

How Successful Was The New Deal?

Mission: to analyse and evaluate a range of sources to help understand the successes and failures of the New Deal.



The New Deal 1933 - 1939

President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal had 3 main aims; Relief, Recovery and Reform. The following collection of sources will help you determine how far the New Deal achieved those aims. You can also consider specific groups such as workers, unemployed, women and business owners and judge how each of those groups was impacted.

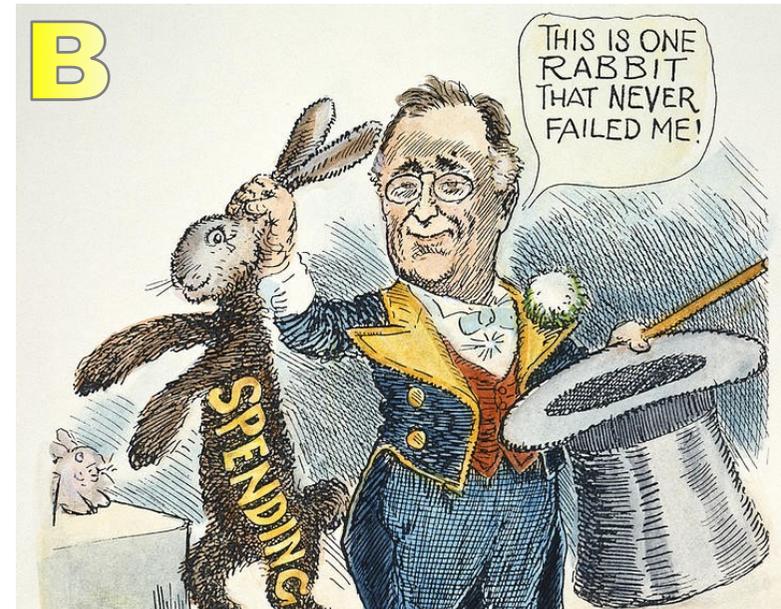
Roosevelt's New Deal was as controversial in its time as the current debate in the USA regarding gun control.

- For those on the political right in the USA Roosevelt's actions meant a dangerous encroachment by the government on individual liberty and free enterprise.
- For those on the political left Roosevelt's actions narrowly avoided a complete disaster and banking collapse.

These two interpretations were current during the 1930s and are reflected in many of the subsequent cartoons and sources.

Hodder Education Article

A



'Judgements on the New Deal are varied. FDR did improve the situation from when he took office but he had not solved them by the time of the Second World War. By 1939 Important advances had been made in working conditions, relief of poverty and the running of business, but there had been no economic miracle'

American Historian.



1937 - Memorial Day Massacre Newspaper Headline

The **Wagner Act** helped reduce working hours and improve conditions for the workers. Trade Union membership rose steadily during the 1930s. Strikes were more common with 80% settled in favour of the workers. However, employers were resentful and some hired thugs to beat up trade union activists. During the 1937 'Memorial Day Massacre' ten demonstrators were killed by the police.

Big business remained a powerful force.



School Textbook.



Cartoon c1934 - It IS a New Deal

"First we give the opportunity of employment to one-quarter of a million of the unemployed, especially the young men who have dependents to go into the forestry and flood prevention work. This is a big task because it means feeding, clothing and caring for nearly twice as many men as we have in the army. In creating the civilian conservation corps we are killing two birds with one stone. We are clearly enhancing the value of our natural resources and second, we are relieving and appreciable amount of actual distress."



An extract from FDR's 'Fireside Chat' May,1933.



The principal advocate for women’s economic and social rights within the New Deal was Eleanor Roosevelt. From the thousands of letters that poured across her desk from ordinary Americans, she knew that women too were suffering as a consequence of Great Depression. This was especially true of working women. It is estimated that more than 2 million women were unemployed at the start of 1933, many of whom represented the sole support for their families. Thanks to the traditional view of a “worker” as a white male breadwinner, however, these women went largely unrecognized, not only by government officials, but also by the public at large.

www.roosevelt.org

The New Deal has clearly done more for the general welfare of the country and its citizen than any administration of the previous history of the nation. Its relief for the underprivileged in the city and country has been indispensable. Without this relief an appalling amount of misery would have resulted in addition, the New Deal has accomplished much of permanent benefit to the nation.

The New Deal in Review 1936-40.
New Republic Magazine.

The New Deal left largely untouched the problems of farmers, sharecroppers, migrants workers in agriculture and among ethnic groups, blacks, Puerto Ricans and Mexican Americans. The New Deal bypassed black Americans, made only small concessions to the status of women, and did little to improve the general standard of education.

Sean Cashman.
America in the 1920s and 30s.

