

BECOMING AMERICA IS A 21ST-CENTURY APPROACH TO LEARNING HISTORY



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Critical Missions immerse students as active participants in a series of transformative moments in history. As advisors to key historical figures, students read and analyze sources, interpret maps and timelines, and write recommendations. In the process, students learn to think like an historian, conducting a retrospective analysis from a contemporary perspective.



The figure displays two screenshots from the 'Critical Missions' interface, specifically for the mission 'Truman and the Atomic Bomb'. The left screenshot shows a 'learn about your mission' screen with a quote from President Harry S. Truman and a list of instructions. The right screenshot shows an 'analyze the map' screen with a world map and a legend for territorial changes and battle casualties.

learn about your mission

I have been president for only a few months, assuming the position of Commander-in-Chief for a nation involved in a long, global war. New technology has provided me with an atomic bomb—the world's first nuclear weapon—which could forever change the face of warfare. Now, I must decide whether to use this devastating new weapon to end the war with Japan. One group of advisors, including my chief advisor and long-time mentor, Secretary of State James F. Byrnes, is encouraging me to approve the plan. Another group, including the Under-Secretary of State and expert on Japanese diplomacy, Joseph Gurnea, advises against it. Here is what I need you to do:

1. Review the information on the following pages: the timeline, the maps, and the documents;
2. Identify important themes and evidence that my advisors have considered in offering their opinions;
3. Write your recommendation of whether or not I should use the atomic bomb on Japan, including the themes and evidence to support your conclusion.

This is a decision that will shape the future for all humanity; consider it well!

President Harry S. Truman

analyze the map

Use the timeline to view changes over time and explore all the information that the map has to offer!

WWII Territorial Changes and Battle Casualties

1942

- ✓ Occupied by Allies
- ✓ Occupied by Soviet Union
- ✓ Occupied by Axis powers
- ✓ Japanese naval power
- ✓ Neutral or non-combatant

● Battle Point

● 100,000+ battle-casualties

● 100,000+ battle-casualties



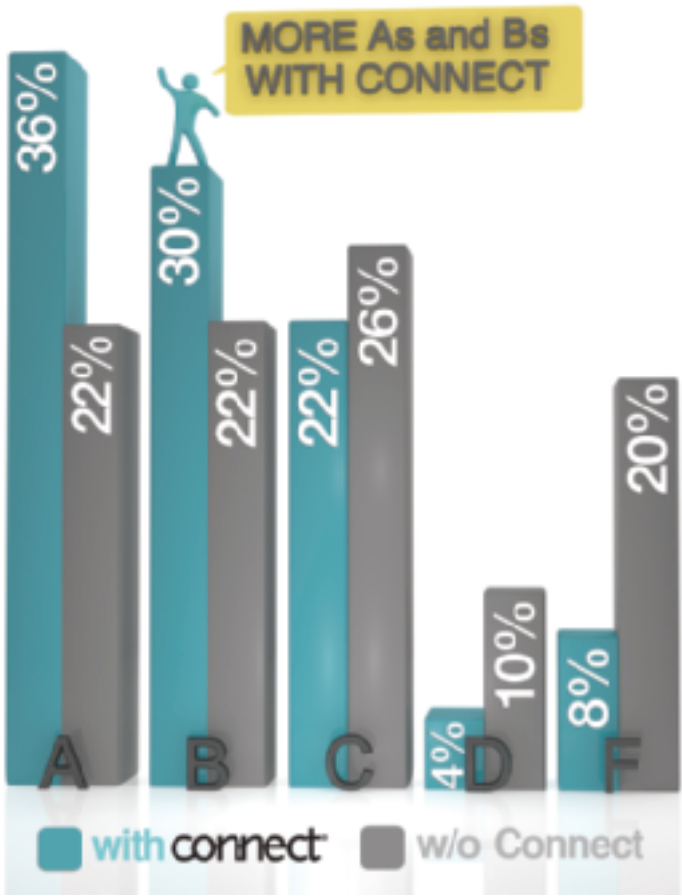
SUCCEED FASTER WITH CONNECT HISTORY

Connect History strengthens the links among faculty, students and coursework. Innovative, adaptive technology aligns the goals of students and faculty, allowing them to work together to accomplish more in less time. Connect History engages students in the course content so they are better prepared, take a more active part in discussions, and achieve better course performance.



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PRAISE FOR BECOMING AMERICA

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"I think the authors did a fantastic job bringing together current scholarship, finding so many fascinating anecdotes and stories, and accurately explaining the broad scope of American history.... My older colleagues who like political history will not be disappointed, but the younger and women professors will be pleased with the focus on culture."
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"The use of various media to explore history is its greatest strength." — Roger Rawlings, *Savannah College of Art and Design*

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BECOMING AMERICA

A HISTORY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

DAVID HENKIN

REBECCA McLENNAN

The University of California, Berkeley





BECOMING AMERICA: A HISTORY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

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BRIEF CONTENTS

1	CONVERGENCE OF MANY PEOPLES: AMERICA BEFORE 1600	2
2	EARLY COLONIES 1600–1680	31
3	SLAVERY & RACE 1660–1750	58
4	BRITISH COLONIES IN AN ATLANTIC ECONOMY 1660–1750	81
5	EMPIRES, WAR, & THE TRANSFORMATION OF INDIAN COUNTRY 1700–1765	102
6	CRISIS & WAR 1765–1781	128
7	MAKING A NEW NATION 1776–1792	158
8	THE EARLY REPUBLIC 1790–1811	184
9	WAR, EXPANSION, & INDIAN REMOVAL 1811–1830	212
10	MARKET SOCIETY & THE BIRTH OF MASS POLITICS 1825–1844	240
11	SLAVERY & THE SOUTH 1831–1844	268
12	ERA OF MIDDLE-CLASS REFORM 1831–1848	296
13	EXPANSION, NATIONALISM, & AMERICAN POPULAR CULTURE 1844–1854	320
14	A UNION UNRAVELING 1848–1860	350
15	DISUNION AND WAR 1861–1865	380
16	SOUTHERN RECONSTRUCTION 1862–1883	414
17	REMAKING THE WEST 1865–1893	444
18	INDUSTRIALIZING AMERICA 1865–1885	472
19	POLITICS & DISCONTENT IN THE GILDED AGE 1878–1896	500
20	THE PROGRESSIVE ERA 1896–1914	532
21	THE BIRTH OF A GREAT POWER: THE UNITED STATES & THE WORLD 1880–1914	564
22	WAR & PEACE 1914–1920	596
23	AMERICA IN THE JAZZ AGE 1920–1929	628
24	AMERICA REMADE: THE GREAT DEPRESSION & THE NEW DEAL 1929–1939	660
25	AMERICA GOES TO WAR 1939–1945	692
26	POSTWAR AMERICA 1945–1953	724
27	AGE OF AFFLUENCE 1953–1960	756
28	ERA OF DREAMS & DISCONTENT 1960–1969	786
29	REACTION, RECESSION, & GLOBALIZATION 1970–1979	820
30	DEINDUSTRIALIZING AMERICA 1980–1992	850
31	GLOBALIZING AMERICA, 1992 TO THE PRESENT	882



DEDICATION

*To Mr. Hand, U.S. history teacher at Ridgemont High School, for his faith in
our generation.*

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



DAVID HENKIN

Since David Henkin joined the history faculty at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1997, he has taught and written about the sorts of subjects that rarely make it into traditional textbooks. He has offered entire courses on baseball, Broadway, consumption, time, leisure, newspapers, world cities, and urban literature, while publishing books and essays about street signs, paper money, junk mail, and intimate correspondence in the nineteenth century. The task of integrating that kind of material into the traditional narrative of the American past has been the singular challenge of his professional life. David holds a BA from Yale University and a PhD from U.C. Berkeley, and he was awarded Berkeley's Distinguished Teaching Award in the Social Sciences. Beyond the Berkeley campus, David teaches classes on the Bible, plays cards, eats lots of fish and berries, roots passionately for the St. Louis Cardinals, and accumulates frequent-flyer miles at a frenetic pace. Raised in New York, where his family still lives, he makes his home with friends and community in San Francisco.



