluous toward the end, because his slaves, like all his possessions, were mortgaged to his creditors and therefore not really his to free. It is unclear why Jefferson did not arrange to free more of his slaves before he died, but it could be that the economic value of the slaves was crucial for mitigating the debts that would burden Jefferson's family, and some of the slaves were even mortgaged and thus could not be freed. Jefferson's belief that free blacks were "pests of society" probably led him to free only those he thought capable of earning a living in the community. He also maintained that individual emancipation should wait until a larger governmental plan had been

developed. An 1806 Virginia law required freed slaves to leave the state within a year, and, thus, Jefferson was forced to seek exemptions from the legislature to prevent the freed Monticello slaves from being separated from their families. Only one of his slaves was sold out of the state, and most of the rest would live and work in neighboring plantations. Jefferson's grandson eventually reunited approximately thirty Monticello slaves at his plantation, Edgehill.

The Examples of Edward Coles, George Wythe, and George Tucker or, Why Making the Argument That All Important Americans at the Time Supported Slavery is Problematic

Edward Coles, Jefferson's neighbor, desired to leave behind slavery and live the rest of his life in the West. Before he left, Coles attempted to persuade Jefferson to speak out against slavery. He wooed him by appealing to his position as a moralist, a statesman, and the Declaration of Independence. Despite getting Jefferson's response: "this, my dear sir, is like bidding old Priam to buckle the armour of Hector," he leaves for Illinois in 1814. Once in the West, he frees each and every one of his slaves. While his political career outside of the West was destroyed, he continued to speak against slavery in Illinois.

George Wythe was one of Jefferson's early role models who taught him at William and Mary and worked as a judge in the state's legal system. In a potentially landmark decision in the case of *Hudgins v. Wright,* Wythe considered Wright and her children "presumptively free". Alternatively, Wythe held that "all men were presumptively free in Virginia in consequence of the 1776 Declaration of Rights." This was similar to a contemporary ruling in Brom and Bett vs. Ashley, which held that Massachusetts' constitution upheld freedom for all men. Though his decision was amended significantly upon appeal (Hudgins was freed on narrow grounds of her ancestry), it revealed that Wythe believed in broad legal action against slavery based upon the words his mentee, Thomas Jefferson, had written.

For his part, George Tucker (a prominent Virginian and planter) recognized the humanity of his slaves and rebutted Jefferson's scientific racism. "There is no excuse for his remarks. I am afraid, indeed that his opinion is but too popular here, as I have heard several masters ready to justify their severity to this poor wretches by alleging that they are an inferior race…what a pity that any gentleman of Mr. J's reputation for talents should lend to it the countenance of his name."

The Sally Hemings Controversy

If history is "an argument without end," as the historian Joseph Ellis says, then the dispute over whether Thomas Jefferson had sexual relations with his slave Sally Hemings might rank as one of the ugliest. As University Guides, we should know the facts of the case and its significance in Jefferson's life.

1800s Chronology

1802: James T. Callender, a muck-raking journalist, writes the first public report on the Jefferson-Hemings relationship in the *Richmond Recorder*.

1826: Jefferson dies at 83. In his will, five male slaves are freed, among them Sally's sons, Madison and Eston Hemings. Sally herself is not freed.

1853: John Hartwell Cocke, a close friend of Jefferson's, writes in his journal about the prevalence of interracial sex, citing ambiguously: "Jefferson's notorious example."

1858: Jefferson's granddaughter writes to her husband repudiating the claim that he was the father of Hemings' children, and the biography *The Life of Thomas Jefferson* by Henry Randall dismisses the story of their relationship as "invented by the Federalists."

1873: In an interview, Madison Hemings stated that he and his siblings (Beverly, Harriet and Eston), were Thomas Jefferson's children.

1874: Another biography, written by James Parton, dismisses the scandal as a lie spread by Jefferson's political enemies. Parton fingers one of the Carr brothers, Jefferson's nephews, as the likely father.

Where did the claim that the relationship existed originate?
The public assertion of this relationship was originally made in 1802 by a disreputable journalist, *James T. Callender,* interested in injuring Jefferson's political career. His claim was corroborated, however, by one of Hemings's children in an 1873 newspaper interview. Though Callender was purposefully sensationalistic, his allegations are largely considered accurate today.

Did Jefferson ever deny having a relationship with Sally Hemings?
Not explicitly, but in an 1805 cover letter to Secretary of the Navy Robert Smith, Jefferson responded to allegations against his character. In it, he admits to making improper advances to the wife of a friend many years before, but states, "it is the only one founded in truth among all their allegations against me." Based on the full text of the letter and the historical circumstances, it is reasonable to believe Jefferson was denying all the charges made against him by his political enemies, including the paternity allegation.

What is known about Sally Hemings?
Hemings, the central character in the story, remains static, a figure in outline only. History has given her many nicknames, but what is truly known about her would fit on the back of an envelope. Her name first appeared in records as an assistant to Martha Jefferson in France. Hemings was 14-years old and quickly had her first child upon her return to Monticello. She bore six children and was listed as living in Charlottesville as a

free person in an 1833 census, but it is not even known where she is buried. A description survives that she was "mighty near white." Jefferson referred to her perhaps five times in his tens of thousands of letters, scholars say.

Modern Chronology

1954: An account of the relationship is published in *Ebony* magazine, "Thomas Jefferson's Negro Grandchildren." This revives public interest in the story**.**

1998: In the journal *Nature,* Dr. Eugene Foster publishes the findings of a DNA test, the first scientific proof that a Jefferson male fathered Hemings' last child, Eston. The DNA test excludes both of the Carr brothers from the list of possible fathers.

1999: Professors Jan Lewis and Peter Onuf organize a conference at U.Va. to allow historians to begin attempting to explain the significance of the liaison.

2000: The Thomas Jefferson Foundation, who owns and operates Monticello and its tours, issues the "Report of the Research Committee on Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings," which endorses the likelihood that a relationship existed. CBS airs its TV miniseries, *Sally Hemings: An American Scandal*.

2001: At the urging of the Thomas Jefferson Heritage Society, a panel of independent scholars forms the Scholars Commission and reevaluates the evidence of the allegations. Their report concludes "it is almost certainly false**."**

Did the DNA test settle the debate?

In the eyes of many, the debate cannot be conclusively settled because the DNA test only proves that a male Jefferson fathered the Hemings children, but not that it was Thomas Jefferson himself. (There were two dozen Jefferson men in Virginia at the time.) Now that the Carr brothers, Jefferson's nephews, have been ruled out by DNA, Jefferson's brother Randolph has become the primary suspect, according to the Thomas Jefferson Heritage Society. While some scholars see Randolph as a convenient fall guy once the Carr brothers were exonerated, others point to the fact that he was often referred to as "Uncle Randolph" at Monticello and Hemings oral history maintained for many years that they descended from a Jefferson "uncle." But Professor of History Joseph Ellis argues, "If history is an argument without end, skeptics and agnostics will still have a role to play in the debate. But the new scholarly consensus is that Jefferson and Hemings were sexual partners."

Why are the stakes so high?

Some historians, like John H. Works Jr, believe that, "the allegations concerning his behavior do not merely provide an interesting sidelight on an otherwise great man. They are, in fact, a frontal assault on him and his principles." The debate is so important to Jefferson admirers because they believe that Jefferson's status as a founding father and his place in American thought and political philosophy hangs in the balance if this

dishonorable act was committed. Those who challenge the allegations say they are labeled as racists and blind defenders of Jefferson. Those who accept the claim have been upbraided as politically correct revisionists.

If he did father the children, what are the implications?
Many people believe that paternity does not settle the debate in regards to Jefferson's character. What would remain unclear is the character of the relationship—consensual or coercive, a matter of love or rape, a mutually satisfactory arrangement, etc. Jefferson's admirers preferred to consider it a love affair and to see Jefferson and Hemings as America's preeminent biracial couple. His critics, on the other hand, considered Jefferson a sexual predator whose eloquent statements about human freedom and equality were hypocritical. As Guides, it's really important to report the facts of the narrative without giving it either of these viewpoints. Ultimately, we don't know what the relationship was. However, we do know the huge age difference and powerfully skewed power dynamic make it more likely it was a coercive relationship.

