

Volume I: To 1877

A NARRATIVE HISTORY OF
THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC

*Nation of
Nations*

FIFTH EDITION

DAVIDSON • GIENAPP
HEYRMAN • LYTLE • STOFF



Volume I: To 1877
Chapters 1-17

Nation of Nations

A Narrative History of the American Republic

Fifth Edition

James West Davidson

William E. Gienapp

Harvard University

Christine Leigh Heyrman

University of Delaware

Mark H. Lytle

*There is not merely a nation but
a teeming nation of nations*

Walt Whitman



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NATION OF NATIONS: A NARRATIVE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC, VOLUME I: TO 1877

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William E. Gienapp

1944–2003

Inevitably, contingency brings grief as well as joy. We are saddened to report the passing of our dear friend and co-author, William E. Gienapp. It would be hard to imagine a colleague with greater dedication to his work, nor one who cared more about conveying both the excitement and the rigor of history to those who were not professional historians—as has been attested by so many of his students at the University of Wyoming and at Harvard. Bill had a quiet manner, which sometimes hid (though not for long) his puckish sense of humor and an unstinting generosity. When news of his death was reported, the *Harvard Crimson*, a student newspaper known more for its skepticism than its sentimentality, led with the front-page headline: “Beloved History Professor Gienapp Dies.” Bill went the extra mile, whether in searching out primary sources enabling us to assemble a map on the environmental effects of the Lowell Mills, combing innumerable manuscript troves in the preparation of his masterful *Origins of the Republican Party*, or collecting vintage baseball caps from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to wear (in proper chronological sequence, no less) to his popular course on the social history of baseball. When an illness no one could have predicted struck him down, the profession lost one of its shining examples. His fellow authors miss him dearly.

preface to the fifth edition

All good history begins with a good story: that has been the touchstone of *Nation of Nations*. Narrative is embedded in the way we understand the past; hence it will not do simply to compile an encyclopedia of American history and pass it off as a survey.

Yet the narrative keeps changing. A world that has become suddenly and dangerously smaller requires, more than ever, a history that is broader. That conviction has driven our revision for the fifth edition of *Nation of Nations*.

The events following on the heels of September 11, 2001, have underlined the call historians have made over the past decade to view American history within a global context. From its first edition, published in 1990, *Nation of Nations* has taken such an approach, with global essays opening each of the book's six parts to establish an international framework and a global timeline correlating events nationally and worldwide. In the fourth edition, we added global focus sections within chapter narratives and a final chapter ("Nation of Nations in a Global Community") highlighting the ties of the United States to the rest of the world.

Changes to the Fifth Edition

The fifth edition expands on the global coverage that has been so important to our text by adding new narratives that place American history in an international perspective. These narratives are not separate special features. Sometimes only a paragraph in length, sometimes an entire section, they are designed to be an integral part of the text. New material includes

- A section on the Barbary pirates and cultural identities in Chapter 9

- Information comparing debt peonage in the New South with similar circumstances in India, Egypt, and Brazil in Chapter 18
- A section on worldwide recovery from the Great Depression in Chapter 25
- A map on the spread of the influenza pandemic in autumn 1918 in Chapter 23
- More on a global labor migrations in Chapter 26
- A section about Vatican II and American Catholics in Chapter 29

Other important content and pedagogical changes include

- Two new After the Fact essays exploring cultural history topics that have received recent scholarly attention. The new essay in Part Two focuses on Sally Hemings and Thomas Jefferson, and the new essay in Part Four, "Engendering the Spanish-American War," looks at contemporary constructions of gender as the United States went to war with Spain in 1898.
- Updates to Chapter 33, including a new section and map on the election of 2000 and material on recent court cases regarding affirmative action.
- To conclude the book, a new epilogue, "Fighting Terrorism in a Global Age," which includes a chart showing terrorist incidents by region and a map on the war on terror in Afghanistan and Iraq.
- The addition of date ranges to chapter titles, to provide students with more guidance as to the chronology of events.
- An "Interactive Learning" section at the end of every chapter, directing students to relevant materials on the Primary Source Investigator CD-ROM.

- In addition to the Additional Readings feature at the end of each chapter, a full bibliography for the book can be found at www.mhhe.com/davidsonnation5.

Information about Supplements

The supplements listed here accompany *Nation of Nations: A Narrative History of the American Republic*, Fifth Edition. Please contact your local McGraw-Hill representative for details concerning policies, prices, and availability, as some restrictions may apply.