REBECCA McLENNAN

Rebecca McLennan is associate professor of history at the University of California, Berkeley. Her research focuses on America since 1607, with an emphasis on post-revolutionary U.S. legal, political, and cultural history. She received her PhD from Columbia University and was on the faculty at Harvard University before joining Berkeley's history department. She has taught a diverse range of undergraduate courses, including classes on American and global foodways and agriculture since 1491; modern consumer culture; land, law, and property; and crime and punishment from colonial times to the present. Rebecca has published widely in American history and is currently writing a cultural history of courts in the early republic. Her most recent book, *The Crisis of Imprisonment: Protest, Politics, and the Making of the American Penal State, 1776–1941* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), won several major book awards, including the American Historical Association's Littleton-Griswold Prize for best book in U.S. legal history.

CONTENTS



CHAPTER 1. CONVERGENCE OF MANY PEOPLES: AMERICA BEFORE 1600 2

NORTH AMERICA BEFORE CONTACT 4

- Early Societies of North America 5
- The Agricultural Revolution and the Cities of the Southwest 6
- Social and Cultural Patterns Among Southwestern Peoples 8
- The Rise and Fall of Mississippian Civilization 8
- Spaces & Places: Cahokia, Hub City 10
- The Dispersal of the North American Powers 10
- Cultures of the Pacific Coast 12

EUROPE AND AFRICA ON THE EVE OF CONTACT 12

- Change and Conflict in Northwestern Europe 12
- Crusades, Reconquista, and the Beginnings of Exploration 13
- West Africa and Islam 15

CONVERGENCE AND CONTACT 17

- Columbus's First and Second Voyages 17
- Successor Voyages—and a New Continent Discovered 18
- The Spanish Conquest 19
- Interpreting the Sources: The Requerimiento 20
- The Columbian Exchange 21

NORTH AMERICA IN THE NEW WORLD 22

- Early Northern Exploration 22
- Protestant Explorers and Conquerors 23
- Early Contacts in the North 25
- Singular Lives: Manteo, Cultural Broker 26
- Hot Commodities: Cod 27



1600–1680

CHAPTER 2. EARLY COLONIES 31

NEW SPAIN IN NORTH AMERICA 33

- The Establishment of New Mexico 33
- The Missionary Regime in the Southwest 34
- Missions in Florida 35

States of Emergency: The Pueblo Revolt 36

NEW FRANCE AND NEW NETHERLAND IN THE IROQUOIS WORLD 37

- The Iroquois League and European Trade 37
- Hot Commodities: Beaver 38
- The French in Canada 39
- New Netherland 40
- Singular Lives: Catalina Trico, Founding Mother 41

STUART ENGLAND AND THE SETTLEMENT OF THE CHESAPEAKE 42

- Crisis in England 42
- Jamestown and Powhatan 43
- Migration and Growth 45
- Bacon's Rebellion 46

Interpreting the Sources: Ballads About Virginia 48

THE FOUNDING OF NEW ENGLAND 49

- Pilgrims and Puritans 49
- Puritan Society, Towns, and Religious Practice 51
- Internal Divisions 52
- Conflicts with Indians 54
- King Philip's War 55



1660–1750

CHAPTER 3. SLAVERY & RACE 58

THE TRANSITION TO SLAVE LABOR 60

- Before the Spread of Slavery 60
- From Servants to Slaves in the Chesapeake 61
- Codifying Black Slavery 62
- Attitudes Toward Race 63
- Interpreting the Sources: The Curse of Ham 64

AFRICANS IN NORTH AMERICA 65

- Capture and the Middle Passage 66
- Hot Commodities: Cowrie Shells 68
- Born into Slavery 69
- African Diaspora 70
- Singular Lives: Ayuba Suleiman Diallo, Redeemed Captive 72

VARIETIES OF COLONIAL SLAVERY 73

- Tobacco Farming in the Chesapeake 73
- Rice in the Lowcountry 74
- States of Emergency: The Stono Rebellion 75
- Slavery in the North 76
- Slavery on the Gulf Coast 77

1660–1750

CHAPTER 4. BRITISH COLONIES IN AN ATLANTIC ECONOMY 81

RESTORATION AND EXPANSION 82

- Charles II and the New Imperial Order 82
- The Middle Colonies 83
- The Glorious Revolution in North America 86

A GROWING WORLD OF MIGRANTS 86

- Natural Increase in New England 87
- Singular Lives: Sarah Grosvenor, Pregnant Puritan 88
- Diverse Immigrants in the Middle Colonies 88
- Creoles in the Chesapeake 90
- Africans and Europeans in the Lower South 90
- Interpreting the Sources: Benjamin Franklin on the Population of British America 91

A FARMING SOCIETY IN A COMMERCIAL EMPIRE 91

- Land Ownership 92
- Farm Households: Gender Roles and Daily Life 92
- The Agricultural Economy: Yeoman Farmers and the Spread of Commerce 93
- Hot Commodities: Forks 94
- Ranks and “Sorts” 95
- Urban Centers and City People 96
- Spaces & Places: Nomini Hall and Carter’s Grove: Elite Homes in the Chesapeake 97

ENLIGHTENMENT AND AWAKENING 98

- Taverns, Newspapers, and Intellectual Life 98
- Enlightenment Culture 99
- Religious Revivals 99



5 1700–1765
CHAPTER 5. EMPIRES, WAR, & THE TRANSFORMATION OF INDIAN COUNTRY 102

RIVAL POWERS IN THE EAST 104

- The Iroquois League and Britain’s Northern Colonies 104
- Spain and France in North America 105
- Singular Lives: Sir William Johnson, Irish Mohawk 106
- Imperial Wars 106

FRONTIERS AND BORDERLANDS IN INDIAN COUNTRY 109

- Alliance and Diplomacy in the East 109
- Indian Powers in the West 110

IMPERIAL CONNECTIONS IN BRITISH AMERICA 111

- Consumer Cultures 111
- Hot Commodities: Horses 112
- Imperial Communications 114
- Military Alliance 114

THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR 115

- War Erupts in the Ohio Country 115
- Spaces & Places: Line of Forts, Imperial Outpost 116
- The Tide Turns 118
- The End of the War 118

A NEW IMPERIAL MAP 119

- Assessing the Costs of War 119
- Populations on the Move 121
- Revolution in Indian Country 122
- Britain’s New Indian Policies 124

Interpreting the Sources: The Proclamation of 1763 and the Wampum Belt of 1764 124

6 1765–1781
CHAPTER 6. CRISIS & WAR 128

THE IMPERIAL CRISIS 130

- Militarization of the British Colonies 131
- Taxation and the Question of Representation 131
- Ideals and Images of Liberty 132
- The Escalating Political Conflict 133

A DECADE OF POPULAR PROTEST 134

- Consumption and Nonconsumption 134



- Violence in the Countryside 134
- Hot Commodities: Homespun Clothing 135
- Urban Crowds and Street Theater 136
- The Tea Party and the Move to Coercion 137

MOBILIZING FOR REVOLUTION 140

- Spreading the Word 140
- The Beginnings of War 141
- Making the Case in Print 143
- Mustering Armies 143

MAKING WAR 145

- Early Campaigns 146
- Saratoga and the Turning Tide 146
- Foreign Interventions 148
- The Southern Campaign and the British Surrender 148
- States of Emergency: The Sack of St. Eustatius 150

WHOSE REVOLUTION? 150

- Women in the Revolution 150
- Singular Lives: Patience Wright: Woman Under Cover 151
- Loyalists 151
- Slaves and Independence 152
- Interpreting the Sources: Antislavery Petitions in Massachusetts 154
- Indians and the War 155

7 1776–1792
CHAPTER 7. MAKING A NEW NATION 158

DECLARING INDEPENDENCE 160

- Declaration by Committee 161
- The Text of the Declaration 161
- Publicizing the Declaration 162

STATE BUILDING 163

- The Original Constitutions 163
- Interpreting the Sources: Thirteen Toasts 164
- Confederation 165
- A Weak Central Government 165