The Continuing Struggle to Understand Jefferson the Human Being
Some Jefferson admirers argue that the allegations that Jefferson fathered several of Sally Hemings' children is a blight against his character and that it would make us question his belief in the American ideals of liberty and equality. They claim that an honorable man like Jefferson could not have taken advantage of another person and engaged in an illicit relationship, especially with a young girl. What is even more egregious, to those that deny the relationship existed, is the fact that their age difference suggests that the relationship might have been coercive. It was a well-documented phenomenon at the time for slave owners to have forcible relationships with much younger slaves.
However, some writers claim that if a relationship existed at all, it must have been consensual. Fawn M. Brodie published a book in 1974 that argues: if, as a widower, he fell in love with a beautiful slave girl and took her as a mistress when she was fourteen years old, it was "not scandalous debauchery with an innocent slave victim, but rather a serious passion that brought Jefferson and the slave woman much private happiness over a period lasting thirty-eight years." Brodie's benign version of the story has proved persuasive, and where previous versions had depicted such behavior as scandalous, hypocritical, or shameful, Jefferson and Hemings are represented as a pair of happy lovers, bravely defying the conventions of a sexually puritanical and racist society. But unfortunately there is no way to know the character of the relationship, especially because Jefferson only mentioned Sally Hemings in about five of his thousands of letters.

Probies, if you ask me, the relationship was inherently based on an **imbalance of power**. She was his property. Whether consensual or not, it was rape.

Findings From the 2000 Committee Report
"While there is a scientific possibility that Randolph Jefferson (Jefferson's brother), one of his sons, or one of Field Jefferson's grandsons, was the father of Eston Hemmings, the preponderance of known historical evidence indicates that Thomas Jefferson was his

father." No other Jefferson male was known to be at Monticello at the time of Eston Hemings' conception. The DNA results only focused on the paternity of Eston Hemings but historically, even during Jefferson's lifetime, no one implied that Sally's children had multiple fathers which is why the DNA result of Eston's descendants are applied to the rest of Sally's children. Based on a statistical analysis by Monticello, the correlation between Jefferson's presence and Hemings' conceptions suggests a 99% probability that he fathered her children. These findings are significant considering how often he traveled during her 16 years of conception. While there were other Jefferson males in Virginia who "had some interaction with Thomas Jefferson and some spent time at or in the vicinity of Monticello, most had no documented presence at Monticello during the times when Sally Hemings conceived her children. Several of them were at Monticello when Thomas Jefferson was absent (Sally Hemings is not known to have conceived in his absences). Jefferson gave freedom to no other nuclear slave family. No other Monticello slaves achieved their freedom before the age of thirty-one (except for Critta Hemings's son James, who ran away). Harriet Hemings was the only enslave woman freed in Jefferson's lifetime, and she was freed when she was twenty-one years of age. The liberation of Sally Hemings's children cannot be wholly attributed to Jefferson's practice – as reported by his granddaughter Ellen Coolidge – of granting freedom to those light enough tot pass for white or skilled enough to make their way as freed people, since there were other Monticello slaves, as light-skinned or as skilled, who were not freed.

Thomas Jefferson Randolph told Henry S. Randall in the 1850's of the close resemblance of Sally Hemings's children to Thomas Jefferson. It was evidently their very light skin and pronounced resemblances to Jefferson that led to local talk of Jefferson's paternity. Eston Hemings, in Ohio in the
1840s, was noted as bearing a "striking" resemblance to Jefferson**.**

How should you talk about the Jefferson-Hemings controversy on a tour?

Why would you get this question?

Many visitors to the University of Virginia have recently visited Monticello, where guides regularly discuss both slavery and in particular Sally Hemings's relationship to Thomas Jefferson. Though you may never be asked about either topic on a tour, knowing how to respond when the subject is broached is critical to maintaining your composure and credibility as a guide.

BE HONEST

DNA evidence proves that a Jefferson male was the father of Sally Hemings' children. The Thomas Jefferson Foundation at Monticello believes that Thomas Jefferson in particular was the father of Sally Hemings' children not just because of this DNA evidence, but also because of "primary and secondary documentary evidence, the oral histories of descendants of Monticello's African-American community, and recent scientific studies."

BE DIPLOMATIC
In all likelihood, this will not be the first time your tourists hear of this, so there is no need to tiptoe around the issue. It is our job to tell the history of UVa and Jefferson's history is part of that, but it is not our job to judge or tell people how to interpret this history. This also means that you do not need to engage in an argument with a tourist about this topic either. If a tourist wants to challenge you on the topic of Sally Hemings you should certainly try to answer their questions but try to keep it from hijacking your tour. One of the best things to tell tourists if they have more questions on the topic is to direct them to Monticello's website as they have reports on why they believe that Thomas Jefferson was the father of Sally Hemings children and even reports written by scholars with different views.

DON'T APOLOGIZE
It should go without saying, but it's not your fault. Seeming embarrassed or apologetic for the potential sexual forays of Jefferson will get you nowhere. It could even lose you a tourist or two. Know the facts, stick to them, and don't editorialize. This goes for anything that could be potentially distasteful about Jefferson, including his views on the biological inferiority of blacks.

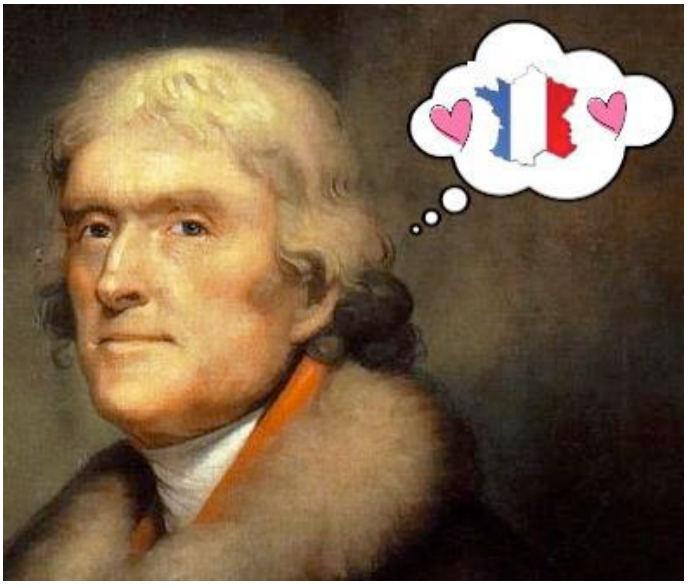
DON'T PATRONIZE
Tourists who ask about this topic want an answer. Discursive answers that avoid the subject will anger tourists and discredit you as a guide. Tourists will be impressed with your candor and honesty. If you incorporate this information into your regular tours, do so in an appropriate manner. Ensure your transition into and discussion of this subject is smooth and that your interest is genuine. Visitors will be turned off if it seems that you are mentioning this topic simply because it is required of you or if you provide "canned" responses to their questions

Jefferson Abroad

1784-89 (41-46)**:** In France as Commissioner and Foreign Minister. Jefferson fortunately departs just as the onset of mob violence that was to become the French Revolution began.

How did Jefferson re-enter politics after vowing to leave it?
Jefferson's vow to retire from politics was sincere but short-lived. Jefferson agreed, albeit reluctantly, to serve as a delegate to the Continental Congress in December 1782, where his major contribution was to set forth the principle that territories in the West should not be treated as colonies but rather should enter the Union with status equal to the original states once certain conditions were met. Then, in 1784, recognizing the need to escape the memories of Martha that haunted the hallways at Monticello, he agreed to replace Benjamin Franklin as American minister to France; or—as he put it— he agreed to succeed Franklin, noting that no one could replace him.

Were the years that Jefferson spent in France significant politically?
During his five-year sojourn in Paris, Jefferson accomplished very little in any official sense. Several intractable conditions rendered his best diplomatic efforts futile: the United States was heavily in debt owing to the recent war, so few European nations were interested in signing treaties of amity and commerce with the infant American republic, etc. His only significant achievement was the negotiation of a $400,000 loan from Dutch bankers that allowed the American government to consolidate its European debts, but even that piece of diplomacy was conducted primarily by John Adams.