For the Student

- Packaged free with every copy of the book, **Primary Source Investigator CD-ROM** (007295700X) includes hundreds of documents to explore, short documentary movies, interactive maps, and more. Find more information about the CD-ROM where it is packaged in your book.
- Located on the book's Web site (www.mhhe.com/davidsonnation5), the **Student Online Learning Center** offers interactive maps with exercises, extensive Web links, quizzes, counterpoint essays with exercises, a bibliography, and more.

For the Instructor

- A set of **Overhead Transparencies** (0072956976) includes maps and images from the textbook.
- An **Instructor's Resource CD-ROM** (0072456992) provides materials for instructors to use in the classroom, including PowerPoint presentations and electronic versions of the maps in the textbook. An instructor's manual and computerized test bank are also included.
- Located on the book's Web site (www.mhhe.com/davidsonnation5), the **Instructor Online Learning Center** offers PowerPoint presentations, an image bank, an instructor's manual, a bibliography, and more.

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Vince Clark
Johnson County Community College

P. Scott Corbett
Oxnard College

Mary Paige Cubbison
Miami Dade Community College

George Gerdow
Northeastern Illinois University

Ronald Goldberg
Thomas Nelson Community College

Michael Hamilton
Seattle Pacific University

Reid Holland
Midland Technical College

Lisa Hollander
Jefferson College

Carol Keller
San Antonio College

Lawrence Kohl
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The division of labor for this book was determined by our respective fields of scholarship: Christine Heyrman, the colonial era, in which Europeans, Africans, and Indians participated in the making of both a new America and a new republic; William Gienapp, the 90 years in which the young nation first flourished, then foundered on the issues of section and slavery; Michael Stoff, the post-Civil War era, in which industrialization and urbanization brought the nation more centrally into an international system regularly disrupted by depression and war; and Mark Lytle, the modern era, in

which Americans finally faced the reality that even the boldest dreams of national greatness are bounded by the finite nature of power and resources both natural and human. Finally, because the need to specialize inevitably imposes limits on any project as broad as this one, our fifth author, James Davidson, served as a general editor and writer, with the intent of fitting individual parts to the whole as well as providing a measure of continuity, style, and overarching purpose. In producing this collaborative effort, all of us have shared the conviction that the best history speaks to a larger audience.

James West Davidson
William E. Gienapp
Christine Leigh Heyrman
Mark H. Lytle
Michael B. Stoff

A Guided Tour of Nation of Nations:

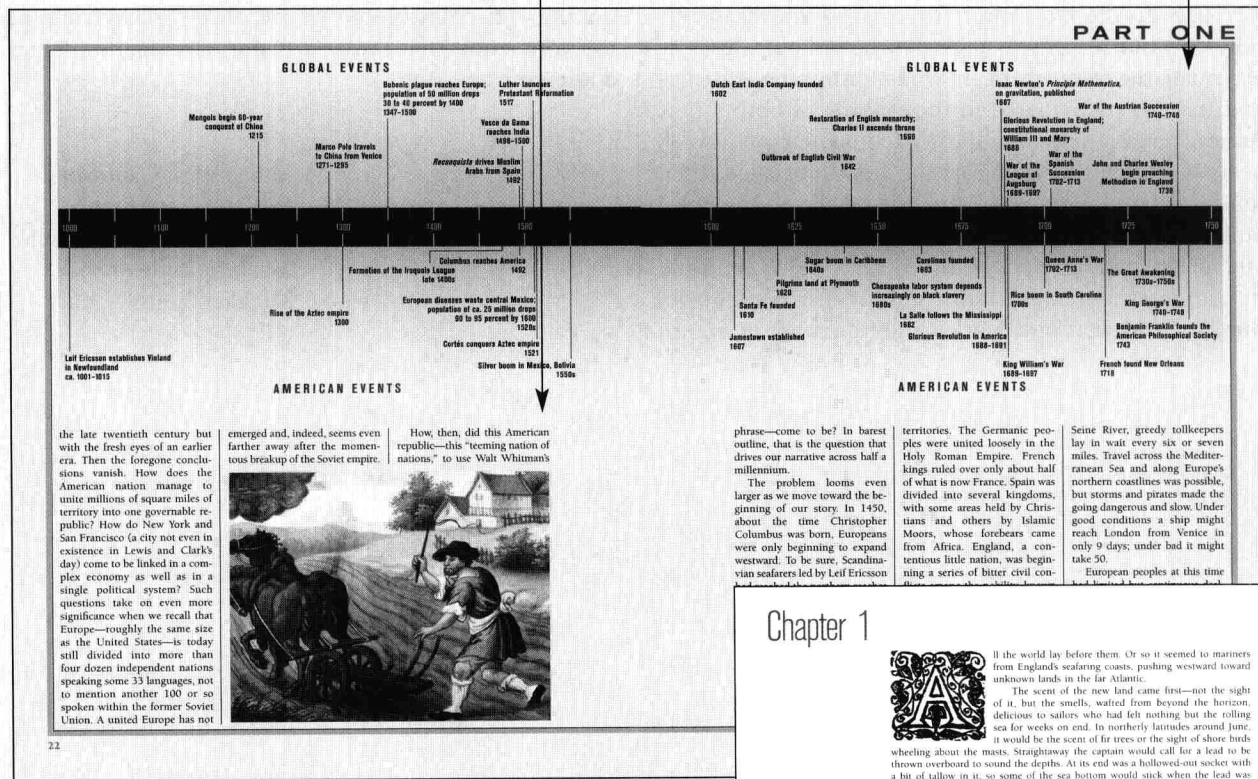
A Narrative History of the American Republic, Fifth Edition