A NEW MAP 167

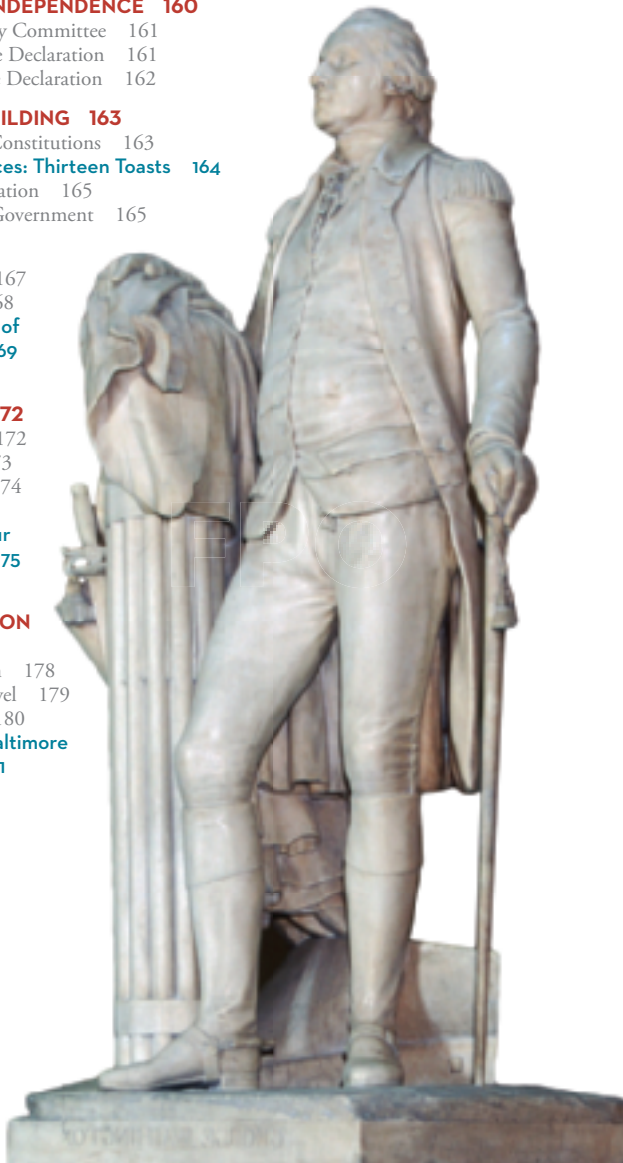
- Imagining a Continent 167
- National Boundaries 168
- Hot Commodities: Maps of the United States 169
- Land Ordinances 170

THE CONSTITUTION 172

- Convening the Delegates 172
- Talking About Slavery 173
- Writing the Constitution 174
- Ratification 174
- Singular Lives: Gouverneur Morris, Ghost Writer 175
- The First President 177

NATIONAL COMMUNICATION NETWORKS 178

- Literature and the New Nation 178
- Women and the American Novel 179
- Broadcast Network 180
- Spaces & Places: The Baltimore Post Office 181





1790–1811

CHAPTER 8. THE EARLY
REPUBLIC 184

THE PROBLEM OF
SLAVERY 186

- Slavery Sectionalized 187
- Haiti's Revolution 188
- Philadelphia's Experiment 189
- States of Emergency: Yellow
Fever in Philadelphia 191

THE BEGINNINGS OF
PARTISAN POLITICS 192

- Alexander Hamilton's
Economic Agenda 192
- Hot Commodities: Whiskey 193
- The First U.S. Party System 194
- Foreign Revolutions 194
- A Partisan Press 195
- "A Bloodless Revolution" 196

IMAGINED CITIES 197

- A Brand New Capital 198
- D.C.'s Humble Beginnings 198
- Interpreting the Sources: Federalist and Republican
Plans for a National Capital 199
- The Urban Frontier 200
- Boosters, Speculators, and Bankers 201
- Singular Lives: Andrew Dexter, Rogue
Banker in the Wilderness 201
- Wall Street and the New York Grid 204

PRESIDENT JEFFERSON AND WESTWARD EXPANSION 205

- Republicans Take Power 205
- The Louisiana Purchase 205
- Lewis and Clark: Revealing the West 207
- Cities on the Mississippi 207

CAPTIVITY AND THE EMBARGO YEARS, 1807–1811 208

- War in the Mediterranean 208
- Ending the International Slave Trade 209
- Neutrality, Impressment, and Embargo 209

1811–1830

CHAPTER 9. WAR, EXPANSION,
& INDIAN REMOVAL 212

TECUMSEH AND THE BEGINNINGS OF WAR 214

- Pan-Indian Resistance 215
- Divisions over the "Civilization Program" 215
- States of Emergency: The New Madrid Earthquakes 216
- U.S.-Indian Tensions Explode 217
- The War Hawks Prevail 217

THE WAR OF 1812: ESCAPING DISASTER 218

- Washington Is Burning 218
- The Hartford Convention 219
- The Southern Front 220
- Interpreting the Sources: "The Defence of Fort
McHenry" ("The Star-Spangled Banner") 221
- War's End: The Treaty of Ghent and the
Battle of New Orleans 222

EXPANSION IN JAMES
MONROE'S AMERICA 223

- The Invasion of Florida and the European
Powers' Withdrawal 223
- Latin American Independence and
the Monroe Doctrine 224
- Internal Improvements, Economic Growth,
and Financial Panic 224
- Missouri and the New Geography of Slavery 226



NEW RELIGIOUS NETWORKS 228

- The Benevolent Empire 228
- The Evangelical Frontier 228
- Hot Commodities: Cheap Printed Bibles 229
- Women, Religion, and Public Life 230
- CIVILIZATION AND REMOVAL 231
- Civilized Tribes 231
- Andrew Jackson and Indian Removal 232
- Singular Lives: Pushmataha, Regretful Ally 234
- Metamora, Leatherstocking, and the New American Culture 235

1825–1844

CHAPTER 10. MARKET
SOCIETY &
THE BIRTH OF
MASS POLITICS 240

ANDREW JACKSON AND
DEMOCRACY 242

- Universal Manhood Suffrage 243
- Jackson's Rise 243
- Patronage, Peggy Eaton, and
Jackson's First Term 245
- The Bank War and the
Panic of 1837 246
- Democracy and Equality 247
- Interpreting the Sources: Bank Notes 248

PARTICIPATORY POLITICS AND THE SECOND PARTY SYSTEM 249

- A Second Party System 249
- Campaigning in Print 250
- Rowdy Elections 250
- Hot Commodities: Davy Crockett and His Almanacs 252
- Fire Companies, Saloons, and Boxers 253

MARKETS AND CITIES 253

- Canals and the Transportation Revolution 254
- Urbanization and City Growth 255
- Cities, Crowds, and Strangers 258
- The Rise of the Penny Press 259
- Singular Lives: Dorcas Doyen, Tabloid Victim 260
- Work, Unions, and Class Struggle 260

MILLENNIALISM AND AWAKENING 262

- Revivals Along the Canal Route 262
- America as Sacred Soil: Joseph Smith and Mordecai Noah 263
- Spaces & Places: Nauvoo, Illinois 264
- The End of Time 265

1831–1844

CHAPTER 11. SLAVERY & THE
SOUTH 268

THE WORLD OF COTTON 271

- Cotton Becomes King 271
- The Domestic Slave Trade 272
- Spaces & Places: The New Orleans Slave Market 274

POWER AND CONTROL UNDER SLAVERY 275

- Plantation Life 275
- Family Life and Sexual Relations 277
- Slaves to the State 278
- Slave Resistance 279
- Hot Commodities: Slave Passes 280
- Urban Slavery 281
- Interpreting the Sources: Runaway Slave Advertisements 282

SOUTHERN CULTURES 283

- Codes of Honor Among Whites 283
- Christianity in Black and White 284
- Slave Folkways 285
- Singular Lives: Frances Webb Bumpass, Evangelical Editor 286
- The Culture of Common White Folk 286

SLAVERY, POLITICS, AND SECTIONAL CONFLICT 287

- Antislavery Rumbblings and Attempts at Censorship 288
- Proslavery Defiance 290
- The Slave Power and Conspiracy Theories 290
- Seminoles, Texans, and the Slavery Conflict 291
- The Amistad Case 292

WAR AND CONQUEST 325

- The Invasion of Mexico 326
- Following the Victory at Home 327
- War and Slavery 328
- Surrender and the Mexican Cession 329
- EXPANDING WEST 331
- Overland Migration 331
- Gold Discovered in California 332
- Natives and Californios 335
- Singular Lives: John Rollin Ridge, Cherokee Novelist 337
- San Francisco: Instant City 337
- Mormon Exodus 338

NATIONALISM AND POPULAR THEATER 338

- States of Emergency: The Astor Place Riot 339
- Boisterous Audiences 339
- P. T. Barnum and Museum Theater 340
- Blackface Minstrelsy 341
- Interpreting the Sources: "Oh! Susanna" 342

NATIONAL COMMUNICATION 343

- The Telegraph 343
- Cheap Postage 345
- Hot Commodities: Daguerreotype Portraits 346
- National Literature 346