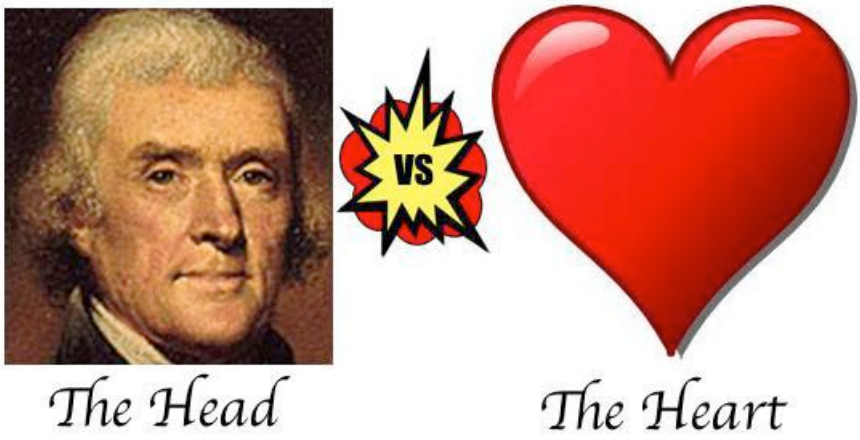


However, Jefferson did serve as an unofficial advisor to Marquis de Lafayette, and helped in designing a new French government. Jefferson felt that France was not ready for republicanism and, instead, recommended constitutional monarchy, but he was excited by the possibility of a powerful and democratic ally. His affection for France waned as the Revolution progressively turned towards violence, however, and he thought Napoleon a tyrant.

How did his time in France illustrate several paradoxes of his personality?
The Paris years were important for the new light they shed on Jefferson's famously elusive personality**.** The dominant pattern would seem to be the capacity to live comfortably with contradiction. For example, he immersed himself wholeheartedly in the art, architecture, wine, and food of Parisian society but warned all prospective American tourists to remain in America so as to avoid the avarice, luxury, and sheer sinfulness of European fleshpots. He made a point of bringing along his daughters as part of his genuine devotion as a single parent. But he then placed both daughters in a convent, wrote them stern lecture-like letters about proper female etiquette, and enforced a patriarchal distance that was in practice completely at odds with his theoretical commitment to intimacy.

Did Jefferson have any relationships with women after the death of his wife?
Despite the fact that he never remarried, he had a couple of notable relationships. The most self-revealing letter he ever wrote, "a dialogue between the head and the heart," was sent to Maria Cosway while he was in France. Cosway was an Anglo-Italian beauty who left him utterly infatuated. Jefferson and Cosway— who was married to a prominent if somewhat degenerate English miniaturist (many historians actually think this guy was gay)— spent several months in a romantic haze, touring Parisian gardens, museums, and art shows together**,** but whether Jefferson's head or heart prevailed, either in the letter or in life, is impossible to know. Meanwhile, as mentioned, there is considerable evidence to suggest, but not to prove conclusively, that Jefferson initiated a sexual liaison with Sally Hemings when he returned from France, about the time his torrid affair with Cosway cooled down—this despite his public statements denouncing blacks as biologically inferior and sexual relations between the races as taboo.

Where did Jefferson travel while he was abroad?
During his time in Europe, Jefferson traveled as far as northern Italy (where he illegally smuggled rice back to the U.S. to help initiate cultivation of upland rice), but he never visited Greece or Rome, the centers of the classical world that served as the basis for his neoclassical designs for UVa. This was why the majority of his neoclassical designs had to come from books. He spent almost all of his time in France, appreciating both the architecture and the culture, which is why many considered him a Francophile.



Jefferson and Public Office

Jefferson served his country in many different political offices and over the span of four decades, but what is most important to know for tour giving is how his political ideals shaped his vision for both higher education and his University. Knowledge of Jefferson's political career is extensive, but what follows is information that will help you gain insight into Jefferson as a man and as a future educator.

What political positions did Jefferson hold in his lifetime? *(YOU SHOULD KNOW ALL OF THESE.)*

1768: House of Burgesses

1775: Delegate to the Continental Congress

1779-1781: Governor of Virginia

1783: Delegate to Congress

1784-89: Foreign Minister to France

1790-1793: First U.S. Secretary of State, under Washington

1797-1801: Second U.S. Vice President, under Adams

1797-1815: President of the American Philosophical Society (the premier scientific organization in the country, founded by Benjamin Franklin)

1801-1809: Third President of the United States

The Differing Viewpoints of Hamilton and Jefferson

Jefferson was a Democratic-Republican, which was a party primarily made up of artisans, shopkeepers, frontier settlers, and small farmers. Because of this, he had deep faith in the common people, especially farmers, and distrusted special privilege. He favored a weak central government, strong state governments, and believed that laws must protect individual liberties. In regards to economics, he thought that agriculture should be the backbone of the nation and opposed the establishment of a national bank. Jefferson came to regard the consolidation of power at the federal level as a diabolical plot to subvert the true meaning of the American Revolution. His major concern about the new Constitution was the absence of any bill of rights. He was less interested in defining the powers of government than in identifying those regions where government could not intrude. As Jefferson saw it, the entire Federalist commitment to an energetic central government with broad powers over the domestic economy replicated the arbitrary policies of Parliament and George III, which the American Revolution had supposedly repudiated as monarchical and aristocratic practices, incompatible with the principles of republicanism. Jefferson sincerely believed that the "principles of '76" were being betrayed by a Federalist version of the "court party," whose covert scheme was to install monarchy and a pseudo-aristocracy of bankers and "monocrats" to rule over the American yeomanry.

Alexander Hamilton was a Federalis**t**, a party primarily consisting of bankers, manufacturers, merchants, and wealthy farmers. Federalists believed that the common people often acted foolishly, and therefore a strong central government was necessary and the rich, educated, and wellborn were the people who should rule. Individual liberties, such as freedom of speech, could be restricted to protect the nation. In regards to economics, Federalists believed that a national bank should be established and a balanced economy of agriculture, trade, finance, and manufacturing would be beneficial. These programs were intended to equip the new United States with economic and financial institutions similar to those that had permitted Britain to compete successfully in four great eighteenth-century wars.

Why was the dichotomy between Jefferson and Hamilton important?
By the middle of the 1790s, two distinctive political camps had emerged, calling themselves Federalists and Republicans (later Democratic-Republicans**).** This would lead to the evolution of America's first two political parties. However, modern-day political parties, with their mechanisms for raising money, selecting candidates, and waging election campaigns, were not fully formed at this stage. Full-blooded political parties date from the 1830s and '40s.

Jefferson's Presidency

Presidential Chronology
1801-1809 (58-66)**:** Served as United States President.

1803 (60)**:** Louisiana Purchase concluded. Lewis and Clark expedition launched.

1804 (61)**:** Daughter Maria Jefferson Eppes died.

1806 (63)**:** House at Poplar Forest begun. Lewis and Clark expedition concluded.

1809 (66)**:** Retired from presidency and public life. Remodeling of Monticello and construction of dependencies largely completed.

Why was the Election of 1800 significant?
Jefferson assumed office in 1801 during tenuous political times. The moment marked the first time in U.S. government history (admittedly we had very little at the time) that a political party peacefully transitioned power to another party. (Little did Jefferson know that various incarnations of his party would dominate the Presidency for much of the next half-century.) The 1800 election was also precedent-setting in that it made John Adams America's first one-term President. The campaign was particularly brutal and involved significant mudslinging and political attacks on Adams by James T. Callender (who later turned on Jefferson and publishing articles about his relationship with Sally Hemings) encouraged by Jefferson. The negative campaigning forced a hiatus in the friendship of Adams and Jefferson. Only after both men had left politics and mellowed with age, and at the urging of Benjamin Rush, did the two men strike up their correspondence once more.

Why were Americans hesitant about a Jeffersonian presidency?
There was a good deal of nervous speculation whether the new American nation could survive a Jefferson presidency. The entire thrust of Jefferson's political position throughout the 1790s had been defiantly negative, rejecting as excessive the powers vested in the national government by the Federalists. He had described any projection of federal authority over the domestic policy of the states as a violation of "the spirit of '76" and therefore a justification for secession from the Union (this became the position of the Confederacy in 1861). His Federalist critics wondered how he could take an oath to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States if his primary goal as president was to dismantle the federal institutions created by that very document. Jefferson argued that America would be a healthier nation with a less powerful federal government, claiming that the sovereign source of republican government was "the people", and these liberated individuals' latent energies were only released when unburdened by government restrictions.

What did Jefferson say in his Inaugural Address on March 4, 1801?
After an ugly election, the major message of Jefferson's first inaugural address was conciliatory. Its most famous line, "We are all republicans—we are all federalists," suggested that the scatological party battles of the previous decade must cease. He described his election as a recovery of the original intentions of the American Revolution, this after the hostile takeover of those "ancient and sacred truths" by the Federalists, who had erroneously assumed that a stable American nation required a powerful central government. The speech's key refrain ("We are all federalists. We are all republicans.") stands to this day as one of the great lines in American history, as it urged political unity in a time when it was sorely needed. Jefferson exhorts Americans in the speech to look past their difference and to their communal freedoms and values. As such, the address provides a good view at Jefferson's views on ideals of freedom and democracy and their applicability in the real world.

