

AMERICAN PASSAGES

A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

VOLUME II
SINCE 1865
SECOND EDITION

EDWARD L. AYERS

LEWIS L. GOULD

DAVID M. OSHINSKY

JEAN R. SODERLUND





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A History of the United States

Volume II: Since 1863

Second Edition

Edward L. Ayers
University of Virginia

Lewis L. Gould
University of Texas at Austin, Emeritus

David M. Oshinsky
University of Texas at Austin

Jean R. Soderlund
Lehigh University

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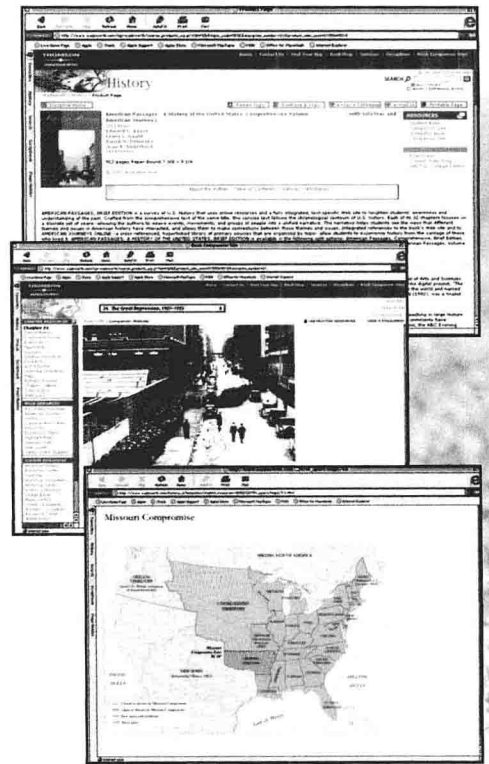
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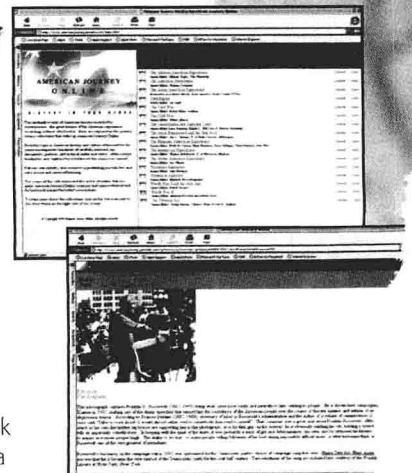
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PREFACE



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A “NOVEL” APPROACH: TELLING THE STORY OF THE AMERICAN PAST

In the first edition of *American Passages* we introduced a tight narrative organization that places readers directly into the story of the past, experiencing events as they unfolded for the people of that era—whether simultaneously or in a sequential chain. Judging by the responses from instructors and students who are using the text and web resources, this approach has proven both engaging and valuable in making history make sense.

WHY STORY IS AT THE CENTER OF OUR HISTORY

History textbooks often focus on one topic at a time—politics, culture, reform, or the economy, for example. That kind of presentation, logical as it may seem, comes with a cost: it turns textbooks simply into gathered information rather than compelling stories.

People do not live one topic at a time. We experience many facets of history every day, all in the flow of time. Things happen simultaneously and in connection. We are used to the idea that our lives combine a mixture of major and minor events, of fads and movies and TV shows as well as elections, wars, and laws. The past was like that as well.

People confront surprise every day, for history seldom follows a straight line. No one could have predicted Bacon's Rebellion, John Brown's Raid, the Haymarket Riot, or the Watergate break-in. Nor could Americans have foreseen the emergence of Thomas Paine, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Henry Ford, or Martin Luther King, Jr. And who could have known on the morning of September 11, 2001, how different life would seem just that afternoon and in the days, weeks, and months that followed?

FEATURES OF AMERICAN PASSAGES

American Passages is written to convey the excitement and uncertainty of this nation's past—to see it whole. Eight “Passages” sections, appearing regularly throughout the text, provide broad overviews that connect ideas and themes across chapters. In addition to a textual outline, the “Passages” sections weave in photographs, posters, graphs, and maps illustrative of the period. Two-page “Passages” timelines help students place smaller stories into context and to understand interrelationships of people, ideas, movements, and events.

