
Native American Relations with the New Settlers

Native Americans play an interesting role in most U.S. history textbooks written over the past two centuries. From the founding of the country until approximately the early 1900s, Native Americans were seen as opponents to U.S. progress. American students learned throughout the 1800s that these "savages" consistently fought white Americans and their desire to expand and improve this country.

Then, starting in the late 1800s to early 1900s, U.S. students began to learn about the concept of the "noble savage." This was the belief that although Native Americans could be barbaric in warfare and culture, they were also uncorrupted by civilization.

All of this changed in U.S. history textbooks by the 1960s and 1970s, when students were given both a more anthropological view of Native American society as well as a more balanced version of what life was like when the Native Americans first met their European counterparts.

1844

Place yourself in a school classroom in 1844, when a Native American tribe might well have been a neighbor, and one can only imagine the impact a history lesson such as

would have had on the young white students who read it, especially the "fact" that these new neighbors were all cannibals.

In the ancient world, tradition has preserved the memory of barbarous nations of cannibals, who fed on human flesh. But in every part of the New World there were people to whom this custom was familiar. It prevailed in the southern continent, in several of the islands, and in various districts of North America. Even in those parts, where circumstances, with which we were unacquainted, had in a great measure abolished this practice, it seems merely to have been so well known, that it is incorporated into the idiom of their language. Among the Iroquois, the phrase by which they express their resolution of making war against an enemy is, 'Let us go and eat that nation.' If they solicit the aid of a neighboring tribe, they invite it to 'eat with me of the flesh of their enemies.' Nor was the practice peculiar to the unpolished tribes; the principle from which it took rise is so deeply seated in the minds of the Americans, that it subsisted in Mexico, one of the civilized empires in the New World, and relics of it may be discovered among the more mild inhabitants of Peru. It was not scarcity of food, as some authors imagine, and the importunate cravings of hunger, which seduced the Americans to those horrid repasts on their fellow creatures. The scour [sic] of revenge first prompted men to this barbarous action. The worst tribes devoured none but prisoners taken in war, or such as they regarded as enemies. Women and children, who were not the objects of enmity, if not cut off in the fury of their first inroad into a hostile country, seldom suffered by the deliberate effects of their revenge.¹

1856

In 1856, most of the Native Americans who had previously lived east of the Mississippi had either been forced off their land—such as the Cherokee (in the infamous Trail of Tears), Creek, Chickasaw, and Choctaw—or killed by disease and warfare. Thereafter, for students living in the eastern part of the United States who had little contact with Native Americans, stories like the one below became interesting tidbits of historical knowledge, while for those white Americans who had traveled west to find land and gold, many of these stories served as an introduction to their new neighbors. Without a tinge of sorrow or regret, this passage informed students that in the future, the white Americans will not really be a concern because "they will entirely disappear."

The Indians were proud and happy when they were engaged in combat with the tribes around them. Next to these wars they were best pleased with hunting, for this was a species of fighting, the wild animals in the forest that they pursued being looked upon somewhat as foes. They, however, despised all labor. They sometimes possessed fields of corn, but they compelled the women to plant and hoe it, and to perform all other domestic labors. They would themselves do nothing when at home except make bows and arrows, or carve ornaments upon their clubs, or fashion other warlike weapons. To hunt and to fight was honorable, but labor in any branch of useful industry they considered beneath them.

When America was discovered and began to be settled by the whites, the Indians were gradually forced to retire from those parts of the country which the white men occupied.

Occasionally quarrels would arise, which would lead to wars between the Indian tribes and the white settlers. In these cases, the Indians would sometimes come rushing into the villages at midnight with dreadful yells and outcries, and massacre the inhabitants and burn the houses. At other times they would lurk in ambush among the trees near the fields where the white men were at work, and shoot them with the guns and gunpowder which they had bought of them before.

Not infrequently it happened that children from the families of some of the settlers were seized and carried off as captives, and kept in the wigwam for many years. Whenever the Indians succeeded in getting a white child in their possession in this way, they usually treated him kindly, and often made him a favorite and pet. They regarded him and treated him much as a boy would treat a young squirrel or young fox that he had succeeded in catching in the woods and bringing home. Still it was a dreadful calamity to the poor child to be taken thus away from his father and mother, and from the comforts and pleasures of his home, and compelled to dwell all his life with these rude and cruel savages.

The chief articles that they bought of the white men were gunpowder and rum, and the rum exerted an awful influence in demoralizing and destroying them. The effect of it upon them was to make them perfectly insane, and the imagination can scarcely conceive the horrors of the drunken orgies, which were sometimes witnessed around the midnight fires.

From these causes the Indians have been gradually melting away and

disappearing, until now there are few left on this side of the Mississippi River. Beyond the Mississippi the country is still filled with them, but their numbers are gradually diminishing, and there is no doubt that in time they will entirely disappear.²

1874

Written amid the Plains Indian Wars of the 1870s, this excerpt takes great pains to emphasize to students the "warlike" characteristics of Native Americans.

Aborigine

When our ancestors first landed upon the shores of the New World, they found it an almost unbroken wilderness, inhabited by numerous tribes or clans of Indians, each tribe under its own sachem, or chief. Of their number, when the English settled among them, we have no certain estimate. They probably did not exceed one hundred and fifty thousand within the limits of the thirteen original states.

The different tribes within the boundaries of the United States were nearly the same in their physical characteristics. In person the Indians were tall, straight, and well-proportioned. Their skins were red, or of a copper brown; their eyes black; their hair long, black and coarse. The same moral characteristics were common to the different tribes. They were quick of apprehension, and not wanting in genius. At times they were friendly, and even courteous. In council, they were distinguished for gravity and eloquence; in war, for bravery and address. They were taciturn and unsocial, except when roused by some strong excitement. When deter- mined upon revenge, no danger would deter them—neither absence nor time could cool them.

Of their employments, war was the favorite. Their weapons were war- clubs, hatchets of stone called tomahawks, and bows and arrows. Their warlike expeditions usually consisted of small parties, and it was their glory to lie in wait for their enemy, or come upon him by surprise. They rushed to the attack with incredible fury, and at the same time uttered their ap- palling war-whoop. Their captives they often tortured with every variety of cruelty, and to their dying agonies added every species of insult. Next to war, hunting and fishing were esteemed honorable. In the former, the

weapons of war became the implements of the chase; in the latter, they used nets made of thread twisted from bark or from the sinews of the moose and deer; for fish-hooks, they used crooked bones. Their arts and manufactures were, for the most part, confined to the construction of wig- wams, bows and arrows, wampum, ornaments, stone hatchets, and mor- tars for pounding corn; to the dressing of skins, and the waving of mats from the bark of trees, or from a coarse sort of hemp. Their agriculture ex- tended not much beyond the cultivation of corn, beans, peas, potatoes, and melons. Their skill in medicine was confined to a few simple prescrip- tions and operations. When they knew no remedy, they resorted to their powwow, or priest, who undertook a cure by means of sorcery. The Indi- ans, however, were liable to few diseases compared with the number that prevails in civilized society. Their women, or squaws, tilled their scanty fields. And performed the drudgery connected with their household af- fairs.

They had no books, or written literature, except rude hieroglyphics; and education was confined to the arts of war, hunting, fishing, and the few manufactures which existed among them. Their language was rude, but sonorous, metaphorical, and energetic, and well suited to the purpose of public speaking.³

1880

It is important to note that over the last two hundred years, U.S. history textbooks have loved the concept of "progress." A vast majority of the textbooks looked at for this study spend at least part of their time discussing America's newest technology and improvements in society. Within this context, this passage, found in the Barnes Historical Series, one of the more popular U.S. history textbook publishers in the 1800s, explains to students exactly what Native Americans are like and, in the end, offers the best solution as to how to save these people from utter destruction.

The Indians were the successors of the Mound Builders, and were by far their inferiors in civilization. We know not why the ancient race left, nor whence the Indians came. It is supposed that the former were driven southward by the savage tribes from the north.

INDIAN CHARACTERISTICS

Arts and Inventions—The Indian has been well termed the "Red Man of the Forest." He built no cities, no ships, no churches, no schoolhouses. He constructed only temporary bark wigwams and canoes. He made neither roads nor bridges, but followed foot-paths through the forest, and swam the streams. His highest art was expanded in a simple bow and arrow.

Progress and Education—He made no advancement, but each son emulated the prowess of his father in the hunt and the fight. The hunting-ground and the battlefield embraced every thing of real honor or value. So the son was educated to throw the tomahawk, shoot the arrow, and catch fish with the spear. He knew nothing of books, paper, writing, or history.

Domestic Life—The Indian had neither cow, nor beast of burden. He regarded all labor as degrading, and fit only for women. His squaw, therefore, built his wigwam, cut his wood, and carried his burdens when he journeyed. While he hunted or fished, she cleared the land for his corn by burning down the trees, scratched the ground with a crooked stick or dug it with a clam-shell, and dressed skins for his clothing. She cooked his food by dropping hot stones into a tight willow basket containing materials for soup. The leavings of her lord's feast sufficed for her, and the coldest place in the wigwam was for her.

Disposition—In war, the Indian was brave and alert, but cruel and revengeful, preferring treachery and cunning to open battle. At home, he was lazy, improvident, and an inveterate gambler. He delighted in finery and trinkets, and decked his unclean person with paint and feathers. His grave and haughty demeanor repelled the stranger; but he was grateful for favors, and his wigwam always stood hospitably open to the poorest and meanest of his tribe.

Endurance—He could endure great fatigue, and in his expeditions often lay without shelter in the severest weather. It was his glory to bear the most horrible tortures without a sign of suffering.

Religion—If he had any ideas of a Supreme Being they were vague and degraded. His dream of a Heaven was of happy hunting-grounds or of gay feast, where his dog should join in the dance. He worshiped no idols, but peopled all nature with spirits, which dwelt not only in birds, beasts, and reptiles, but also in lakes, rivers, and waterfalls. As he believed these had power to help or harm men, he lived in constant fear of offending them.

He apologized therefore, to the animals he killed, and made solemn promises to fishes that their bones should be respected. He placed great stress on dreams, and his camp swarmed with sorcerers and fortune-tellers.

THE INDIAN OF THE PRESENT

Such was the Indian two hundred years ago, and such he is to-day. He opposes the encroachments of the settler, and the building of railroads. But he can not stop the tide of immigration. Unless he can be induced to give up his roving habits and cultivate the soil, he is doomed to destruction. It is to be earnestly hoped that the red man may yet be Christianized, and taught the arts of industry and peace.⁴

1899

Nearly a decade after the Wounded Knee Massacre and with the Plains Indian Wars having come to an end, students still read about the savagery of Native Americans.

Accordingly, when Europeans began coming to America in 1492, they supposed it was Asia, and as they found the country peopled by red men, they called these red men "Indians." Europeans at that time knew very little about the inhabitants of Asia or India, else they would not have made such a mistake. The natives of America are not especially like Asiatics. They are a race by themselves. They have lived in America for many thousand years; just how long nobody knows. One thing is sure, however. Before ever white men came here, the red men had for long ages been spread all over North and South America, from Hudson Bay to Cape Horn, and differences of race had grown up among them. All alike had skins of a cinnamon color, high cheek bones, and intensely black eyes and hair, with little or no beard. But in respect of size, as of general appearance and manners, there were differences between different tribes as marked as the difference between an Englishman and an Arab.

THE SAVAGE INDIANS

Some of these Indians were much more savage than others. There were three principal divisions among them: (1) savage, (2) barbarous, and (3)

half-civilized. In North America the savage Indians lived to the west of Hudson Bay, and southwardly between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific coast, as far as the northern parts of Mexico. The Athabaskans, the Bannocks, and the Apaches were, and are, specimens of savage Indians. They had little or no agriculture, but lived by catching fish or shooting birds or such game as antelopes and buffaloes. They were not settled in villages, but moved about from place to place with very rude tent-like wigwams. They wove excellent baskets, but did not bake pottery.

MORE ABOUT THE BARBAROUS INDIANS

The religion of these Indians was the worship of their dead ancestors, curiously mingled with the worship of the Sun, the Winds, the Lightning, and other powers of nature, usually personified as animals. For example, lightning was regarded as a snake, and snakes were held more or less sacred. Religious rites were a kind of incantation performed by men especially instructed in such things, and called "medicine-men." In most religious ceremonies dancing played a great part.

The Indians had dogs (of a poor sort) which helped them in the chase and served also as food: but they had neither horses, asses, cows, goats, sheep, nor pigs—no domesticated farm animals of any sort. Without the help of such animals it is very difficult to rise out of barbarism into civilized life. The Indian's supply of food was too scanty to support a dense population. The people lived in scattered tribes, without any government higher than the tribe; and hence they were almost always at war. Fighting was the chief business of life, and a young man was not considered fit to be married until he had shown his prowess by killing enemies and bringing away their scalps. Such a kind of life tended to make men cruel and revengeful, and the Indians were unsurpassed for cruelty. It was their cherished custom to put captives to death with lingering tortures.⁵

1912

By 1912, the "Indian problem" had become a thing of the past, since Native Americans had, for the most part, been removed to the reservations. This textbook reflects the new situation by portraying Native Americans less as a physical threat to whites and more as "inferior" individuals who need to improve their ways. It also

shows a change in how students read about Native Americans: for the first time, the history of these people and events are reported in a more detached way.

