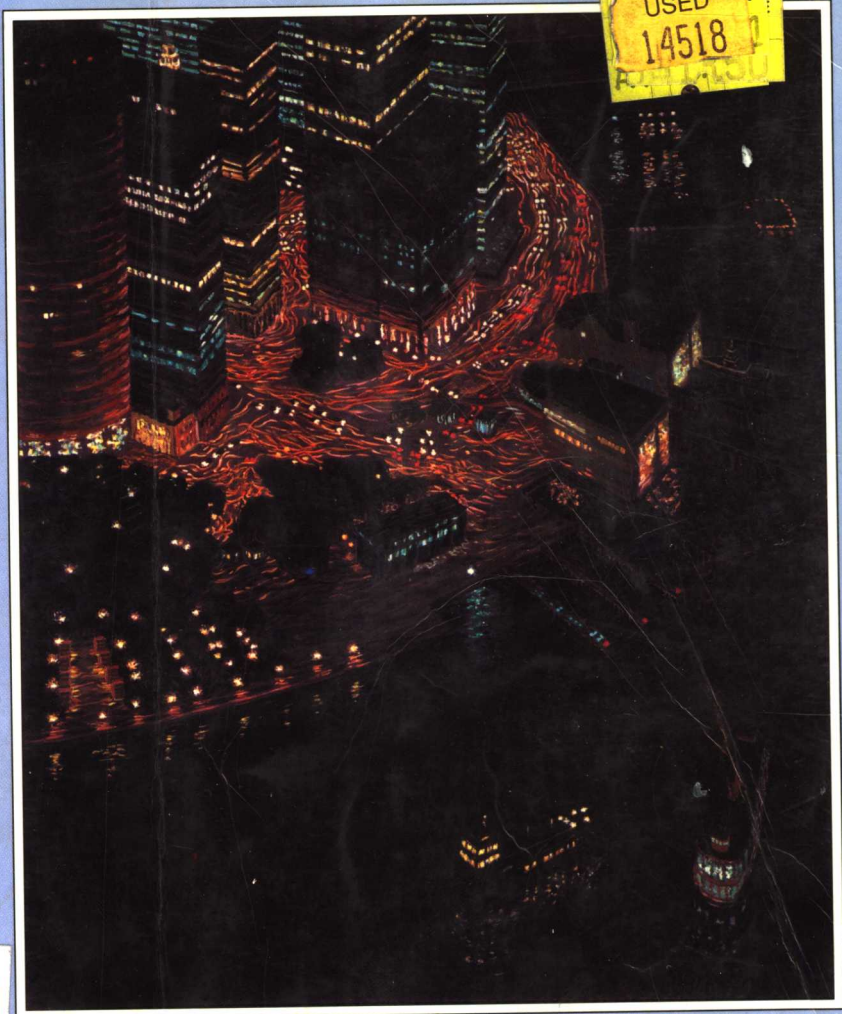


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Tindall • Shi

BRIEF THIRD EDITION • VOLUME TWO

# AMERICA

A N A R R A T I V E  
H I S T O R Y

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B R I E F T H I R D E D I T I O N



VOLUME II

GEORGE BROWN TINDALL

DAVID E. SHI

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## PREFACE

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The warm reception instructors have accorded the Brief Second edition of *America: A Narrative History* suggests that the book's purpose remains valid: to offer a succinct introductory narrative history of America—a narrative alive with character, augmented with analysis and social texture, and propelled by the energy of great events. The format continues to be unique in its field: *America* is designed to be read. Its single-column page remains uncluttered by distracting inserts, portfolios, or other interruptions to the story. It also remains the only text that students can purchase without breaking the bank and carry around without breaking the back.

Why a brief edition? We hope it meets the needs of those instructors who must cover the American past from its pre-Columbian roots to the present in one semester or less. It is also intended for those professors who prefer to assign students a brief text and rely more heavily on supplementary readings.

Smaller by one-third than the full Third Edition, the Brief *America* retains the character and appearance of its parent volume. The narrative is still strewn with colorful personalities and illuminating anecdotes, but its detail has been pared back throughout. Almost all the major subjects discussed in the full edition remain here, but most have been reduced in length and several sections have been reorganized.