THE AMERICAN NATION IN THE WORLD 347

- The Revolutions of 1848 347
- Filibusters 347
- New Commercial Frontiers 348

12

1831-1848

CHAPTER 12. ERA OF MIDDLE-CLASS REFORM 296

THE CULTURE OF REFORM IN THE NORTH 299

- Self-Improvement 299
- Associations and Utopias 299
- Reforming the State 300

TEMPERANCE AND SELF-CONTROL 301

- Taking the Pledge 301
- Hot Commodities: Cold Water 302
- Sensationalism and the Perils of Drink 303
- Sex and the Secret Vice 303
- Singular Lives: Sylvester Graham, Diet Crusader 305

ABOLITIONISTS 305

- Immediatism 305
- Slave Testimony 306
- Mob Violence 307
- States of Emergency: The Murder of Elijah Lovejoy 308
- Internal Divisions 309

DOMESTICITY AND GENDER 310

- Men's and Women's Separate Spheres 310
- White-Collar Men 311
- Magazines, Holidays, and Consumption 312
- The Rise of Feminism 313

RELIGIOUS CONFLICT 315

- Anti-Catholicism 315
- Interpreting the Sources: The Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk 316
- Irish Immigration and the Potato Famine 317
- Religion and the Common Schools 318

13

1844-1854

CHAPTER 13. EXPANSION, NATIONALISM, & AMERICAN POPULAR CULTURE 320

MANIFEST DESTINY AND THE ROAD TO WAR 323

- Texas and the Politics of Expansion 323
- The Election of 1844 324
- Young America, Race, and Manifest Destiny 324

14

1848-1860

CHAPTER 14. A UNION UNRAVELING 350

COMPROMISES AND BOUNDARIES 353

- The Election of 1848 353
- The Compromise of 1850 353
- Fugitive Slaves 354
- Uncle Tom's Cabin 356

RAILROAD NATION 357

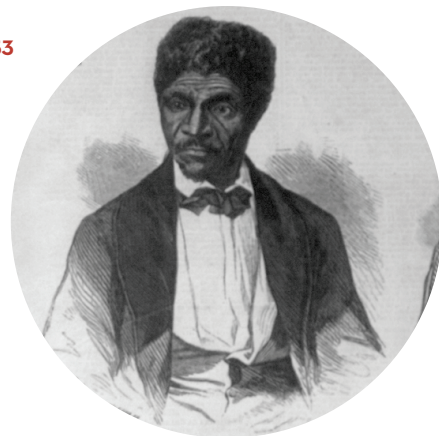
- The Rail Network 357
- The Rise of Chicago 360
- Hot Commodities: Grain 363
- Railroads and Time 363
- Industry and Wages 363
- Interpreting the Sources: George Fitzhugh on Industrial Labor 364

POLITICAL REALIGNMENT 365

- Kansas and Nebraska 365
- The Know-Nothings 366
- Bleeding Kansas, Bleeding Sumner 368
- Dred Scott and the End of Compromise 370
- Singular Lives: Elizabeth Keckley, Free Seamstress 371
- Spaces & Places: Mount Vernon 372

FEAR AND CRISIS 372

- The Lincoln-Douglas Debates 372
- John Brown's Raid 374
- The Election of 1860 375



15

1861–1865

CHAPTER 15. DISUNION & WAR 380

SECESSION 383

The Confederation of the Cotton States 383

The Upper South in the Balance 383

Compromise Plans 384

Fort Sumter 385

THE CONFEDERACY UNDER SIEGE, 1861–1862 386

Preparing for War 386

A Thwarted Invasion 387

The Western Front and the Naval Blockade 388

West of the Mississippi: Native Americans

Join the Fray 388

THE SLAVERY WAR 390

Slavery and War Policy 390

Emancipation 391

Blacks in the Union Army 393

White Soldiers' Attitudes Toward Slavery 393

THE WAR'S MANY FRONTS 394

Occupied Territory 394

Guerrilla Warfare 395

Prisons, Hospitals, and Burial Grounds 396

Home Fronts 399

Interpreting the Sources: Walt Whitman's Condolence Letters 400

Hot Commodities: Civil War Board Games 401

THE WAR'S END, 1863–1865 404

Key Union Victories 404

Lincoln's War 404

A New Federal Government 406

Grant's Command 407

States of Emergency: The New York Draft Riots 408

Surrender and Assassination 409

Singular Lives: Jesse James, Confederate Guerrilla 410



16

1862–1883

CHAPTER 16. SOUTHERN RECONSTRUCTION 414

WARTIME RECONSTRUCTION 417

Lincoln's Ten Percent Plan 417

Early Congressional Initiatives 417

Lincoln's Assassination and Northern Sentiment 419

CLAIMING THE FUTURE 419

Freedpeople Claim Their Freedom 419

Hot Commodities: Dressing for Freedom: Silks and Satins 420

Rural Worlds Lost: White Farmers 421

Planters and Power 422

The Freedmen's Bureau 422

PATHS TOWARD RECONSTRUCTION 422

Johnson and Presidential Reconstruction 422

Black Codes 423

Congress Takes Control 423

Interpreting the Sources: Mississippi's Black Code, 1865 424

The Fourteenth Amendment, Violent Backlash, and Impeachment 425

Toward a Racially Inclusive Democracy 427

Reconstruction Governments 428



17

1865–1893

CHAPTER 17. REMAKING THE WEST 444

CONQUEST AND INCORPORATION 447

Mapping the Land 448

Railroading the West 449

The Contested Plains 451

War, Relocation, and Resistance 453

Fighting Back 454

Singular Lives: Siting Bull: Warrior, Chief, and Symbol of Resistance 456

Hunters into Farmers 457

The Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee 458

BONANZAS, FEVERS, AND BUSTS 458

Men, Women, and Mining 458

Farmers and Land Fever 460

Cattlemen and Cowboys 461

Spaces & Places: Pumpkinville (Phoenix), Arizona 462

The Cattle Wars 464

Hot Commodities: Barbed Wire 465

REINVENTING THE WEST 466

Excluding the Chinese 466

Wilding the West 467

Interpreting the Sources: Advertising the Dream: Palmdale, California 468

California Dreaming 469



18

1865–1885

CHAPTER 18. INDUSTRIALIZING AMERICA 472

THE INDUSTRIAL NETWORKING OF AMERICA 475

Railroads and the Birth of Big Business 475

Completing the Information Network 476

The Construction Boom 477

Mass Production Comes of Age 478

The Energy Revolution 480

Corporate Monopolies 480

Speed and Time in Industrial Culture 481

Interpreting the Sources: George M. Beard, American Nervousness 482

19

1878–1896

CHAPTER 19. POLITICS &
DISCONTENT IN THE GILDED AGE 500

- YEARS OF UNREST 482**
 - New Classes, New Aspirations 482
 - Riot, Fire, and Flu 483
 - The Depression Years 484
- States of Emergency: The Great Chicago Fire 485**
 - The Great Railroad Strike of 1877 487
- SOCIETY AND CULTURE IN THE GILDED AGE CITY 488**
 - Cathedrals of Consumption: The Rise of the Department Store 488
 - Inhabiting the City 489
- Singular Lives: John Wanamaker, Department Store Magnate 490**
 - Cheap Amusements 492
 - Women, Gender, and the Culture Wars 493
- Hot Commodities: The Concert-Saloon 494**
- THE INDUSTRIALIZED ENVIRONMENT 495**
 - Land, Waterways, and Forests 495
 - Urban Ecology 496
 - Remaking Nature and Inventing “The Country” 497
- AGE OF MASS POLITICS 502**
 - Political Machines and Their Critics 502
 - Saloons and Politics 503
- Hot Commodities: Votes for Sale! 504**
 - Election Campaigns and the Pageantry of Mass Politics 504
 - The Partisan Press 506
 - Electoral Mapmaking 507
 - The South and Biracial Politics 507
- Singular Lives: Nellie Bly, Investigative Journalist 508**
- WOMEN IN POLITICS 509**
 - Campaigning for Suffrage 509
 - Temperance Crusaders and Clubwomen 510
 - The Settlement Movement and Municipal Politics 510
- NATIONAL POLITICS 511**
 - Republic of Lobbyists 511
 - Veterans and the Foundations of the Welfare State 512
 - The Presidency and the Spoils System 512
 - Civil Service Reform and the Garfield Assassination 513
 - Debating the Tariff 514
 - The Money Question 514
 - Democrats Return: The One-Term Presidency of Grover Cleveland 515
- Interpreting the Sources: Thomas Nast, “Milk Tickets for Babies” 516**
- TIDES OF POLITICAL DISCONTENT 518**
 - The Anti-Monopoly Movement 518
 - Workers and the Producers’ Republic 519
- States of Emergency: The Haymarket Affair 520**
 - Industrial Conflict and the New Nativism 520
 - “Brains, Push, and Enterprise”: Farmers and Rural Modernization 522
- THE COLLAPSE OF GILDED AGE POLITICS 523**
 - The Populist Challenge and the Election of 1892 524
 - Democrats and Depression 525
 - Strikers and Marchers 526
 - Jim Crow and the New Racial Order 527
 - Remaking the American Political System 529



