

Free essay on jeffersonian democracy vs. jacksonian democracy

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A) Democratic actions during the age of Jefferson

Jefferson is regarded as one of the most democratic American president.

There were a number of democratic actions during this age. First, republicanism became the core political value whereby every citizen had a civic duty of helping state and oppose corruption, aristocracy and monarchism. During this time also, it became the citizens' duty to vote and voter turnout increased significantly. According to Wilentz (33), the Yeoman Farmer was viewed as the best example of civic virtue as well as freedom from corruption. Any government policy is to benefit the free man. This age also saw the separation of the state and church. A nationalist government was established but it was to be closely watched. Several freedoms were guaranteed such as the freedom of the press and speech and the Bill of Rights. B) Anti-democratic actions during the age of Jefferson

During this age, only the educated were mean to rule. Though Jefferson had the view that all men were born to freedom, he still owned slaves. Jefferson also held the view that the purpose of women was marriage and subordination and their husbands, and thus women were neither allowed to vote, nor were they called upon to discuss politics (Hoover 146). C)

Democratic actions during the age of Jackson

Jackson eliminated property requirements for voting. As such, the right to vote was expanded to be inclusive of all white men. States dropped property restrictions on voting. At the same time, Jackson believed that all men were qualified to hold office, and that political positions should be rotated. During this time, nominating conventions were introduced. Planters, laborers, mechanics and farmers were included in the "chosen class". Ellis (56)

observes that Jackson believed in a federal government that had limited powers, and his approach to the economy was hands-off. Therefore, Jackson managed to broaden citizenry influence in government. D) Anti-democratic actions during the age of Jackson

Jackson introduced a patronage policy known as the “ Spoils System” which rewarded political supporters by placing them into appointed offices. This would ensure that any government officials elected on an opposing party platform were cleared out. Jackson has a negative attitude towards Native Americans (Ellis 28). Jackson was also opposed to the establishment of public education and educational reform programs.

Therefore, distinct and sharp similarities and differences can be observed between the two democracies. Mainly, they arise from the areas of social life, politics, economics and religion. While the two agree on a number of issues, they strongly disagree on others. It is the ideas, opinions and viewpoints of these two democracies that have enabled to make America a strong democracy.

Works Cited

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