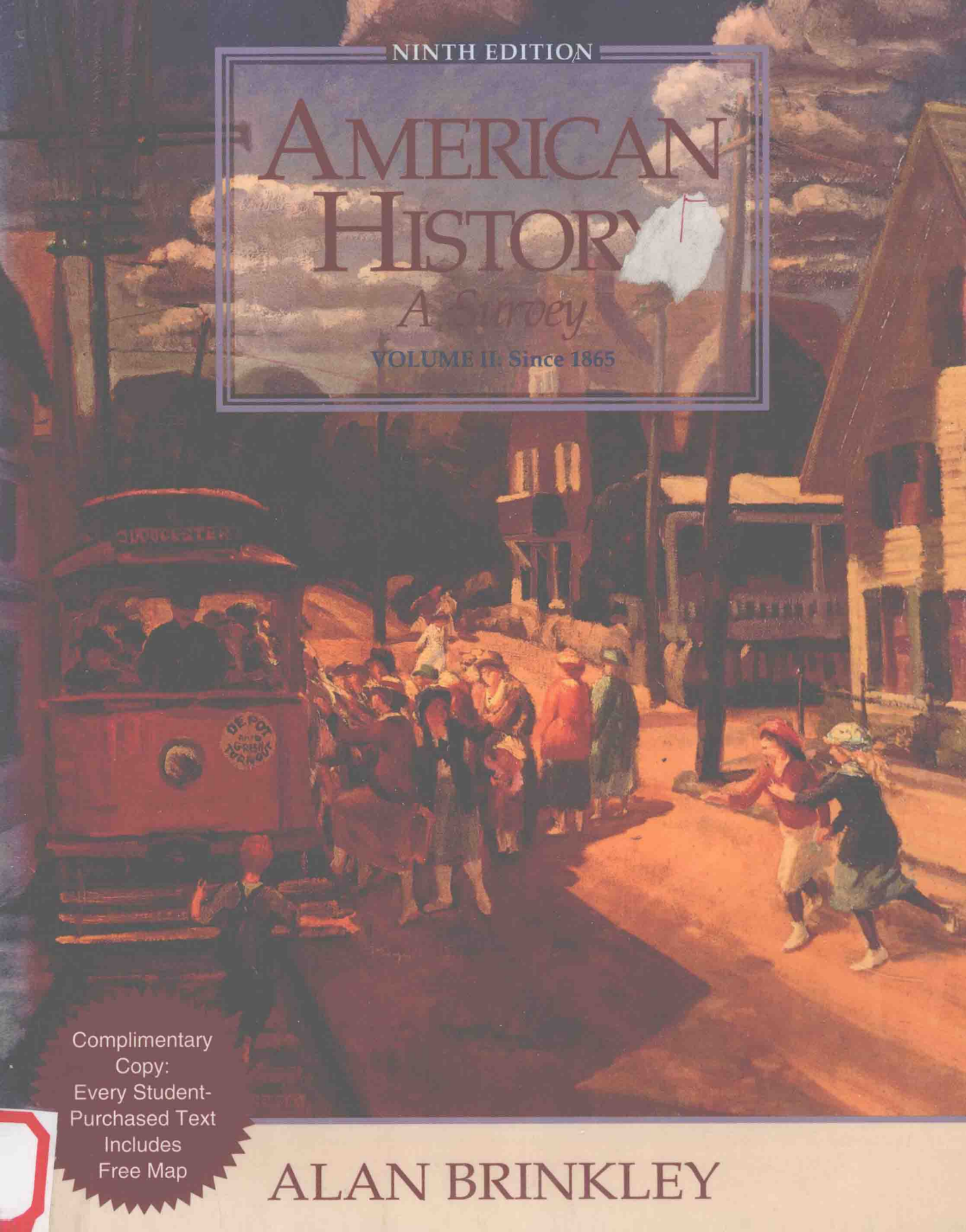


NINTH EDITION

# AMERICAN HISTORY

*A Survey*

VOLUME II: Since 1865



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ALAN BRINKLEY

NINTH EDITION

# AMERICAN HISTORY

*A Survey*

VOLUME II: SINCE 1865

ALAN BRINKLEY

*Columbia University*

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## "The American Environment"

essays by William Cronon, University of Wisconsin–Madison

### About the Author

**Alan Brinkley** is Professor of History at Columbia University. He is the author of *Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin, and the Great Depression*, for which he won the 1993 American Book Award; *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People*; and *The End of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War*. He has held Guggenheim, National Endowment for the Humanities, Woodrow Wilson Center, and National Humanities Center fellowships and has written many articles, essays, and reviews for both scholarly and nonscholarly publications.