Global Essay

Each of the book's six parts begins with an essay that sets American events into a global context.

Global Timeline

Each global essay includes a time line comparing political and social events in the United States with developments elsewhere.



phrase—come to be? In barest outline, that is the question that drives our narrative across half a millennium.

The problem looms even larger as we move toward the beginning of our story. In 1450, about the time Christopher Columbus was born, Europeans were only beginning to expand westward. To be sure, Scandinavian seafarers led by Leif Ericsson

territories. The Germanic peoples were united loosely in the Holy Roman Empire. French kings ruled over only about half of what is now France. Spain was divided into several kingdoms, with some areas held by Christians and others by Islamic Moors, whose forebears came from Africa. England, a contentious little nation, was beginning a series of bitter civil con-

Seine River, greedy tollkeepers lay in wait every six or seven miles. Travel across the Mediterranean Sea and along Europe's northern coastlines was possible, but storms and pirates made the going dangerous and slow. Under good conditions a ship might reach London from Venice in only 9 days; under bad it might take 50.

European peoples at this time

Chapter 1



If the world lay before them. Or so it seemed to mariners from England's seafaring coasts, pushing westward toward unknown lands in the far Atlantic.

The scent of the new land came first—not the sight of it, but the smells, waited for beyond the horizon, delicious to sailors who had felt nothing but the rolling sea for weeks on end. In northerly latitudes around June, it would be the scent of fir trees or the sight of shore birds wheeling about the masts. Straightaway the captain would call for a lead to be thrown overboard to sound the depths. At its end was a hollowed-out socket with a bit of tallow in it, so some of the sea bottom would stick when the lead was

Old World, New Worlds

1400–1600

preview • In the century after 1492, Europeans expanded boldly and often ruthlessly into the Americas, thanks to a combination of technological advances in sailing and firearms, the rise of new trading networks, and stronger, more centralized governments. Spain established a vast and profitable empire but at fearful human cost. A diverse Mesoamerican population of some 20 million was reduced to only 2 million through warfare, European diseases, and exploitation.

Country seaports like Bristol, ships headed west and north to Ireland, bringing back animal hides as well as timber for houses and barrels. Or they turned south, fetching wines from France and olive oil or figs and raisins from the Spanish and Portuguese coasts. In return, West Country ports offered woven woolen cloth and codfish, caught wherever the best prospects beckoned.

Through much of the fifteenth century, the search for cod drew West Country sailors north and west, toward Ireland. In the 1480s and 1490s, however, a few English tried their luck farther west. Old maps, after all, claimed that the bountiful *Hy-Brasil*—Gaelic for “Isle of the Blessed”—lay somewhere west of Ireland. These western ventures returned with little to show for their daring until the coming of an Italian named Giovanni Caboto, called John Cabot by the English. Cabot, who hailed from Venice, obtained the blessing of King Henry VII to hunt for unknown lands. From the port of Bristol his lone ship set out to the west in the spring of 1497.

This time the return voyage brought news of a “new-found” island where the trees were tall enough to make fine masts and the codfish were plentiful. After returning to Bristol, Cabot marched off to London to inform His Majesty; received 10 pounds as his reward, and with the proceeds dressed himself in dashing silks. The minutiae of London flocked after him, wondering over “the Admiral,” then Cabot returned triumphantly to Bristol to undertake a more ambitious search for a northwest passage to Asia. He set sail with five ships in 1498 and was never heard from again.

Cabot discovers Newfoundland

Preview

A preview introduces each chapter's main themes.