This edition of *American Passages* also adds a new feature, Picturing the Past, which uses extended captions to link illustrations in each chapter to the larger themes explored in the “Passages” sections. Since photos, cartoons, maps, and other visual materials are so important in our understanding of the past, we have paused a little longer over three images in each chapter to call students' attention to the detail and meaning those images convey. These extended captions are labeled corresponding to the three major organizing principles of the book—Politics and Diplomacy, Social and Cultural Events, and Economics and Technology—and are color-coordinated to the timelines in the “Passages” sections. This visual and thematic association will help students understand how people and events connected across time. And the exercise of looking at images through a historian's eye will also help them learn to evaluate images on their own.

We have added map captions that explain the significance of specific features and relationships. By highlighting the important information in various types of maps, these captions will help students

develop their own map-reading and critical thinking skills. Also new to this edition are Web icons throughout the text that alert students to the remarkable resources available on the Web site custom-built for *American Passages*. Far more than any traditional ancillary or generic Web site, the site for this book amplifies and deepens the specific topics students are reading about, offering hundreds of documents, maps, illustrations, and multimedia selections—all organized to match up with the text's table of contents. Its dynamic maps and expanded entries make the *American Passages* site the most helpful and engaging resource of its kind. Visit the companion site at <http://history.wadsworth.com/passages2e>.

CONTENT REVISIONS

The second edition works to tell the stories of the American past as effectively as possible. The authors have trimmed the text so that it is even tighter and more efficient, making room for colorful and telling details. Each section of *American Passages* has been substantially improved. Throughout, we have consulted the latest scholarship and integrated the nuances, additions, and corrections that current literature offers.

Chapters on the colonial period include new information on North America before Columbus's arrival, the Spanish empire, and Native Americans who lived within British settlements. Perspectives on the American Revolution and the new United States place greater emphasis on the young republic's achievements within an international context.

In the chapters that cover the decades between 1815 and Reconstruction, we have consolidated material on Andrew Jackson, antebellum reform, and the War with Mexico so that these chapters work more effectively as a narrative. Memorable quotations and surprising facts have been woven in throughout these chapters.

For the late nineteenth century, we have reduced the amount of the text devoted to national politics and have also pared down some detail on farm problems and Populism so that students can better understand this complex period. The approach to progressivism and then to the 1920s reflects this same intention to provide better access to the significance of these decades rather than to a detailed recounting of events. For the mid-twentieth century—the chapters from the 1930s through the 1970s—we have tightened the narrative, focusing again on events of major political, diplomatic, and economic signifi-

cance, while expanding our coverage of cultural and technological change, from rock music and television to the polio vaccine and the computer. There is more information on the way that Americans of different backgrounds lived their everyday lives in times of economic depression, world war, unprecedented prosperity, and social unrest. For the final chapters we have integrated the events of September 11 and the unfolding of the war on terrorism into the narrative in a way that helps students grasp how the nation's present situation grew out of the political and diplomatic decisions of the 1980s and 1990s.

The second edition of *American Passages*, in short, remains true to its original vision of history as interwoven stories and now tells those stories even more effectively.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my students and colleagues at the University of Virginia who have helped me struggle with the tough questions of American history. I am grateful, too, to Katherine Pierce and Margaret Beasley for their imagination, hard work, and good advice in the creation of this book. Finally, I am very appreciative of my co-authors, who have been engaged scholars, thoughtful critics, devoted teachers, and good friends throughout the years it took us to write *American Passages*.

Edward L. Ayers

I would like to acknowledge the help of the following former students who contributed in constructive ways to the completion of the textbook: Martin Ansell, Christie Bourgeois, Thomas Clarkin, Stacy Cordery, Debbie Cottrell, Patrick Cox, Scott Harris, Byron Hulsey, Jonathan Lee, John Leffler, Mark Young, and Nancy Beck Young. Karen Gould gave indispensable support and encouragement throughout the process of writing the text. Margaret Beasley supplied patient, informed, and thorough editorial guidance for the second edition, and the authors are all in her debt for that significant contribution. I am grateful as well to the readers of my chapters who made so many useful and timely criticisms.

Lewis L. Gould

I would like to thank my colleagues and students at Rutgers for allowing me to test out an endless stream of ideas and issues relating to modern American history, and also for their thoughts on how a good college textbook should “read” and

what it should contain. As always, the support and love of my family—Matt, Efrem, Ari, and Jane—was unshakable. Above all, I must commend my co-authors and my editors for their remarkable patience and professionalism during this long collaborative process.