The earliest settlers in the English colonies were indebted to the Indians in several ways. They learned the Indians' methods of hunting, fishing, and trapping; also, the value of maize and how to produce it upon new land. Thus colonization was assisted by a more available food supply. The Indians' canoe and their methods of travel and fighting were also adopted by the settlers.

On the other hand, the natives soon acquired from the whites tools and utensils, especially guns; these, together with cloth and horses, changed in many ways the character of their daily life. They learned few virtues, but acquired destructive vices, especially the use of intoxicants. Some efforts were made by the English to convert the Indians, but they were conducted, on the whole, without enthusiasm or persistence. The loud profession of missionary zeal with which the English colonization began was not made good.

The history of Indian relations in colonial times is one of continual strife. This was inevitable at that period in the contact between a superior and an inferior race. Of incidental causes for these troubles there was a large variety; the vicious and the drunken, whether whites or Indians, were especially numerous on the frontier, and they were ever ready to commit outrages and to begin quarrels. But the fundamental cause for this condition was the land question. The character of Indian industry, which was mainly hunting and fishing, with comparatively slight attention to agriculture, and the frequent movements of most tribes from one locality to another, made the Indians occupants rather than owners of the land in the true sense. In their simplicity and short-sightedness they were ever ready to part with their right of occupancy; but they did not comprehend the white man's idea of permanent transfer and possession. The purchase of Indian lands was a universal practice in colonial times. The different colonial governments undertook to regulate this subject by law, prohibiting the settlers from occupying lands until the Indian title was extinguished. The laws enjoined in many ways the fair treatment of the Indians in other transactions; for instance, the sale of fire-arms and liquors was quite generally prohibited. These laws, however, were little obeyed.

Trouble arose as soon as the natives realized the slow but sure advance

of the whites into the country and the permanency of this process. Hunting grounds were destroyed, and the strip between the frontier of settlement, and the Allegheny Mountains became gradually narrower. The Indians were able to make but spasmodic, and on the whole, feeble, resistance to the advance of settlement because they did not present a united front; and this in turn was owing to their lack of political organization.

Under these circumstances the result was inevitable: civilization triumphed over savagery, doubtless through the commission of innumerable wrongs, in our judgment of which we must remember the ethical standards of that time and the failure of each race to comprehend the other's point of view.⁶

1916

This textbook story is a perfect example of the stereotype of the Native American as a noble savage.

Traits of Character

Living an outdoor life, and depending for daily food not so much on the maize they raised as on the fish they caught and the animals they killed, the Indians were most expert woodsmen. They were swift of foot, quick-witted, keen-sighted, and most patient of hunger, fatigue, and cold. White men were amazed at the rapidity with which the Indian followed the most obscure trail over the most difficult ground, at the perfection with which he imitated the bark of the wolf, the hoot of the owl, the call of the moose, and at the catlike tread with which he walked over beds of autumn leaves to the side of the grazing deer.

Courage and fortitude he possessed in the highest degree. Yet with his bravery were associated all the vices, all the dark and crooked ways, which are the resort of the cowardly and the weak. He was treacherous, revengeful, and cruel beyond description. Much as he loved war (and war was his chief occupation), the fair and open fight had no charm for him. To his mind it was madness to take the scalp of an enemy at the risk of his own, when he might waylay him in an ambush or shoot him with an arrow from behind a tree. He was never so happy as when, at the dead of night, he roused his sleeping victims with an unearthly yell and massacred them by the light of their burning home.⁷

1920

Reinforcing the stereotype of the noble savage, this story from the 1920s does suggest a change in the way that the original encounters between the Native American and the white settler were being perceived in the classroom.

Character and Fate of the Indians

In character the Indian showed the most astonishing extremes, now immovable as a rock, now capricious as the April breeze. Around the council fire he was taciturn, dignified, thoughtful, but in the dance he broke into unrestrained and uncontrollable ecstasies. He bore with stoical fortitude the most horrible tortures at the stake, but howled in his wigwam over an injured finger. His powers of smell, sight, and hearing were incredibly keen on the hunt or the warpath, but at the same time he showed a stolid stupidity that no white man could match. The Indian seems to have been generally friendly to the European on their first meeting, and it was chiefly the fault of the white man's cruelty and treachery that the friendly curiosity of the red man was turned so often into malignant hatred instead of firm alliance.⁸

1927

Rather than just discussing ambushes, savagery, and the brutality that used to be associated with Native Americans, twentieth-century history textbooks began to take a more balanced view of their culture and society. This period also saw a change in how the Native American woman was portrayed: she was no longer a virtual slave to her "lazy warrior husband" but rather an important member of her society—although this 1927 passage still refers to her using the derogatory term "squaw."

Columbus Finds a Strange People in America

The people Columbus found in America were very different from the Europeans with whom he was familiar. As we have said, he called them Indians, and they have always been known by that name. Since they were to play a considerable part in the history of our country, it is desirable we should know what kind of people they were.

THEIR DIVISION OF WORK

Although the Indian was a true child of nature, with a wild love of freedom, his life was not, as some have supposed, an idle one. Hunting and fishing were his chief occupations, these being the necessary means by which he obtained his food. But the Indian brave was first of all a warrior. He had to defend his hunting-grounds and ward off attacks of hostile tribes; and sometimes he took the war-path for his own gain. When not following the war-path or the chase, he had to make his weapons. They were mainly the bow and arrow, the war-club, and the tomahawk. He also required canoes and snowshoes for covering distances, and these, with other necessary conveniences or tools, he made with his own hands.

The squaw, too, led a busy life. Digging with shells and pointed sticks, she cultivated the soil and gathered the crops. These were more varied in the South than in regions farther north, for the climate was warmer and more attention was paid to a rude kind of agriculture. Indian corn was the chief crop, but tomatoes, beans, pumpkins, squashes, and tobacco were also raised. Besides cultivating the soil, the squaw dried the meat brought home from the chase and dressed the skins, making from them moccasins and other wearing apparel, for the hunt supplied clothing as well as food. She also rudely fashioned the simple household utensils, gathered wood, made fires, cooked the food, and set up the wigwam when on the trail, for the brave was supposed to be busy providing game or guarding against the enemy.

THEIR CHARACTERISTICS WERE PRIMITIVE

The instincts of the Indian were untrained, but he could be kind and generous. In the midst of famine he would cheerfully share his last morsel with a fellow sufferer, and in the hour of danger would lay down his life for a friend. He was also capable of lofty ideas of right and duty, and frequently gave proof of them in making and keeping treaties and in the beautiful and poetic expression of his thoughts.

THEIR BELIEF IN THE AFTER-LIFE

The Indian had faith in good and bad spirits, but had no clear idea of one God over all. He believed that Indians, good and bad, would after this

life go to the happy hunting-grounds. This was his name for heaven, where life, he believed, would continue with the same occupations as in this world. It is thought that the practice of scalping enemies killed in battle was associated with the belief that the loss of the scalp prevented the spirit from entering the happy hunting-grounds. The Indian would, therefore, take almost any risk to save the dead body of his chief or his friend from being scalped by the enemy. It was common practice to bury arms with the "brave," so that he might have them in the happy hunting-grounds. That he might lack no means of comfort other articles of common use also were buried with him.⁹

1961

By the 1960s, Americans had become much more conscious of the multicultural makeup of their country, due in part to the Civil Rights Movement that began in the 1950s. Many U.S. history textbooks started to inform their students that Native Americans were actually a diverse group of people who had a different way of life, rather than a backward or savage one. Students were told that some Native American tribes not only had "fairly advanced cultures" but also may have helped the new Europeans instead of just acting as barriers to American progress.

Ancestors of the Indians Come from Asia to Settle in the New World

The American Indian is the most truly "native American." Between 20,000 and 40,000 years ago, people from northern Asia—the ancestors of the American Indians—began crossing the Bering Strait from Siberia to settle in Alaska. Over a period of thousands of years, they pushed down from Alaska and spread through-out the length and breadth of North and South America. In time, they lost all contact with Asia and began to develop various cultures of their own. By the time of Columbus, there were millions of Indians spread thinly throughout the vast areas of the New World. They were divided into hundreds of tribes, with different languages and customs, and were isolated from one another by great distances.

Some of these tribes lived by hunting and fishing. Others learned to support themselves by agriculture. Most of them were in a primitive stage of development when Columbus reached the Caribbean. Some of them, however, like the Incas of Peru and the Aztecs of Mexico, had developed

fairly advanced cultures. But, on the whole, the American Indians were at a great disadvantage when confronted by fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Europeans. Even the most advanced Indian tribes lacked the wheel, the plow, iron implements, and livestock. Nor did any of them possess ships or gunpowder.

THE EUROPEAN SETTLERS RECEIVE MUCH FROM THE INDIANS

Nevertheless, the Indians had much to teach the white man. From the Indian, European settlers learned of many new products: maize (Indian corn), white potatoes and sweet potatoes, tobacco, pineapples, peanuts, maple sugar, various kinds of beans, tomatoes, squash, pumpkins, chocolate, quinine, vanilla, and rubber. It is estimated that one-third of our agricultural products came originally from the Indians.

The ability of the early white explorers and fur traders to survive in the wilderness was due, in part, to the forest lore they learned from the Indians. Like the Indians, the European pioneers wore deerskin clothing, used canoes and snowshoes, and learned to move in Indian file and fight in open formation for greater safety. The European settlers also borrowed many Indian names for villages, cities, lakes, rivers, and mountains throughout America. The names of 26 of our 50 states are taken from Indian names. Thus, the heritage of the United States is Indian as well as European. The Indian was to play an important part in the white man's exploration and colonization of America. He was to prove valuable as a friend and dangerous as an enemy.¹⁰

1986

By the 1980s, the story of Native Americans in U.S. history textbooks changed a great deal. One can see the impact politics has played on the publishing of textbooks simply by noting that terms such as "Indian," "squaw," and "savage" are no longer a part of the textbooks' vocabulary. Students also read more about anthropological research rather than the historical hearsay they were given in textbooks written one hundred years earlier. Finally, women in Native American society are given a vastly different set of societal roles as compared to earlier textbooks.

What did it feel like to be among the first humans to reach this great, empty land? We know what the first astronauts experienced when they set foot on the moon. They were aware that they were doing something no one had ever done before. We do not know exactly what the first Americans experienced. They did not know that they were exploring a new continent. Understanding the difference calls for an act of historical imagination. Having a good historical imagination means being able to look at past events from the outside, keeping in mind what the people of the day knew, but at the same time remembering what they did not know.

Once in North America, the wanderers moved slowly southward and to the east, following the life-giving game and grasses. The distances they covered were enormous. It is 15,000 miles (24,000 kilometers) from their homeland in Asia to the southern tip of South America and 6,000 miles (9,600 kilometers) to what is now New England. Many thousand years passed before they had spread over all of North and South America.

As they advanced and multiplied, the first Americans gradually changed their ways of life. Some made their homes in fertile valleys, others in tropical jungles. Some settled in mountainous regions or in deserts. Each group had different problems, and each learned to see the world in different ways. As a result each society created its own culture.

A society is a group of families who live and work together and who have common values and patterns of behavior. The culture of a society consists of the special characteristics of the people who make it up: the language they speak, their government, how they make a living, their family relationships, how they educate their children. Some sense of how many different cultures these first Americans and their descendants created comes from the fact that the peoples of North and South America spoke between 1,000 and 2,000 languages.

EARLY AMERICAN CULTURES

About 500 years ago there were more than 25 million people living in North and South America. Only about 1 million of these inhabited what is now the United States and Canada. Partly because they were so few in number and spread over such a huge area, these people had developed a number of distinct cultures. But they had many things in common. Most

did not rely entirely on hunting and living off berries, fruits, and other wild plants. Many were farmers. Seed corn 4,000 years old has been found in caves in the Southwest. Those who planted seeds and cultivated the land instead of merely hunting and gathering food were more secure and comfortable. People who had mastered farming, or agriculture, could settle in one place instead of roaming in constant search of food. They built permanent houses. Their societies grew to include more members.