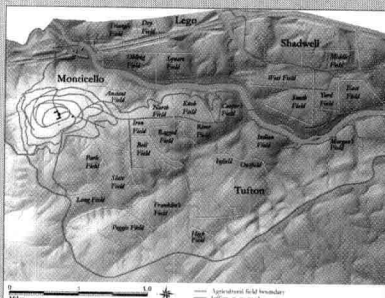
AFTER THE FACT

Historians Reconstruct the Past

Sally Hemings and Thomas Jefferson

The rumors began in Albemarle County, Virginia, more than two hundred years ago; they came to the notice of a journalist by the name of James Callender. A writer for hire, Callender had once lent his pen to the Republicans, but turned from friend into foe when the party failed to reward him with a political appointment. When his story

splashed onto the pages of the *Recorder*, a Richmond newspaper, the trickle of rumor turned into a torrent of scandal. Callender alleged that Thomas Jefferson, during his years in Paris as the American minister, had contracted a liaison with one of his own slaves. The woman was the president's mistress even now, he insisted, in 1802. She was kept at



Daily Lives

POPULAR ENTERTAINMENT Exploring the Wondrous World

In 1786 Charles Willson Peale, painter and jack-of-all-trades, opened a museum of natural history in his home on Lombard Street in Philadelphia. Americans had always been fascinated by freaks of nature and "remarkable providences" (see *Daily Lives*, "A World of Wonders and Witchcraft," on pages 94–95). But unlike seventeenth-century colonialists, Peale was not searching for signs of the supernatural in everyday life. A student of the Enlightenment, Peale intended his museum to be "a school of useful knowledge" that would attract men and women of all ages and social ranks. By studying natural history, Peale believed, citizens would gain an understanding of themselves, their country, and the world and thereby help sustain civilization in the United States. The sign over the door read, "Whoso would learn wisdom, let him enter here!"

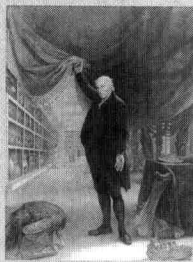
Inside, the visitor found a wide assortment of items from

around the world. Peale displayed nearly a hundred paintings he had completed of leading Americans, stuffed birds and animals, busts of famous scientists, cases of minerals, and wax figures representing the races of the world. Among the technological innovations that were showcased, a machine called a *physiognance* produced precise silhouettes. Moses Williams, a former slave, operated the machine and did a thriving business, selling 6000 profiles in the first year. Peale's backyard soon contained a zoo with a bewildering assortment of animals, including two grizzly bear cubs, an eagle, numerous snakes, monkeys, and a hyena. Prominent acquaintances such as Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, and Thomas Jefferson sent specimens, and the collection eventually totaled some 100,000 items.

Peale's most famous exhibit was a skeleton of a mammoth the man named it a mammoth, thereby adding a synonym for huge to the American vocabulary. Assembled from several digs he had conducted with great publicity in upstate New York, it stood 11 feet high at the shoulder and was the first complete mammoth skeleton ever mounted. Billed "the ninth wonder of the world," it was

housed in a special "Mammoth Room" that required a separate admission fee.

In gathering and mounting his specimens, Peale sought "to bring into one view a world in miniature." He carefully labeled plants, animals, insects, and birds and



In this self-portrait, Charles Willson Peale lifts a curtain to reveal the famous Long Room of his museum. Partially visible on the right behind Peale is the great mammoth skeleton, at which a woman gazes in awe, while in the rear a father attracts his son to the wonders of nature.

arranged them according to accepted scientific classifications. He also pioneered the grouping of animals in their natural habitat. Stuffed tigers and deer stood on a plaster mountainside, while below, a glass pond was filled with fish, reptiles, and birds. For the safety of visitors who could not resist handling the exhibits, the birds, whose feathers were covered with arsenic, were eventually put in glass-fronted cases with painted habitats behind them.

Peale refused to indulge the popular taste for spectacles and freaks. He hesitated before accepting a five-legged cow with two tails, fearing it would lower the institution's dignity and compromise its serious purpose. He declined to display a blue sash belonging to George Washington because it had no educational value, and only after Peale's death was it exhibited. He put curiosities away in cabinets and showed them only on request.

Peale's museum was an expression of its founder's republican ideals of order, stability, and harmony. It was, in his mind, an institute of eternal laws, laid bare for the masses to see and understand. Peale hoped the museum would instill civic responsibility in its patrons, and he often told the

story of how two hostile Indian chiefs, meeting by accident in the museum, were so impressed with its harmony that they agreed to sign a peace treaty.

The museum attracted thousands of curious customers and prospered in its early years. It was one of the major attractions in Philadelphia and became famous throughout the nation. Yet Peale's vast collection soon overwhelmed his scientific classification scheme, and his grandiose plans always outran his funds and soon his space as well. Refusing to slow his collection efforts, Peale moved his museum in 1794 to Philosophical Hall, and then in 1802 he took over the second floor of Independence Hall.