What else was special about his Inaugural Address?
Jefferson was also the first President to be inaugurated in Washington, D.C., and his two inaugural addresses were the only two speeches he made during his presidency. Apparently, while the text is regarded as one of the finest inaugural addresses in Presidential history, the presentation was absolutely horrendous. Jefferson was always known as a reserved genius, a man whose written word was eloquent and persuasive while his speech was not. So wedded to writing was Jefferson that as President he insisted on dealing with his Cabinet in writing, rather than in-person conversation.

How did the Louisiana Purchase represent a paradox of Jefferson's political ideals?
In 1803, Napoleon decided to consolidate his resources for a new round of the conflict with England by selling the vast Louisiana region, which stretched from the Mississippi Valley to the Rocky Mountains. Jefferson's decision to obtain the Louisiana Purchase doubled the geographical size of the United States**.** It was a complicated and arguably unconstitutional political action, but Jefferson felt that the fate of Louisiana was so important that he was willing to forego his strict-constructionist principles. Although the asking price, $15 million, was a stupendous bargain, the cost meant substantially

increasing the national debt. Many historians regard it as the boldest executive action in American history. But Jefferson never wavered.

Why was he willing to compromise his principles to acquire the territory?
More than any other politician of his era, Jefferson understood that the Louisiana Territory was not a "howling wilderness," as Delaware's Senator Samuel White deemed it, but nearly 828,000 square miles of glorious future for American commerce and agriculture. He realized that whoever controlled the bustling port of New Orleans owned the Mississippi River and had the power to open or close it to commerce at will, and thereby had, as he phrased it, “a hand on the throat of the American economy.” He understood that the great river did not divide the North American continent in half, but rather drew the continent together. The American West always triggered Jefferson’s most visionary energies, seeing it, as he did, as America’s future, the place where the simple republican principles could be constantly renewed. In one fell swoop he removed the threat of a major European power from America’s borders and extended the life span of the uncluttered agrarian values he so cherished. Even before news that the purchase was approved reached the United States in July 1803, Jefferson dispatched his private secretary, Meriwether Lewis, to lead an expedition to explore the new acquisition and the lands beyond, all the way to the Pacific. Jefferson was fascinated by environmental science and wanted Lewis and his partner William Clark to send word of the flora and fauna that existed in the West.

What were the goals of the expedition?
The Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804-1806) accomplished the necessary mission of exploring the lands of the Louisiana Purchase. Specifically tasked to find a water route to the Pacific Coast, Lewis and Clark ventured into the unknown and captured the nation’s imagination. Though Louisiana was purchased for strategic, security, and economic purposes, Jefferson also had interests in anthropology, naturalism, and archaeology, and was arguably most interested in the natural world and populations that Lewis and Clark would explore. Jefferson encouraged Lewis to respect and catalogue the Indian groups the expedition met along the way. Jefferson even instructed Lewis to provide medicines to address smallpox.

What is a Megalonyx?
Jefferson, was also deeply interested in what types of natural features, flora and fauna existed in the West. He was especially taken with a creature he named the Megalonyx from a series of fossils, and instructed Lewis to locate the creature in the West. Rather than the living large lion Jefferson hypothesized, the Megalonyx was actually a giant ground sloth and had been extinct for thousands of years. Jefferson, and America, had moved from a world where areas like Charlottesville were the frontier to where the entire continent seemed within their grasps. For Jefferson, the West provided America the land to fulfill its destiny as a great republic.

Did he do anything else of political significance during his presidency?
Probably the most controversial policy of the Jefferson presidency, even more so than the Louisiana Purchase, was the Embargo Act of 1807. Caught between warring France and

England, Jefferson sought to introduce a new type of foreign policy based on peaceful coercion. The Embargo was intended to preserve commercial and political neutrality, and this neutrality was to be achieved by forbidding all commerce with both France and England. This policy was highly unpopular as it led to the severe reduction of American exports, but it did have the intended effect: war was avoided. James Madison, Jefferson's friend and presidential successor, would repeal the Embargo Act.

Jefferson and Monticello

Setting the scene: At 14, Jefferson envisions plans for a mountaintop home.
One day in 1757, a Virginia tobacco planter and surveyor named Peter Jefferson died, leaving thousands of hilly, wooded acres to his 14-year-old son, Thomas. The lanky, red-haired heir already felt a special attachment to a part of that land--a little hill, just 867 feet high, that the neighbors called Tom's Mountain because he could often be found there alone with his books. And now young Thomas Jefferson owned the mountain. He could do with it whatever he wished. What he wished was to build a house. Jefferson knew that wouldn't be easy: There were no good roads and little water on Tom's Mountain and, to accommodate the mansion he envisioned, the heavily forested summit would have to be leveled. But he was determined, and in his 20s, he began building the house that would occupy much of his considerable mind for as long as he lived: Monticello.

What does Monticello look like today?
Monticello was originally an eight-room English-inspired manor, but was redesigned and expanded following Jefferson's visits to France, wherein he added the first dome on a house in the North American continent. Monticello today is much as it was at Jefferson's death: a domed, red brick structure with neoclassical porticoes (large, columned, open porches) and pier-like terraces jutting into the landscape. The house sits on a great lawn amid acres of gardens and orchards surrounded by native forest. Its style is Roman neoclassicism.

Monticello was a constant work-in-progress because Jefferson was constantly learning & innovating. We know that Jefferson brought classicism to American architecture. But yet another paradox of Jefferson (i.e. the emancipationist who owned slaves) is that he was a

classicist who couldn't resist innovating. Jefferson never quite finished Monticello ("little mountain" in Italian), and he probably never believed he had got it quite right, as it was his great experiment—the house was his "essay in architecture". Monticello was incredibly state-of-the-art, and its revolutionary ideas reached into the future to change architects' ideas about houses and how to live in them.

Innovations

The value of natural light: At Monticello today, what immediately strikes a visitor is how bright the house seems. The typical 18th-century house was a dim box with stingy little windows, dark walls and
shadowy corners. But Jefferson added numerous features to Monticello to create great splashes of light:
(1) enormous floor-to-ceiling three-paned windows (which also served as doors, so that even his **6'2½"** frame could pass through without stooping), **(2)** light-colored walls, **(3)** semi-octagonal rooms on the house's ends (to spread the sunlight at day and candlelight at night), and **(4)** 13 skylights, made of small overlapping glass panes to prevent leaks, to brighten rooms and halls.

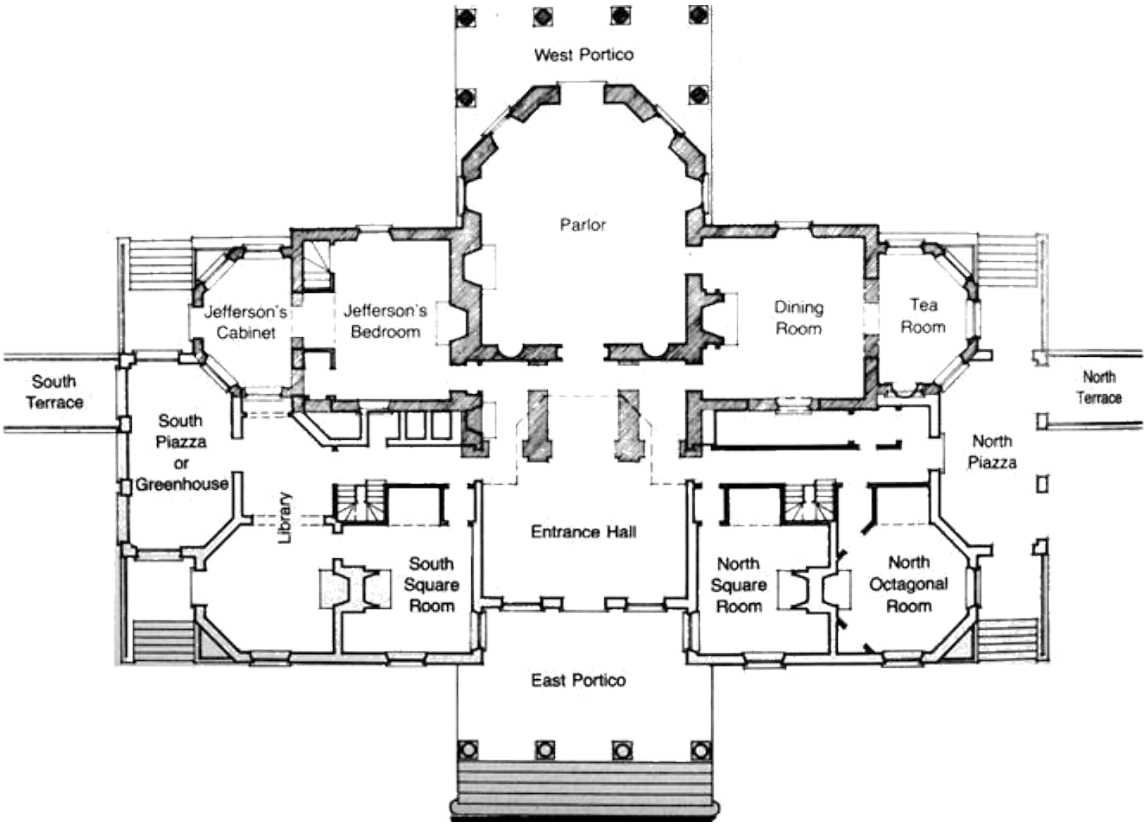
The intimacy between indoors and outdoors: Jefferson opened Monticello not only to the light, but also to the air, the sky, and the views in a remarkably intimate and harmonious way. He "assaulted the barriers between inside and outside" with long porches, terraces reaching into the landscape, and his large windows' splendid mountaintop view.