20

1896–1914

CHAPTER 20.
THE PROGRESSIVE
ERA 532

- INDUSTRY TRIUMPHANT 534**
 - Growth and Consolidation 535
 - Making Work Scientific 535
 - Labor Discontent 536
- Hot Commodities: The Automobile 537**
- THE URBAN AGE 538**
 - Leaving the Land 538
 - The New Immigration 539
 - The Immigrant Metropolis 540
 - Mass Entertainment and the Rise of Cinema 543
- Singular Lives: Ehrich Weiss (Harry Houdini), Escape Artist 544**
 - The Color Line 546
 - New Built Environments 547
 - The Urban Middle Class 548
- THE BIRTH OF PROGRESSIVISM 549**
 - Progressivism’s Evangelical Roots 549
 - Atlantic Crossings 549
 - A Middle-Class Movement 550
 - Feminist Progressives 551
- Interpreting the Sources: Florence Kelley on Consumer Power 553**
 - Spectacles of Reform 553
- CLEANING UP THE CITY 554**
 - The Sanitized City 554
- States of Emergency: The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire 555**
 - War on Vice 556
 - Purifying Politics 557
 - The City Beautiful 557
- THE NATIONAL PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT 557**
 - Electoral Reform 557
 - Progressive Politics and Government Regulation 558
 - Roosevelt and Conservation 558
 - Progressive Legislation in the Taft Years 558
- Woodrow Wilson: A Southern Progressive in the White House 560**



21

1880–1914

CHAPTER 21. BIRTH OF A GREAT
POWER: THE UNITED STATES &
THE WORLD 564

- NETWORKING THE WORLD 567**
 - Speeding the Gospel 567
- Singular Lives: William Henry Sheppard, Missionary and Human Rights Advocate 568**
 - The Birth of Foreign Aid 569
 - The Search for New Markets 571
 - Sea Power 573
 - Visions of Global Expansion 574
- FROM DIPLOMACY TO WAR 574**
 - Crisis in Cuba 574
 - War with Spain 575
 - War Stories 577



EMPIRE OF ISLANDS 579
The New Colonial Power 580
Blowback: The Filipino Insurgency 581
The Home Front 583
Nation-Building in the Colonies 583
Interpreting the Sources: Imperial Eyes: Inspecting the Filipino Village, St. Louis Exposition 585
Race and Empire 585

INFORMAL EMPIRE 586
Opening the Door to China 586
Rivals for the Pacific 587
Reviving the Monroe Doctrine 588
Dollar Diplomacy 589
War in Mexico 589
Spaces & Places: The Panama Canal 590
Hot Commodities: Bananas 592



23
1920–1929
CHAPTER 23. AMERICA IN THE JAZZ AGE 628

THE TRIUMPH OF CONSUMER CAPITALISM 631
The Republicans Return 631
Engines of Prosperity 632
Advertising the Good Life 632
Networking the Airwaves: The Birth of Broadcasting 634
Interpreting the Sources: Advertisement for Aunt Jemima Self-Raising Pancake Mix 637
The Culture of Credit 637
Hot Commodities: Miami Beach 638
Speculators and Swindlers 639



22
1914–1920
CHAPTER 22. WAR & PEACE 596

CLASH OF EMPIRES 598
Arms, Alliances, and Anxiety 599
Between Empires: Crisis in the Balkans 599
The Battle for Europe 599
The View from America 601
Birth of the Peace Movement 602
The Case for Preparedness 602

THE ROAD TO WAR 602
The Complexities of Neutrality 603
Progressive Crusaders 604

WARTIME GOVERNMENT 605
The Collectivist State 605
Financing the War 607
Selling the War 608
The Surveillance State 608
Singular Lives: Mary Pickford: Actor, Producer, Entrepreneur 609
Interpreting the Sources: Satirizing the War Effort 610

AMERICANS AT WAR 611
Fit to Fight 611
Hellfighters and Doughboys 612
Equal Partners: Women, Minorities, and Unions Wage War 614
Americans on the Battlefield 617

WINNING THE PEACE 618
Hot Commodities: Blood 619
Competing Visions: Progressives and Bolsheviks 619
Wilson's New World Order 620
The Dream of Collective Security 621

THE GREAT UNREST 621
Racist Backlash 622
Workers Press Their Claims 624
The Red Summer of 1919 624
States of Emergency: The Palmer Raids 625
End of the Progressive Era 625



AGE OF MASS SPECTACLE 639
Making a Spectacle of Sports 639
The Big Screen 640
Parading Commerce 641

NEW CULTURES 642
Experiencing Prohibition 642
African Americans Confront City Life 643
The Harlem Renaissance and the Jazz Age 644
Cultivating Youth 645
New Freedoms and Limits for Women 646

NEW DIVIDES 647
The Women and Men of the Ku Klux Klan 647
Policing the Borders 649
Censorship Wars 650
Protestants Divided 651
Singular Lives: Aimee Semple McPherson, Modern Evangelist 652

END OF AN ERA 653
The Rise of Herbert Hoover 653
States of Emergency: Politics of Disaster: The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 654
The Perils of Prosperity 655
The Great Crash 657

24
1929–1939
CHAPTER 24. AMERICA REMADE: THE GREAT DEPRESSION & THE NEW DEAL 660

HERBERT HOOVER AND HARD TIMES 662
The Unraveling Economy 663
The Limits of Voluntarism 664
Living Lean 664
Mobilizing for Change 665
The Election of 1932 666

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT AND THE FIRST NEW DEAL 667
Emergency Reform 667
Reconstructing the Economy 667
Communicating Reform 668
Popular Responses 669
Business Against Reform 670

THE SECOND NEW DEAL 670
Extending Reform 670
The Election of 1936 671

Spaces & Places: Swope Park Swimming Pool,
Kansas City, Missouri 672
A New Deal for the Arts 673

ADAPTING CONSUMER CULTURE 675
Entertaining the Nation 675
Hot Commodities: Cigarettes 676
Inventing the Teenager 678
Refining the American Diet 679
Advertising Wars 680

RURAL WORLDS TRANSFORMED 681
Demise of Sharecropping and Tenant Farming 681
Leaving the Dust Bowl 682
Envisioning the Depression 683
Singular Lives: Florence Owens Thompson, "Migrant Mother" 684
Networking Rural America 685
A New Deal for the Environment 686

LIBERALISM AND ITS DISCONTENTS 686
New Deal Liberalism 686
The Rise of the Left 687
Interpreting the Sources: Casey Bill Weldon, "W.P.A. Blues" 688
Conservative Rebirth 689
The Roosevelt Recession 689



25

1939-1945 CHAPTER 25. AMERICA GOES TO WAR 692

A WORLD AGAIN
AT WAR 694
The March of Fascism 695
Isolationist America 696
Business and the American Way 696
Confronting Fascism 697

UNDECLARED WAR 699
Aiding the Allies 699
Preparing for War 699
Attack on Pearl Harbor 700

HOME FRONTS 701
Democracy's Army 701
A War of Production 703
Americans on the Move 703
Singular Lives: Ben Kuroki, U.S. Airman 704
The Wartime City 706

CONSUMER CULTURE IN WARTIME 706
Consumers, Rationing, and Sacrifice 706
Spaces & Places: Washington, D.C., Global Capital 707
Selling the "Good War" 708
Hot Commodities: The Zoot Suit 709
Interpreting the Sources: Imagining
Rosie the Riveter 710
Patriotic Hollywood 711
Yanks About Town 713

WAGING WAR 714
The Big Three 714
Reclaiming the Pacific 716
Planning the Peace 718
Marching to Berlin 719
Facing the Holocaust 720
Dawn of the Nuclear Age 721



26

1945-1953 CHAPTER 26. POSTWAR AMERICA 724

A MEANINGFUL VICTORY 727
Challenges of Reconversion 727
Fighting Racism at Home 727
New Anxieties 728
Consolidating the New Deal 729
Republican Resurgence 729