Before he retired in 1810, Peale tried vainly to interest the national government in acquiring his collection and creating a national museum. Under the direction of his son, the museum struggled on, but it was unable to satisfy the growing popular appetite for showmanship rather than education. The museum finally closed its doors in 1850, but during the Republic's formative years it offered thousands of Americans a unique opportunity, as the ticket of admission promised, to "explore the wondrous world."

limits and threatened the liberties of citizens, states had the right to interpose their authority.

But Jefferson and Madison were not ready to rend a union that had so recently been forged. The two men intended for the Virginia and Kentucky resolutions only to rally public opinion to the Republican cause. They opposed any effort to resist federal authority by force. Furthermore, other states openly rejected the doctrine of "interposition." During the last year of the Adams administration, the Alien and Sedition Acts quietly expired. Once in power, the Republicans repealed the Naturalization Act.

The Election of 1800

With a naval war raging on the high seas and the Alien and Sedition Acts sparking debate at home, Adams suddenly shocked his party by negotiating a peace treaty with France. It was a courageous act, for Adams not only split his party in two but also ruined his own chances for reelection by driving Hamilton's pro-British wing of the party into open opposition. The nation benefited, however, for France signed a peace treaty ending its undeclared war. Adams, who bristled with pride and independence, termed this act "the most disinterested, the most determined and the most successful of my whole life."

Daily Lives

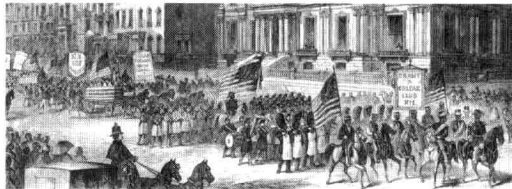
Every chapter contains an essay focusing on one of five themes that give insight into the lives of ordinary Americans: clothing and fashion; time and travel; food, drink, and drugs; public space/private space; and popular entertainment.

Marginal Headings

Succinct notes in the margins highlight key terms and concepts.

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Part Three The Republic Transformed and Tested



From the beginning of Reconstruction, African Americans demanded the right to vote as free citizens. The Fifteenth Amendment, ratified in 1870, secured that right for black males. In New York, black citizens paraded in support of Ulysses Grant for president. Parades played a central role in campaigning; this parade exhibits the usual banners, flags, costumes, and a band. Blacks in both the North and the South voted solidly for the Republican party as the party of Lincoln and emancipation, although white violence in the South increasingly reduced black turnout.

The New State Governments

The new southern state constitutions enacted several significant reforms. They put in place later systems of legislative representation, allowed voters to elect many officials who before had been appointed, and abolished property requirements for officeholding. In South Carolina, for the first time, voters were allowed to vote for the president, governor, and other state officers. The Radical state governments also assumed some responsibility for social welfare and established the first statewide systems of public schools in the South. Although the Fourteenth Amendment prevented high Confederate officials from holding office, only Alabama and Arkansas temporarily forbade some ex-Confederates to vote.

All the new constitutions proclaimed the principle of equality and granted black adult males the right to vote. On social relations they were much more cautious. No state outlawed segregation, and South Carolina and Louisiana were the only states that required integration in public schools (a mandate that was almost universally ignored). Sensitive to status, mulattoes pushed for prohibition of social discrimination, but white Republicans refused to adopt such a radical policy.

Economic Issues and Corruption

The war left the southern economy in ruins, and problems of economic reconstruction were as difficult as those of politics. The new Republican governments encouraged industrial development by providing subsidies, loans, and even

⁷Previously, presidential electors as well as the governor had been chosen by the South Carolina legislature.

Summary

A bulleted summary reinforces each chapter's main points.

Interactive Learning

Lists at the end of every chapter direct students to relevant interactive maps, short documentary movies, and primary source materials located on the Primary Source Investigator CD-ROM.

Additional Reading

Annotated references to both classic studies and recent scholarship encourage further pursuit of the topics and events covered in the chapter.

before them) turned for labor to the African slave trade. Only after slavery became firmly established as a social and legal institution did England's southern colonies begin to settle down and grow: during the late seventeenth century for the Chesapeake region and the early eighteenth for the Carolinas. That stubborn reality would haunt Americans of all colors who continued to dream of freedom and independence.

chapter summary

During the seventeenth century, plantation economies based on slavery gradually developed throughout the American South.

- Native peoples everywhere in the American South resisted white settlement, but their populations were drastically reduced by warfare, disease, and enslavement.



