

STUDY GUIDE TO ACCOMPANY
NATION OF NATIONS

A NARRATIVE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC

S E C O N D E D I T I O N

Volume One: To 1877



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CHRISTINE LEIGH HEYRMAN ♦ MARK H. LYTLE ♦ MICHAEL B. STOFF

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Volume I: To 1877

SECOND EDITION

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A Narrative History of the American Republic, Volume I: To 1877

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INTRODUCTION

This Study Guide is designed to accompany the second edition of *Nation of Nations: A Narrative History of the American Republic*. In it, we try to help you organize more clearly the facts and themes presented in the text and to present that material more cogently in exams and papers. Ultimately, we hope, the guide may even help you come to grips with the history of a nation that has shaped us all in countless ways. To quote from the preface of the text itself, "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 or grieve, sing the songs we sing, 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."

A CRITICAL APPROACH TO READING HISTORY

Before providing more information about the study guide, a word may be in order about the textbook itself. In the days before the consumer movement dictated that warnings be affixed to hazardous products, the traditional attitude of most sellers was summed up in the Latin motto, *caveat emptor*: let the buyer beware. We have not affixed warning labels to our text, but we would like to make it clear that buyers should be more than a little wary when reading *any* history--including our own.

Why? All history is presented in a way that is slightly seductive. Textbooks come dressed out in the full trappings of authority. They present the printed word on crisp white pages, provide a host of detailed maps, charts, and appendices, plus a list of authors with university affiliations after their names. The subliminal message behind all these trappings is, *This book is authoritative. This is history the way it really happened. Read and believe.* When, of course, the truth is much more complicated.

Look, for example, at the following paragraph, taken from Chapter 2 of *Nation of Nations*. It discusses conditions in the colony of Virginia during the first few decades of its existence.

Even the most skeptical immigrants must have been shocked at what they found.

The death rate in Virginia in the 1620s was higher than that of England during times of epidemic disease. The life expectancy for Chesapeake

men who reached the age of 20 was a mere 48 years; for women it was lower still. Servants fared worst of all, since malnutrition, overwork, and abuse made them vulnerable to disease. As masters scrambled to make quick profits, they extracted the maximum amount of work before death carried off their laborers. An estimated 40 percent of servants never regained their freedom because they did not survive to the end of their indentured terms.

On the face of it, the paragraph seems straightforward. It is not an impassioned argument filled with value judgments about whether Christopher Columbus was a hero or a villain, whether Andrew Jackson was an inspired political leader, or whether the Civil War could have been avoided. It merely describes the harsh conditions of life in early Virginia.

But the word *merely* is misleading. The paragraph lists a number of statistics as if they were obvious, easily documented truths. A male Virginian who reached the age of 20 had, on average, a life expectancy of only 48. The death rate in Virginia in the 1620s was higher than that of England during times of epidemic disease. About 40 percent of indentured servants died before gaining their freedom. None of these "facts" are recorded in some official *Virginia Book of Records*, like Guinness's famous collection. And none of the authors of this text have themselves combed through the old documents, records of births and deaths, records of the plague in England, to make these computations. We have relied on other historians who have done this work and published it, just as they rely on our work in other specialized areas. Often, years of research lie behind such apparently simple statements. The computations are often difficult and full of uncertainty. Yet readers of a text like this will quickly read and digest those few sentences and quickly move on to another paragraph--equally full of uncertainties. *Read and believe.*

There is no way, of course, for readers to skeptically check the research behind hundreds of different subjects and thousands of paragraphs in any history text. Yet it is worth understanding, right at the start, that a text is inevitably misleading in its presentation. To compress an account of American history even into an ample 1000 pages means leaving out most of the uncertainties behind any statement of "facts."

Beyond that, larger uncertainties await in matters of interpretation. In composing a narrative like this, the authors have had to make hard choices about presenting and interpreting American history. These are decisions that must be made chapter by chapter, paragraph by paragraph, and even sentence by sentence. How much biographical information should one include of pivotal figures like Washington, Lincoln, or King? How much on the history of anonymous Americans like shoemakers in nineteenth century Massachusetts? To what degree should we cover topics like slave communities in the South before the Civil

War or the intellectual history of American arts and letters? Such decisions are not merely questions of space. They involve larger issues of interpretation. Do individual actions shape history more than broad social forces and trends? Is it more important to talk about the rise of a market economy or the rise of the modern presidency? Putting words to paper involves making choices about a host of different issues, both large and small.

In the limited space available to a textbook, it is impossible to explore in any detail so many differences of interpretation. But as alert readers, you should be aware that those differences remain, always lurking below the narrative's confident surface. One goal of this study guide is to help students become more sensitive to the choices historians must inevitably make.

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

The guide proceeds chapter by chapter, providing both **Review Questions** that are designed to help you review for exams as well as a **Critical Thinking** section designed to hone skills that are crucial for analyzing historical problems and writing concise, coherent essays, research papers and examinations. Within each chapter, the material is presented as follows:

The Chapter in Perspective opens with a paragraph or two placing the chapter under review within the larger context of the American history. These paragraphs underline links to materials discussed in previous chapters. Sometimes, they identify trends that will become increasingly important in future chapters.

Overview. This provides a summary of the chapter's major themes, using the same headings that appear in the chapter itself. It may be useful to read the overview before beginning your reading, as a preview of the material. Or read afterward, the Overview serves as a tool for review. Summaries like these, of course, cannot include all the facts and interpretive material you will need to discuss key themes and topics. But they should serve to focus attention on those areas you would naturally elaborate upon in an exam.

Key Events are time line chronologies. Use them as a checklist of important occurrences and trends, but also consider how they relate to each other in sequence, in order to develop a sense of the pacing of history. How long were the Pilgrims in Massachusetts before John Winthrop's Puritans arrived? (Chapter 3) Was it years or decades between the time that William Lloyd Garrison established his radical abolitionist newspaper *The Liberator* and his split with the more moderate antislavery forces? (Chapter 12) Thus time lines allow you to better sense the progression of events and the matter of historical timing.

Learning Objectives. These list the chapter's five or six most important themes. Like the Overview, they serve as a means of reviewing key material that is likely to be covered, especially in essay questions. In fact, they could be treated as just as easily as exam questions: if you find you can't answer each of them coherently, you need additional preparation.

Multiple Choice Questions include ten per chapter. Although they cover a representative range of topics, they are not meant to be exhaustive in coverage--only to provide a general feel for the *type* of factual questions that may be asked on an exam. Following each item is a page reference to the text, indicating where the correct answer may be found.

Identification Questions. These include both terms and concepts as well as individuals and places. They are fairly comprehensive for each chapter: that is, if you can explain the significance of all of them, you should be well prepared to handle the factual aspects of the chapter material. In addition, each chapter includes an outline map and asks you to locate significant places or other geographic information central to the period.

Essay Questions. These cover a range of topics of the sort that might be encountered on an exam. In using the questions for review, it may not be necessary to write out an entire sample essay, although putting something to paper is always a superior way to organize your thoughts. (It is remarkable how many ideas that seem brilliant when floating around in one's brain, end up looking vague and imprecise when actually committed to paper.) An alternate way to review would be to jot down a brief outline of the points that the essay would cover, and talk them through orally, perhaps with a friend. In any case, jotting an outline down before beginning an essay is always a good practice.

Evaluating Evidence (Maps, Illustrations and Charts). Each Critical Thinking section begins with questions asking for evaluation or analysis of the text's illustrative material. As authors, we feel strongly that students, professors and even the writers of many textbooks do not pay close enough attention to the materials that accompany the core narrative. We have included the maps, graphs and illustrations not merely as window dressing, but as ways to make clearer the points in the text. Thus these questions can be seen as ways to help you understand more clearly the main point of a map or chart, and to notice details in paintings or photographs that might not have been so obvious at first glance.

Critical Analysis. On the face of it, this section of the Study Guide would seem the most easily skippable. It merely reprints a section of the text itself--usually two or three paragraphs--that you have already encountered. But the passage may bear rereading, for two reasons. First, it has often been selected because it is pivotal, making a point that is likely to be encountered on an exam question. Second, the questions that follow the selection are designed to test your skills as a reader. If you can answer them easily, then your reading of other portions of the narrative has most likely been equally sharp. If they prove more diffi-

cult to answer, or require a rereading of the passage, then they point up the need to develop the kind of close reading skills indispensable not only for analyzing *Nation of Nations*, but any historical narrative or argument.

Primary Source. Each chapter concludes with a primary source excerpt that illustrates one of the chapter's themes. A *primary source* is one that has been written (or made, or left behind in some way) by historical subjects themselves, not by later historians studying or analyzing the period. It could be a diary, a song, a last will and testament, an official record of laws passed, or the sketch on the back of an envelope. Primary sources are the raw materials of history: those pieces of the puzzle from which the narrative in this and all history books are pieced together. We include a selection of them in order to underline the point we made about: that is, what a chancy business interpreting history is. The "lessons" history provides are usually not so evident in the primary sources as they are in a textbook. To understand a subject in depth, we must all become our own historians, going to the primary sources to put together the story for ourselves.

Obviously, in such a short space we can provide only a hint of what that process involves, just as in *Nation of Nations*, we can only sketch the major outlines of American history. But in the text and Study Guide, we hope we have provided enough of both the sinews and the savor of the historian's task so that you may wish to continue your own explorations of history. Like it or not, the events shaping this teeming nation of nations have also defined and shaped us, and we can look to our future more intelligently the better we understand the contours of our past.

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OLD WORLD, NEW WORLDS

THE CHAPTER IN PERSPECTIVE

Early modern Europe emerged from its isolation during the Middle Ages by conquering the world's oceans--opening direct contact and commerce with Africa and Asia and rediscovering America. Before the end of the fourteenth century, western Europeans had relied on the mariners and merchants of the Muslim world for their access to the trade and technology of the rest of the known world, Africa and Asia. But during the fifteenth century, western Europeans mastered the world's oceans. Thus they threw off their dependence on Muslim middlemen for access to the learning and resources of distant continents. European mariners carved out new sea routes to Africa and Asia and laid claim to continents in the Americas. The results of those efforts at exploration and discovery transformed western Europe from a backward society into a major world power.

OVERVIEW

The story of European exploration and discovery in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries starts with the international fishing community at Newfoundland, a group of fisherfolk, mariners, and merchants who swarmed to fish the waters off the Grand Banks and to swap supplies and gossip at St. John's. The tales traded by these ordinary seamen and traders featured the exploits of "great men"--the Portuguese explorations of the coast of Africa and their charting of a new route to Asia; the efforts of John Cabot to find a northwest passage to the Orient; and, of course, Columbus's discovery of America.

The Meeting of Europe and America

That conquest of the high seas began with the successful voyages of the Portuguese into the Atlantic in the late 1300s, when they colonized the Canary Islands and, a few decades later, Madeira, and the Azores. By the early 1400s the Portuguese had established sugar plantations on the Atlantic islands worked by enslaved Africans. The Portuguese also initiated a trade with West Africa, and by the end of the century their explorers had rounded the tip of that continent and opened a direct commerce with India.

While the Portuguese dominated the trade routes to Africa and Asia, the Spanish laid claim to the Americas, led by the discovery of an Italian mariner, Christopher Columbus.

Early North American Cultures

The people who first settled the Americas were descendants of Asian migrants who crossed the Bering Strait to Alaska many millennia before 1492. When Europeans first arrived in the Americas, these Indian cultures were numerous and diverse, ranging from the hunting and gathering societies of the Great Plains to the sophisticated civilization of the Aztecs in Mezoamerica.

Indeed, the Aztec economy and society encountered by Spanish explorers was similar in many respects to that of sixteenth-century Europe. One crucial difference, however, distinguished the direction of Aztec development from that of Europe: Aztec expansionism did not take the form of exploration and colonization across the Atlantic.

The European Background of American Colonization

To understand why western European expansion extended overseas requires a closer investigation of not only advances in maritime technology but also the economic and political evolution of early modern Europe. That evolution included the concentration of investment capital in the hands of merchants, financiers, and landlords; the pressure of population on a limited supply of land; and the centralization of political authority in nation states. All these changes allowed Europeans to push back the ocean frontier and to support overseas settlement. Transatlantic expansionism became not only possible but desirable due to deep change within the structure of western society.

Spain's Empire in the New World

Spain took the lead in exploring and colonizing the Americas. Under Spain, conquistadors like Hernando Cortes and the Pizarro brothers supplanted the Aztecs and the Incas as the new overlords of the most densely populated regions of Central and South America. Both divisions within Indian empires and the devastation of native populations by European diseases made the Spanish conquest easier.

But Spanish monarchs soon replaced the conquistadors with their own rule over Spanish America, through an elaborate civil and ecclesiastical bureaucracy. The empire that developed during the sixteenth century proved enormously profitable, especially after the discovery of silver. That wealth, in turn, pushed Europe more rapidly down a path it was already following--toward more capitalistic forms of economic organization and more centralized forms of political authority.

The Reformation in Europe

As Spain developed its American empire, the Protestant Reformation transformed western Europe. Inspired by the teachings of Martin Luther and John Calvin, Protestant reformers criticized the worldliness and corruption of the Roman Catholic church, as well as its failure to respond to the spiritual needs of ordinary Christians. Protestant teachings addressed popular needs for religious reassurance by stressing that men and women were saved not by good works but through divine grace alone. Protestants also stressed the ability of each individual to read and understand the will of God as revealed in the bible.

England's Entry into the New World

Protestant attacks on Roman Catholicism won both zealous followers and determined opponents, triggering a series of bloody religious wars. The energies of young English men, barred by royal policy from poaching on Spain's preserve in the Americas, found an outlet in these religious conflicts, as well as in England's effort to conquer and colonize Ireland.

Many veterans of the Irish campaigns turned their attention to North America in the 1570s and 1580s. At that time, the threat Spain posed to English economic and military security encouraged Elizabeth I to challenge Spain more aggressively, both within Europe and across the Atlantic. English merchants and gentlemen, in search of new markets and new land, lent increasing support to colonization schemes as well. Martin Frobisher, Humphrey Gilbert, and Walter Raleigh all tried and failed at planting colonies in America. But their efforts, as well as the younger Richard Hakluyt's energetic promotion of English colonization, paved the way for renewed English expansionism in the seventeenth century.

KEY EVENTS

ca. 50,000-25,000 B.P.	<i>First Asian penetration of the Americas:</i> initial human settlement of the two continents
ca. 1300	<i>Rise of the Aztec empire:</i> the Indian civilization encountered by the Spanish in present-day Mexico
1271-1295	<i>Marco Polo travels to China from Italy:</i> medieval Europe begins its contact with Asia
1347	<i>First outbreak of the Black Death:</i> Europe's population declines drastically

1420s	<i>Portuguese settlements in the Atlantic Islands:</i> western Europe first penetrates its ocean frontier
1488	<i>Dias rounds the tip of Africa</i>
1492	<i>Columbus discovers America</i>
1497	<i>John Cabot discovers Newfoundland:</i> England penetrates its ocean frontier
1498	<i>Da Gama reaches India:</i> western Europe opens a direct trade with the Far East
1517	<i>Luther posts his 95 theses:</i> the Protestant Reformation begins
1519-1522	Magellan circumnavigates the globe
1521	<i>Tenochtitlán surrenders to Cortes:</i> Aztec empire falls to Spain
1540	<i>Discovery of silver in Mexico and Peru:</i> Spain vastly enriched by its overseas empire
1558	<i>Elizabeth I becomes queen of England</i>
1565	<i>England begins its conquest of Ireland:</i> the first effort at colonization by England
1584-1590	<i>Roanoke voyages:</i> England makes its first effort at colonization in North America

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

When you have finished studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Compare and contrast Indian cultures with western European society in the fifteenth century.
2. Explain why western Europeans were able to establish colonies across the Atlantic during the early modern period.

3. Describe the Spanish empire in America and discuss its impact on European development.
4. Explain the ways in which English efforts at colonization in the sixteenth century shaped their eventual settlements in North America.
5. Explain the significance of the Protestant Reformation and its relationship to western Europe's expansion.

Review Questions

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. The chapter introduction tells the story of West Country seafarers to make the point that
 - a. out of the maritime expertise of a small group of Portuguese came the crucial knowledge and experience that would make possible the Age of Discovery.
 - b. ordinary folk no less than conquistadors and crowned heads were enthralled by the possibilities of new worlds opened to Europeans.
 - c. fishing and trading were ultimately more important to the European conquest of the Americas than gold and silver.
 - d. while the Spanish were first to discover the Americas, the English quickly followed suit, establishing a dominant presence in North America during the 1500s.

(pp. 8-10)

2. Columbus succeeded in reaching the Americas
 - b. because he grossly miscalculated the distance from Europe to the Indies.
 - c. because he convinced the Spanish monarchs to underwrite a fleet of the largest vessels of that day.
 - d. because the Spanish *reconquista* had failed, and Spain needed a different enterprise.

(pp. 14-15)

3. By the mid-1500s (half a century after Columbus' discovery), all of the following were true except:
- a. The Spanish empire stretched from Mexico south to present Argentina and Chile.
 - b. The English had begun efforts to establish a permanent colony in North America.
 - c. The Portuguese were sailing directly to China around the south tip of Africa.
 - d. An international fishing community congregated annually off the Newfoundland coast.

(pp. 8-10, 12-14, 24-27)

4. The label "Indian" is a double error: to Columbus and other Europeans it conveyed the erroneous ideas
- a. that natives of the Americas originally came from India rather than Siberia, and that they followed a philosophical rather than sacramental religious system.
 - b. that Columbus thought he had reached the East Indies, and that the peoples of the Americas wore little clothing.
 - c. that the peoples of the mainland were like those of the West Indies, and that they were racially inferior.
 - d. that Columbus thought he had found Asians, and that the peoples of the Americas shared a common culture.

(pp. 15-16)

5. The most advanced native American cultures were located
- a. along the Gulf Coast.
 - b. in the Pacific Northwest Coast.
 - c. among the Pueblo peoples of the southwest.
 - d. in Mesoamerica.

(pp. 18-19)

6. What accounted most lastingly for the early and rapid success of the conquistadors?
- a. the military technology of the Spanish
 - b. the infectious diseases brought by the Spanish
 - c. the rigid political centralization of the Aztecs, which meant that to capture the emperor was to conquer the empire
 - d. the bloody religious system of the Aztecs, which meant that the Spanish stress on Christian virtue won converts among Indian peasants

(pp. 25-26)

7. John Calvin preached all of the following doctrines except:
- a. the free conscience and choice of the individual.
 - b. the calling of the Christian believer to productive work in the world.
 - c. the calling of the Christian church to actively reshape the world.
 - d. the divine choosing of God's saints for salvation.
- (pp. 30-31)*
8. English colonizers of the New World had at least one precedent to follow: efforts--encouraged by the crown--to colonize and subdue
- a. the Cape region at the southern tip of Africa.
 - b. islands off the West African coast.
 - c. Ireland.
 - d. Iceland and Greenland.
- (pp. 33-34)*
9. The text suggests that England's thrust into North America--an interest renewed nearly a century after Cabot's voyages--should be understood in the context of a direct challenge to Spanish power. This challenge "fused" three elements, including all except:
- a. English nationalism.
 - b. English Protestantism.
 - c. English political instability.
 - d. English economic enterprise.
- (p. 34)*
10. In 1600, England's settlements in the Americas included
- a. Roanoke.
 - b. Jamestown.
 - c. Newfoundland.
 - d. none of the above.
- (p. 40)*

IDENTIFICATION QUESTIONS

You should be able to describe the following key terms, concepts, individuals and places, and explain their significance:

Terms and Concepts

agricultural revolution
"factories"
encomienda
Black Legend
Protestant Reformation
quadrant
Price Revolution
justification by faith alone

privateers
reconquista
repartimiento
indulgences
doctrine of the calling
Black Death
caravel

Individuals and Places

Marco Polo
Bartholomeu Dias
Arawaks
Pueblo Indians
Hernando de Soto
Bartolomé de Las Casas
John Calvin
Martin Frobisher
Francisco Vasquez de Coronado

Prince Henry of Portugal
Vasco da Gama
Amerigo Vespucci
Ferdinand Magellan
Montezuma
Martin Luther
Puritans
Francis Drake

MAP IDENTIFICATIONS

On the map on the next page, label or shade in the following places. In a sentence, note their significance to the chapter. (For reference, consult the map in *Nation of Nations* on page 24.)

1. Aztec Empire
2. Inca Empire
3. Mezoamerica
4. The Spanish Main
5. The West Indies
6. Caribbean Sea