

For the **RECORD**

A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF AMERICA

SECOND EDITION



VOLUME ONE
FROM FIRST CONTACT THROUGH RECONSTRUCTION

DAVID E. SHI & HOLLY A. MAYER

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From Contact through Reconstruction



DAVID E. SHI AND HOLLY A. MAYER

W • W • NORTON & COMPANY



NEW YORK • LONDON

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Printed in the United States of America

Second Edition

Composition by PennSet.

Manufacturing by Maple-Vail.

Book design by Jack Meserole.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Shi, David E.

For the record : a documentary history of America / David E. Shi and Holly A. Mayer.—
2nd ed.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

Contents: v. 1. From contact through Reconstruction — v. 2. From Reconstruction
through contemporary times.

ISBN 0-393-92444-0 (v. 1). — ISBN 0-393-92445-9 (v. 2)

1. United States—History—Sources. I. Mayer, Holly A. (Holly Ann), 1956— II. Title.

E173.S487 2003

973—dc21

2003048715

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W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 500 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10110

www.wwnorton.com

W. W. Norton & Company Ltd., Castle House, 75/76 Wells Street, London W1T 3QT

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PREFACE FOR INSTRUCTORS

“The historian, essentially, wants more documents than he can really use.”

—Henry James, Jr.

For the Record: A Documentary History of America is a collection of primary sources intended to supplement textbooks in American history survey courses. This collection may also serve as a convenient reference work for both teachers and students of history. It provides a comprehensive yet diverse array of documents that have shaped the American experience. We know from our own experiences in the classroom that students can benefit greatly from studying the original sources that historians have used to craft their interpretations of the past. And students can use such sources to develop their own perspectives on the past.

In selecting these documents, we sought to represent the wide spectrum of historical developments by striking a balance among political, diplomatic, economic, social, and cultural perspectives. As work has often defined the lives of Americans, we have also added some more perspectives on labor and laborers in this revised edition. In general, we have tried to provide entire documents or substantial portions rather than brief snippets, which so often are pedagogically unsound and intellectually unsatisfying. We also incorporated some documents that provide comparative views on certain events and issues. We have edited several of these documents to eliminate extraneous material and make them more accessible to the reader. Ellipses and asterisks indicate where passages or portions have been omitted. In a few cases, we have also modernized spelling and punctuation, taking care not to change the meaning of the original selection.

Chapter introductions set the stage for the accompanying selections by describing each historical period and highlighting its key issues and actors. Each document in turn is introduced by a headnote that places it in the context of

the period and suggests its significance. And each document is followed by a list of review questions to stimulate reflections about the material.

One of the unique features of *For the Record* is its recognition that visual artifacts are also important primary sources for the historian. Each volume contains two special sections intended to help students learn how to analyze and interpret visual sources. The four visual features include the following:

- *Colonial Architecture* explores the relationship between form and function by comparing the designs of colonial homes from three different regions.
- *Picturing the Civil War* explores the Civil War as the first “total war” represented through the camera lens of Mathew Brady and his associates.
- *Photography and Progressive Reform* explores the Progressive era through the famous and controversial photos of the immigrant reformer Jacob Riis.
- *Vietnam War Photographs* explores the relationship between media coverage and propaganda during America’s longest war and period of greatest social turmoil.

Taken as a whole, *For the Record* reveals the diversity of sources that contribute to our understanding of American history. In the process, it exposes students to important public documents and powerful personal accounts of events and experiences. The result is a more textured and comprehensive understanding of the ways in which we recreate and understand the past.

In compiling *For the Record*, we have benefited from the talents and advice of the editorial and marketing staff at W. W. Norton. Steve Forman and Jon Durbin shepherded us through the first edition with great insight and considerable forbearance, and now Steve Forman has done it again with this second edition. Accolades also go to copyeditor Claire McCabe, who, with the able assistance of Sarah England, did a splendid job of shaping up the final product.

WHERE TO BEGIN

This checklist contains a series of questions that can be used to analyze most of the documents in this reader.

- ✓ What type of document is it?
- ✓ Why does the document exist? What motives prompted the author to write the material down in this form?
- ✓ Who wrote this document?
- ✓ Who or what is left out of the document—women, children, other minorities, members of the majority?
- ✓ In addition to the main subject, what other kinds of information can be obtained from the document?
- ✓ How do the subjects of the document relate to what we know about broader society?
- ✓ What was the meaning of the document in its own time? What is its meaning for the reader today?
- ✓ What does the document tell us about change in society?

For the Record

A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY
OF AMERICA

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