- Thriving monocultures were established throughout the region—tobacco in the Chesapeake, rice in the Carolinas, and sugar in the Caribbean.
- African slavery emerged as the dominant labor system in all the southern colonies.
- Instability and conflict characterized the southern colonies for most of the first century of their existence.
- As the English colonies took shape, the Spanish extended their empire in Florida and New Mexico, establishing military garrisons, missions, and cattle ranches.

interactive learning

The Primary Source Investigator CD-ROM offers the following materials related to this chapter:

- Interactive maps: *The Atlantic World, 1400–1850* (M2) and *Growth of the Colonies, 1610–1690* (M3)
- A collection of primary sources on the English colonization of North America, such as an engraving that



illustrates the dress and customs of Native Americans living near Jamestown, letters and documents about the peace resulting from the marriage of Pocahontas and John Rolfe, and the terrible collapse of that peace captured in a contemporary engraving of the Indian massacre of Jamestown settlers. Also included are several sources on the origins of slavery in America: a document that presents one of the earliest restrictive slave codes in the British colonies, images of Portuguese slave-trading forts on the coast of West Africa, and a sobering diagram of the human cargo holds of that era's slave-trading ships.

additional reading

The best treatment of early Virginia is Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom* (1975). A more intimate portrait of an early Virginia community can be found in Darrett and Anita Rutman's study of Middlesex County, *A Place in Time* (1984). Karen Kupperman offers an excellent overview of relations between whites and Indians not only in the early South but throughout North America in *Settling with the Indians* (1980), while James Merrell sensitively explores the impact of white contact on a single southern tribe in *The Indians' New World* (1989). Two other notable treatments of slavery



and race relations in Britain's southern colonies are Richard Dunn's study of the Caribbean, *Sugar and Slaves* (1972); and Peter Woods work on South Carolina, *Black Majority* (1974). And for the Spanish borderlands, see David J. Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (1992).

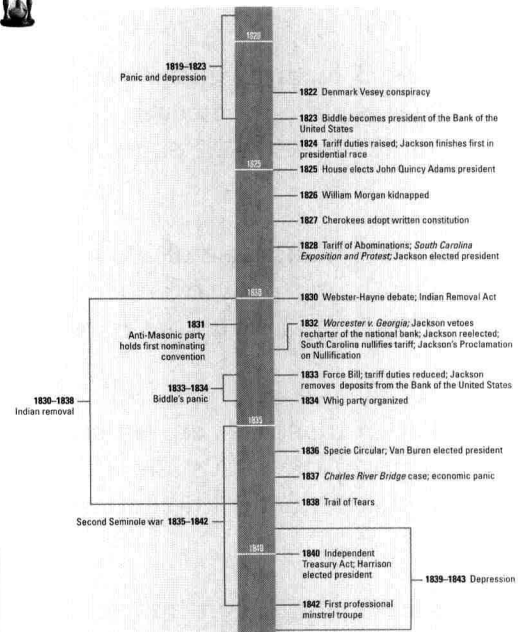
The Chesapeake has always drawn more notice from early American historians than South Carolina has, but in recent years some important studies have redressed that neglect. The best overview of that colony's development remains Robert Weir, *Colonial South Carolina* (1982), for fine explorations of more specialized topics, see Daniel C. Littlefield, *Rice and Slaves* (1981); Peter Colquhoun, *The Shadow of a Dream* (1989); and Timothy Silver, *A New Face on the Countryside* (1990). For a fuller list of readings, see the Bibliography at www.mhhe.com/davis/american.

Significant Events

A chronology at the end of each chapter shows the temporal relationship among important events.



significant events



Printer Ornaments and Initial Blocks

History records change over time in countless ways. The flow of history is reflected not only in the narrative of this text but in the decorative types used in its design.



Over the years printers have used ornamental designs to enliven their texts. Each chapter of *Nation of Nations* incorporates an ornament created during the period being written about. Often these ornaments are from printers' specimen books, produced by type manufacturers so printers could buy such designs. In other chapters the ornaments are taken from printed material of the era.

The initial blocks—the large decorative initials beginning the first word of every chapter—are drawn from type styles popular during the era covered by each of the book's six parts.



Part 1 uses hand-engraved initials of the sort imported from England and Europe by colonial printers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.



Part 2 displays mortised initial blocks. These ornaments had holes cut in the middle of the design so a printer could insert the initial of choice. These holes provided greater flexibility when the supply of ornaments was limited.



Part 3 features initial blocks cut from wood, an approach common in the early and middle nineteenth century. This design, Roman X Condensed, allowed more letters to be squeezed into a limited space.