The most salient theme of this new edition is embodied in a question posed over two hundred years ago by J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, a transplanted French farmer: "What then is the American, this new man?" Crèvecoeur, who arrived in the colonies in 1759, married an American woman, and settled on a New York farm, went on to explain in *Letters from an American Farmer* that in America "individuals of all nations are melted into a new

race of men, whose labors and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world.” Fifty years later the transcendental philosopher-poet Ralph Waldo Emerson addressed the same point when he wrote in his journal that in America, this “asylum of all nations, the energy of Irish, Germans, Swedes, Poles and Cosacks, and all the European tribes—of the Africans and of the Polynesians, will construct a new race . . . as vigorous as the new Europe which came out of the smelting pot of the Dark Ages.”

These statements express a shared truth: from its inception America has been an ambitious effort to create a pluralist society. The United States has welcomed more people from other places than any other country in history, and the process of absorbing such a multicultural population has given American life its roiling energy. The lofty social aim of American civilization is expressed in the official motto of the United States, *e pluribus unum*—“one out of many.”

Yet the national motto has rarely described the reality. Americans have prided themselves on their ability to fashion what one New York mayor called a “gorgeous mosaic,” an integration of different ethnic groups and cultural backgrounds. But in fact the United States has never become the mythic “melting pot” envisioned by Crèvecoeur, Emerson, and others. Instead, peoples from the four corners of the globe have converged to form a richly diverse—and often fractious, too often violent—society held tenuously together by a shared commitment to democratic principles, economic opportunity, religious freedom, and the rule of law.

From the Revolutionary era to the 1990s, the nation’s politicians, preachers, and pundits have debated the effects of America’s quest for unity through diversity. This quest forms a prominent thread running through the pages of this edition. It surfaces in discussions of the backgrounds and folkways of the colonists, in accounts of the waves of “new” immigration in the late nineteenth and late twentieth centuries and the nativist prejudices they aroused, in descriptions of the tangled skein of legislation affecting immigrants and refugees, and in data detailing recent trends in immigration and ethnic diversity. Few students, we suspect, realize that immigrants were responsible for one-third of the population growth of the United States in the 1980s, or that fully 80 percent of the newcomers were from Asia and Latin America.

To describe the remarkable “peopling of America,” this edition of *America* highlights biography. From Anne Hutchinson and John Winthrop through Sojourner Truth, Mary Elizabeth

Lease, Amelia Earhart and Martin Luther King, Jr., brief biographies integrated throughout the narrative give students a more textured feel for the character and personality of key figures. And in fresh treatments of female slaves, women workers at the Lowell mills, women on the frontier and on the social fronts of foreign wars, this Brief Third Edition of *America* offers enhanced discussions of women's lives and their contributions to American history.

By its very nature a brief survey can neither exhaust the facts of history nor treat every fashion of theory or interpretation, whether old or new. It instead offers a tour of the house of history, so to speak, pointing out many doors, stopping to open a few, stepping inside some of them, and all the while hoping that readers will be enticed to explore further what is behind those doors and others.

Our collaboration on the Brief Third Edition and its parent version benefited greatly from the insights and suggestions of many people. The following scholars provided close readings of the full manuscript at various stages: Albert Broussard (Texas A & M University), Janet Coryell (Auburn University), Charles Eagles (University of Mississippi), Peter R. Knights (York University), Phillip L. Osborne (United States Air Force Academy), David Parker (Southwest Missouri State University), Malcolm Rohrbough (University of Iowa), and Daniel B. Thorp (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University). Copyeditors Debra Makay and Margie Brassil polished the manuscript. Kristin Prevaillet showed remarkable energy in gathering material for illustrations, and Bonnie Hall helped with innumerable details. Linda Sellars (University of North Carolina) updated the bibliographies originally prepared by Gary Freeze (Erskine College) and revised for the second edition by David Parker. Steve Forman, our steadfast editor at W. W. Norton, remains a pillar of insight and patience. An accomplished wordsmith with a certain historical flourish himself, he pruned our prose without bruising our pride and in the process gave enhanced meaning to the term discretion. We are confident that this edition of *America* is the better for the assistance provided by all of these people.

—George B. Tindall  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

—David E. Shi  
Davidson, North Carolina

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