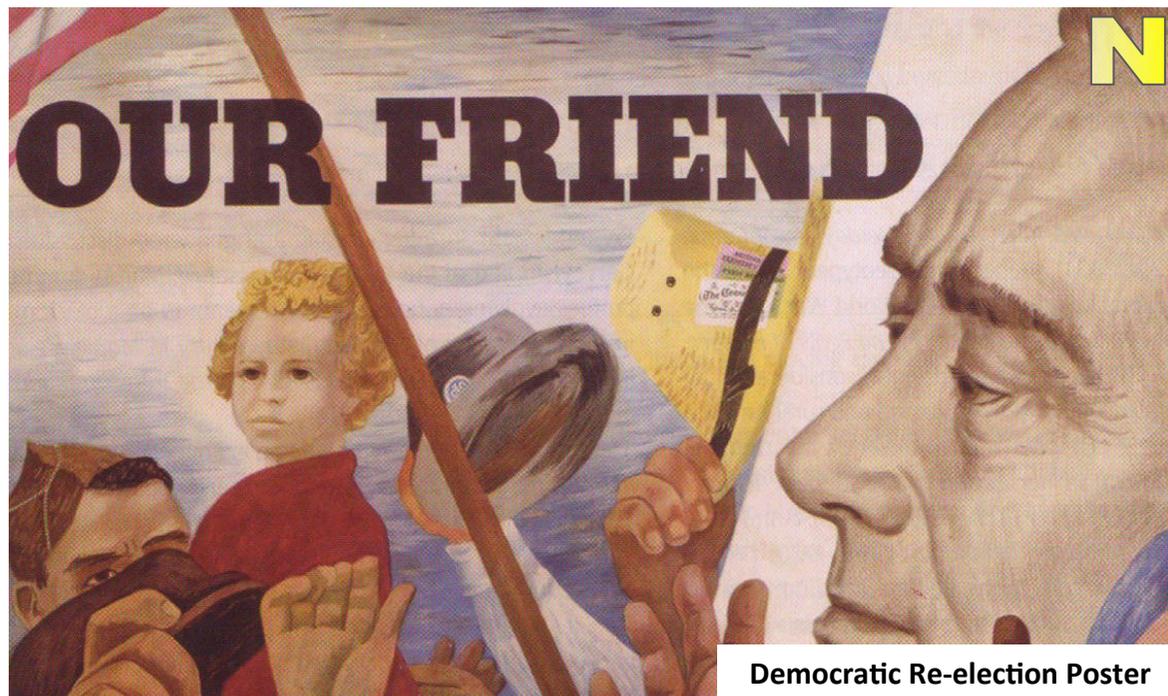


'What did the New Deal achieve? It certainly did not cure the Depression. And many economists have maintained that on balance it did not even do much to help American businesses to recover. Yet, it had notable positive achievements to its credit. The transformation of the Tennessee Valley under the TVA from much poverty to a growing measure of prosperity was one. The Public Works Administration (PWA) built on a considerable scale - schools and sewage plants, hospitals, railway stations and bridges. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) also gave work to writers, painters, sculptors and actors. But far more significant was the simple fact that the New Deal restored hope to millions of men and women by providing them with a job or saving their home.'

CP Hill

Franklin Roosevelt, 1966.

M



Democratic Re-election Poster

'The New Deal never demonstrated it could achieve prosperity in peacetime. As late as 1941 there were still six million unemployed and not until the war did the army of the jobless disappear

W.E. Leuchtenberg.

Franklin D Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1963.

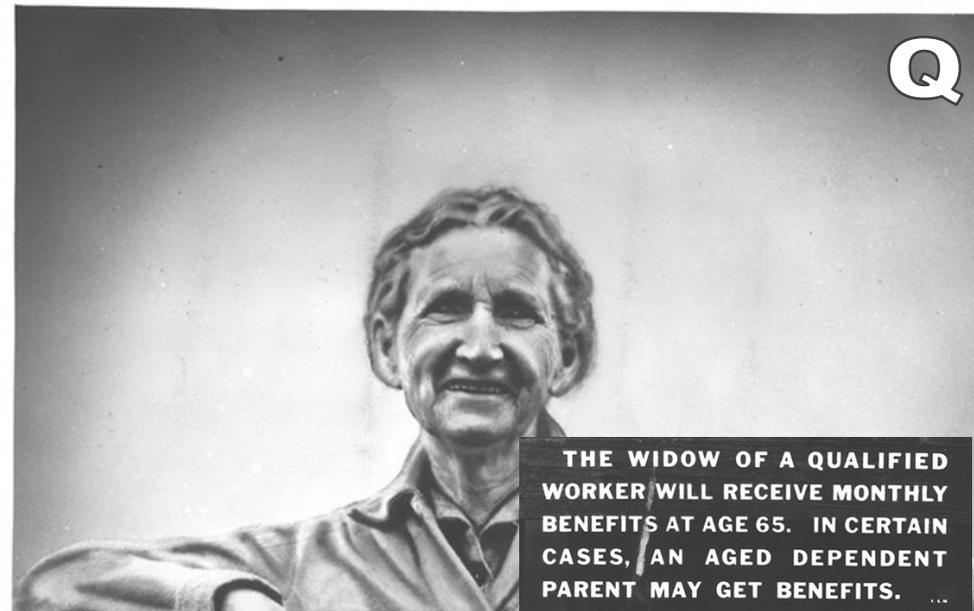
O

The main aims of the New Deal were the recovery of industry and agriculture, and to get people back to work. There is no doubt that the first phase of the New Deal for 1933 to 1936 brought about a degree of recovery. Unemployment was reduced and businesses revived. But, when, in 1937, the government started to spend less money on its schemes, production fell again and a second wave of depression hit the country. Roosevelt pumped billions of dollars into the economy to prevent the situation getting worse, However, it was clear the continual injections of government money were needed. It was only after 1941, when the USA become involved in the Second World War and the demand for American manufactured goods and food increased dramatically, the economy was lifted out of the depression.