Part 4 makes use of a more ornamental initial block common in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Some Victorian designs became quite ornate. This font, a style that is relatively reserved, is Latin Condensed.



Part 5 illustrates an initial block whose clean lines reflect the Art Deco movement of the 1920s and 1930s. Printers of the New Era turned away from the often-flowery nineteenth-century styles. This font is Beverly Hills.



Part 6 features an informal style, Brush Script Regular. First introduced during World War II, this typeface reflects the more casual culture that blossomed during the postwar era.

about the authors

James West Davidson received his Ph.D. from Yale University. A historian who has pursued a full-time writing career, he is the author of numerous books, among them *After the Fact: The Art of Historical Detection* (with Mark H. Lytle), *The Logic of Millennial Thought: Eighteenth-Century New England*, and *Great Heart: The History of a Labrador Adventure* (with John Ruge). He is coeditor, with Michael Stoff, of the *Oxford New Narratives in American History* and is at work on a study of Ida B. Wells for the series.

William E. Gienapp has a Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley and taught at the University of Wyoming before going to Harvard University, where he was Professor of History until his death in 2003. In 1988 he received the Avery O. Craven Award for his book *The Origins of the Republican Party, 1852–1856*. He edited *The Civil War and Reconstruction: A Documentary Collection* and most recently published *Abraham Lincoln and Civil War America* and a companion volume, *This Fiery Trial: The Speeches and Writings of Abraham Lincoln*.

Christine Leigh Heyrman is Professor of History at the University of Delaware. She received a Ph.D. in American Studies from Yale University and is the author of *Commerce and Culture: The Maritime Communities of Colonial Massachusetts, 1690–1750*. Her book *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt* was awarded the Bancroft Prize in 1998.

Mark H. Lytle, who received a Ph.D. from Yale University, is Professor of History and Environmental Studies and Chair of the History Program at Bard College. He was recently reappointed Mary Ball Washington Professor of History at University College, Dublin, in Ireland. His publications include *The Origins of the Iranian-American Alliance, 1941–1953*, *After the Fact: The Art of Historical Detection* (with James West Davidson), and “An Environmental Approach to American Diplomatic History” in *Diplomatic History*. His most recent book, *The Uncivil War: America in the Vietnam Era*, will be published in 2005, and he is completing a biography of Rachel Carson.

Michael B. Stoff is Associate Professor of History at the University of Texas at Austin. The recipient of a Ph.D. from Yale University, he has received many teaching awards, most recently the Friars’ Centennial Teaching Excellence Award. He is the author of *Oil, War, and American Security: The Search for a National Policy on Foreign Oil, 1941–1947* and coeditor (with Jonathan Fanton and R. Hal Williams) of *The Manhattan Project: A Documentary Introduction to the Atomic Age*. He is currently working on a brief narrative of the bombing of Nagasaki.

introduction

History is both a discipline of rigor, bound by rules and scholarly methods, and something more: the unique, compelling, even strange way in which we humans define ourselves. We are all the sum of the tales of thousands of people, great and small, whose actions have etched their lines upon us. History supplies our very identity—a sense of the social groups to which we belong, whether family, ethnic group, race, class, or gender. It reveals to us the foundations of our deepest religious beliefs and traces the roots of our economic and political systems. It explores how we celebrate and grieve, how we sing the songs we sing, how we weather the illnesses to which time and chance subject us. It commands our attention for all these good reasons and for no good reason at all, other than a fascination with the way the myriad tales play out. Strange that we should come to care about a host of men and women so many centuries gone, some with names eminent and familiar, others unknown but for a chance scrap of information left behind in an obscure letter.

Yet we do care. We care about Sir Humphrey Gilbert, “devoured and swallowed up of the Sea” one black Atlantic night in 1583; we care about George Washington at Kips Bay, red with fury as he takes a riding crop to his retreating soldiers. We care about Octave Johnson, a slave fleeing through Louisiana swamps trying to decide whether to stand and fight the approaching hounds or take his chances with the bayou alligators; we care about Clara Barton, her nurse’s skirts so heavy with blood from the wounded, that she must wring them out before tending to the next soldier. We are drawn to the fate of Chinese laborers, chipping away at the Sierras’ looming granite; of a Georgian named Tom Watson seeking to forge a colorblind political alliance; and of desperate immigrant mothers, kerosene lamps in hand, storming Brooklyn butcher shops that had again raised prices. We follow, with a mix of awe and amusement, the fortunes of the quirky Henry Ford (“Everybody wants to be somewhere he ain’t”), turning out identical automobiles, insisting his factory workers wear identical expressions (“Fordization of the Face”).