These agricultural people were mostly peaceful, though they could fight fiercely to protect their fields. The hunters and wanderers, on the other hand, were quite warlike because their need to move about brought them frequently into conflict with other groups. Some early American cultures were matrilinear, which means that family relationships were controlled by the female side. When a man and woman married in such a society, the man became a member of his wife's social group, or clan. A typical household might consist of an older woman, her daughters, and her granddaughters. Of course, the woman's husband, her sons-in-law, and her grandsons would also live in the household group. But only the female members were truly permanent members of the clan.¹¹

2

The Vikings

The presence of the Vikings in U.S. history textbooks has become less and less important over the years. In the 1800s, textbooks gave a great deal of space to these seafaring adventurers. By the end of the twentieth century, the Vikings seem to have become more of a historical anecdote rather than crucial historical story for America's young to study.

1844

Most of the information we have about the Vikings' travels to North America comes from the Icelandic Sagas and archaeological findings. Today, while most Viking historians would agree that the Sagas are of immense historical importance, they are also quick to point out that there is a great deal of legend and myth interwoven into these tales—as opposed to this author's claim that the authenticity of the Sagas "seems indisputable."

The remarkable fact that in the tenth century the continent of America was visited by Europeans, who founded settlements on the shores of New England, seems to be fully substantiated by the Icelandic histories which

Columbus's Landing in the New World

Columbus, and his voyage to the New World, is one of those historical stories that makes it into every single U.S. history textbook. Up until the 1990s, Columbus was depicted as a great and brave man, and his story was used to teach young Americans that if they hold on to their convictions and ignore the naysayers, great things will come their way. Since Columbus shows up so often and usually has large sections of text dedicated to him, this section looks specifically at how textbooks dealt with the first contact made between Europeans and Native Americans.

1794

*Originally published in the 1780s, Noah Webster's An American Selection of Lessons in Reading and Speaking was used to improve students' grammatical and oral speaking skills, and therefore it would not be considered a "historical textbook" today. But by its third edition in 1787, approximately half of the entire book was dedicated to historical content, arguably making this textbook one of the first to record the historical events that led to the founding of the new nation.**

* In most printed material done before 1820, book publishers and newspaper editors did not use the letter "f" instead of the letter "s" within their text. Rather, they were using something called the "long S," which was actually a separate printed letter.

He [Columbus] therefore proposed that they should* obey his orders for three days longer and, should they not discover land in that time, he would then direct his course for Spain.

They complied with his proposal; and, happily for mankind, in three days they discovered land. This was a small island, to which Columbus gave the name of San Salvador. Their first interview with the natives was a scene of amusement and compassion on the one part, and of astonishment and adoration on the other.

The natives were entirely naked, fimple and timorous; and they viewed the Spaniards as a superior order of beings, descended from the Sun, which, in their island, and in most parts of America, was worshipped as a Deity. By this it was easy for Columbus to perceive the line of conduct proper to be observed toward that fimple and inoffensive people.¹⁷

1830

The author of this textbook gives students an idealized view of Columbus and the Native Americans he seemed to have enchanted with his dress and behavior. Although highly overstated and lacking any real historical research, passages such as this must have given students in the 1830s a definite sense of being superior to these "simple" people.

At sunrise, Columbus, in a rich and splendid dress, landed, and, with a drawn sword in his hand, and displaying the royal standard, took possession of the island for the crown of Spain, all his followers kneeling on the shore and kissing the ground with tears of joy. The natives who had assembled in great numbers on the first appearance of the ships, stood around the Spaniards, gazing in speechless astonishment.

The Europeans were hardly less amazed at the scene before them. Every herb, and shrub, and tree was different from those which flourished in Europe. The inhabitants appeared in the simple innocence of nature, entirely naked. Their black hair, long and uncurled, floated upon their shoulders or was bound in tresses around their heads. Though not tall, they were well shaped and active. They were shy at first, through fear, but soon became familiar with the Spaniards; from whom, with transports of joy, they received

* An approximation of the "long S" (see the footnote on the previous page).

various trinkets, for which in return they gave such provisions as they had, and some cotton yarn, the only commodity of value they could produce.¹⁸

1880

Starting in the late 1800s, an interesting twist took place in the historiography of the Columbus story—Native Americans disappear completely. Now, Columbus and his men take over a new, completely uninhabited land.

On landing, he threw himself on his knees, kissed the earth, and returned thanks to God with tears of joy. His example was followed by the rest, whose hearts, indeed, overflowed with the same feelings of gratitude. Columbus then rising, drew his sword, displayed the royal standard, and assembling round him all who had landed, took solemn possession in the name of the Castilian sovereigns, giving the island the name of San Salvador. Having complied with the requisite forms and ceremonies, he called upon all present to take the oath of obedience to him as admiral and viceroy, representing the persons of the sovereigns.

The feelings of the crew now burst forth in the most extravagant transports. They had recently considered themselves devoted men hurrying forward to destruction; they now looked upon themselves as favorites of fortune, and gave themselves up to the most unbounded joy. They thronged around the admiral with overflowing zeal, some embracing him, others kissing his hands. Those who had been most mutinous and turbulent during the voyage were now most devoted and enthusiastic. Some begged favors of him as if he had already wealth and honors in his gift. Many abject spirits, who had outraged him by their insolence, now crouched at his feet, begging pardon for all the trouble they had caused him, and promising the blindest obedience for the future.¹⁹

1946

Columbus's taking the land and its people are justified in this 1946 except due to the fact that he did it for "their Highnesses." It is interesting to note that U.S. history textbooks written after 1945 would unanimously condemn Germany, Japan, and Italy for their aggressive acts of basically doing the exact same thing.

Setting out under the Spanish flag from the little harbor of Palos, in August, 1492, Columbus and his badly frightened crew reached one of the Bahama Islands the following October. "After a passage of seventy-three days," he wrote, "... I discovered very many islands inhabited by people without number: and of them all I took possession for their Highnesses with proclamation and the royal banner unfurled, no one offering any contradiction."²⁰

1995

By the 1990s—amid widespread historical controversies surrounding the Columbus quincentennial—U.S. history textbooks began to question whether Columbus should be a celebrated hero or, as the following text suggests, regarded as a villain.

Columbus: Hero or Villain?

For years, Columbus has been remembered as the bold sea captain who "discovered America." In one sense, he deserves that honor. Europeans knew nothing of the Americas before Columbus brought them news of this "new world." Today, we recognize that other people "discovered" America long before Columbus. Still, his daring journey brought the peoples of Europe, Africa, and the Americas into lasting contact for the first time in history.

Native Americans, however, paid heavily for Columbus's voyage. Columbus and the Europeans who came after him forced native peoples to work in mines or on farms raising sugar cane and cotton. Over the next 50 years, hundreds of thousands of Caribbean Indians died from harsh working conditions and European diseases.

"Discovery" also cost Native Americans their lands. Starting with Columbus, Europeans justified seizing Indian lands. Some believed they had the right to take the lands because Indians were not Christians.

For better or worse, the rise of powerful nations in Europe signaled a new era for the Americas. Curious Europeans wanted to know more about the lands across the Atlantic. They saw the Americas as a place where they could trade and grow rich. Once Columbus reached the Americas, nothing could stop the flood of explorers and settlers who followed him.²¹

tlement on the east coast of Spanish Florida. The Spaniards had made several attempts to occupy Florida, but each expedition had met with disaster. When they heard of the French settlement, an expedition under Menendez was fitted out. In September, 1565, Menendez reached Florida and founded St. Augustine. He then proceeded to wipe out the French settlement. Several Spanish forts, towns, and missions were established along the coast, the most northern being a temporary mission on the James River, near the spot where about forty years later the English were to found their first settlement in the New World.²⁶

1995

And then there were none. Most U.S. history textbooks today refer to the city of St. Augustine to let students know that Spain actually built the first city in the New World. The French settlements have become a historiographical casualty.

During their first hundred years in the Americas, the Spanish did not build settlements in the borderlands. The only exception was at St. Augustine, Florida, where a presidio was erected in 1565.²⁷

5

Captain John Smith and Pocahontas

The story of the Jamestown colony, Captain Smith, and Pocahontas are staples of almost every U.S. history textbook. For over two hundred years, Smith's story has been repeated time and again to intrigue young students—from tales of his swashbuckling throughout Europe, to his bravery and cunning in the face of danger from Native Americans. The story of Pocahontas is equally prominent, but has changed more over time than Smith's. Pocahontas's role in the following stories says a great deal more about the time period in which each text was written than the actual historical character herself. Of particular interest is how often the textbook authors themselves question the story's validity. If they doubted much of its historical content, why did they then feel the need to incorporate it in their text?

1805

A public relations firm today probably could not give Smith more of a glorified spin than the passage below. Pocahontas, on the other hand, runs into a historical problem. By informing the English of her father's plans is she, as this text claimed, an "angel of peace" or, from the Native American viewpoint, a traitor to her people?

History of Pocahontas

Perhaps they who are not particularly acquainted with the history of Virginia may be ignorant that Pocahontas was the protectress of the English, and often screened them from the cruelty of her father.

She was but twelve years old, when Captain Smith, the bravest, the most intelligent and the most humane of the first colonists, fell into the hands of the Savages. He already understood their language, had traded with them several times, and often appeased the quarrels between the Europeans and them. Often had he been obliged also to fight them, and to punish their perfidy.

At length, however, under the pretext of commerce he was drawn into an ambush, and the only two companions who accompanied him fell before his eyes but though alone, by his dexterity he extricated himself from the troop which surrounded him; until, unfortunately imagining he could save himself, by crossing a morass, he stuck fast, so that the savages, against whom he had no means of defending himself, at last took and bound him, and conducted him to Powhatan.

The king was so proud of having Captain Smith in his power, that he sent him in triumph to all the tributary princes, and ordered that he should be splendidly treated, till he returned to suffer that death which was prepared for him.

The fatal moment at last arrived. Captain Smith was laid upon the hearth of the savage king, and his head placed upon a large stone to receive the stroke of death; when Pocahontas, the youngest and darling daughter of Powhatan, threw herself upon his body, clasped him in her arms, and declared that if the cruel sentence was executed, the first blow should fall on her.

All savages (absolute sovereigns and tyrants not excepted) are invariably more affected by the tears of infancy, than the voice of humanity. Powhatan could not resist the tears and prayers of his daughter.

Captain Smith obtained his life, on condition of paying for his ransom a certain quantity of muskets, powder, and iron utensils; but how were they to be obtained? They would neither permit him to return to James-Town, nor let the English know where he was, lest they should demand him sword in hand.

Captain Smith, who was as sensible as courageous, said, that if

Powhatan would permit one of his subjects to carry to James-Town a leaf which he took from his pocket book, he should find under a tree, at the day and hour appointed, all the articles demanded for his ransom.

Powhatan consented; but without having much faith in his promises, believing it to be only an artifice of the Captain to prolong his life. But he had written on a leaf of few lines, sufficient to give an account of his situation. The messenger returned. The king sent to the place fixed upon, and was greatly astonished to find every thing which had been demanded.

Powhatan could not conceive this mode of transmitting thought; and Captain Smith was henceforth looked upon as a great magician, to whom they could not show too much respect. He left the savages in this opinion, and hastened to return home.

Two or three years after, some fresh differences arising amidst them and the English, Powhatan, who no longer thought them forcerers but still feared their power, laid a horrid plan to get rid of them altogether. His project was to attack them in profound peace, and cut the throats of the whole colony.

The night of this intended conspiracy, Pocahontas took advantage of the obscurity; and, in a terrible storm which kept the savages in their tents, escaped from her father's house, advised the English to be on the guard, but conjured them to spare her family; to appear ignorant of the intelligence she had given, and to terminate all their differences by a new treaty.

It would be tedious to relate all the service which this angel of peace rendered to both nations. We shall only add, that the English, I know not from which motives, but certainly against all faith and equity thought proper to carry her off. Long and bitterly did she deplore her fate; and the only consolation she had was Captain Smith, in whom she found a second father.²⁸

1842

The relationship the very young Pocahontas had with an older white European male has been a controversial historical story that textbook authors have struggled with for two hundred years. In 1842, though, the issue was made quite clear.

While she [Pocahontas] was detained at Jamestown, Mr. John Rolfe, a young Englishman, gained the favour of the princess, and desired her in

the two cannon and a grindstone, but they thought them too heavy to carry. He then discharged the cannon, loaded with stones among the trees, which so terrified them that they were glad to return to Powhatan with a quantity of toys and trinkets in their stead.

Powhatan was greatly pleased with the presents, but Indian friendships are not always permanent. Some time afterward, his savage feelings became again excited against the English, and a plan was laid for cutting them all off at a blow, which, but for the interference of Pocahontas, would probably have succeeded. The day and the hour were set, and Pocahontas was informed of both.

The very night before the deed was to be done, in the midst of a terrible storm, which, with the thick darkness, kept the savages in their huts, Pocahontas proceeded to Jamestown, and revealed the plot. The colonists were, therefore, on their guard, and a part of them saved. This first Indian plot to massacre the English took place in 1609.

It does not appear that the savages ever found out who revealed their plan, for Pocahontas remained at her father's house for some time afterward. In the meanwhile, with the aid of Captain Smith, peace was once more established between the two nations.