AMERICAN HISTORY: A Survey  
Volume II: Since 1865

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# PREFACE

**T**HE PAST, OF COURSE, can never change. But our understanding of the past changes constantly. Perhaps at no time has that been more evident than in the last two decades, when historical scholarship has experienced something close to a revolution. Once historians viewed the past largely through the experiences of great men and great events. Today, they attempt to tell a much more complicated story—one that includes private as well as public events, ordinary people as well as celebrated ones, difference as well as unity. The new history is fragmented at times, because it attempts to embrace so many more areas of human experience than the older narrative. It is often disturbing, because it reveals failures and injustices as well as triumphs. But it is also richer, fuller, and better suited to helping us understand our own diverse and contentious world.

This book began its life several decades ago; and like most general histories of its time, it concentrated at first primarily on America's political development and on its expanding role in the world. Nine editions later, it continues to tell those important stories. But it tells many other stories as well. This newest version continues a process of change stretching now over more than a decade. It attempts to present not only the traditional stories of great public events, but also the many areas of the nation's past that historians have more recently revealed.

Despite the many changes, I have tried to retain what I believe has long been the most important strength of this book: a balanced picture of the American past that attempts to connect the newer histories of society, culture, and ordinary people with the more traditional stories of politics, diplomacy, and great public events. The United States is a nation of extraordinary diversity, and we cannot understand its history without understanding the experience of the many different groups that have shaped its society and of the particular worlds that have developed within it based on race, gender, ethnicity, religion, class, or region. But America is not just a collection of different cultures. It is also a nation, whose people share a common political system, a connection to a vast national economy, and a familiarity with a powerful public culture. To understand the American past, it is necessary

to examine not just the nation's considerable diversity, but also the powerful forces that have drawn it together and allowed it to survive and flourish despite division.

The process of revision usually means adding things, and this book—like many books that experience periodic revisions—has tended to grow steadily longer. In this edition, I have tried to reverse that process. I have substantially rewritten the entire narrative to make it clearer and more compact, and to make it possible for me to add substantial new material without increasing the length of the book as a whole. I have reorganized several sections to provide a more coherent picture of various elements of the past. Chapter 15 has been restructured to link the extended description of the New South to the account of the Reconstruction process that did so much to shape it. Chapter 16 is now devoted entirely to the history of the trans-Mississippi West in the late nineteenth century and contains a considerably expanded account of that important area of American history. There is a new chapter (27) on the diplomacy of the period between the two world wars, and a new and expanded chapter (28) on World War II itself. There is a new final chapter (35), which contains an account of events since the publication of the previous edition and a significantly expanded discussion of some of the issues that have emerged to shape contemporary society and culture.