SUPERPOWER AMERICA 730
The Big Two 730
From Rivalry to Cold War 731
The Strategy of Containment 732
The Cold War in Europe 732
Cold War Politics 734
The Cultural Cold War 734

INFRASTRUCTURES OF
CONSUMPTION 735
Americanizing Global Markets 735
Truman's Fair Deal and the Election of 1948 735
Investing in Veterans 736

Selling the Suburban Dream 737
Spaces & Places: Lakewood Park Suburban
Development, Los Angeles 738
Unions and Benefits 739
Hot Commodities: Baby Food 740

CROSSCURRENTS 741
Uneven Affluence 741
The Deindustrializing City 741
Race and Suburbanization 742
From Social Justice to Civil Rights 742
Challenging Convention 745
Interpreting the Sources: Alfred Kinsey, *Sexual
Behavior in the Human Male* 746

THE COLD WAR HEATS UP 746
The Cold War in Asia 746
Evangelizing the Cold War 748
The Korean War 748
Singular Lives: Henry Luce, *Opinion Maker* 749
McCarthy's Reign 750
The Election of 1952: Eisenhower Victorious 751



27

1953-1960 CHAPTER 27. AGE OF AFFLUENCE 756

AFFLUENT AMERICA 759
Modern Republicanism 759
The Credit Revolution 759
Televising Suburbia 760
Vehicles of Desire 762
Culture of Convenience 763

GLOBALIZING THE COLD WAR 765
Nuclear Strategies 765
The Great Technology Race 766
Competing for the Third World 767
Spaces & Places: The Cold War Kitchen 768
The Challenge of Neutrality 770

28

1960–1969

CHAPTER 28. ERA OF DREAMS & DISCONTENT 786

CULTURE REBELS 770

Teenage Worlds 770

Interpreting the Sources: The Going-Steady Controversy 772

Race, Sex, and Rock ‘n’ Roll 772

Hot Commodities: Blue Jeans 774

The Beats and the Avant-Garde 775

Critiquing Mass Society 776

THE FREEDOM MOVEMENT 777

Litigating Segregation 777

The Montgomery Bus Boycott 777

Birth of a Mass Movement 778

Challenging Inequality in the West 778

REIMAGINING GOVERNMENT 779

Gospels of Free Enterprise 779

Singular Lives: Elizabeth Eckford, “Little Rock Nine” Student 780

New Corporate Agendas 782

The Election of 1960 783



THE KENNEDY YEARS 788

New Vision, New Frontiers 788

Celebrity President 789

End of Consensus 790

The Other Americans 791

Kennedy’s Cold War Policy 791

Confronting Khrushchev 792

The Road to Vietnam 793

YOUTH AND THE FREEDOM MOVEMENT 794

Students Empower the Movement 794

Government Indecision 795

Turning the Tide 796

Marching for Freedom and Jobs 797

Assassination of JFK 798

TOWARD THE GREAT SOCIETY 799

LBJ’s Legislative Agenda 799

The Election of 1964 800

High Tide of Liberalism 801

Women Challenge Convention 801

Environmental Awakening 801

Interpreting the Sources: Betty Friedan, The Feminine Mystique 802

NATION AT WAR 803

Americanizing the Vietnam War 803

A Teenage Army 804

Urban Rebellions 804

Singular Lives: Tim O’Brien, GI 805

States of Emergency: The Detroit Rebellion, 1967 806

Black Power 807

Youth Renew the Left 808

The Antiwar Movement 809

DEFYING AUTHORITY, MAKING COMMUNITY 810

Native Americans Decolonize 810

Brown Power 810

The Counterculture 811

Women’s Liberation 812

Hot Commodities: Hair 813

Out of the Closet 814

CHALLENGING LAW AND ORDER 814

Days of Rage 814

Election of 1968 816

29

1970–1979

CHAPTER 29. REACTION, RECESSION, & GLOBALIZATION 820

PROTEST AND LIBERATION IN A DIVIDED NATION 823

Desegregation Battles 823

Singular Lives: Curt Flood, Activist Athlete 824

The Politics of Pride 825

Feminism, Family Life, and the Sexual Revolution 826

Therapeutic Culture 827

Hot Commodities: Pornographic Feature Films 828

RICHARD NIXON’S AGENDA 828

A New Political Coalition 829

Widening the Vietnam War 830

Domestic Politics and the Expanding Welfare State 831

Henry Kissinger, Realism, and Détente 833

REPUBLICAN TRIUMPH, REPUBLICAN DISGRACE 833

The Landslide Election of 1972 834

Scandal and Resignation 835

Gerald Ford: Unelected President 836

Interpreting the Sources: Chevy Chase as Gerald Ford on Saturday Night Live 837

The Election of 1976 837

RECESSION AND URBAN CRISIS 838

Energy Shocks and the Global Economy 838

Stagflation and Deindustrialization 839

Urban Decline, Urban Dystopia 839

New Urban Music 841

States of Emergency: The New York City Blackout of 1977 842

Jimmy Carter and the Politics of Malaise 843

CULTURE WARS AND CONSERVATIVE BACKLASH 843

Evangelical Counterculture 843

Rise and Fall of the ERA 844

Affirmative Action 845

Tax Revolt 845

COLD WAR AND HUMAN RIGHTS 846

Helsinki and the International Human Rights Movement 846

Internationalism and Jimmy Carter’s America 846

Iran, Afghanistan, and the Unraveling of Carter’s Foreign Policy 847



30

1980–1992

CHAPTER 30. DEINDUSTRIALIZING AMERICA 850

NATION AT THE CROSSROADS 852

The Faltering Economy 852

Third World Immigrants 853

Conservative Revival 854

The Election of 1980 855

Interpreting the Sources: Ronald Reagan, First Inaugural Address, January 1981 856

REVERSING THE NEW DEAL 856

Reaganomics: Reining in Big Government 857

Empowering Corporations 857

Weakening Organized Labor 858
The Environment and the Limits of Deregulation 859
The Cold War Renewed 860
Morning in America 861
Law-and-Order Presidency 861
Cold War Thaw 862

THE NEW GILDED AGE 862

The Economy's "Great Expansion" 863

Interpreting the Sources: Made in Japan: The Chrysler Conquest

Celebrating Affluence 864
Revising History 864

New Frontiers of Consumerism 865

Hot Commodities: Pac-Man and the Popularization of Virtual Reality 866

New and Old Inequalities 867

REINVENTING DISSENT 867

The New Activism 868
Going Global 869

Singular Lives: Adriana Rodriguez, Political Refugee 870

Electing African Americans 870

Acting Up 871

Art of Dissent 873

TOWARD A NEW WORLD ORDER 874

The New Cultural Politics 874

The Election of 1988 874

States of Emergency: The Culture Wars 875

Domestic Gridlock 875

New Allies, New Enemies 876

The Persian Gulf War 877



31

CHAPTER 31. GLOBALIZING AMERICA, 1992 TO THE PRESENT 882

BILL CLINTON AND THE NEW DEMOCRATS 884

Reinventing the Democratic Party: The Election of 1992 885

New Democrats in Government 886

Congressional Battle Lines 887

Clinton's Second Term: Gridlock and Scandal 887

The New Extremism 888

Globalization and Its Critics 889

Hot Commodities: Garbage 891

The United States in a Globalizing World 892

BRAVE NEW CULTURE 893

The Digital Revolution 893

The New Economy 894

Spaces & Places: The World Wide Web 894

Reconceiving the Meaning of Life 895

Renewing Diversity 897

Urban Renaissance 897

GEORGE W. BUSH AND THE WAR ON TERROR 899

The Election of 2000 899

Compassionate Conservatism in Action 900

Al-Qaeda Attacks 900

The War on Terror 902

The Iraq War 903

The Election of 2004 904

Crises at Home and Abroad 904

THE GREAT RECESSION 906

The Housing Bubble 906

Saving the New Economy 906

The Election of 2008 907

Renewing the Dream 907

Interpreting the Sources: Barack Obama, "A More Perfect Union," Speech given in Philadelphia, March 2008 908

Challenges of Leadership 909

The Election of 2012 910

APPENDIX A-1

The Declaration of Independence

The Constitution of the United States of America

Presidential Elections

GLOSSARY G-1

CREDITS C-1

INDEX I-1

INTERVIEW WITH THE AUTHORS

Rebecca McLennan and David Henkin

Q. Why a new U.S. history survey—and why now?

A. We wrote *Becoming America* in and for a new century, inspired by recent shifts in historical scholarship and the interests and learning styles of a new generation of students. Today's students live in a world where cultural, technological, and environmental transformation are palpably experienced and keenly debated. Paralleling this reorientation, the topics of environmental change, religious ritual, mass communications, technological innovation, and popular entertainment have become central and compelling subjects of historians' research and teaching. *Becoming America* seamlessly weaves these fascinating dimensions of the past into the core narrative of American history to produce an account that we believe students will find exciting, memorable, and relevant.