Pocahontas, having now become the warm friend of the English, came every few days to the fort at Jamestown, with her basket of corn for the garison, which proved of great service to them. At length, however, she was stolen by a foraging party of the white people, and a large sum was demanded of her father for her ransom.

Powhatan was unwilling to comply with the terms proposed, and began to prepare for a war with the English; and had it not been for an event as singular as it was unforeseen, a most fatal conflict would doubtless have arisen. A young Englishman, by the name of Rolfe, proposed to marry Pocahontas, and the proposal met with approbation of the king.

She accordingly professed the faith of the Christian religion, and was baptized from a font hewn from the trunk of a tree, in the little rugged church at Jamestown. Soon after she was married. She became a faithful wife and an exemplary and pious mother. Some of the principal families in Virginia are descended from this union of a young planter with an Indian princess.

In 1616, Pocahontas went with her husband to England, but she was unhappy there. Captain Smith, who was in London at the time of her ar-

marriage. Powhatan consented; and with his daughter, the noble-spirited prince gave his heart. He was ever after the firm and sincere friend of the colony. The powerful tribe of the Chickahominy also sought the friendship of the English, and demanded to be called Englishmen.

Though the marriage of Pocahontas was hailed as an auspicious event at the time, and has always been celebrated in the annals of the colony, it never operated as an example. The English and Indians would not intermarry, and the races have always remained distinct.²⁹

1866

Here is an example of historical storytelling in full flower, replete with vivid (mainly fictitious) detail and a clearly conveyed moral.

Two large stones were brought in, and laid at the feet of the savage king, and Smith's head was placed on one of them, while the savages gathered around to witness the execution. At length the club of the destroyer was raised, and every one was waiting in silent suspense to see it fall on the victim.

At this critical instant, Pocahontas, the eldest of the king's daughters, now scarcely twelve years of age, rushed forward with a shriek, and threw herself between the unhappy stranger and the executioner. Her hair was loose, and her eyes were wild and streaming with tears. She raised her hands to her father, and besought him, with all her power of eloquence, to spare his captive.

Powhatan, though little used to pity, could not resist her entreaties and tears. He paused, and looked round upon his warriors, as if to gather their opinion of what was proper to be done. They too were touched with pity, though they were savages. At last he raised his daughter, and promised her to spare the prisoner's life.

He was accordingly saved, and the very next day conducted by a guard of twelve men to Jamestown. He had been a prisoner about seven weeks. Before his departure he made a treaty with the king, by which he was to send back two cannon and a grindstone, for which Powhatan was to let him have a large tract of country, and forever regard him as his son.

He reached Jamestown in safety, but not wishing to send guns to the savages, he determined to frighten them. However, he brought forward

rival, called to her, but he was a little reserved in his manners toward her. This added to the intensity of her feelings, and she wept like a child.

Captain Smith inquired the cause of her grief. "Did I not save thy life," said she, "in America? When I was torn from the arms of my father, and conducted among thy friends, didst thou not promise to be a father to me? Didst thou not say that if I went into thy county, thou wouldst be my father, and I should be thy daughter? Thou hast deceived me and behold me here, now, a stranger and an orphan!"

Captain Smith could not resist such eloquence. He introduced her to many families of respectability, and did all he could, while she remained in England, to make her happy; he never, however, ventured to bring her before the king. She fell a victim to the united influence of grief and the climate, and died at the age of twenty-two, as she was about to re-embark for America.³⁰

1872

Even though the author of this textbook clearly questioned the validity of the historical story he was writing about, he nevertheless decided that it was such an important part of the study of American history that it must be kept in the narrative.

Accordingly he was bound, and his head placed upon a stone; but, just as the savages were raising their clubs to dash out his brains, Pocahontas, a daughter of Powhatan, rushed forward, clasped the captive's head in her arms, and begged that his life might be saved. It is further related that the conduct of Pocahontas touched her father's heart, and the sentence was revoked. Recent investigations, however, render it nearly certain that no such event ever took place.³¹

1897

This textbook discussed the story of the Rolfe-Pocahontas marriage in terms of international relations. Historical writing and teaching had become increasingly "professionalized" by the late 1800s, which is reflected in the sober tone and direct reference to historical sources.

In the course of the exploration Smith was captured by the Indians, and taken to their chief, Powhatan. The chief was "a tall, sour-looking old

man"; he ordered his warriors to knock Smith's brains out. According to the valiant captain's account, he was saved by Pocahontas, the chief's youthful daughter, who ran up, just as the club was raised, and put her arms round the prisoner's head.^{(1)*}

Some years afterward, John Rolfe, a colonist who had come over to Virginia at a later period, became interested in Pocahontas. He labored for the conversion of the tender-hearted heathen, and labored so effectually [sic] that she not only embraced Christianity, but took Rolfe for her husband besides. The marriage was a fortunate one, since it made Powhatan the firm friend of the colony at a time when it needed all the friends it could get. King James, however, shook his head over the matter, and questioned whether Rolfe, being a man without rank, had not committed treason in presuming to marry a native American princess.³²

1936

One has to question why this author felt the need to explain the story of Smith's near-death situation and then add the caveat that it is likely not true. Considering that his story was seen as a science by a great many academicians in the 1930s, allowing a historical story with no fact into a textbook seems to be an odd choice.

A Born Leader—John Smith

The whole colony was in danger of extinction when John Smith took charge. He was a young man thirty years of age, but he had traveled much and had experienced many thrilling adventures. He was a strong character and a born leader. Under his direction the food supply was replenished by bartering with the Indians and the colony was saved.

Smith's explorations along the Virginian rivers and his experiences with the Indians make an interesting story. He made many journeys throughout the country to the west of Chesapeake Bay. On one of these voyages up the Chichahomy River he was captured by the Indians and taken before their chief, Powhatan, who controlled at least thirty-four tribes of the Algonquin race. His dominion extended from the Roanoke River to the head

* [Original footnote] (1) Certain inconsistencies in Smith's account of the affair have caused most recent historians to question the truth of his story; otherwise it is not at all improbable.

of Chesapeake Bay. Powhatan, according to an account by Smith, would have put him to death had it not been for Pocahontas, the chief's daughter, who, when Smith was about to be killed, threw herself between him and the executioner and saved his life. Some historians doubt the story. But everyone who has read about Virginia knows how John Rolfe, an English planter, fell in love with and married Pocahontas. To this day, Americans are proud to trace ancestry back to this couple.³³

1978

By the latter half of the twentieth century, the heroism of Smith disappeared along with Pocahontas from the Jamestown story. Rather than a mythical story of these two characters, students begin to receive a more sophisticated understanding of the colony's history and its impact on the development of the United States.

Smith Becomes the Leader

Very likely the little settlement would have perished completely in those early years but for the efforts of one man, Captain John Smith. It was Captain Smith who saw to it that defenses were built against the Indians. He was firm in his dealings with the Indians and forced them to be cautious about attacking the new colony. Smith also insisted that the men work, that they plant corn for food and not spend their time digging for gold. He established the policy of "no work, no food." Even a lazy man will work rather than starve! In September, 1609, however, Captain Smith was badly burned by an explosion of gunpowder. He went back to England to receive treatment for his burns and to escape some violent quarrels with other colonists. He never returned to Virginia.

One of the early settlers, named John Rolfe, learned from the Indians how to produce fine tobacco. This plant was unknown to Europeans until they learned about it from the American Indians. Smoking soon became popular in England, so the Jamestown colonists found it easy to sell all the tobacco they could grow. The colony at last began to prosper. Workers were needed to grow tobacco, and many white indentured servants were imported. About this time, also, a Dutch ship brought 20 Negroes from Africa to Jamestown. The first of these blacks, who were indentured servants rather than slaves, proved very helpful as workers in the tobacco

fields. Small farms gave way to large plantations. The colony now spread far beyond the limits of Jamestown and became known as Virginia.³⁴

1995

As this excerpt reveals, Smith's story is simply too alluring to keep on the historical sidelines, despite the wealth of new knowledge about the Virginia colony and its development. There is perhaps no better example of the role of mythical stories in the teaching and learning of American history.

The Indomitable Captain John Smith

Virginia might have gone the way of Roanoke had it not been for Captain John Smith. By any standard, he was a resourceful man. Before coming to Jamestown, he had traveled throughout Europe, fought with the Hungarian army against the Turks, and if Smith is to be believed, was saved from certain death by various beautiful women. Because of his reputation for boasting, historians have discounted Smith's account of life in early Virginia. Recent scholarship, however, has reaffirmed the truthfulness of his story. In Virginia, Smith brought order out of anarchy. While members of the council in Jamestown debated petty topics, he traded with the local Indians for food, mapped the Chesapeake Bay, and may even have been rescued from execution by a young Indian girl, Pocahontas. In the fall of 1608, he seized control of the ruling council and instituted a tough military discipline. Under Smith, no one enjoyed special privilege. Individuals whom he forced to work came to hate him. But he managed to keep them alive, no small achievement in such a deadly environment.³⁵

Adams, they were protected in their rights against the claims of the state of Georgia, but in the following administration, the legislature of Georgia extended the laws of the state over the Indian territory, annulling the laws which had been previously established, and among other things, declaring that "no Indian or descendant of an Indian, residing within the Creek or Cherokee nations of Indians, should be deemed a competent witness or party to any suit in any court where a white man is a defendant."

Although the supreme court of the United States declared the acts of the legislature of Georgia to be unconstitutional, yet the decision of that tribunal was disregarded, and the president of the United States informed the Cherokees that he had no power to oppose the exercise of the sovereignty of any state over all who may be within its limits; "and he therefore advised them to abide the issue of such new relations without any hope that he will interfere." Thus the remnant of the Cherokees, once a great and powerful people, were deprived of their national sovereignty, and delivered into the hands of their oppressors.

Yet the Cherokees were still determined to remain in the land of their fathers. But at length, in 1835, a few of their chiefs were induced to sign a treaty for a sale of their lands, and a removal west of the Mississippi although this treaty was opposed by a majority of the Cherokees, and the terms afterwards—decided upon at Washington—rejected by them, yet as they found arrayed against them the certain hostility of Georgia, and could expect no protection from the general government, they finally decided upon a removal; but it was not until towards the close of the year 1838 that the business of emigration was completed.¹⁶

1889

With the frontier closing toward the late nineteenth century and the "Indian problem" coming to an end, some students began to read passages from textbooks that went to great pains to highlight the "civilized" qualities of the Cherokee.

The Cherokees were now the most powerful tribe of Indians in Georgia and Alabama, since the Creeks had been overthrown by Jackson. They were intelligent and educated; they had churches, schools, and newspapers of their own; and they refused to remove across the Mississippi. Finally, the State of Georgia became impatient, and decided to force the Indians to go.

18

The Trail of Tears

In these accounts of the notorious Trail of Tears—the forced removal of the so-called Five Civilized Tribes from the Southeast—one can see an unexpected historical narrative. While U.S. history textbooks—especially in the nineteenth century—went out of their way to criticize Native Americans and accuse them of savagery and being uncivilized, the Trail of Tears was the great exception to this trend.

1849

Written at a time when most other textbooks described Native Americans as "savages" (which the author of this particular textbook actually does in an earlier passage), this selection was surprising for the way it discussed how "civilized" the Cherokee were and how wrong the U.S. government had been in this situation.

A few events concerning the Cherokees require notice in this portion of our history. These Indians had long been involved in the same difficulties as those which had troubled their Creek neighbors. They were the most civilized of all the Indian tribes, had an established government, a national legislature, and written laws. During the administration of Mr.

President Adams, in 1827, interfered to protect the Indians, but Georgia declared its intention to resist the Federal Government, if necessary, by force. The State was at last successful in compelling the Cherokees to remove.¹⁷

1916

By the early part of the twentieth century, students began to have their attention focused on the fight between Jackson and Marshall, while the story of the Cherokee basically became a footnote to the event.

When Jackson came into office, the state of Georgia was still engaged in its struggle to remove the Creek and Cherokee Indians from its borders to the regions west of the Mississippi. In contrast to President Adams, who vainly attempted to defend the Indians against what he considered unfair treatment, Jackson, who knew from experience how the presence of the Indians hindered the settlement of the country, upheld the state at every step. To assert its jurisdiction over the lands of the Cherokees, the courts of Georgia tried a Cherokee, Corn Tassels by name, for murder, and found him guilty. Against the order of the Supreme Court of the United States the officials of the state put the culprit to death, and the President did not interfere. On another occasion a certain missionary was arrested and convicted by the state for entering, without state license, upon the lands held by the Indians, and was kept in prison in defiance of the Supreme Court of the United States. Again the President refused to uphold the court. "John Marshall has made his decision," he is reported to have said; "now let him enforce it." Disheartened, the Cherokees at last gave up their lands to the United States for a stipulated sum and consented to removal to Indian Territory, which Jackson recommended to be set aside for the Indian tribes.¹⁸

1947

Staying with the theme that these tribes had done nothing wrong to deserve what happened to them, many textbooks often tried to insinuate that the tragedy was due to the settlers' greed and Jackson's arrogance.