David M. Oshinsky

I am grateful to my husband, Rudolf Soderlund, and my family for their support throughout this project. They have provided valuable feedback on the text. Many scholars in the colonial and early national periods shared their ideas orally and through publications. I received very helpful comments from James S. Saeger, Roger D. Simon, Marianne S. Wokeck, my co-authors of this text, and the anonymous readers for the press.

Jean R. Soderlund

Reviewers

The authors wish to thank the following professors who have provided useful feedback and suggestions at various stages in the writing and revising of *American Passages*.

Joseph Adams, St. Louis Community College at Meramec
 Dawn Alexander, Abilene Christian University
 Charles Allbee, Burlington Community College
 Julius Amin, University of Dayton
 Melodie Andrews, Mankato State University
 Richard Baquera, El Paso Community College–Valle Verde
 Robert Becker, Louisiana State University
 Peter Bergstrom, Illinois State University
 Blanche Brick, Blinn College
 John Brooke, Tufts University
 Neil Brooks, Essex Community College
 Linda D. Brown, Odessa College
 Colin Calloway, Dartmouth University
 Milton Cantor, University of Massachusetts
 Kay Carr, Southern Illinois University
 Paul Chardoul, Grand Rapids Junior College
 Thomas Clarkin, University of Texas, Austin
 Myles Clowers, San Diego City College
 William Cobb, Utah Valley State College
 David Coon, Washington State University
 Stacey Cordery, Monmouth College
 Debbie Cottrell, Smith College
 A. Glenn Crothers, Indiana University Southeast
 David Cullen, Collin County Community College

Christine Daniels, Michigan State University
 Amy E. Davis, University of California, Los Angeles
 Ronnie Day, East Tennessee State University
 Matthew Dennis, University of Oregon
 Robert Downtain, Tarrant County Junior College, Northeast Campus
 Robert Elam, Modesto Junior College
 Rob Fink, Texas Tech University
 Monte S. Finkelstein, Tallahassee Community College
 Linda Foutch, Walter State Community College
 Robert G. Fricke, West Valley College
 Michael P. Gabriel, Kutztown University
 David Hamilton, University of Kentucky
 Beatriz Hardy, Coastal Carolina University
 Peter M. G. Harris, Temple University
 Thomas Hartshorne, Cleveland State University
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 Ron Hatzenbuehler, Idaho State University
 Robert Hawkes, George Mason University
 William L. Hewitt, West Chester University
 James Houston, Oklahoma State University
 Raymond Hyser, James Madison University
 Lillian Jones, Santa Monica College
 Jim Kluger, Pima Community College
 Timothy Koerner, Oakland Community College
 James Lacy, Contra Costa College
 Alton Lee, University of South Dakota
 Liston Leyendecker, Colorado State University
 Robert Marcom, San Antonio College
 Greg Massey, Freed-Hardeman
 Michael Mayer, University of Montana
 Randy McBee, Texas Tech University
 Loyce B. Miles, Hinds Community College
 Kimberly Morse, University of Texas, Austin
 Augustine Nigro, Kutztown University
 Elsa Nystrom, Kennesaw State
 David O'Neill, Rutgers University
 Elizabeth R. Osborn, Indiana University–Purdue University, Indianapolis
 Betty Owens, Greenville Technical College
 Mark Parillo, Kansas State University
 J'Nell Pate, Tarrant County Junior College, Northeast Campus
 Louis Potts, University of Missouri at Kansas City
 Noel Pugach, University of New Mexico
 Alice Reagan, Northern Virginia Community College
 Marlette Rebhorn Austin Community College, Rio Grande Campus
 David Reimers, New York University
 Hal Rothman, Wichita State University
 Erik S. Schmeller, Tennessee State University
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Jack Smith, Great Basin College
Thaddeus Smith, Middle Tennessee State University
Phillip E. Stebbins, Pennsylvania State University
Marshall Stevenson, Ohio State University
William Stockton, Johnson County Community
College
Suzanne Summers, Austin Community College
Frank Towers, Clarion University

Steve Tripp, Grand Valley State University
Daniel Usner, Cornell University
Daniel Vogt, Jackson State University
Stephen Webre, Louisiana Technical College
John C. Willis, University of the South
Harold Wilson, Old Dominion University
Nan Woodruff, Pennsylvania State University
Bertram Wyatt-Brown, University of Florida
Sherri Yeager, Chabot College
Robert Zeidel, University of Wisconsin

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