Q. What's different about your approach?

A. Key to our approach is an appreciation for how much the study of the past entails learning about the beliefs, attitudes, and mentalities of historical actors and about the worlds of communication and information exchange within which historical events acquired meaning. When we study a war, for example, we need to know more than its political causes and practical course; we also need to understand how different groups of participants, observers, and victims experienced the conflict. How long did it take military leaders in one part of the world to receive messages from civilian authorities in another? How did soldiers experience and make sense of war and demobilization? Did city dwellers read war news in newspapers reporting telegraphed messages from the front? Did voters watch live broadcasts of artillery fire while sitting in their living rooms? How were the dead commemorated? And in what ways did war and the memory of war change American culture, politics, and the economy?

Q. Where does the incorporation of the history of culture, media, technology, and the environment leave the political, social, and economic narrative that is essential to understanding the American past?

A. We have neither thrown out political, social, and economic history nor simply tacked on new subjects. Instead, we have innovated in a way that respects the need for chronology, narrative unity, social inclusiveness, and canonical coverage. For instance, the evolution of the British colonies after the

Stuart Restoration, which many surveys identify narrowly as a project of imperial regulation or a pattern of demographic movement, emerges in these pages through broader shifts in folkways, foodways, sexual ethics, consumption, home design, and religious outlook (Chapter 4). Instead of isolating southern plantation slavery in a single chapter on the Old South spanning multiple periods, we spread the discussion of slavery across several chapters, showing how human bondage infused and influenced economic, political, and cultural developments in multiple regions through many different eras. We broaden the conventional treatment of southern Reconstruction as the story of political and economic struggle by exploring the parades, conventions, and "grapevine telegraphs" through which African Americans formulated and relayed their demands for full and meaningful freedom (Chapter 16). Our discussion of the political functions of saloons, urban machines, and women's clubs enlivens the story of Gilded Age government and helps students understand the roots and significance of mass politics (Chapter 19). And rather than painting a picture of the affluent 1950s solely as a period of conservative consensus punctuated by an increasingly assertive civil rights movement, we also explore the cultural and intellectual ferment that preceded and primed the upheavals of the 1960s (Chapter 27). Every chapter weaves new scholarship of this nature into the narrative.

Q. How does integrating old and new approaches enhance students' learning experience?

A. The new synthesis offers distinct advantages. First, students are excited by history that connects to their experience of contemporary life. Mass media, popular entertainment, technological innovation, religious ritual, material culture, and environmental change all capture their imagination, and consequently they come to class engaged and ready to learn more. *Becoming America* shows them how those subjects have developed over time and how earlier patterns of living have informed or differed from the pleasures, frustrations, dangers, and mysteries that students encounter in their own worlds.

Second, our updated survey of the American past helps students relate imaginatively to this rich history by actively drawing upon their interests, passions, and skills as both readers and creators of contemporary culture. We show for instance how nineteenth-century Americans experienced new kinds of connection through the postal service, cheaper newspapers, telegraph wires, sales catalogs, networks of religious instruction, and commercial entertainment. We encourage readers to grasp

the historical significance of slang, fashion trends, marketing strategies, spectator sports, and news scandals. Throughout the narrative, our visual program asks students to analyze the way in which engravers, photographers, cartoonists, advertisers, and other visual artists in both early and later eras created, affirmed, or disrupted public perceptions.

Finally, our approach teaches students to understand and ask questions about the cultural, political, and economic circumstances under which certain new media and technologies find—or fail to find—traction. Why did printing play such a prominent role in the politics of the American Revolution? Why, in the 1920s, did radio quite suddenly become a mass medium after years of relative obscurity? By demonstrating how to analyze these phenomena as historians do, we give students new critical tools with which to recognize and analyze the deep connections that bound—and still bind—culture, politics, and economics. Questions probing these connections are included in our Connect History program.

Q. History is more than a grand narrative. How do you incorporate fine-grained details of the sort that enliven the story for students?

A. Boxed essays throughout the text show students in detail how historians analyze the past, while also creating a vivid image of different periods in American history. Every chapter includes features entitled *Hot Commodities* and *Singular Lives*, as well as either a *States of Emergency* or a *Spaces and Places* selection. A set of questions encouraging students to analyze and contextualize the selection rounds out each essay. In addition, the Hot Commodities feature is included in Connect History as a gradable exercise. Descriptions of these learning features appear in the visual walk-through of the text that follows this interview.

Q. These features take the narrative deeper, but how do you guide students through the process of interpreting and analyzing primary sources?

A. Each chapter offers students the opportunity to examine historical evidence through an *Interpreting the Sources* selection. The primary sources in these boxed features include public and private documents, visual sources, material artifacts, and transcripts of oral traditions and stories. A headnote puts the source in context, and a series of questions after the source challenges students to think deeply and analytically about its significance. The *Interpreting the Sources* feature is included in our Connect History program; students can complete the exercise and submit it online for grading.

Q. What will students take away from *Becoming America*?

A. For all of our readers, whether *Becoming America* is their gateway to further studies in history or the only account they will read on the subject, our goals are the same. Our attention to the connections and discontinuities between past and present make it easier for students to grasp both the distinctiveness and the familiarity of bygone eras and to recognize themselves and our own time in the great sweep of American history. Students should come away with a contextualized understanding of the deep cultural changes that have characterized the American past; an appreciation for the interconnections among culture, technology, society, politics, economics, and the environment; and the analytical skills associated with rigorous interpretation of diverse sources. We want them to look with different eyes at the design of their own homes and neighborhoods, to actively interpret the meaning of mass spectacle and social media, and to think in a historically informed way about the urgent questions of our times. We hope that both our narrative and its lessons in critical thinking will help students participate fully and creatively in our diverse and culturally vital democracy.

Q: Is *Becoming America* available as an e-book?

A. Yes, in fact, it's available as a Smartbook, which means that students not only can read it online but can quiz themselves after every section. The Smartbook then adapts to their response, highlighting areas in the narrative that they need to study more.

BECOMING AMERICA:

A new way to learn U.S. history

Becoming America weaves the latest research on culture, technology, and the environment into the traditional core of the U.S. history survey.

HOT COMMODITIES offers a detailed study of consumer goods, food, paintings, recordings, and performances that were tellingly popular at a given point in time. These boxes—with topics ranging from beavers and Bibles to cigarettes and garbage—reinforce the importance of material artifacts to the study of the past. The point is that consumption patterns are not new phenomena (though they have changed radically) and that they offer valuable insight into past societies, much as they do in the present day.



SINGULAR LIVES spotlights unusual women and men whose experience, perspective, or mythological status captures some broader point about the period. These case studies reinforce the notion that individuals as well as larger social forces shape history.



Each chapter offers students the opportunity to examine historical evidence through an **INTERPRETING THE SOURCES** selection. The primary sources in these boxed features include public and private documents, visual sources, material artifacts, and transcripts of oral traditions and stories. A headnote puts the source in context, and a series of questions after the source challenges students to think deeply and analytically about its significance.



STATES OF EMERGENCY dramatizes scenes and moments of destruction, violence, epidemic, and natural disaster, from the Stono Rebellion and the New Madrid Earthquake to the Great Chicago Fire and the New York blackout of 1977. These extraordinary events often had far-reaching social and political consequences for the story we tell in the main narrative, but they also gripped the popular imagination and became the focus of fears and fantasies that help us understand larger historical forces.