Jackson Removes the Indians to the West. The fate of the Indians was still unsettled when Jackson took office. Thomas Jefferson had believed we should civilize the red men and let them keep part of their land. This pol-

icy was not tried in the old Northwest, for there the white settlers advanced along a single wide front, pushing the Indians steadily westward. But in the old Southwest, where the white men settled chiefly along the great rivers, five powerful tribes were left on the lands in between. These tribes were accepting the Christian religion and taking up most of the white men's ways. They were known as the "Five Civilized Tribes." The Cherokees, for example, were excellent farmers and stock raisers, living in neat wooden houses surrounded by orchards. They built roads, kept inns, and made cotton and woolen cloth. They had an alphabet and kept written records. They had a constitution and a government much like ours. The United States had recognized them in treaties as an independent nation.

The people of Georgia wanted the Cherokee lands, so the state authorities announced that the Indians must move. The Cherokees appealed to the courts. The Supreme Court, under John Marshall, ruled that the Cherokees were a nation and that the laws of Georgia did not apply to them. Georgia refused to obey the Supreme Court and began to remove the Indians by force. This action was just as serious as South Carolina's refusal to obey the tariff law. Yet President Jackson did nothing about it. Like other frontiersmen, he had no respect for Indians, and believed they should be driven to places set aside for them in the West, that is, to reservations. He is reported to have said, "John Marshall has made his decision; now let him enforce it."¹⁹

1974

While the historiography of the Trail of Tears has consistently put the Cherokee in a positive light, Jackson's reputation seemed to take the hardest hit in the 1970s.

When it came to Indian policy, Jackson sometimes took a states' rights stand. Like many other westerners, Jackson disliked and distrusted Indians. The Indians disliked and distrusted him, too, with reason. Jackson's two terms as President were marked by constant fighting with the tribes.

The government's, and especially Jackson's, aim in this period was to remove all Indians living in the area east of the Mississippi. Explorers had described the area west of the Mississippi as the "Great American Desert," unsuitable for farming. Thinking that white settlers would never want this arid land, government leaders decided it would be the perfect spot to put

the Indians. Thus the government would end the seemingly endless cycle by which white settlers moved in to Indian Territory, fought over it, defeated the tribes, negotiated a treaty, pushed the tribes out, settled, filled up the territory, and moved toward more Indian land. By locating the Indians on land that no whites wanted, the leaders thought they would be giving the Indians a permanent territory. At the same time they would be getting rid of the tribes in areas that whites wanted for themselves.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs, which had been set up as part of the War Department in 1824, was expanded in 1832. Under Jackson, the BIA directed the signing of ninety-four treaties by which tribal peoples gave up some of their lands.

In the North, most of the tribes had already been moved west of the Mississippi. The last stand of the northeastern tribes was the Black Hawk War, in 1832. Led by the Sauk chief, Black Hawk, the Sauk and Fox resisted removal. They fought in northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin until they were finally beaten by the army.

Of the southeastern tribes, the Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Creek were fairly easy to move to the new Indian Territory. The Cherokee and Seminole, however, refused to sign treaties with the government. When the state of Georgia tried to make the Cherokee subject to the state, the Cherokee took their case to the Supreme Court. Although the Court upheld the Cherokee position, Andrew Jackson did not. The President refused to execute the court's orders. He is reported to have said: "John Marshall has made his decision; now let him enforce it."

The state of Georgia, at Jackson's urging, harassed the Cherokee until some of them signed a removal treaty. The tribe was moved west in 1838 and 1839, after Jackson had left office. A fourth of the tribe died during the journey, which came to be called the Cherokee "Trail of Tears." Some of the Cherokee fled to the hills of North Carolina, where their descendants still live.²⁰

I 995

In this passage, an economic motivation—the expansion of cotton—has been woven into the story of the Native Americans' removal. Also of note, this was one of the very few texts that, although extremely brief, mentioned the actual journey these people were forced to take in the 1830s.

President Jackson also used federal power negatively to support the relocation of the Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek, Chickasaw, and Seminole peoples to what is now Oklahoma. He had a deep prejudice against Native Americans and believed that they would prevent white people from moving west and opening up land for cotton production.

Many Americans shared Jackson's prejudice against Native Americans. In 1829 Georgia seized Cherokee land for cotton growers. After appealing to the United States Senate with little result, the Cherokee appealed directly to the American people in 1830. In that appeal, the Cherokee said:

The people of the United States will have the fairness to reflect, that all the treaties between them and the Cherokee were made . . . for the benefit of the whites. . . . We wish to remain on the land of our fathers. We have a perfect and original right to remain without interruption. . . . The treaties with us and laws of the United States made in pursuance of treaties, guaranty [sic] our residence. . . . It cannot be that the community we are addressing, remarkable for its intelligence and religious sensibilities, and preeminent [admirable] for its devotion to the rights of man, will lay aside this appeal.

Two years later, Chief Justice Marshall, in the case *Worcester v. Georgia*, ruled that Georgia's action was unconstitutional and should not be allowed. But Jackson and Georgia ignored the Supreme Court, which had no power to enforce its decision. In 1837 and 1838, the United States Army gathered about fifteen thousand Cherokee and forced them to migrate west.

On this nightmare journey, which has come to be called the Trail of Tears, about one out of every four Cherokees died of exposure or disease. In an added outrage, the \$6 million spent by the federal government to relocate the Cherokee was charged against the \$9 million that the Cherokee had been forced to accept for their lands.²¹

America hastened to their aid. In 1835, the revolution began with the battle of Gonzales, in which 1,000 Mexicans were defeated by 500 Texans. Goliad, and the strong citadel of Bexar, known as the Alamo, were soon after taken, and the whole Mexican army was dispersed. On the 6th of March, 1836, however, Santa Anna, having raised a new force of 8,000 men, attacked the Alamo, which had been left in charge of a small but gallant garrison. All night they fought, but superior numbers triumphed. Every man fell at his post but seven, and these were killed while asking quarter. Here died David Crockett, the famous hunter. Crockett had enjoyed but two months instruction at a country school; but his strong common sense and indomitable courage made him very popular among the people of Tennessee, who three times elected him to Congress. In 1834 he went to Texas, to strike a blow for freedom. The Alamo proved his last battlefield. He expired, covered with wounds, surrounded by a circle of Mexicans who had fallen by his sword.²⁷

1878

In the nineteenth century, Mexican brutality and American courage were two consistent themes in the historiography of this event.

Santa Anna now invaded the country with nearly eight thousand men and laid siege to the Alamo, then held by only one hundred and forty Texans under Colonel Travis. The place was taken by storm, the Mexicans losing sixteen hundred soldiers. All the garrison fell fighting at their posts except seven who were put to the sword after having surrendered. Among them was David Crockett, the famous backwoodsman and hunter. Santa Anna then attacked Colonel Fanning, who was stationed at Goliad with five hundred men. Overwhelmed by superior forces, the soldiers surrendered on condition that they should give up their arms and return to the United States. In spite of this agreement, they were all massacred in cold blood.²⁸

1899

Like most of the textbooks printed in the 1800s, the Alamo, as in this passage, was not even mentioned in the story of the Texas Revolution.

20

The Alamo

Few historical events in American history evoke as much legend, patriotism, and myth as the siege of the Alamo. Nevertheless, much of the mythology seems to have been created in the latter half of the twentieth century. The Alamo rarely received more than a mention in most nineteenth-century textbooks, but today there are often longer passages with the compulsory picture of the Alamo. One has to wonder what impact television and film has had on our collective memory of this historical event.

1867

In a textbook written just two years after the end of the Civil War, students learned that the Alamo was significant due to the "gallant" bravery of the Americans who fought there and that David (not Davy) Crockett was probably one of those killed.

The prosperity of these settlers awakened the jealousy of the Mexicans, and an unjust and oppressive policy was pursued towards them. Their remonstrances being disregarded, they declared their independence of Mexico, and made ready to support it by force of arms. Volunteers from

The southern people, therefore, in self-defense felt driven to acquire more territory. The republic of Texas was close at hand, a fine country as big as the Austro-Hungarian Empire, with Italy and Switzerland thrown in. Texas had once belonged to Mexico, but, in 1820, Moses Austin, a native of Connecticut, had obtained a grant of land there, and within a few years more than 20,000 people from the United States had settled in Texas. The government of Mexico was regarded as oppressive, and these Texans declared their state independent. In 1836, their commander, Samuel Houston, totally defeated the Mexicans under Santa Anna, in the battle of San Jacinto, and the independence of Texas was achieved. Next year, she asked for admission to the American Union, but nothing was done about it, and for some years she was known as the "Lone Star State."²⁹

1905

This passage made a unique claim when it stated that "the Texans were too well organized and too good fighters ever to be conquered by Mexico." If this is historically accurate, then how exactly did they lose the battle for the Alamo?

By 1835 the spirit of independence was so strong that the Texans resisted a Mexican force under General Santa Anna, the Mexican dictator. In March, 1836, under Sam Houston, a friend of Jackson, they declared their independence, drew up a national constitution, and made slavery a fundamental part of the government. Four days later a fortified convent, the Alamo in San Antonio, was taken by a Mexican army after a brave defense, and every man within it was killed. This massacre sowed undying hatred, and the Texans were too well organized and too good fighters ever to be conquered by Mexico. They desired to be annexed by the United States; and it might have been brought about had not the North protested against an annexation which would strengthen the slave power. In October, 1836, the Texan congress claimed a boundary "to the mouth of the Rio Grande, thence up the principal stream of the said river to its source."³⁰

1916

In the early twentieth century, students reading this passage probably did not miss the racial overtones.

Conflict with the Mexicans was an unavoidable consequence. It could not be expected that citizens of the United States, with Anglo-Saxon blood in their veins and with the independent spirit of frontiersmen, would feel loyalty to the weak and shifting government of Mexico. Once settled in the province of Texas, the immigrants quarreled with the native inhabitants, broke into open rebellion, and on March 2, 1836, declared Texas a free and independent state. The Texas War of Independence opened with a terrible massacre by the Mexicans of one hundred and fifty Texans at the Alamo, an old Spanish mission building in San Antonio, Texas, and closed with the battle of San Jacinto, in which the insurgents under General Sam Houston won a notable victory over President Santa Anna and his Mexican followers. Six hundred Mexicans were killed in the battle, two hundred injured, and Santa Anna made prisoner. Houston was made President of the new Republic of Texas, and in spite of the fact that Mexico still claimed Texas as her own, the President and Congress of the United States recognized the independence of the revolted state. After such an unfriendly act by the United States, the neighboring sister republic and the nations farther south began to question the sincerity of the Monroe Doctrine.³¹

1950

By midcentury, U.S. history textbooks began to give students the more "modern" agreed-on story.

Mexico tried to crush the revolt. General Santa Anna led troops into Texas to punish the Americans. The Texans suffered two horrible defeats, but they also won one final and glorious victory. The first defeat was at the Alamo in the city of San Antonio. The Alamo was an old Spanish mission surrounded by high walls. A force of 187 Texans, under the command of Colonel William Barrett Travis, barricaded themselves in the mission and were besieged by 3,000 Mexicans under Santa Anna. In spite of the unequal odds, the Texans held out for eleven days. When the battle was over, all of them were dead. "Remember the Alamo" became the battle cry of all Texans.³²

1961

In this passage, the stereotypical images began to seep into the story, with the names of Colonel William Barret Travis, Davy Crockett, and James Bowie as well as the phrase "Remember the Alamo" all playing integral parts.

The Texans are defeated at the Alamo. Before the end of February, 1836, Santa Anna's invading army had encircled San Antonio. Texas was not prepared to meet his force. Her troops were scattered and out of touch with each other, and there was no plan of campaign. One band of Texans, led by William B. Travis, instead of retreating before Santa Anna's superior force, moved into the chapel in San Antonio, called the Alamo, and awaited the Mexican assault.

Surrounded by a force of 2,400 Mexicans, Travis' little group of men succeeded in holding out for more than a week. Every one of the 188 defenders, including such famous pioneers as David Crockett and James Bowie, as well as Travis, was killed. Among Texans, "Remember the Alamo!" became the popular battle cry.³³

1995

By the mid-1990s, a different perspective was added to the historiography of the Alamo story. This passage questioned the "mythical bravery" of the Texas/American forces inside the Alamo, and did not give Crockett his glorious last-stand death.