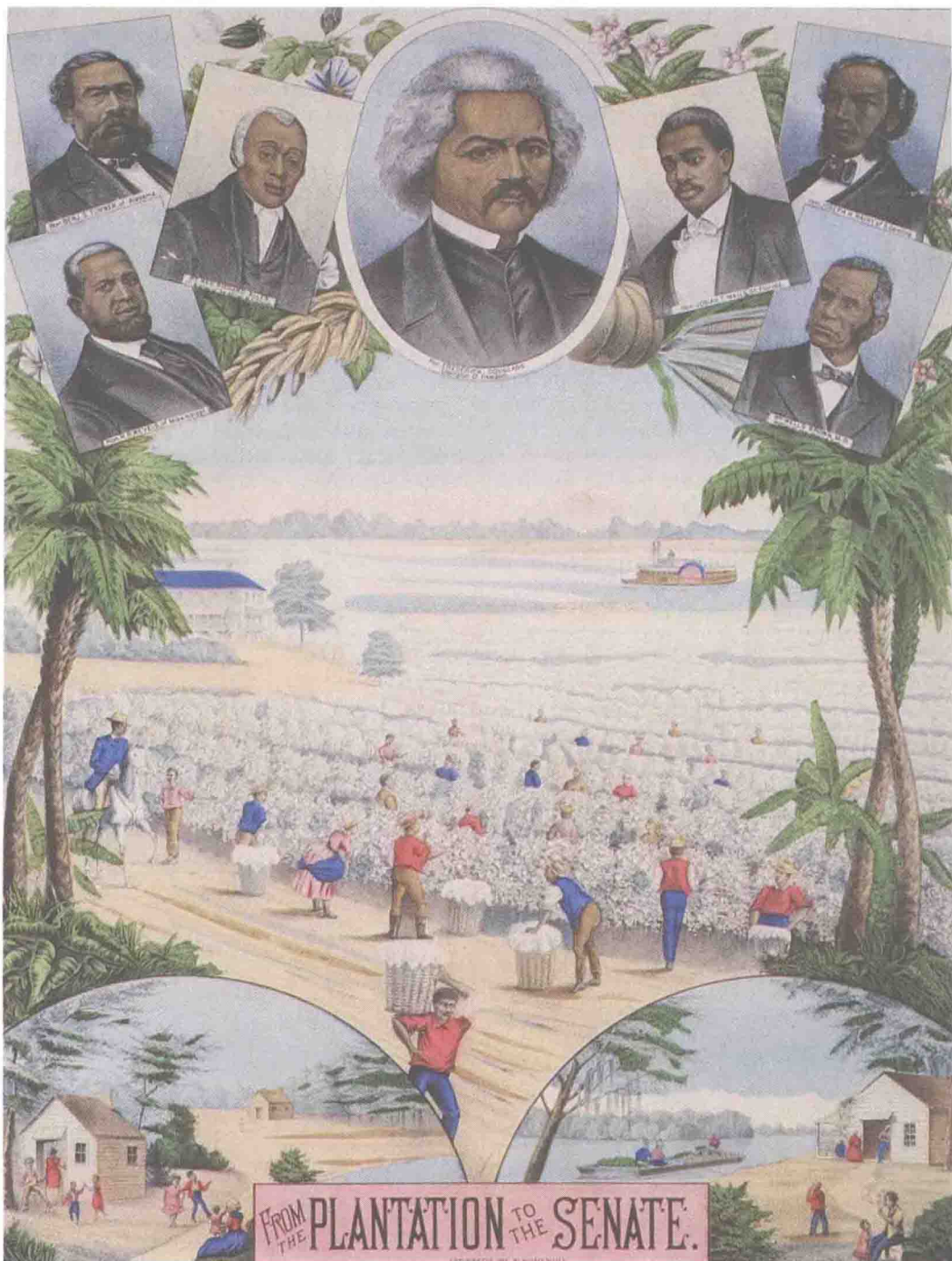
There are many other important changes in this edition as well. Throughout the book, there is considerably expanded coverage of the history of the American West and substantially increased attention to the history of Hispanic and Asian people in the United States. There is important new material derived from recent scholarship in women's history. There is a much-expanded discussion of the complicated social and cultural history of the 1950s, a greatly extended account of the origins and impact of the Vietnam War, and a major new section on the rise of the right in the 1970s and 1980s. There are also two new essays in the series entitled "Where Historians Disagree": one on the history of the West (Chapter 16) and the other on women's history (Chapter 32). There are many new illustrations, and there are expanded and updated bibliographies.

The first edition of *American History: A Survey* was the work of three distinguished historians: Richard N. Current, Frank Freidel, and T. Harry Williams. I have had the great privilege of inheriting this book from them and trying to keep alive in a very different time the high standards they established more than thirty years ago. It has now been over fifteen years since I assumed sole responsibility for this book; and as I have attempted to adapt it to the many changes in historical scholarship of the last several decades, it has now evolved into something very different from the book the original authors bequeathed me. Consequently, it now seems to us time for me to accept sole public responsibility for the result. This book will always reflect the extraordinary talents and enduring contributions of its three original authors. But beginning with this edition, it will carry my name alone.

As always, I am grateful to many people for their help in producing this new edition. John Alexander, Sonya Michel, Gary Okihiro, and George Sanchez were among the scholars who read and commented on

the previous edition. Their suggestions were of great value. I owe a particular debt to Richard White, both for his thoughtful critique of the coverage of western history in the previous edition of this book and for his excellent history of the American West (*"It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own"*), which introduced me to much of the new work in this rapidly changing field of scholarship. My research assistants Yanek Mieczkowski, Thaddeus Russell, and Charles Forcey made enormous contributions to this edition. So did the many people at McGraw-Hill who steered it through production, among them Peter Labella, Larry Goldberg, Joan Benham, Kathy Bendo, Elyse Rieder, and Sandra Topping. Finally, I am grateful, as always, to the students, teachers, and other readers of this book who have sent me unsolicited comments, criticisms, and corrections. I hope they will continue to offer their reactions by sending them to me in care of the Department of History, Columbia University, New York, N.Y. 10027.

*Alan Brinkley*



A RECONSTRUCTION-ERA TRIBUTE TO THE ELECTION OF AFRICAN AMERICANS TO CONGRESS  
 From left to right: Sen. Hiram R. Revels, Rep. Benjamin S. Turner, the Reverend Richard Allen, Frederick Douglass, Representative Josiah T. Walls, Representative Joseph H. Rainey, and writer William Wells Brown. (Library of Congress)

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