The mating of a house with its natural surroundings: Monticello, built of brick fired from local clay, seems to grow from, or flow into, its exposed mountaintop, squatting there against the sun, wind and rain. Modest steps and built-in brick planters at each corner tie Monticello to the earth in a "refined transition to the outdoor landscape".

The indoor privy: Jefferson pointed a way toward the modern house *inside* Monticello as well, consolidating the functions of domestic life. He moved the privy indoors, where it was ventilated by a tunnel; waste fell to ground level for a slave to remove.

The consolidation of food storage and preparation facilities connected to the main house: He also rethought the traditional kitchen. In contrast to the modern setup (where stove, refrigerator, sink and pantry dwell in a single room inside the house), cooking was done in outbuildings to isolate heat, flame and smells. Slaves delivered meals to the house. At Monticello, these elements were still divided, but Jefferson, uniquely, brought them in closer to the house. The "stove" was a fireplace beneath a terrace, the "sink" a set of tubs in a scullery, the "refrigerator" an icehouse (an underground pit containing tons of ice probably insulated by straw or wood shavings), the "cabinets" and "pantry" a room where cheese, coffee, and chocolate were stored. All were accessible to the dining room through a Jefferson-designed all-weather passageway (a tunnel beneath the house) and then upstairs. Slaves carried food up the narrow stairways on trays, set it on shelves fastened to one side of an unusual revolving door and then spun the door a half turn.

Presto: Dinner appeared in the Jefferson dining room, but the servant didn't. His famous dumbwaiters brought bottles of wine up from the house's cellar.
The importance of spaces given over to individual privacy: Those dumbwaiters weren't to ease his slaves' burden, but for privacy. Typical 18th century houses were expensive, hard to heat and small – while families were large. Floor plans designated most indoor space as public, so people were always crowded together. The notion of a room of one's own was largely foreign. Jefferson's private apartment, a retreat that nurtured his intellectual spirit, offered a quiet spot not merely to sleep, but also to read, write, think, work, rest and restore his mind without interruption. "This was a new concept in America," Monticello guide Peggy Mowbray says, "having a private space within your own home." Ironically**,** Jefferson's love of privacy and his fondness for light and flowing spaces ultimately trapped him. (If he could see out, people could see in, and Monticello, a working plantation, supported more than 100 souls.) So he eventually took to sleeping behind a paper-lined screen, and once even nailed the door shut to prevent visitors and family members from barging in.



Other important aspects of Monticello

First use of an insulation technique: In the winter, the many windows of his bright tea room on the house's north end froze the little chamber and chilled the adjacent dining room as well. Jefferson installed two sets of sliding glass pocket doors, one a foot inside the other, between the rooms. The innovation was the first known North American use of double glass doors for dead-air insulation, a precursor to the stormproof window.

On inventions: He only ever invented a part of a steel tipped plow. But most of his creations were ingenious reworkings of common objects: goblets with square bases, a comfortably sprung seat for his two-horse phaeton, the bizarre calendar-clock driven by cannonball-like weights in the Monticello basement.

Chronology: After clearing and leveling the mountaintop in 1768, construction started in 1769 and it became habitable in the 1770s. By 1796 he began reconstruction on a new design for the 1800s. The house as we know it today was completed in 1809.

The dome: Though the home has many practical components, Monticello's dome was a purely aesthetic statement. It was the first dome on a private house in the United States. Meticulously, Jefferson laid out the complex framing himself, improving on a French method. The dome is the highest spot on the mountain, a crown to the house from the outside. Yet inside—despite its brilliant skylight and circular windows—the dome room is drab: a kind of dead zone, like an empty skull atop a vital body. Even in Jefferson's lifetime, it was used mainly for storage.

The library: Jefferson's two-room library held nearly 7,000 books, until he sold them to the federal government in 1815 to pay debts. They helped replaced the federal library burned by the British in the War of 1812 and became the nucleus for the new Library of Congress.

Common Questions about Monticello

Which side is the front? Though the image on the nickel is of the Dome and West Portico, most visitors then—and today— would enter through the East Portico into the Entrance Hall. The house had both an east front and a west front.

Who inherited the house? To pay off Jefferson's $107,000 debt, Jefferson's daughter and her son found it necessary to first sell nearly all of Monticello's furniture, animals, farm equipment, and slaves (1827) and then eventually the plantation itself. From 1831-1834, James T. Barclay, a local apothecary, owned the home. Failing to cultivate silk worms there, he sold the home to Uriah P. Levy, a Jewish naval officer who admired Jefferson's views on religious tolerance. He owned the home until his death in 1862 when he bequeathed the land to the government (under certain conditions). When the Confederacy seized and sold the property against Levy's wishes, Levy's heirs contested the ownership. After years of litigation, Levy's nephew Jefferson Monroe Levy took possession in 1879. Striving to preserve Monticello as a memorial to

Jefferson, in 1923 the Levys sold Monticello to the newly created Thomas Jefferson Foundation, which owns Monticello today.

Who built the house? Both skilled white workers (e.g. masons, carpenters) and slaves built the house.

Where were the materials made? The bricks, mortar, nails, timber, and stone were made on property. The mahogany window sashes were from Philadelphia. The window glass came from Bohemia, an area in what is now in the Czech Republic.

How much land did Thomas Jefferson own? The 1000-acre Monticello tract, 4000 other acres of farmland in Albemarle County, and the 5000-acre Poplar forest plantation in Bedford County

What was grown at Monticello? On his 400 cultivated acres Jefferson grew tobacco until 1794 when wheat became his primary cash crop (as tobacco depleted the soil). Other crops (corn, small grains, grasses) and livestock (cattle, hogs, sheep) were raised for the support of his family, visitors, slaves, and animals.

Slaves: Jefferson owned about 200 slaves at any one time (about 130 in Albemarle and 70 at Poplar Forest), and over 600 during his lifetime. Most were acquired through inheritance (about 40 from his father, and 135 from his father-in-law), and he purchased fewer than 20 slaves in his lifetime, either to satisfy labor needs or to unite spouses. He legally freed 7 slaves: two during his lifetime and five in his will. All were male, skilled tradesmen, and members of the Hemings family.
The Monticello Cemetery: Thomas Jefferson, his immediate family (save his father Peter who is buried at Shadwell), and approximately 200 of his descendants are buried there. Burials are usually limited to direct descendants and their spouses who call themselves the Monticello Association.

Jefferson in Retirement

Chronology

1809 (66): Retires from public life and returns to Monticello.

1815 (72)**:** Sold 6,700-volume library to Congress.

1824 (81)**:** Historic reunion with the Marquis de Lafayette at Monticello.

1825 (82)**:** University of Virginia opened.

1826 (83): Died at Monticello on July 4.