The USA Between the Wars: 1919 - 1941

P

MORE SECURITY FOR THE AMERICAN FAMILY



THE WIDOW OF A QUALIFIED WORKER WILL RECEIVE MONTHLY BENEFITS AT AGE 65. IN CERTAIN CASES, AN AGED DEPENDENT PARENT MAY GET BENEFITS. ...

R

Cartoon: 1934

The New Deal did help to reduce unemployment. Agencies such as the CCC and WPA got millions back to work. Public projects such as road building and tree planting were of great benefit to the country. Yet, unemployment remained high and some jobs were created just for the sake of it. Confidence in the economy remained low and people spent 75% less than they did in 1928 before the economic crash. The New Deal never solved underlying economic problems and although unemployment did drop before 1938 but it rose again when Roosevelt cut government support.

S

School History Textbook.

Many large farm owners did benefit. Production stabilised and prices rose. Loans helped them keep their farms and buy equipment. By 1935 incomes were rising. However, small farmers and sharecroppers particularly in the South failed to benefit.

T

Internet Article

U

1935 cartoon by Herbert Johnson.

He was a conservative and a critic of Roosevelt and the New Deal.

The argument FOR Roosevelt and the New Deal.

- 1: He was the driving force behind the New Deal and left a legacy of new and improved schools, roads, bridges and buildings.
- 2: He relieved the suffering of millions of Americans by organising government funded relief to prevent starvation and homelessness.
- 3: He rescued the banking system and saved businesses from collapse.
- 4: He raised public moral and inspired hope and courage

The argument against Roosevelt and the New Deal.

- 1: Didn't get the economy out of the depression or solve unemployment.
- 2: He did not do enough for minority groups such as black people.
- 3: He made the central government and presidency too powerful, damaging the Constitution and the independence of the Supreme Court.
- 4: He interfered too much in people's lives and took away the concept of self reliance.
- 5: He prevented economic recovery by placing too many rules and regulations on business and allowing trade unions to have too much power.

The USA Between the Wars: 1919 –1941

V

1933 cartoon by Tom Carlisle.

W



Women also benefited from the major reforms of the New Deal, such as the Fair Labor Relations Act - which guaranteed workers rights to organize and led to more than 800,000 women joining trade unions by the end of the 1930s. In addition, the Fair Labor Standards Act, set maximum hour and minimum wages, although some major categories of women's employment, such as domestic workers and retail clerks, were left outside the reach of the law. These gains, though somewhat modest within the overall scope of the New Deal relief, nevertheless established the precedent that the plight of working women must be taken into consideration in any state or national effort to provide relief to the unemployed.

www.rooseveltinstitute.org

X

'The legacy of the New Deal was in the ideas and attitudes. These years brought in the revolution in thinking of the American people about the place of federal government in their lives. The great reforms—the regulation of banking, the limitation so working hours have remained part of the American social fabric. It was not the least of Roosevelt's achievements that he gave new heart and vigour to his fellow countrymen just in time to face the Second World War.'

ACP Hill: The USA Since the First World War - 1967.

Y

Equally important, the opportunities provided by the New Deal for professional women such as Ellen Woodward to work in higher positions of the federal government was also new. The New Deal's record in placing women in positions of responsibility within government - which includes, among others, Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labor, the first female cabinet minister in history and Mary Bethune as head of the Division of Negro Affairs in the National Youth Administration - would not be matched until the 1960s. Thanks to the efforts of Eleanor Roosevelt and others, then, the New Deal-though not perfect broke new ground for women in America.

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Z

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 **Task:** to review sources to consider the strengths and weaknesses of the New Deal

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A		
B		
C		
D		
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Alphabet Agencies represented as cures.



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This source provides the headline for source F.



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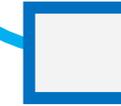
Message =The New Deal covered up bigger problems.



Gives a fair summary of the New Deal and unemployment.



Gives a FOR and AGAINST for farmers.



Says how many women joined trade unions.



FDR is bragging a little here.



The New Deal did not create an 'economic miracle'



Says that WW2 was the main reason the USA fully recovered.



STRONG words in support of the New Deal.



Explains how some women got improved political status.



Says the New Deal his lots of left wing corruption / polices.



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The New Deal provided benefits for older women.



Answers

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