Within days after Texas declared itself a republic, rebels and Mexican troops in San Antonio fought the famous battle of the Alamo. Myths about that battle have magnified the rebels' valor at the Mexicans' expense. The story is based on fact—only 187 rebels fought a far larger number of Mexican soldiers for more than a week before eventual capitulation—but it is not true that all rebels, including folk hero Davy Crockett, fought to the death. Crockett and seven other survivors were captured then executed. Moreover, the rebels fought from inside a strong fortress with superior cannons against march-weary Mexican conscripts. Nevertheless, a tale that combined actual mythical bravery inside the

Alamo gave the insurrection new inspiration, moral sanction, outside support, and the rallying cry "Remember the Alamo."

The revolt ended with an exchange of slaughters. A few days after the Alamo battle, another Texas detachment was surrounded and captured in an open plain near the San Antonio River and was marched to the town of Goliad, where most of its 350 members were executed.³⁴

Slavery in America

Slavery is arguably one of the most contentious issues in American history and one that many textbooks have had to treat rather gingerly since the 1800s. Textbooks authors in the early 1800s often did not want to face the subject head-on. Therefore, the reader will find a hodgepodge of stories here dealing with the issues of states' rights, the slave trade, and in the late 1900s, what life was like as an African slave. Most of the textbook selections reflect the sharp racial stereotypes of their time. For the most part authors, even those who were against slavery, must have reinforced the stereotypes that many white students already had—especially the image of the kindly master and the “happy-go-lucky” slave.

1851

The ideological viewpoint of this selection should be clear: this book was printed for and used in the North, and it did not mince words when it came to dealing with slavery. While this passage did not explain the life of a slave, it gave the reader a good sense of the political and social atmosphere in the years before the Civil War.

Since the middle of the last century, expanded minds have been, with slow gradations, promoting the decrease of slavery in North America. The

progress of truth is slow; but it will, in the end, prevail. The first voice raised against this uncharitable practice was by a Quaker, the amiable and enlightened John Woolman, of Mount Holly, in New Jersey. He wrote his sentiments on that subject in the year 1746; strenuously recommended its abolition, at the several stated meetings of his society; and, in 1754, published his "Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes"; a work admirable for its dispassionate and lucid style of argument; highly beneficial in his own time, and deserving most serious attention at the present. Anthony Benezet, of Philadelphia, though his writings were subsequent to Woolman's, has acquired a yet higher rank among philanthropists. His labours, in the same field, were singularly active, and conspicuously successful. St. George Tucker, of Virginia, also wrote an able dissertation against slavery. A duty on the importation of slaves was laid by New York, in 1753; by Pennsylvania, in 1762; and by New Jersey, in 1769. Virginia the first state concerned in their introduction, was also the first that set an example of their exclusion; having, in the year 1778, amidst the perplexing scenes of civil warfare, passed an act to discontinue their entry into her ports. In 1780, Pennsylvania made a law for the gradual abolition of slavery; a law which, although it did not allow all the natural rights declared in her constitution, has the merit of being the earliest legislative proceeding of the kind, in any nation; and, soon afterwards, there was instituted in the same state, a society "for promoting the abolition of slavery, for the relief of free negroes unlawfully held in bondage, and for improving the condition of the African race." All the other states, north and east of Maryland, have since made laws for their gradual emancipation. On the adoption of the federal government, congress was authorized to prohibit, at the end of twenty years, the importation of negroes, into any part of the United States; and, accordingly, no arrivals have legally occurred since 1807. In 1820, a society for colonizing free people of colour, began a settlement at Sierra Leone, on the coast of Africa. A heavy grievance, however, is yet to be removed. Virginia, as well as every other American republic that still sanctions domestic bondage, will, we confidently anticipate, at no distant period, make arrangements, to unloosen, by degrees, the fetters, which are not less alarming to the master, than galling to the slave. Let us not only declare by words, but demonstrate by our actions, "That all men are created equal; that they are endowed, by their Creator, with certain unalienable

rights; that, amongst these, are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Let us venerate the instruction of that great and amiable man, to whom, chiefly, under Providence, the United States are indebted for their liberties; the world, for a common home: "That there exists an, indissoluble union between virtue and happiness, between duty and advantage."¹

1856

This textbook, written for an unquestionably Southern audience, was published during the height of the pre-Civil War sectional controversy. Of particular interest is the fact that students in the South learned that the sectional tension, from their perspective, had nothing to do with slavery, but rather the rights of each individual state.

Does Either Government Exercise Any Dominion Over the Other?

Young persons sometimes imagine that the general government is, in some sense, a government *above* the state governments, and that it exercises a sort of superintendence [*sic*] over them; but this is not so in any sense whatever. The general government extends its jurisdiction over a wider field than the state governments, it is true, but it does not rise to any higher elevation in respect to sovereignty and power. It is supreme in respect to the business intrusted [*sic*] to it, and so are the state governments supreme in respect to the business intrusted to them.

WHAT EXAMPLE IS THERE OF THE EXERCISE GOVERNMENT IN VIRGINIA?

The government of Virginia, for example, has founded a university in the heart of the state for the education of young men. That is a business that belongs to the state. Now neither the President of the United States, nor the Congress, nor both combined, can touch that institution at all, no matter how well or how badly the government of Virginia may manage it. The education of the people of Virginia is a subject that belongs to the state. In respect to that business the state is supreme, and the general government of the United States has no more power to touch it than has the government of France, or England, or that of any other country.

WHAT EXAMPLE IS THERE OF THE EXERCISE OF THE POWER OF THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT IN VIRGINIA?

On the other hand, at Gosport, near Norfolk, in Virginia, is a navy yard, established and maintained by the government of the United States. Every thing that pertains to the navy belongs to the departments of national defense and foreign commerce, and those things are the business of the general government. The general government accordingly bought the land for that navy yard, and built the docks and piers, and hired the workmen, and, although the ground is within the limits of the State of Virginia, neither the governor of Virginia, nor the Legislature, nor both together, can touch the navy yard at all, no matter how well or how badly the general government may manage it.

HOW MANY SYSTEMS OF GOVERNMENT, THEN, HAVE THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES ESTABLISHED?

In other words, the people of the United States, having a variety of public business to perform, have divided the business into two great branches, and have adopted one system of government for one, and another system for the other. In respect to certain great subjects of general interest, they have formed themselves into one nation, and they have constituted one general government to attend to that business. In respect to another great branch of business, they deem it more convenient to have it transacted in a different way. In respect to this, they are not one nation, in any sense, but are divided into a great many independent states, each of which has supreme and sovereign control within its jurisdiction. . . .

WHAT HAS BEEN THE PROGRESS OF THE COUNTRY SINCE THAT TIME?

Since that time the country has advanced in population, wealth, and power with a rapidity which is entirely unparalleled in the history of the human race. The extent of its territory has been greatly enlarged, and many new states have been successively formed and added to the confederation, so that the new republic is rapidly rising to a very exalted rank among the nations of the earth, and is destined, perhaps, at no distant day,

to surpass all the political organizations that have preceded her in population and power, and to exert a vast influence upon the future destinies of the great human family.²

1889

Written in the post-Civil War era, when the United States had to try to come to terms with the war and the institution of slavery, this textbook attempted to help students figure out how such a thing might have happened. Obviously written for Northerners, this selection was unique in how it criticized both the former slaves and the South for many of their problems.

Negro Slavery in the colonies was one of the worst of these cases of bad judgment. The first mention of it is in Virginia, in 1619 when a Dutch man-of-war exchanged some negro slaves for provisions. Negroes were soon held as slaves in all the colonies, though they increased most rapidly in the warmer southern colonies. Labor is the most important thing in a state. Out where laborers are generally known as slaves, no free man likes to labor, because there labor is thought to degrade the laborer to the level of a slave. A wise government would therefore have forbidden slavery in the colonies: the king of England not only did not forbid it, but became an active partner in the slave trade, and refused to allow the colonies to forbid it. Thus the southern colonies came to believe that slavery and slave labor were absolutely necessary to them. . . .

Negro Slavery existed in the colony, though there were not so many slaves as in the southern colonies. In 1740, it was believed that the negroes in New York City had made a plot to kill all the whites. Before the excitement ceased, 4 whites and 18 negroes were hanged, 14 negroes were burned at the stake, and 71 negroes were banished. It is almost certain now, however, that there was in reality no such plot. . . .

The Effects of Slavery

The cause is now seen by every one to have been negro slavery, though the South could not see that in 1860. Slaves worked only because they were made to do so; they worked slowly, carelessly, and stupidly, and were fit for nothing better than to hoe cotton. In factories or on railroads they

were of little use. The rich whites did not need to work; and the poor whites did not wish to work, because they had grown up in the belief that work was a sign of slavery. Here was the real reason for the backwardness of the South, compared with the North. In the North there was a general race for work, and everything was in active motion. In the South there was no great number of persons who really wanted to work, and everything stood still.³

1900

This passage adopted a fairly contemporary view of slavery, even if it took great pains to blame the British for "forcing" the American colonists to accept this institution and would not be considered "politically correct" in today's world.

The enslavement of man by his fellow man was almost universal among ancient peoples. The system in most countries gradually merged into the serfdom of the Middle Ages, and eventually disappeared, after being greatly ameliorated by the influence of Christianity. In ancient times slavery was usually the result of conquest in war. The enslavement of the African race on commercial grounds had its beginning in comparatively modern times.

Slavery in the English colonies of North America dates back to within twelve years of the founding of the first colony, Virginia; but it had existed in Central America and in South America for more than a century before that, and in southern Europe for about fifty years before the discovery of the New World by Columbus. Not long after the introduction of slavery into the colonies, the traffic in slaves became quite profitable, and was chiefly carried on by English traders. England was responsible, above all other countries, for slavery in the United States. At different times the colonies attempted to suppress the slave-trade, but the British government thwarted them at every turn simply because it was a profitable means of commerce.

As early as 1712 Pennsylvania passed an act to restrict the increase of slaves, but it was annulled by the Crown. Fourteen years later Virginia attempted to check the trade by laying a tax on imported negroes, but the colony was soon forced to repeal the law. South Carolina attempted to restrict the trade in 1761, and Massachusetts made a similar attempt ten

years later. In each case the effort was summarily crushed by the British Crown. The traffic was a source of much profit to England, and she would listen to no promptings of humanity in the matter. There had been founded in England, more than a century before the Revolution, the Royal African Company, a great monopoly, which furnished slaves for all the British colonies throughout the world. Queen Anne owned one-fourth of the stock in this company during her reign, and she especially enjoined Parliament to suffer no interference with the slave trade.

Thus England, while not permitting slavery on her home soil, not only encouraged, but enforced it, in her colonies. But the mother country was not alone to blame for the increase of the traffic in North America. The colonists purchased the slaves; if they had not, the traffic would have died out. Virginians made the first settlement in North Carolina, and took their slaves with them. Sir John Yeamans introduced them into South Carolina from the Barbadoes [*sic*], and from South Carolina they were carried into Georgia.

The Society of Friends, or Quakers, took the lead in opposing slavery, beginning about 1688. The Pennsylvania Germans also entered their protest against the evil at an early date. John Wesley called slavery the sum of all villainies [*sic*]. At the time of the Revolution all the colonies but one, Massachusetts, had slaves. The Continental Congress of 1774 pronounced against the slave trade. This was repeated two years later, only three months before the Declaration of Independence. The people were so jubilant over their own prospects of freedom that they were disposed to extend the blessings of liberty to their slaves; but this feeling was temporary with many, and subsided after the war was over. Jefferson in writing the Declaration of Independence put in a clause condemning the slave trade, but South Carolina and Georgia demanded that it be struck out, and it was done. But they could not prevent that grand sentiment in the Declaration: "All men are created equal"—not equal in mental gifts nor in worldly station, but equal in their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. If the colonists had followed out that noble principle, it would have freed every slave in America; and indeed it did furnish a powerful weapon in the hands of the opponents of slavery down to its overthrow in the sixties.

Soon after the Revolution the northern States took hold of the matter and began to emancipate, Pennsylvania leading in 1780. Virginia came

very near it two years before. New Hampshire became a free state in 1784, New York in 1799, and so on until all the northern States had abolished slavery. New Jersey had a few left as late as 1840. In 1787 an ordinance was framed for governing the territory northwest of the Ohio River, afterward Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan. In this document, known as "The Ordinance of 1787," slavery was forever prohibited in that territory. Had it not been for this prohibition Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois would no doubt have become slave States, as they were largely settled by emigrants from Virginia and Kentucky. Even then efforts were made by Governor William Henry Harrison and others to break down that ordinance and to make Indiana and Illinois slave States; but they were not successful. In 1784 Jefferson introduced in the old Congress a similar ordinance to prohibit slavery in the new States south of the Ohio, afterward Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, etc. Had this motion carried and been effective, how great would have been the results; slavery would have been confined to the few Atlantic States in the South, and would no doubt have died a natural death. This would have prevented the seventy years of slavery agitation and the great Civil War. But the measure was lost by one vote. A member from New Jersey who would have voted for it was absent, and for want of his vote the measure was lost. Thus the entire course of our history was changed by the absence of one man from Congress on a certain day in 1784!