What happened after Jefferson retired from politics?
During the last 17 years of his life after his presidency, Jefferson maintained a crowded and active schedule in his retirement at Monticello. He rose with the dawn each day, bathed his feet in cold water, then spent the morning on his correspondence (one year he

counted writing 1,268 letters) and working in his garden. Each afternoon he took a two-hour ride around his grounds. He asked his only surviving child, Martha, to come live with him and act as his hostess, so she moved to Monticello with her husband and eight children. Jefferson eventually was a grandfather of twelve grandchildren, and he called grandfatherhood "the noblest of occupations." Dinner was usually an occasion to gather his family, along with the inevitable visitors. Monticello became a veritable hotel during these years, on occasion housing 50 guests. The lack of privacy caused Jefferson to build a separate house, known as Poplar Forest, on his Bedford estate about 90 miles from Monticello, where he periodically fled for seclusion.

What three major architectural projects did Jefferson work on during his retirement?

Monticello: Throughout his life Monticello remained a work-in-progress that had the appearance of a construction site. Even during his retirement years, Jefferson's intensive efforts at completing the renovations never quite produced the masterpiece of neoclassical design he wanted to achieve but that modern-day visitors to Monticello find so compelling.
Poplar Forest: A smaller but more architecturally distinctive mansion at Bedford, called Poplar Forest, was completed on schedule. It too embodied neoclassical principles but was shaped as a perfect octagon.
The University of Virginia: Finally there was the campus of the University of Virginia at Charlottesville, which Jefferson called his **"**academical village." Jefferson surveyed the site, which he could view in the distance from his mountaintop, and chose the Pantheon of Rome as the model for the Rotunda, the library and centerpiece flanked by two rows of living quarters for students and faculty. In 1976, the American Institute of Architects voted it "the proudest achievement of American architecture in the past 200 years."

Wasn't Thomas Jefferson an inventor?
Although Jefferson is often popularly perceived as an inventor, he was much more of a synthesizer. He adapted ideas and devices he found throughout his travels in Europe, and he incorporated these adaptations into his daily life at Monticello. Jefferson did not invent the polygraph or the dumbwaiter (Europeans will scoff at you if you even suggest it). In fact, Jefferson only had one true invention, a more efficient farming tool called a *moldboard plow of least resistance*. Jefferson always promoted the free exchange of intellectual and practical ideas, and, in this case, his plow improved agricultural efficiency and benefited Virginia farmers. He never applied for a patent, and, thus, he never directly profited from his innovative farming tool.

Why did Jefferson sell his library to the Library of Congress? How does the modern Library continue to represent his ideals?
It was necessary to pay off his enormous debts. In 1815, Jefferson sold his library of around 6,700 books, one of the nation's finest collection, to the United States government for about half of its worth. The collection became the seed of the new Library of Congress, the original having been burned by the British during the War of 1812. Jefferson had spent 50 years accumulating books, "putting by everything which related to America, and indeed whatever was rare and valuable in every science"; his

library was considered to be one of the finest in the United States. In January 1815, Congress accepted Jefferson's offer, appropriating about $24,000 for his books, and the foundation was laid for a great national library. In offering his collection to Congress, Jefferson anticipated controversy over the nature of his collection, which included books in foreign languages and volumes of philosophy, science, literature, and other topics not normally viewed as part of a legislative library. He wrote, "I do not know that it contains any branch of science which Congress would wish to exclude from their collection; there is, in fact, no subject to which a Member of Congress may not have occasion to refer." The Jeffersonian concept of universality, the belief that all subjects are important to the library of the American legislature, is the philosophy and rationale behind the comprehensive collecting policies of today's Library of Congress. After the sale, Jefferson wrote to John Adams, "I cannot live without books!" Shortly thereafter, Jefferson began amassing another library, which he willed to the University after his death. Unfortunately, most of these bequeathed books would never reach the Rotunda Library, as they were instead sold after Jefferson's death to pay off his huge debt**.**

Why was Jefferson in debt near the end of his life, and what is the legacy of this debt?

Jefferson was chronically in debt throughout most of his life, in part because of obligations inherited from his father-in-law in his wife's dowry, and mostly because of his own lavish lifestyle (he never came to terms with the proverbial bottom line despite careful entries in his account books that provided him with only the illusion of control). In truth, by the 1820s the interest on his debt was compounding at a faster rate than any repayment schedule could meet. By the end, he was *around $107,000*—in modern terms several million dollars—in debt. An exception was made in Virginia law to permit a lottery that Jefferson hoped would allow his heirs to retain at least a portion of his property. But the massiveness of his debt overwhelmed all such hopes. Monticello, including land, mansion, furnishings, and the vast bulk of the slave population, was auctioned off the year after his death, and his surviving daughter, Martha, was forced to accept charitable contributions to sustain her family.

Jefferson and Adams

In 1812, his vast correspondence began to include an exchange with his former friend and more recent rival John Adams. The reconciliation between the two patriarchs was arranged by their mutual friend Benjamin Rush**,** who described them as "the North and South poles of the American Revolution." As the "Sage of Monticello," Jefferson represented the Revolution as a clean break with the past, the rejection of all European versions of political discipline as feudal vestiges, the ingrained hostility toward all mechanisms of governmental authority that originated in faraway places**.** As the "Sage of Quincy (Massachusetts)," Adams resembled an American version of Edmund Burke, which meant that he attributed the success of the American Revolution to its linkage with past practices, most especially the tradition of representative government established in the colonial assemblies. It is ironic that in terms of architecture Jefferson believed that looking towards the past meant believing in the future (coupling neoclassicism with innovation), but in the realm of politics he firmly believed in casting off the shackles of European influence.

These genuine differences of opinion made Adams and Jefferson drift to different sides of the divide during the party wars of the 1790s. The exchange of 158 letters between 1812 and 1826 permitted the two sages to pose as philosopher-kings and create what is arguably the most intellectually impressive correspondence between statesmen in all of American history. The correspondence exposed the fundamental contradictions that the American Revolution managed to contain. As Adams so poignantly put it,

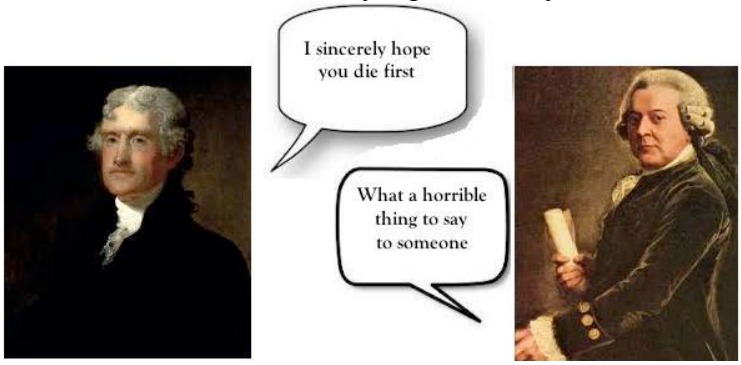
"You and I ought not to die before we have explained ourselves to each other." And because of Adams's incessant prodding, Jefferson was frequently forced to clarify his mature position on the most salient issues of the era.

What were Jefferson's final days like?

By 1826, Jefferson's health was rapidly declining. Soon after making his last visit to the University**,** overseeing the cataloguing of books in the Pavilion VII library and the placement of a capital on the Rotunda, Jefferson reluctantly declined an invitation to attend the July 4, 1826 celebrations in Washington D.C., commemorating the 50th anniversary of the *Declaration of Independence.*

What were Jefferson's last words? Adams' last words?

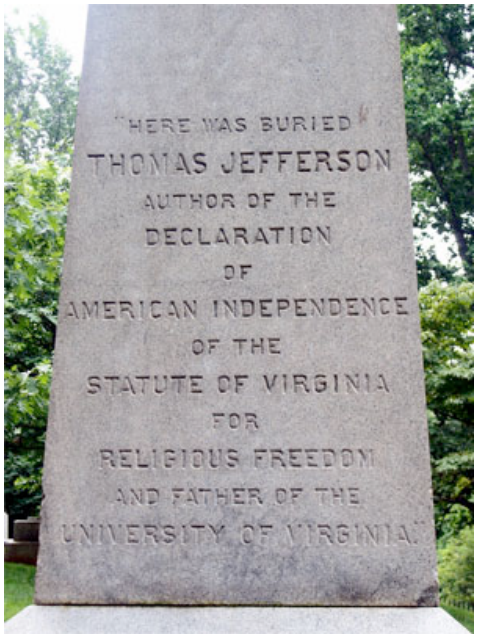
Jefferson died in his bed at Monticello at about half past noon on July 4, 1826 (the 50th anniversary of he signing of the Declaration of Independence). His last conscious words, uttered the preceding evening, were "Is it the Fourth?". More remarkably, up in Quincy on that same day his old rival and friend also managed to die on schedule. John Adams passed away later in the afternoon. His last words, allegedly—"Thomas Jefferson still lives**"**—were wrong at the moment but right for the future, since Jefferson's complex legacy was destined to become the most resonant and controversial touchstone in all of American history.