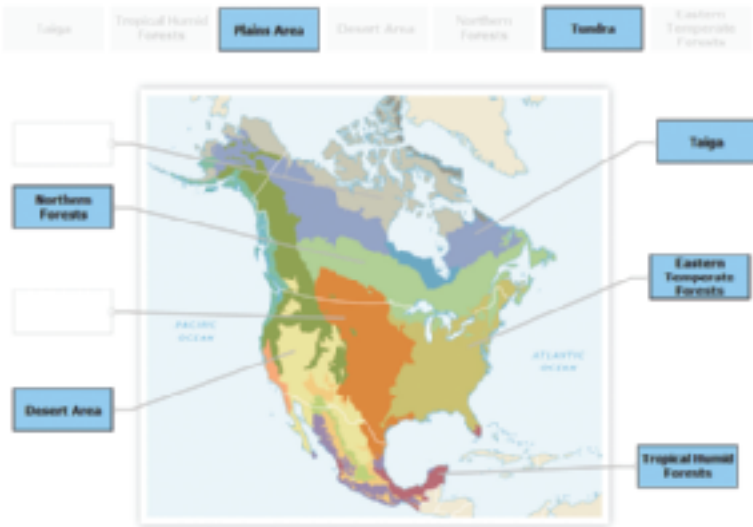


BECOMING AMERICA

is a Program for the 21st Century

The Connect History digital program that accompanies *Becoming America* includes

- map activities using key maps from the text
- image analysis activities that ask students to examine artifacts and images
- primary source activities built around the documents in *Becoming America*
- key terms quizzes
- multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay questions



SPACES & PLACES features buildings, landscapes, monuments, and virtual spaces as sources for exploring the country’s built and natural environments. U.S. history is partly a story of how human beings have continually reshaped and reimagined the landscapes that we now take for granted. With rich pictorial detail, we show how the spaces and places in which history unfolds have transformed over time.

LIST OF MAPS

- 1.1 The Peopling of the Americas (p. 6)
- 1.2 The Vast Reach of Mississippian Civilization, ca. 800–1500 C.E. (p. 9)
- 1.3 Western Europe and West Africa on the Eve of Contact, ca. 1400–1500 (p. 13)
- 1.4 The Spanish Conquest, 1492–1600 (p. 19)
- 1.5 European Explorations in North America, 1500–1600 (p. 24)
- 2.1 Spanish Settlements of North Mexico, ca. 1675 (p. 37)
- 2.2 French and Dutch Settlements in North America, ca. 1660 (p. 39)
- 2.3 English Settlements in the Chesapeake, ca. 1607–1660 (p. 46)
- 2.4 English Settlements in New England, ca. 1620–1660 (p. 53)
- 3.1 West African Sources of the Atlantic Slave Trade (with table) (p. 65)
- 3.2 New World Destinations of the Atlantic Slave Trade, ca. 1450–1760 (with table) (p. 66)
- 4.1 British Colonies, ca. 1660–1750 (p. 84)
- 4.2 European Migrations to the English/British Colonies, ca. 1700–1750 (p. 89)
- 5.1 English, Spanish, and French Presence in the Lands That Became the United States, ca. 1700 (p. 107)
- 5.2 Indian Country in an Imperial World, ca. 1720–1750 (p. 109)
- 5.3 Indian Powers in the West, ca. 1720–1750 (p. 111)
- 5.4 A Global War for Empire, 1754–1763 (p. 117)
- 5.5 North America, as Envisioned Under the Treaty of Paris, with Comparison to European Land Claims in 1750 (p. 120)
- 5.6 Pontiac's Rebellion (p. 123)
- 6.1 Key Battles of the Revolutionary War, 1775–1777 (p. 147)
- 6.2 The Southern Front, 1778–1781 (p. 149)
- 6.3 A Civil War in Britain's American Colonies (p. 152)
- 7.1 Treaty of Paris, 1783 (p. 168)
- 7.2 Western Land Claims and Cessions, 1784–1802 (p. 170)
- 7.3 Plotting the Northwest Territory (p. 171)
- 8.1 Gradual Abolition in the North (p. 187)
- 8.2 Slave Revolt in the Caribbean (p. 189)
- 8.3 The Urban Frontier (p. 201)
- 8.4 Doubling the Size of the Nation (p. 206)
- 9.1 Tecumseh's Diplomatic Mission (p. 217)
- 9.2 Major Offensives of the War of 1812 (p. 219)
- 9.3 The National Road (p. 225)
- 9.4 The Missouri Compromise (p. 227)
- 9.5 Indian Removal (p. 233)
- 10.1 Canal Network, 1840 (p. 254)
- 10.2 Travel Times from New York, 1800 and 1830 (p. 256)
- 10.3 Information Flow from New York (p. 257)
- 11.1 Cotton and Slavery, 1820–1860 (p. 272)
- 11.2 The Second Middle Passage (p. 273)
- 13.1 North America in 1844 (p. 323)
- 13.2 Election of 1844 (p. 325)
- 13.3 Major Battles of the U.S.-Mexican War (p. 326)
- 13.4 Settlement of the Oregon Question (p. 329)
- 13.5 The United States in 1854 (p. 331)
- 13.6 The Overland Trail (p. 332)
- 14.1 The Compromise of 1850 (p. 354)
- 14.2 Travel Times from New York City, 1830 and 1857 (p. 359)
- 14.3 Growth of the Rail Network, 1850–1860 (p. 361)
- 14.4 The Kansas-Nebraska Act (p. 366)
- 14.5 The Election of 1860 (p. 377)
- 15.1 Secession in Two Stages (p. 384)
- 15.2 Western and Eastern Theaters of the Civil War, 1861–1863 (p. 389)
- 15.3 The Union-Occupied South, 1861–1865 (p. 395)
- 15.4 The War in the East, 1863–1865 (p. 405)
- 15.5 The War in the West and Southeast, 1863–1865 (p. 407)
- 16.1 Southern State Governments During Reconstruction (p. 430)
- 16.2 Election of 1876 (p. 440)
- 17.1 The West's Many Biomes (p. 447)
- 17.2 Connecting the West (p. 450)
- 17.3 Conquest and Incorporation, 1850–1890 (p. 452)
- 17.4 From Boomtown to Ghost Town, 1861–1883 (p. 459)

- 17.5 The Homestead Act of 1862 (p. 460)
- 17.6 Driving Cattle North (p. 464)
- 18.1 The Industrial Belt (p. 475)
- 18.2 The Great Railroad Strike Paralyzes the Economy (p. 488)
- 19.1 Labor Strikes, 1881–1990 (p. 522)
- 19.2 Election of 1892 (p. 525)
- 19.3 Democracy in America, 1900 (p. 528)
- 19.4 Election of 1896 (p. 529)
- 20.1 Urbanizing America (p. 539)
- 20.2 The New Immigration (p. 540)
- 20.3 Immigration Cities (p. 541)
- 20.4 Growth of National Parks (p. 559)
- 20.5 Election of 1912 (p. 560)
- 21.1 Colonization and the Congo (p. 568)
- 21.2 Humanitarian Crisis, 1865–1906 (p. 571)
- 21.3 The Spanish-American War, 1898 (p. 577)
- 21.4 America's Tropical Empire, 1900 (p. 580)
- 21.5 U.S. Intervention in Latin America, 1895–1940 (p. 588)
- 22.1 The Road to World War I (p. 600)
- 22.2 Election of 1916 (p. 605)
- 22.3 The Great Migration, 1916–1930 (p. 616)
- 22.4 The United States in Combat: Major Battles (p. 618)
- 22.5 Election of 1920 (p. 626)
- 23.1 Radio Set Ownership, 1930 (p. 635)
- 23.2 Membership of the Ku Klux Klan by Region (p. 648)
- 23.3 The Geography of Religion (p. 651)
- 23.4 Election of 1928 (p. 655)
- 24.1 Election of 1932 (p. 667)
- 24.2 Election of 1936 (p. 671)
- 24.3 Dust Bowl Migrants (p. 683)
- 24.4 Networking Rural America (p. 685)
- 25.1 Fascism on the March (p. 695)
- 25.2 Mobile America, 1940–1950 (p. 705)
- 25.3 The Allied Advance in Africa and Europe (p. 715)
- 25.4 The Pacific War (p. 717)
- 26.1 Election of 1948 (p. 736)
- 26.2 Segregated America, 1955 (p. 745)
- 27.1 The Dwight D. Eisenhower System of Interstate and Defense Highways (p. 764)
- 27.2 The Suez Canal Crisis and Gaza Invasion (p. 769)
- 28.1 The U.S. National Security Network, 1967 (p. 792)
- 28.2 The Road to Vietnam (p. 794)
- 28.3 Election of 1968 (p. 816)
- 30.1 Election of 1980 (p. 855)
- 30.2 The Persian Gulf War (p. 877)
- 31.1 Election of 1992 (p. 886)
- 31.2 Election of 2000 (p. 900)
- 31.3 U.S. Military Interventions, 2001–2013 (p. 902)
- 31.4 Election of 2008 (p. 907)



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