We trace the career of young Thurgood Marshall, crisscrossing the South in his own “little old beat-up ’29 Ford,” typing legal briefs in the back seat, trying to get black teachers to sue for equal pay, hoping to get his people somewhere they weren’t. The list could go on and on, spilling out as it did in Walt Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass*: “A southerner soon as a northerner, a planter nonchalant and hospitable, / A Yankee bound my own way . . . a Hoosier, a Badger, a Buckeye, a Louisianian or Georgian. . . .” Whitman embraced and celebrated them all, inseparable strands of what made him an American and what made him human:

In all people I see myself, none more and not one
a barleycorn less; And the good or bad I say of
myself, I say of them.

To encompass so expansive an America, Whitman turned to poetry; historians have traditionally chosen *narrative* as their means of giving life to the past. That mode of explanation permits them to interweave the strands of economic, political, and social history in a coherent chronological framework. By choosing narrative, historians affirm the multicausal nature of historical explanation—the insistence that events be portrayed in context. By choosing narrative, they are also acknowledging that, although long-term economic and social trends shape societies in significant ways, events often take on a logic (or an illogic) of their own, jostling one another, being deflected by unpredictable personal decisions, sudden deaths, natural catastrophes, and chance. There are literary reasons, too, for preferring a narrative approach, because it supplies a dramatic force usually missing from more structural analyses of the past.

In some ways, surveys such as this text are the natural antithesis of narrative history. They strive, by definition, to be comprehensive: to furnish a broad, orderly exposition of their chosen field. Yet to cover so much ground in so limited a space necessarily deprives readers of the context of more detailed accounts. Then, too, the resurgence of social history—with its concern for class and race, patterns of rural and urban life, the

spread of market and industrial economies—lends itself to more analytic, less chronological treatments. The challenge facing historians is to incorporate these areas of research without losing the story's narrative drive or the chronological flow that orients readers to the more familiar events of our past.

With the cold war of the past half-century at an end, there has been increased attention to the worldwide breakdown of so many nonmarket economies and, by inference, to the greater success of the market societies of the United States and other capitalist nations. As our own narrative makes clear, American society and politics have indeed come together centrally in the marketplace. What Americans produce, how and where they produce it, and the desire to buy cheap and sell dear have been defining elements in every era. That market orientation has created unparalleled abundance and reinforced striking inequalities, not the least a society in which, for two centuries, human beings themselves were bought and sold. It has made Americans powerfully provincial in protecting local interests and internationally adventurous in seeking to expand wealth and opportunity.

It goes without saying that Americans have not always produced wisely or well. The insistent drive toward material plenty has levied a heavy tax on the

global environment. Too often quantity has substituted for quality, whether we talk of cars, education, or culture. When markets flourish, the nation abounds with confidence that any problem, no matter how intractable, can be solved. When markets fail, however, the fault lines of our political and social systems become all too evident.

In the end, then, it is impossible to separate the marketplace of boom and bust and the world of ordinary Americans from the corridors of political maneuvering or the ceremonial pomp of an inauguration. To treat political and social history as distinct spheres is counterproductive. The primary question of this narrative—how the fledgling, often tumultuous confederation of “these United States” managed to transform itself into an enduring republic—is not only political but necessarily social. In order to survive, a republic must resolve conflicts between citizens of different geographic regions and economic classes, of diverse racial and ethnic origins, of competing religions and ideologies. The resolution of these conflicts has produced tragic consequences, perhaps, as often as noble ones. But tragic or noble, the destiny of these states cannot be understood without comprehending both the social and the political dimensions of the story.



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0 1000 2000 Kilometers



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|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. NETHERLANDS | 18. MOLDOVA |
| 2. BELGIUM | 19. GEORGIA |
| 3. LUXEMBOURG | 20. ARMENIA |
| 4. ESTONIA | 21. AZERBAIJAN |
| 5. LATVIA | 22. LEBANON |
| 6. LITHUANIA | 23. ISRAEL |
| 7. CZECH REPUBLIC | 24. LAOS |
| 8. SLOVAKIA | 25. THAILAND |
| 9. SWITZERLAND | 26. CAMBODIA |
| 10. AUSTRIA | 27. PUERTO RICO (U.S.) |
| 11. HUNGARY | 28. ST. KITTS AND NEVIS |
| 12. SLOVENIA | 29. ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA |
| 13. CROATIA | 30. DOMINICA |
| 14. BOSNIA AND HERCEGOVINA | 31. ST. LUCIA |
| 15. SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO | 32. ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES |
| 16. MACEDONIA | 33. BARBADOS |
| 17. ALBANIA | 34. TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO |