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# A SHORT HISTORY *of the* AMERICAN NATION



JOHN A. GARRATY    MARK C. CARNES

# A SHORT HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN NATION

EIGHTH EDITION

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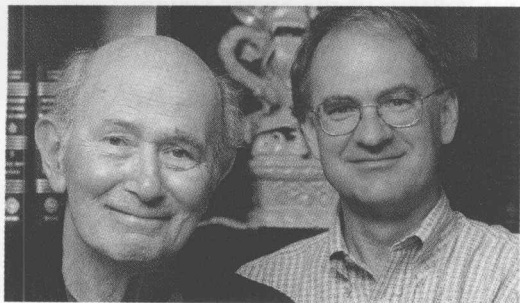
# TO OUR READERS

Mark C. Carnes of Barnard College and Columbia University has joined me in preparing this Eighth Edition of *A Short History of the American Nation*. His scholarly specialization in cultural and social issues, especially gender, complements mine in politics and the economy. The book has benefitted, too, from his special interest in postwar America. Although this volume is the work of two authors, it is as nearly the product of a single historical sensibility as is possible. Mark studied with me in graduate school. Even before he received his doctorate from Columbia in 1982, I invited him to join me as co-editor of the final supplement of the *Dictionary of American Biography*. Since then, we have co-authored one book (*Mapping America's Past*, 1996), and for over a decade we have served as co-general editors of the 24-volume *American National Biography* (1999). Over the many years of our collaborations, one of our favorite topics of discussion has been the craft of historical writing. We share a commitment to clarity and conciseness. We strive to avoid jargon and verbiage. We believe that while the political history of the nation provides a useful narrative framework, its people are what give the story meaning.

John A. Garraty  
Gouverneur Morris Professor of History,  
Emeritus  
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When I began work on my doctorate at Columbia in 1976, I was assigned to John A. Garraty's seminar on the historian's craft. At that time, I knew two things quite clearly: that I wanted to join the crusade to promote the new social history and extend its insights into new gender topics; and that Professor Garraty's fame resided in the far-removed fields of economic and political history. Without attending a single class, I applied to be shifted to a seminar more in keeping with my interests. Whether from bureaucratic inertia or transcendent wisdom, the history department refused my request. I was stuck with Garraty, and in consequence my life was changed. In that seminar, Garraty preached a particular doctrine on historical writing. He insisted that the writer's sole duty was to readers, who might be confused by unclear phrases or tired by excess words. He expounded on the details of a complex process whereby the murky abstractions of the past were distilled into clean, clear narrative. This literary alchemy was all the more wondrous for being so devoid of artifice. Enthralled, I stayed with Garraty—that first year, and all subsequent ones. I became an acolyte who has spent the past two decades learning to apply his craft to social and cultural topics. To join with him now in synthesizing all of American history in this way is the fulfillment of a dream.

Mark C. Carnes  
Professor of History  
Barnard College, Columbia University



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# PREFACE

Historians try to explain what happened in the past, and of course “what happened” does not change. But our knowledge and understanding of it changes constantly as more information about past events comes to light and as current events raise new questions about the events and people of earlier times.

The eighth edition of *A Short History of the American Nation* appears at the onset of a new millenium. We pound chronological signposts into the vast plain of human existence to make the past easier to discuss and comprehend. The existence of such markers influences how we perceive the terrain. In this book, for example, Jeffersonian America “begins” in 1800, and the Progressive era in 1900. The fast-paced decade of the “twenties,” similarly, evokes a particular set of images vastly different from those of the gritty “thirties.” The new millenium will doubtless usher in a new historical period, as well as a new way of thinking about history.

We therefore trumpet all that is new and distinctive about this edition. Every chapter has been reviewed and updated. Chapter 1 has been substantially rewritten, with several new sections on Native Americans and Europeans. New material on women has been added throughout the book. The post-Civil War chapters, likewise, include much new material: a discussion of African American women reformers in Chapter 17, a new section on changes in family life in the late nineteenth century in Chapter 19, a new section on woman’s suffrage in Chapter 22, and in Chapter 25 material on the emergence of gay culture in the 1920s and 1930s. Chapter 28 on World War II now includes a separate section on the internment of Japanese Americans.

Two major developments during the 1980s—the collapse of the Soviet Union and the restructuring of the American economy—have necessitated a major reconsideration of nearly all facets of American history since World War II. We have reorganized and reworked Chapters 29 through 32, which cover the period from 1945 through the 1980s. We have also written a new, final chapter, “Crimes and Misdemeanors,” which discusses violence and crime and concludes with a consideration of President William Clinton’s impeachment proceedings.

Also new to this edition are the “American Lives” feature essays. Based on the popular “American Lives” of *The American Nation*, “American Lives” goes beyond the traditional biography and focuses more on a moment in an individual’s life, rather like a social history snapshot. “American Lives” included in this edition are: Tis-

quantum (Chapter 1), Benjamin Franklin (Chapter 2), Eunice Williams (Chapter 3), George Washington (Chapter 4), Horace Greeley (Chapter 9), Sojourner Truth (Chapter 10), Emma Goldman (Chapter 22), Frederick Funston (Chapter 23), Harry Truman (Chapter 24), and Bill Gates (Chapter 32).

The brief eighth edition also offers a new full-color format and a more compact size than the previous edition. In addition to giving the book a vibrant appearance, use of color allows students to more readily see distinctions and subtleties on the book's maps and figures. We believe students will also appreciate the smaller, easier-to-carry size of the book. Furthermore, we have chosen many new drawings, paintings, and photographs and rewritten captions so as to show how all such representations are interpretations of the past rather than unbiased renderings of it.

Although the onset of the new millennium stimulates reflections on change, it is worth pointing out that much remains as before. People will seek engagement with the past, as evidenced by the proliferation of Hollywood movies on historical subjects, and by the success of the History Channel, a commercial television station. We all want to know how we got where we are, perhaps in the hope of determining what will become of us.

This edition of *A Short History of the American Nation*, like those that have preceded it, uses the political history of the nation as the framework on which social, economic, and cultural development depend. However, the people of the United States, in their infinite variety, remain central to the account. The theory that a few great individuals, cut from larger cloth than the general run of human beings, have themselves shaped the course of the past oversimplifies history. But the past becomes more comprehensible when attention is paid to how the major figures on the historical stage have reacted to events and to one another.

As authors of *A Short History of the American Nation*, we conceive of the past as an aggregate of countless stories about particular people; we do this most obviously in the "American Lives." But throughout we have embedded historical analysis within the many stories that make up this history. The personality, words, and actions of the American people made the American nation what it is.

This edition assumes that American history is important for its own sake—as an epic and unique tale of the experience of hundreds of millions of people in a vast land. Beyond this, our history provides an object lesson in how the past affects the present, or rather, how a series of pasts has changed a series of presents in an unending pattern of development. Thus, while historians have never been any better at foretelling the future than politicians, economists, or soothsayers, good historians have always been able to illuminate their own times, adding depth and perspective to their readers' understanding of how they got to where they are.

### *Supplements for Qualified College Adopters*

*The History Place—Garraty Special Edition* ([www.awl.com/garraty](http://www.awl.com/garraty)). This special edition of *The History Place* combines quality educational publishing with the immediacy and interactivity of the Internet. At this Web site, you'll find a continually updated source of maps, timelines, and other interactive learning activities. You'll also find a rich collection of primary documents, news, and online quizzes that corres-

pond to the text's organization. A free subscription to *The History Place—Garraty Special Edition* is included with every new copy of the student text.

**Companion Web Site ([www.awl.com/garraty](http://www.awl.com/garraty)).** This online course companion provides a wealth of resources for both students and instructors using *A Short History of the American Nation*, Eighth Edition. Instructors will have access to the instructor's manual, useful teaching links, downloadable figures from the text, a PowerPoint presentation, and can also take advantage of Syllabus Builder, our comprehensive course management system.

***The American Nation Tenth Edition Interactive Edition CD-ROM.*** This dual platform CD-ROM contains the entire text of *The American Nation*, Tenth Edition, the student study guide, maps, videos, and several primary sources such as *Huckleberry Finn* and *Democracy in America*. Using it, students will be able to search the Web, search the text, take notes online, e-mail peers and professors, create personal binders, and much more. Available free with *A Short History of the American Nation*, Eighth Edition, it is a unique and exciting tool.

**Instructor's Manual.** Written by Michael Mayer of the University of Montana, this tool is designed to aid both the novice and experienced instructor in teaching American history. Each chapter includes a concise chapter overview, a list of points for student mastery, lecture supplements, and questions for class discussion. A special feature of each chapter is a set of excerpted documents with accompanying questions for student analysis.

**Test Bank.** Written by Kevin Jones-Kern of Bowling Green State University, the test bank contains multiple choice, true/false, and essay test items. The questions are keyed to topic, difficulty level, cognitive type, and relevant text page.

**Computerized TestGen EQ Computerized Testing System.** This flexible, easy-to-use computer test bank includes all the test items in the printed test bank. Available on dual platform CD-ROM and floppy disks, the software allows you to edit existing questions and add your own items. Tests can be printed in several different formats and can include graphs and tables.

**Transparencies.** A set of over 30 map transparencies drawn from the text is available.

**Comprehensive American History Transparency Set.** This vast collection of American history transparencies is a necessary teaching aid. It includes over 200 maps covering social trends, wars, elections, immigrations, and demographics. Included is a set of reproducible map exercises.

***Discovering American History Through Maps and Views Transparency Set.*** Created by Gerald Danzer of the University of Illinois at Chicago, the recipient of the AHA's 1990 James Harvey Robinson Prize for his work in the development of map transparencies, this set of 140 four-color acetates is a unique instructional tool. It contains an introduction on teaching history through maps and a detailed commentary on each transparency. The collection includes cartographic and pictorial maps, views and photos, urban plans, building diagrams, and works of art.

***Discovering American History Through Film.*** Created by Randy Roberts of Purdue University, this guide provides instructors with a creative and practical tool for stimulating class discussions. The sections include "American Films: A Historian's

Perspective,” and a listing of “Films for Specific Periods in American History.” The narrative film explains the connection between each film and the topics being studied.

**Video Lecture Launchers.** Prepared by Mark Newman of the University of Illinois at Chicago, these video lecture launchers (each two to five minutes in duration) cover key issues in American history from 1877 to the present. The launchers are accompanied by an instructor’s manual.

***American Impressions: A CD-ROM for American History.*** This unique, groundbreaking product for the U.S. Survey course is organized in a thematic framework that allows in-depth coverage of each topic. Hundreds of photos, maps, art, graphics, and historical film clips are organized into narrated vignettes and interactive activities to create a tool for both professors and students. Topics include: “When Three Cultures Meet,” “The Constitution,” “Labor and Reform,” and “Democracy and Diversity.” It is available on Windows or Macintosh floppy disks.

***This Is America Immigration Video.*** Produced by the Museum of Immigration, this video tells the story of immigrant America. By showing the personal stories and accomplishments of immigrants, it explores the contributions of millions of immigrants to America.

### ***Supplements for Students***

***The History Place—Garraty Special Edition*** ([www.awl.com/garraty](http://www.awl.com/garraty)). This special edition of *The History Place* combines quality educational publishing with the immediacy and interactivity of the Internet. At this Web site, you’ll find a continually updated source of maps, timelines, and other interactive learning activities. You’ll also find a rich collection of primary documents, news, and online quizzes that correspond to the text’s organization. A free subscription to *The History Place—Garraty Special Edition* is included with every new copy of the student text.

**Companion Web Site** ([www.awl.com/garraty](http://www.awl.com/garraty)). This online course companion provides a wealth of resources for both students and instructors using *A Short History of the American Nation*, Eighth Edition. Students will find chapter summaries, test questions with answers and hints, annotated Web links, a complete guide to conducting research on the Internet, and more!

***The American Nation, Tenth Edition Interactive Edition CD-ROM*** This dual platform CD-ROM contains the entire text of *The American Nation*, Tenth Edition, the student study guide, maps, videos, and several primary sources such as *Huckleberry Finn* and *Democracy in America*. Using it, students will be able to search the Web, search the text, take notes online, e-mail peers and professors, create personal binders, and much more. Available free with *A Short History of the American Nation*, Eighth Edition, it is a unique and exciting tool.

**StudyWizad Computerized Tutorial.** Prepared by Billy Hathorn of Laredo Community College, this interactive program helps students learn major facts and concepts through drill and practice exercises and diagnostic feedback. Available on dual-platform CD-ROM and floppy disks, StudyWizad provides immediate correct answers and the text page number on which the material is discussed.



**Study Guides.** Volume One by Ken Weatherbie of Del Mar College and Volume Two by Billy Hathorn of Laredo Community College are designed to provide students with a comprehensive review of the text material and to encourage application and critical analysis of the material. Each chapter contains a chapter overview, learning objectives, important glossary terms, identification, map and critical thinking exercises, and multiple choice and essay questions.

***Everything You Need to Know About Your History Course.*** Written by Sandra Mathews-Lamb of Nebraska Wesleyan University for first-year university students, this guide provides invaluable tips on how to study, use a textbook, write a good paper, take notes, read a map, graph, or bar chart, and review primary and secondary sources.

***Longman American History Atlas.*** This four-color historical atlas includes 69 maps designed especially for this volume. This valuable reference tool is available shrink-wrapped with the text at a low cost.

***Mapping American History: Student Activities.*** Written by Gerald Danzer of the University of Illinois at Chicago, this free map workbook for students features exercises designed to teach how to interpret and analyze cartographic materials as historical documents. The instructor is entitled to a free copy of the workbook for each copy of *A Short History of the American Nation*, Eighth Edition purchased from Longman.

***Mapping America: A Guide to Historical Geography, Second Edition.*** Written by Ken Weatherbie of Del Mar College, this free two-volume workbook contains 35 exercises correlated to the text that review basic American historical geography and ask students to interpret the role geography has played in American history.

***America Through the Eyes of Its People, Second Edition.*** This single-volume collection of primary documents reflects the rich and varied tapestry of American life. The revised edition includes more social history and enhanced pedagogy. It is available shrinkwrapped with *A Short History of the American Nation*, Eighth Edition at no charge.

***Sources of the African American Past.*** Edited by Roy Finkenbine of the University of Detroit at Mercy, this collection of primary sources covers the themes in the experience of African Americans from the West African background to the present. Balanced between political and social history, it offers a vivid snapshot of the lives of African Americans in different historical periods, and includes documents representing women and different regions of the United States. Available at a minimum cost when bundled with the text.

***Women and the National Experience.*** Edited by Ellen Skinner of Pace University, this primary source reader contains both classic and unusual documents describing the history of women in the United States. The documents provide dramatic evidence that outspoken women attained a public voice and participated in the development of national events and policies long before they could vote. Chronologically organized and between social and political history, this reader offers a striking picture of the lives of women across American history. Available at a minimum cost when bundled with the text.

*Reading the American West.* Edited by Mitchel Roth of Sam Houston State University, this primary source reader uses letters, diary excerpts, speeches, interviews, and newspaper articles to let students experience how historians research and how history is written. Every document is accompanied by a contextual headnote and study questions. The book is divided into chapters with extensive introductions. Available at a minimum cost when bundled with the text.

*Library of American Biography Series.* Edited by Oscar Handlin of Harvard University, each of these interpretive biographies focuses on a figure whose actions and ideas significantly influenced the course of American history and national life. At the same time, each biography relates the life of its subject to the broader themes and developments of the times. Brief and inexpensive, they are ideal for any U.S. History course. New editions include *Abigail Adams: An American Woman*, Second Edition by Charles W. Akers; *Andrew Carnegie and the Rise of Big Business*, Second Edition by Harold C. Livesay; and *Eleanor Roosevelt: A Personal and Public Life*, Second Edition by J. William T. Youngs.

*A Short Guide to Writing About History.* Written by Richard Marius of Harvard University, this short guide introduces students to the pleasures of historical research and discovery while teaching them how to write cogent history papers. Focusing on more than just the conventions of good writing, this supplement shows students first how to think about history, and then how to organize their thoughts into coherent essays.

*Learning to Think Critically: Films and Myths About American History.* In this guide, Randy Roberts and Robert May of Purdue University use well-known films such as *Gone With the Wind* and *Casablanca* to explore some common myths about America and its past. Many widely held assumptions of our country's past originate from, or are perpetuated by, popular films. Which are true? How can a student of history approach documents, sources, and textbooks with a critical and discerning eye? This short handbook scrutinizes some popular beliefs to help students develop a method of inquiry to approach the subject of history.

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John A. Garraty

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Barnard College, Columbia University

# CONTENTS IN BRIEF

*Contents in Full*    vii

*Maps and Graphs*    xxiii

*To Our Readers*    xxv

*Preface*    xxvi

<b>Chapter 1</b>	Europe Discovers America	1
<b>Chapter 2</b>	American Society in the Making	33
<b>Chapter 3</b>	America in the British Empire	64
<b>Chapter 4</b>	The American Revolution	94
<b>Chapter 5</b>	The Federalist Era: Nationalism Triumphant	121
<b>Chapter 6</b>	Jeffersonian Democracy	150
<b>Chapter 7</b>	National Growing Pains	171
<b>Chapter 8</b>	Toward a National Economy	199
<b>Chapter 9</b>	Jacksonian Democracy	220
<b>Chapter 10</b>	The Making of Middle-Class America	245
<b>Chapter 11</b>	A Democratic Culture	266
<b>Chapter 12</b>	Expansion and Slavery	283
<b>Chapter 13</b>	The Sections Go Their Ways	306
<b>Chapter 14</b>	The Coming of the Civil War	328
<b>Chapter 15</b>	The War to Save the Union	349
<b>Chapter 16</b>	Reconstruction and the South	374
<b>Chapter 17</b>	In the Wake of War	396
<b>Chapter 18</b>	An Industrial Giant	422
<b>Chapter 19</b>	American Society in the Industrial Age	444
<b>Chapter 20</b>	Intellectual and Cultural Trends Toward the End of the Century	466



<b>Chapter 21</b>	Politics: Local, State, and National	487
<b>Chapter 22</b>	The Age of Reform	505
<b>Chapter 23</b>	From Isolation to Empire	536
<b>Chapter 24</b>	Woodrow Wilson and the Great War	559
<b>Chapter 25</b>	Postwar Society and Culture: Change and Adjustment	587
<b>Chapter 26</b>	The New Era: 1921–1933	611
<b>Chapter 27</b>	The New Deal: 1933–1941	633
<b>Chapter 28</b>	War and Peace	661
<b>Chapter 29</b>	The American Century	684
<b>Chapter 30</b>	From Camelot to Watergate	715
<b>Chapter 31</b>	Society in Flux	748
<b>Chapter 32</b>	Running on Empty: The Nation Transformed	773
<b>Chapter 33</b>	Crimes and Misdemeanors	800

*The Declaration of Independence* A1

*The Constitution of the United States* A3

*Picture Credits* C1

*Index* II

# CONTENTS IN FULL

*Maps and Graphs*    xxiii

*To Our Readers*    xxv

*Preface*    xxvi

## CHAPTER 1 ■ *Europe Discovers America*    1

Columbus and the “Discovery” of America    1

Spain’s American Empire    5

The Indian and the European: Cultures in Collision    6

Native American Civilizations    7

An American Holocaust?    11

Disease and Population Loss    12

The Spanish Decline    12

The Protestant Reformation    13

English Beginnings in America    14

The Settlement of Virginia    15

“Purifying” the Church of England    18

*Of Plymouth Plantation*    19

A Puritan Commonwealth    20

Troublemakers    22

Other New England Colonies    24

French and Dutch Settlements    24

Maryland and the Carolinas    25

The Middle Colonies    26

Indians and Europeans as “Americanizers”    28

### ♦ AMERICAN LIVES

*Tisquantum*    32

## CHAPTER 2 ■ *American Society in the Making*    33

What Is an American?    33

Spanish Settlement    34

The Chesapeake    34

The Lure of Land	35
“Solving” the Labor Shortage	36
Prosperity in a Pipe: Tobacco	38
Bacon’s Rebellion	39
The Carolinas	40
Home and Family in the South	42
Georgia and the Back Country	44
Colonial New England	45
The Puritan Family	46
Visible Puritan Saints and Others	47
Democracies without Democrats	48
Dedham: A “Typical” Town	48
The Dominion of New England	49
Salem Bewitched	50
Higher Education in New England	52
Prosperity Undermines Puritanism	53
A Merchant’s World	54
The Middle Colonies: Rising	55
The Middle Colonies: An Intermingling of Peoples	56
“The Best Poor Man’s Country”	57
The Politics of Diversity	58
Rebellious Women	60

◆ **AMERICAN LIVES**

*Benjamin Franklin* 63

**CHAPTER 3** ■ *America in the British Empire* 64

The British Colonial System	64
Mercantilism	65
The Navigation Acts	66
The Effects of Mercantilism	67
The Great Awakening	68
The Rise and Fall of Jonathan Edwards	70
The Enlightenment in America	71
Colonial Scientific Achievements	73
Repercussions of Distant Wars	74
The Great War for the Empire	75
The Peace of Paris	78
Putting the Empire Right	78
Tightening Imperial Controls	79
The Sugar Act	81
American Colonists Demand Rights	82
The Stamp Act: The Pot Set to Boiling	83
Rioters or Rebels?	84
Taxation or Tyranny?	84
The Townshend Duties	85

The Boston Massacre	86
The Tea Act Crisis	88
From Resistance to Revolution	89

◆ **AMERICAN LIVES**

<i>Eunice Williams/Gannenstenbawi</i>	92
---------------------------------------	----

**CHAPTER 4 ■ *The American Revolution* 94**

“The Shot Heard Round the World”	94
The Second Continental Congress	95
The Battle of Bunker Hill	96
The Declaration of Independence	96
1776: The Balance of Forces	99
Loyalists	100
Early British Victories	101
Saratoga and the French Alliance	101
The War Moves South	103
Victory at Yorktown	104
The Peace of Paris	105
Forming a National Government	107
Financing the War	108
State Republican Governments	108
Social Reform	109
The Effects of the Revolution on Women	112
Growth of a National Spirit	113
The Great Land Ordinances	115
A National Hero: Washington	116
A National Culture	116

◆ **AMERICAN LIVES**

<i>George Washington</i>	120
--------------------------	-----

**CHAPTER 5 ■ *The Federalist Era: Nationalism Triumphant* 121**

Border Problems	121
Foreign Trade	122
The Specter of Inflation	124
Daniel Shays’s “Little Rebellion”	125
To Philadelphia, and the Constitution	126
The Great Convention	126
The Compromises that Produced the Constitution	127
Ratifying the Constitution	130
Washington as President	132
Congress under Way	133
Hamilton and Financial Reform	133



The Ohio Country: A Dark and Bloody Ground	136
Revolution in France	137
Federalists and Republicans: The Rise of Political Parties	139
1794: Crisis and Resolution	140
Jay's Treaty	140
1795: All's Well That Ends Well	141
Washington's Farewell	141
The Election of 1796	142
The XYZ Affair	143
The Alien and Sedition Acts	143
The Kentucky and Virginia Resolves	144

## CHAPTER 6 ■ *Jeffersonian Democracy* 150

The Election of 1800	150
The Federalist Contribution	151
Thomas Jefferson: Political Theorist	153
Jefferson as President	154
Jefferson's Attack on the Judiciary	155
The Barbary Pirates	156
The Louisiana Purchase	157
Federalism Discredited	159
Lewis and Clark	160
Jeffersonian Democracy	162
Domestic Concerns Vex Jefferson	163
The Burr Conspiracy	164
Napoleon and the British	165
The Impressment Controversy	166
The Embargo Act	167

## CHAPTER 7 ■ *National Growing Pains* 171

Madison in Power	171
Tecumseh and Indian Resistance	172
Depression and Land Hunger	174
Opponents of War	174
The War of 1812	174
Britain Assumes the Offensive	177
The Treaty of Ghent	178
The Hartford Convention	179
The Battle of New Orleans	180
Victory Weakens the Federalists	180
Anglo-American Rapprochement	181
The Transcontinental Treaty	182
The Monroe Doctrine	183