NOTE ABOUT THE "DEATH BET": Guides used to say that Jefferson and Adams had a supposed **"**death bet," where they continued their rivalry up until their final days by placing a bet on who would live the longest. The myth of the bet appears to be attributed to the coincidental circumstances in which they died, and Adams' last words. Although an explicit bet did not exist, Jefferson and Adams would often write to each other and

joke about mortality with comments such as: “I pray for the continuance of your life until you shall be tired of it yourself.”

Where is he buried? What is inscribed on his tombstone?
Jefferson is buried in the cemetery at Monticello. Jefferson designed his own tombstone in the shape of an obelisk, the Egyptian symbol for eternity. He also wrote his own epitaph, and specified that only three things be inscribed on the stone. Jefferson explained that “by these testimonials that I have lived I wish most to be remembered.” The inscription reads:



HERE WAS BURIED
THOMAS JEFFERSON
AUTHOR OF THE DECLARATION
OF
AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE
OF THE
STATUTE OF VIRGINIA
FOR
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM
AND FATHER OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

BORN APRIL 2, 1743 O.S.
DIED JULY 4, 1826

Note that the O.S. following the date of Jefferson’s birth represents the Old Style (Julian) Calendar that was used during his lifetime until 1752, when the New Style (Gregorian) was introduced. The Gregorian **calendar adds eleven days, so we celebrate Jefferson’s birthday as April 13, 1743**. (Beginning almost immediately, the granite obelisk suffered continual damage at the hands of visitors as they chipped off pieces of the stone - not for the value of the material, as Jefferson had originally feared, but as souvenirs. The decision was made by Jefferson's descendants to donate the *original* obelisk to the University of Missouri, where it now resides.)

Citations (for all of the sections in Mr. Jefferson until this point, unless another citation was noted)
Monticello.org
“Thomas Jefferson.” Encyclopedia Britannica. 2010. Encyclopedia Britannica Online. 05 Jan. 2010
<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/302264/Thomas-Jefferson>.
“Thomas Jefferson’s Empire of Liberty.” Douglas Brinkley. *American History Magazine*, 2003.

Jefferson: A Paradox

Adapted from: "Thomas Jefferson and the Character Issue." *The Atlantic Monthly*; November 1992. Volume 270, No. 5. "The Sublime Oxymoron." Charles Krauthammer. *Time Magazine*. May 22, 2000.

Long regarded as America's most distinguished apostle of liberty, Jefferson has come under increasingly critical scrutiny within the scholarly world. At the popular level, both in the United States and abroad, he remains an incandescent icon, an inspirational symbol for both major U.S. political parties, as well as for dissenters in communist China, liberal reformers in central and eastern Europe, and aspiring democrats in Africa and Latin America. His image within scholarly circles has suffered, however, as the focus on racial equality has prompted a more balanced reappraisal of his dependence upon slavery and his conviction that American society remain a white man's domain.

Jefferson the Champion for Equality vs. Jefferson the Slave Owner

For Jefferson, the paramount political issue in the American Revolution was what he called liberty and what we now call personal freedom, or choice. It was and remains the theme of American culture, something that Americans since the republic's first years have been strongly conscious of and willing to fight for. But what has become the most familiar and the most quoted phrase in the Declaration -- "all men are created equal" -- is about something else. It is an intriguing fact that although Americans generally understand that the prologue to the Declaration is their charter of freedom, even more indelibly impressed upon their imagination is its affirmation of the ideal of human equality.

Jefferson as a Revolutionary?

So how did Jefferson reconcile his supposed belief in equality with being a slave owner? According to *The Atlantic Monthly*, people could be asking the wrong question: "The question carries a silent assumption that because he practiced slave holding, Jefferson must have somehow believed in it, and must therefore have been a hypocrite. My belief is that this way of asking the question… is essentially backward, and reflects the pervasive presentism of our time. Consider, for example, how different the question appears when inverted and framed in more historical terms: How did a man who was born into a slave holding society, whose family and admired friends owned slaves, who inherited a fortune that was dependent on slaves and slave labor, decide at an early age that slavery was morally wrong and forcefully declare that it ought to be abolished?"

Or a Man of his Time?

However, critics of Jefferson provide the counterargument that while Jefferson found holding slaves to be morally wrong, he continued to hold them anyway. Jefferson himself would argue that whites and blacks could not peaceably coexist after abolition because of the lingering legacy of slavery, which is why he believed that expatriation back to Africa was the only option. There is no doubt that obstacles to emancipation in Jefferson's Virginia were formidable, and the risk was demonstrably great that emancipated slaves would enjoy little, if any, real freedom and would, unless they could pass as white, be more likely to come to grief in a hostile environment, but many

scholars argue that these were simply excuses to hide his racist beliefs. In his *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Jefferson concludes, albeit as "a suspicion only," that the blacks he had observed were "inferior to the whites in the endowments both of body and mind." Though he did admit that his acquaintance with blacks did not extend to the African continent and embraced only black people who had been born in and forced to live under the degrading conditions of slavery. "It will be right to make great allowances for the difference of condition, of education, of conversation, of the sphere in which they move," Jefferson wrote, but it is evident in the hindsight of two hundred years that his estimate of the capabilities of blacks failed to make sufficient allowances, particularly for the things he himself named. But interestingly, the reasons that Jefferson gave for doubting the possibility of integration -- "deep rooted prejudices entertained by the whites; ten thousand recollections, by the blacks, of the injuries they have sustained; new provocations; [and] the real distinctions which nature has made" -- are the same reasons often cited by black separatists, who entertained the same misgivings. Jefferson resorted to many devices, architectural and intellectual, to enjoy the bounties of plantation life without having to face its injustices. He designed a revolving serving door for outside the dining room, with one side that had shelves and the other flat. Food would be brought up from the basement kitchen and placed on the shelves on the outer side of the door. It would then be swung around, so that Jefferson and his guests saw the food, but not the slaves who prepared it. He was more clear-sighted, however, in facing that other American conundrum, the Native American. Jefferson had great respect for Native Indians. He considered them the equal of the white man. And yet he fully understood that America would have to be built at their expense. “Behind every great fortune there is a crime,” said Balzac**.** Behind every great nation, too. Jefferson certainly wanted to do justice to the Indians. But he knew the white man needed to instill fear in the Indian or the American experiment would fail. How characteristically Jefferson: an offhanded trope that sublimely captures the central tension of all foreign policy--that between morality and necessity, power and principle.

Jefferson the Progressive vs. Jefferson the Preserver

Jefferson once wrote about slavery: "Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate than that these people are to be free.” To someone who only knows this quote, it would appear that Jefferson had an inalienable belief in the progressive nature of the new American republic, and the people would work tirelessly to make emancipation a reality. Writing from retirement at the age of seventy-three, he told a correspondent that "laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind." However, some argue that Jefferson was merely deferring a problem of the present to future generations. It could be argued that a visible and well-regarded figure like Jefferson would have been able to shape progress and not wait for the delayed effect of laws. Another explanation is that Jefferson might have stopped talking progressively about slavery later in his life as he became more and more entrenched in Virginia politics, and realized that his constituents and peers relied on slavery. Jefferson himself seemed to understand and accept this contradiction, and used it as an explanation for his stagnant response to the problem of slavery. He said: “But as it is, we have the wolf by the ear, and we can neither hold him, nor

safely let him go. Justice is in one scale, and self-preservation in the other." Jefferson also considered himself to be a paternalistic slaveowner, and believed that since white Americans imposed the institution of slavery on blacks, they should not only emancipate them but also educate and train them to be self-sufficient, provide them with necessary materials, and establish a colony in which they could live as free and independent people. But this appears to be a view based on self-preservation rather than progress, because he thought that violence would inevitably ensue if the races attempted to coexist.

