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Sommario/riassunto	Brooke explores the struggle within the young American nation over

the extension of social and political rights after the Revolution. By closely examining the formation and interplay of political structures and civil institutions in the upper Hudson Valley, it traces the debates over who should fall within and outside of the legally protected category of citizen. The story of Martin Van Buren - US president, and first theoretician of American party politics - threads the narrative, as his views profoundly influenced American understandings of consent and civil society and led to the birth of the US party system.