Here let me say a word about the slave trade, especially the smuggling trade. This was certainly one of the most nefarious pieces of business ever carried on. A vessel would go to the African coast and secure a cargo of negroes. These were packed in the ship almost like sardines in a box, and so inhuman was the treatment that sometimes thirty percent of them died before reaching America. A smuggling vessel, pursued, would sometimes throw its entire cargo of negroes overboard! This occurred on various occasions. But when a smuggling ship was caught, it seldom brought relief to the poor blacks, as the laws were persistently against them, and often a whole cargo of negroes was sold to pay the cost of investigation. There was always a way found to enslave the black man; sending him back to his home in Africa, or giving him his freedom in this country was almost unheard of. A committee of Congress recommended that a free colored man on trial and proving himself free, must pay the cost of the trial, and if unable to do so must be sold into slavery to defray the expenses! But fortunately this did not become a law.⁴

1933

The image of the kindly old master and his happy-go-lucky slaves is a part of the slave narrative that existed well into the twentieth century in a great many U.S. history textbooks.

The Slaves

Although he was in a state of slavery, the negro of plantation days was usually happy. He was fond of the company of others and liked to sing, dance, crack jokes, and laugh; he admired bright colors and was proud to wear a red or yellow bandana. He wanted to be praised, and he was loyal to a kind master or overseer. He was never in a hurry, and was always ready to let things go until the morrow. Most of the planters learned that not the whip, but loyalty, based upon pride, kindness, and rewards, brought the best returns. If a slave was overworked or was ill-treated, he was apt to run away.³

1950

Beginning in the mid-twentieth century, many history textbooks explained to students what plantation life was like for the slave. In many instances, such as the one below, these passages probably reinforced more stereotypes and prejudices than they helped destroy.

How did the slaves live? All the hard work on the plantation was done by the slaves. The field hands worked from early morning until nightfall. The more fortunate slaves were personal and house servants. On a large plantation, each member of the family had his own slave as a personal servant. On each plantation there were also a few slaves who worked as carpenters and blacksmiths or who took care of the horses. The great majority of the Negro men, women, and children, however, were field hands. . . .

Slaves were owned by their master, of course, and were absolutely subject to his will. Yet life in the slave quarters on many a plantation was not too unhappy. During the day the small children played merrily, often with the younger white children from the "great house." In the twilight young and old gathered to sing and dance. The Negroes have given us some of

our most beautiful folk songs and spirituals, such as *Deep River*, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, and *All God's Chillum Got Wings*. On special occasions the slaves were allowed to attend picnics or to hunt 'coon' and 'possum.' Of course there were some harsh masters who treated their slaves cruelly. In general, however, slaves were too valuable to be mistreated. The greatest fear of the slave was that he and his family would be sold. When this happened, families often became separated, and great suffering resulted.⁶

1961

Even in this 1960s' textbook, slavery was not considered an "absolute" evil.

Treatment of slaves varies. The treatment that a slave received depended upon the owner and the kind of work performed by the slave. Farmers with only two or three slaves lived and worked alongside them and often regarded them much as northern farmers regarded their hired help. On the larger plantations, the slaves were usually well treated. After all, they were valuable property and it was foolish to overwork or injure them. House servants were better off than field hands. Slave families lived in log cabins, "the quarters" on the master's plantation. They received clothing and rations of cornmeal, pork, and molasses, and were encouraged to raise vegetables and poultry for themselves. During the busy season, working hours were from sunrise to sunset, with two hours off at noon. They were given most of Saturday, as well as Sunday, off. Plantation owners insisted that the life of the average factory worker in the North was far worse than that of their slaves.

Nevertheless, the slave was the property of the planter, who was free to do as he wished with him. It was difficult, and in some states illegal, for slaves to acquire freedom or to secure an education. Free Negroes, who were most numerous in Virginia and Maryland, were subjected to increasingly severe restrictions as time went by.⁷

1974

In this passage, the author moved away from the questions about how well the slaves were treated and focused on the repression that masters forced on their slaves in order to protect Southern white society.

Free the slaves or repress them? These were two of the choices that white southerners faced. Out of fear, habit, self-interest, and belief, they chose repression.

One reason for this choice was a slave revolt in Virginia. Nat Turner, a black preacher, led other slaves in an insurrection in 1831. They killed fifty-seven whites before they were captured. In the long chase by soldiers and sailors, perhaps as many as one hundred blacks were killed. Turner and twenty other blacks were tried and executed.

A shudder ran through the entire South, and afterward, white planters always wondered which slaves could be trusted. More than any other event, the Turner revolt led to the passage of a nightmarish series of laws, codes, and restrictions.

Every state with slaves had a slave code. This set up the legal position of the slave in relation to his or her master as well as to society. Most codes also prescribed minimum living conditions.

According to most codes, a slave was not to be away from the owner's land without a written pass. This pass had to be shown to any white who asked to see it. A slave could not preach, except to other slaves, and then only in the presence of a white. A slave could not own a gun, blow a horn, or beat drums. A gathering of five slaves or more was an unlawful assembly.

No one might teach a slave to read or write, and it was against the law to give books, pamphlets, newspapers, or other reading matter to slaves. A slave could not give drugs or medicine to whites.

In individual communities, the slave codes often included other rules. A curfew might be imposed. Some codes prohibited dancing or even any outward signs of joy.

The laws set up different standards for blacks than for whites. For example, in every southern state there was harsher punishment for blacks than for whites for the same offense. A crime that carried imprisonment for a white often carried a death penalty for a black.

The laws were, however, very harsh on any white who aided a slave. The stiffest penalties were given to those whites who hid a runaway or helped plan a rebellion. Death was the usual punishment.

The slave codes reflected a "closed society" in which any criticism of slavery could not be tolerated. Southerners who opposed slavery found it necessary to move north. Even in entertainment, such as plays, slaves had

to be shown as servile. Although there had been slave codes in colonial times, they had been relaxed during the first years of the new republic. The Turner revolt and the rising tide of abolitionist activity led to tighter controls.⁸

1995

Many current textbooks now incorporate a fairly sophisticated analysis of American slavery, in all of its variations and complexity.

Life on Small and Large Farms

The life of enslaved Americans varied depending on circumstances. The typical slaveholder owned only a few African Americans. On small farms, enslaved people often worked side by side with their owners and their families. They sometimes ate together and slept in the same house. Close personal relationships sometimes developed; but, just as often, enslaved workers endured all manner of cruelties without a larger community to turn to for support and protection.

Most enslaved Americans, however, did not live on small farms. Because a few white men owned most of the enslaved people of the South, most enslaved African Americans lived on plantations. There they had the benefits of a sizeable community of people, usually including twenty or more African Americans. But plantation life had serious drawbacks in contrast to life on a small farm. Labor could be harsher, for example. Plantation workers frequently toiled in gangs under the supervision of foremen and slave drivers.

For enslaved women in particular life could be extremely difficult. In addition to bearing and caring for their own children and taking care of their households, they cooked and served food, cleaned houses and clothes, and labored in the fields. Especially hard work was required of them at harvest time in the late summer and fall. In addition to the drudgery of plantation life, they also had to endure rape or the threat of rape by slave owners.⁹

23

Abraham Lincoln's Character

Most historical characters found in history textbooks only appear when they are historically significant. We hear of Meriwether Lewis during his exploration west and Admiral George Dewey during the Spanish-American War, otherwise, according to textbooks, there is nothing else we need to know about them. On the other hand men such as George Washington and Abraham Lincoln are two of the lucky few who are usually given at least a paragraph to several pages dedicated to both their characters and lives before they came onto the national scene. Yet there is a significant difference between the two narratives. While Washington is viewed as a near "saint," Lincoln is your average man of the people. Washington, it seems, was predestined to lead the nation, while Lincoln had to work from the bottom-up to get where he was going. Finally, Washington was blessed with a wealthy family and natural abilities, whereas Lincoln's parents were people of the soil and he struggled to earn everything he received.

1866

News of Lincoln's assassination could not have reached this author long before his textbook went to press. Not only is Lincoln compared to Washington, but it seems his character was also forever solidified.

they became section hands—men whose job it was to maintain the railroad right of way and repair damaged tracks. This work kept them moving from place to place. Many families had to live in railroad boxcars. Other Mexican immigrants worked as cowhands on cattle ranches. Still others became farm laborers. Like so many immigrants, the Mexican-Americans were poorly paid and oftentimes badly treated.¹²

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Women's Suffrage

Over the past two hundred years, few, if any, U.S. history textbooks seem to have made overtly sexist remarks about women, as compared to, for example, racist comments about African Americans or Native Americans. And as far back as the early 1800s, individual women were often accorded significant positive attention. Still, women as a group, obviously deserving of serious historical analysis, did not seem to exist in U.S. history until the 1970s, when students were introduced to such textbook topics as "Women in the Colonies," "The Seneca Falls Movement," and "Women's Suffrage."

1920

The link on the Nineteenth Amendment was barely dry when this textbook reported the passage of the amendment that finally gave women the right to vote.

Woman Suffrage

The House passed an amendment granting women suffrage in January, 1918, but, in spite of the President's repeated recommendations, it was

1986

As with other topics covered in this book, note the distinctly different tone of this text-book in comparison with earlier excerpts. Rather than just explaining to students all the negative images and stereotypes of the immigrants who came during this time, by the 1980s textbooks showed that all the groups that immigrated to the United States ran into some problems, but most were hardworking and in search of the American dream.

Before the 1880s most immigrants had come from western and northern Europe, especially from England, Ireland, Germany, and the Scandinavian countries. We have already noted that established Americans frequently resented these newcomers. However, people from western Europe had certain advantages that helped them to adjust in their new homeland. British and Irish immigrants spoke English. Many German immigrants were well educated and skilled in one or another useful trade. Scandinavians were experienced farmers and often came with enough money to buy land in the West. Except for the Irish, most of these immigrants were Protestants, as were most Americans. In the 1880s the trend of immigration changed. Thousands of Italians, Poles, Hungarians, Greeks, and Russians flocked in. After 1886 the immigrants' first sight of America was often the Statue of Liberty. The words at its base, written by the poet Emma Lazarus, began "Give me your tired, your poor . . ." Most were indeed poor. They had little or no education and no special skills. They knew no English. Their habits and cultures were very different from those of native-born Americans. The majority were Roman or Greek Orthodox Catholics or Jews.

Many of these immigrants came from areas where money was seldom used. People there exchanged food for cloth, a cow for a wagon, and so on. It was difficult for such people to adjust to life in a large industrial city.

The immigrants from each country or district tended to cluster together in the same city neighborhood. In 1890 a New York reporter wrote that a map of the city showing where different nationalities lived would have "more stripes than the skin of a zebra, and more colors than any rainbow." These ethnic neighborhoods were like cities within cities. They offered people newly arrived in the strange new world of America a chance

to hold on to a few fragments of the world they had left. There the immigrants could find familiar foods, people who spoke their language, churches and clubs based on old-country models.

Many native-born Americans resented this new immigration. They insisted that the newcomers were harder to "Americanize" than earlier generations. Workers were disturbed by the new immigrants' willingness to work long hours for low wages. A new nativist organization, the American Protective Association, blamed the hard times of the 1890s on immigration. Nativists charged that the new immigrants were physically and mentally inferior. They were dangerous radicals, the nativists said, who wanted to destroy American democratic institutions.

In the 1890s the Immigration Restriction League called for a law preventing anyone who could not read and write some language from entering the country. The League knew that such a literacy test would keep out many immigrants from southern and eastern Europe.

In that part of the world many regions did not have public school systems. Congress passed a literacy test bill in 1897, but President Grover Cleveland vetoed it. He insisted that America should continue to be a place of refuge for the world's poor and persecuted. Many employers opposed any check on immigration for less humane reasons. They knew that unlimited immigration would assure them a steady force of low-paid but hardworking laborers.

Congress *did* exclude one type of immigrant during this period: the Chinese. By 1880 there were about 75,000 Chinese immigrants in California. They were extremely hardworking people. Because of language and cultural differences, the Chinese tended even more than most immigrants to stick together. They seemed unwilling to try to adapt to American ways, to *assimilate*. Older residents feared and resented them. In 1882 Congress responded to the demands of Californians by passing the Chinese Exclusion Act. It prohibited Chinese workers from entering the United States for a period of ten years. Later the ban was extended. It was not lifted until 1965.

By 1900 there were about 80,000 Mexican-Americans in the southwestern part of the nation. Unlike most other immigrants, these newcomers seldom settled in large cities. Many found jobs as laborers building the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe Railroads. When the lines were completed,

1950

In the aftermath of World War II, the historiography of immigration took a sharp turn. The bad guys in the story were now close-minded Americans or cruel factory owners. Part of the reason for this change may be due to the fact that the earlier waves of immigrants had lived in the United States for a generation or two, and were sending their children to public schools. A wise textbook publisher would want to market well-received books in traditionally "immigrant" areas.