Jefferson the Democratic-Republican vs. Jefferson and the Empire of Liberty

Jefferson, a believer in small, limited government, also enacted the Louisiana Purchase, arguably the grandest exercise of extra-constitutional Executive power in American history. Quite simply, the Louisiana Purchase was the direct result of the cunning Jefferson's longstanding, unshakable vision of a United States that would stretch to the Pacific Ocean: the "Empire of Liberty," as profound an oxymoron as political theory can provide. Jefferson wanted to acquire lands in order to bring democracy to the people there and strengthen the American republic, but some scholars argue this was simply the first vestige of democratic imperialism.
Offering Americans the greatest Independence Day gift imaginable, he fed the story to a Washington, D.C., newspaper, the National Intelligencer, which pronounced July 4 a day of "widespread joy of millions at an event which history will record among the most splendid in our annals." A jubilant Jefferson had achieved his dream: an Empire of Liberty for the bargain price of $15 million. What many Americans don't realize is how viciously Federalist politicians denounced Jefferson for what they deemed an unconstitutional transaction. There was no constitutional provision for a president acquiring new territory and granting automatic citizenship to the inhabitants. Jefferson, it seemed, was putting his grandiose notion of an Empire of Liberty ahead of the Constitution, which he supposedly espoused a strict interpretation of it. Opting not to amend the Constitution, he submitted the treaty to Congress on national security grounds: A menacing France had to be removed from America.

Jefferson the…American (I thought About Re-wording This But I Couldn't Bring Myself to Do It)

The most delightful example of the duality of the man is to be found in the library that Jefferson gave the U.S. in 1815. Two-thirds of the books were destroyed in a fire in 1851, but now the Library of Congress has found equivalent editions and put the entire 6,487 volumes on magnificent display. The tall stacks are arranged as Jefferson had them at Monticello. What strikes you first is how brilliantly and methodically they are cataloged. Jefferson's classification system--used by the Library of Congress for 82 years--divided all knowledge into three parts: memory (history), reason (philosophy, the sciences) and imagination (art). But as you walk around the room, you notice something: the shelves are not of equal height. The tallest ones are at the bottom. And they are full of the tallest books. Then you understand. Jefferson, the philosopher, worshipped reason. Jefferson, the librarian, understood that sometimes you must surrender to reality and classify a book by its size. Which is why Americans will be celebrating Jefferson at the next Library of Congress centenary, too. He so embodies America in all its sprawling contradictory greatness: the Wilsonian idealist prepared to engage in ruthless

Rooseveltian realism; the worshipper of system, order and science who is given to romance--with France, with revolution, with the American West; the practical inventor and tinkerer, yet endowed with the capacity to compose the most lyrical, most transcendent assertion of human liberty ever penned. If Washington is father of our country, Jefferson is father of the ever restless, ever hungering American mind.

Quotes

"All that is necessary for a student is access to a library, and directions in what order the books are to be read." *1790*

"I cannot live without books."*1815*

"I was a hard student until I entered on the business of life, the duties of which leave no idle time to those disposed to fulfill them; and now, retired, and at the age of seventy-six, I am again a hard student."
1819

"To give to every citizen the information he needs for the transaction of his own business; To enable him to calculate for himself, and to express and preserve his ideas, contracts, and accounts, in writing; To improve, by reading, his morals and faculties; To understand his duties to his neighbors and country, and to discharge, with competence, the functions confided to him by either; To know his rights; to exercise with order and justice those he retains; to choose with discretion the fiduciary of those he delegates; and to notice their conduct with diligence, with candor, and judgment; And, in general, to observe with intelligence and faithfulness all the social relations under which he shall be placed."*1817*

"A system of general instruction, which shall reach every description of our citizens from the richest to the poorest, as it was the earliest, so it will be the latest of all the public concerns in which I shall permit myself to take an interest…Mine, after all, may be a Utopian dream; but being innocent, I have thought I might indulge in it till I go to the land of dreams, and sleep there with the dreamers of all past and future times."*1818*

"The rock which I most dread is the discipline of the institution, and it is that on which most of our public schools labor. *The insubordination of our youth is now the greatest obstacle to their education*. We may lessen the difficulty, perhaps, by avoiding too much government, by requiring no useless observances, none which shall merely multiply occasions for dissatisfaction, disobedience, and revolt…" *1823*

"
We have in Virginia a college (William and Mary) just well enough endowed to draw out the miserable existence to which a miserable constitution has doomed it. It is moreover eccentric in its position, exposed to all bilious diseases as all the lower country is, and. therefore, abandoned by the public care, as that part of the country itself is in a considerable degree by its inhabitants." *1800*

"To William and Mary, as my alma mater, my attachment has been ever sincere, although not exclusive."
1824

"It is an axiom in my mind that our liberty can never be safe but in the hands of the people themselves, and that, too, of the people with a certain degree of instruction."
1786

"I think by far the most important bill in our whole code is that for the diffusion of knowledge among the people. No other sure foundation can be devised for the preservation of freedom and happiness." *1786*

"Above all things, I hope the education of the common people will be attended to; convinced that on their good sense we may rely with the most security for the preservation of a due degree of liberty." *1787*

"If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be." *1816*

"I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education." *1820*

"A plan of female education has never been a subject of systematic contemplation with me. It has occupied my attention so far only as the education of my own daughters occasionally required." *1818*

Architecture

"Architecture is my delight, and putting up and pulling down one of my favorite amusements."
Date Unknown
"You see, I am an enthusiast on the subject of the arts. But it is an enthusiasm of which I am not ashamed, as its object is to improve the taste of my countrymen, to increase their reputation, to reconcile them to the rest of the world, and procure them its praise."
1785

The University of Virginia

"We wish to establish in the upper country of Virginia and more centrally for the State, a University on a plan so broad and liberal and modern, as to be worth patronizing with the public support, and be a temptation to the youth of other States to come and drink from the cup of knowledge and fraternize with us." *1800*

"This institution of my native State, the hobby of my old age, will be based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind to explore and to expose every subject susceptible of its contemplation." *1820*

"For here we are not afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead, nor to tolerate any error so long as reason is left free to combat it."
1820

"Each pavilion will have a school-room below and two rooms for the professor above; and between pavilion and pavilion a range of dormitories for the boys… Now

what we wish is that these pavilions should be models of good taste and architecture, and of a variety of appearances, no two alike, so as to serve as specimens for architectural lectures." *1817*

"I would strongly recommend to their consideration instead of one immense building, to have *small ones for every professorship*, arranged at proper distances around a square, or rather three sides of a square, to admit extension, connected by a piazza, so that they may go dry from one school to another. This *village form* is preferable to a single great building for many reasons, particularly on account of fire, health, economy, peace, and quiet. More may be said hereafter on the opportunity these small buildings will afford, of exhibiting models in architecture of the purest forms of antiquity, furnishing to the student examples of the precepts he will be taught in that art." *1816*

"Our University is now so far advanced as to be worth seeing. It exhibits already the appearance of a beautiful Academical Village, of the finest models of buildings and classical architecture in the U.S. It begins to be much visited by strangers and admired by all, for the beauty, originality, and convenience of the plan." *1820*

"We concluded to employ no professor who is not of the first order of the science he professes, that when we can find such in our own country we shall prefer them and when we cannot we will procure them wherever else to be found."*1819*

"…a finer set of youths I never saw assembled for instruction. They committed some irregularities at first, until they learned the lawful length of their tether…"
1825

"A great proportion of them are severely devoted to study, and I fear not to say that…they will exhibit their country in a degree of sound respectability it has never known, either in our days, or those of our forefathers. I cannot live to see it. My joy must only be that of anticipation." *1825*

"Our University goes on well…We studiously avoid too much government. We treat the students as gentlemen, under the guidance mainly of their own discretion. They so consider themselves, and make it their pride to acquire that character for their institution." *1825*

"By bringing the sects together, and mixing them with the mass of other students, we shall soften their asperities, liberalize and neutralize their prejudices, and make the general religion a religion of peace, reason, and morality." *1825*

"Our University is the last of my mortal cares, and the last service I can render my country." *1820*

"It is the last act of usefulness I can render, and could I see it open I would not ask an hour more of life."
1821

"Withdrawn by age from all other public services and attentions to public things, I am closing the last scenes of my life by fashioning and fostering an establishment for the instruction of those who are to come after us. I hope its influence on their virtue, freedom, fame, and happiness will be salutary and permanent."*1825*

"I contemplate the University of Virginia as the future bulwark of the human mind in this hemisphere." *1820*

"I sincerely think that the prominent characters of the country where you are could not better prepare their sons for the duties they will have to perform in their new government than by sending them here [UVa] where they might be familiarized with the habits and practice of self-government. This lesson is scarcely to be acquired but in this country, and yet without it, the political vessel is all sail and no ballast."
1822