Immigrants Must Work Hard

Many immigrants did not have an easy time earning a living. Those who had been farmers at home and became farmers here got along with the least difficulty. Even though they might not own their own farms, at least they were doing familiar work. As we have seen, many immigrants, particularly those who arrived before about 1890, did become farmers. They and their descendants are among the most successful American farmers. Immigrants seeking other jobs, however, often found that they had to accept the hardest work, with the longest hours, at the lowest pay. This was particularly true in the late 1800's and early 1900's. Unless the newcomer had a special skill which was needed by employers, he had to accept hard labor. Because these immigrants at first were not familiar with American ways, greedy and selfish men were able to cheat them in business and to take advantage of them in general.

IMMIGRANTS ARE DISLIKED BY SOME AMERICANS

It is unfortunate but true that immigrants were often received in an unfriendly way by older Americans. Some people dislike anybody or anything which seems strange to them. Most of the new immigrants, of course, did seem strange. They did not have the speech, the manners, or the customs of Americans. Also, although the people of the United States had much work to do in building the country, immigrants sometimes seemed to cause unemployment. Some of them were willing to take jobs at lower wages than those which people who had been here for some time would accept. Americans feared that this would lead to lower wages for them, too. These things caused some Americans to dislike immigrants.

SHOULD IMMIGRATION BE RESTRICTED?

Many Americans believe that this policy of limiting immigration is unwise. They point out that progress in the United States has been helped greatly by newcomers to our shores. They also believe it is undemocratic to deny completely the right of some people (from Asia and Africa) to settle in the United States. They believe that immigration should be limited on some other basis than that of birthplace—possibly on education or the ability to earn a living.¹⁰

1961

The key to a successful immigrant story, according to this textbook, was for the immigrants to assimilate to American values and ideas as rapidly as possible.

The immigrants become part of America. During the twentieth century, the immigrant was being successfully assimilated into American society. Because of the immigration restrictions put into effect after World War I, the proportion of foreign-born Americans has decreased. In 1900, approximately 13 per cent of the American population was foreign-born. In 1960, the foreign-born made up approximately 6 percent of the population. One heard foreign languages spoken in American cities and industrial towns far less often in 1960 than in 1900. The foreign-language press and theater declined steadily and among some groups disappeared entirely. Foreign-language hours on the radio also became less frequent.

Sons and daughters of immigrants attended public schools, tried to live by American standards, and acquired American customs and manners. They discarded the traditions which their parents had brought from the Old World and adopted the traditions of the *Mayflower* and the Declaration of Independence, which they learned in school. Grandchildren of immigrants, with English-speaking parents, considered themselves as American as descendants of seventeenth-century Pilgrims. The public school provided the means by which many different national and racial groups were unified.¹¹

Many of the Germans went to the farms in Michigan, Illinois, and Wisconsin. Most of the Scandinavians—Danes, Swedes, and Norwegians settled in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and the Dakotas. The prosperous country in those regions is a monument today to their thrift, industry, and intelligence.

THE CHINESE EXCLUSION ACTS

The Chinese were not welcomed when it began to appear that they might fill places in industries which were sought by the American laborer. The Chinaman's habits of living were such that he could afford to work for much less than our laborers and still prosper. There was a good deal of agitation against the Chinese in the western states during the '70's. The feeling became so intense that a Chinese Exclusion Act was passed in 1902 making the exclusion of Chinese effective for all time.

IMMIGRANTS FROM SOUTHERN EUROPE

After 1880 the majority of European immigrants to the United States came from Russia, Austria, Hungary, and Italy. In 1882 nearly 789,000 were admitted. Many of this number were Russians, who left their native country on account of persecution; others were Italians and Austrians, who found it convenient to emigrate to America after direct steamship lines had been opened between the United States and the Mediterranean ports. The southern European countries soon surpassed the northern in number of immigrants because the Irish, Germans, and Scandinavians were unwilling to live as cheaply and to work for as small a wage as the immigrants from southern Europe.

THE NEW TYPE OF IMMIGRANT CREATES ALARM

The character of the new immigration marked a change not only in habits of living but also in education and readiness to adopt the democratic institutions in the United States. Many had lived so wretchedly in Europe that any conditions of living and working were an improvement over what they had had. There were some among the new immigrants who were quickly Americanized, but a large percentage of them were illiterate

and did not soon change their habits of life. They gathered into communities of Italians and Hungarians and "Little Italies," and "Little Hungaries" and the like sprang up in large cities where the customs of Europe, rather than of America, prevailed.

The public schools and compulsory attendance laws made a great change in the second generation of the newcomers. There was, however, such a constantly swelling tide of immigrants to the United States that many feared that democratic America would be flooded with Europeans with all sorts of radical notions about government. The next step was the adoption of some restrictive measures to keep out undesirables, and also to cut down the total number of immigrants.

JAPANESE IMMIGRATION

In 1900 there were about twenty-four thousand Japanese laborers in the United States. Most of these people were in the Pacific states, though some were in other Western states, particularly Colorado, about one-half of them were in California. At first the Japanese were welcomed in the salmon-canning factories, on the farms, in the mines, and in domestic service. In 1909 the Immigration Commission discovered that the Japanese owned over sixteen thousand acres of land in California and leased over one hundred thirty-seven thousand acres. After this information was made public, the Californians became very hostile to the Japanese. They feared domination by a race that showed so much ability. The anti-Japanese policy found its way into politics and candidates were pledged to oppose further immigration. Bills were passed which resulted in an agreement by Japan to keep her people out of the United States. In 1924 the law expressly forbade Japanese and Chinese immigration. President Coolidge recommended to Congress while the law was being considered that such harsh measures against Japan should not be adopted. There seemed no necessity for it. The Japanese government did not wish her people to go where they were not wanted and she particularly did not want them regarded as inferior to other people. There were street riots against Americans in Japan and many threats were made to boycott American goods. The feeling between the two countries seems to be adjusted now, however.⁹

of railroads, was highly objectionable to the labor unions. The Asiatics worked for low wages, lived in squalid quarters on a few cents a day, and in general competed with the whites on terms which to the latter were intolerable. Their presence, too, threatened to create another race problem, which might some day rival in difficulty the Negro or the Indian problem. President Hayes vetoed a bill passed in his administration to exclude the Chinese altogether, as contrary to the existing treaty with China; but before he went out of office he succeeded in making a new treaty with China, which gave to the United States discretionary power to "regulate, limit, or suspend" but not to "absolutely prohibit" the coming of Chinese laborers into the country. Under this treaty, in the administration of Arthur, Congress passed a law to exclude the Chinese for twenty years, which seemed to the President too long a term, and he refused his approval. A compromise bill, fixing the term of exclusion at ten years, was then passed and received the signature of the President. This was renewed later under another president, and the exclusion is still in force. Though the law seems harsh, every nation undoubtedly possesses the right to expel from its shores any aliens whose presence may be considered dangerous to its interests, and likewise to refuse admission to all whom it may consider undesirable.⁷

1933

Oddly enough, this textbook condemned Chinese immigrants by claiming that although they are hardworking and law-abiding, they cannot be trusted since they do not "intermarry with other races."

An influx of Chinese causes alarm in California. The westernmost region, the new world facing the old Oriental world across the Pacific, had also its race problem. Chinese laborers came to San Francisco as early as 1849, where the scarcity of labor won them a hearty welcome. Industrious and law-abiding, they occupied themselves with mining, farming, making cigars, and working on the railways. But when they continued to arrive in increasing numbers, sentiment toward them changed. "Are we to convert California into an Oriental region?" men asked. "Are we to permit these Chinese to run American laborers out of the West by working long hours for small wages? You cannot make Americans out of these people; they will not become Christians, do not intermarry with other races." Scenes of vio-

lence and bloodshed ensued. Everywhere Chinese were persecuted and abused. Legislatures and city councils vied in passing laws denying them citizenship, excluding them from schools, restricting their rights to work. In 1882 this movement culminated in a federal act, excluding all Chinese except visiting merchants, travelers, and students. Although this law was frequently defied, the desire of many Chinese to return to their native land brought about a gradual decline in their numbers.

California discriminates against Japanese settlers. With the subsidizing of the Chinese problem, the Japanese problem became acute. In 1900 there were 24,000 Japanese in the United States; ten years later there were three times that number. They were mostly unmarried young men, who showed a great willingness to learn the language of the country and adopt its customs. But the readiness with which they acquired land, together with the fact that their marked racial traits made assimilation unlikely, brought them into disfavor. Matters reached a crisis when San Francisco excluded Japanese from the public schools. This brought a protest from the Japanese government. Japan was just emerging as a world power and was jealous of her dignity and the rights of her citizens. While political candidates in California pledged themselves to an anti-Japanese policy and hoodlums attacked Japanese residents without interference, President Roosevelt took up the matter with the government at Tokyo. The exclusion act of 1907 resulted. In 1911 this was superseded by a "gentleman's agreement" whereby Japan herself limited emigration to this country, in return for the removal of the formal restrictions.⁸

1936

The author of this textbook made a distinction—common for its time—between good and bad immigrants. It should also be noted that this textbook would have been used in U.S. schools in the mid- to late 1930s, and many of the young men who read textbooks such as this one might have served during World War II in the Pacific.

Good Types of Immigrants

The immigrants before 1880 were largely from Great Britain, Ireland, Germany, and the Scandinavian countries. They were desirable people.

Canadians, Poles, Bohemians, Hungarians, Russian Jews, Slovaks, Armenians, Greeks, and Syrians. The workingmen secured from Congress a series of acts somewhat restricting immigration. (1) Convicts, idiots, and like unfit persons were shut out, and a head tax of fifty cents was laid on all immigrants admitted (1882). (2) Congress excluded "contract laborers" who might come over under an agreement to take a specified job when they arrived (1885). (3) Polygamists, diseased persons, and persons unable to support themselves were shut out (1891). (4) The immigrant head tax was raised to two dollars (1903).

That some foreigners were dangerous to society was shown by an anarchist outbreak in Chicago (May 4, 1886). After weeks of violent speeches, principally by foreigners, urging people to resist the government, a dynamite bomb was thrown in the Haymarket and killed seven policemen.⁶

1916

While most textbooks focused on European immigration, the "threat" of immigration from Asia, to some textbook authors, seemed even more troubling. According to this author, if action was not taken against the continuing growth of Asian immigrants, soon they "might some day rival in difficulty the Negro or the Indian problem."

Organized labor, bent on keeping down the supply of labor in order to maintain as high a standard of wages as possible, had long stood consistently opposed to foreign immigration, but only after the labor unions had become a powerful factor in national life did Congress pay attention to their demands. The first law of the United States for the restriction of immigration, marking the end of the country's traditional policy of welcome to all foreigners, was passed in 1882. Previous to this time there had been some few restrictions on immigration by such states as were directly affected; for example by New York, which had excluded certain classes. By the national law, which was in many respects a copy of existing state laws, lunatics and convicts were excluded, all who were liable to become a public charge, and, by an act of 1885, all contract laborers, that is, all laborers coming into the country under a contract. At this time most of the immigrants were from the countries of Northern Europe.

The presence of thousands of Chinese laborers on the Pacific coast, attracted by the prospects of work in the gold mines and in the construction

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Immigration

The historical story of the poor immigrant who comes to the United States without a dime to his or her name and climbs the social ladder is as much a part of American folklore as any other tale in U.S. history. Between 1870 and 1920, nearly twenty million immigrants arrived, looking for this golden opportunity that textbooks so love to talk about. Ironically, that image of the hardworking, industrious immigrant ran into the belief of a number of "old-stock" Americans that these new immigrants from Europe and Asia were actually destroying U.S. culture.

1905

This textbook was published amid the great wave of European immigration, between 1870-1920. In the historiography of immigration, there has always been two competing stories: the positive narrative and the darker view, which usually overshadowed the former in most early twentieth-century history textbooks.

The supply of labor was affected by a wave of immigration of races which, up to 1870, were not much known in America—Italians, French

The efforts of Catt and other suffragists slowly succeeded. Year by year, more states in the West and Midwest gave women the vote. For the most part, they were allowed to vote only in state elections. In time, more and more women called for an amendment to the Constitution to give them a voice in national elections. Some suffragists took strong measures to achieve their goal.¹⁷

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The Sinking of the USS Maine

The role of the United States as a world superpower has its roots in the Spanish-American War's conclusion. Although there were a number of causes for this war, the sinking of the *USS Maine* has come to represent the primary catalyst that pushed the United States over the edge, and therefore it has taken on enormous symbolic significance. Indeed, the debate over what exactly sank the *USS Maine* in Havana Harbor still rages on. How a textbook answers this question says a lot about how it represents America's role in the world to students.

1905

In this 1905 account, there seemed to be little question as to who was to blame for this tragedy.

Demonstrations against the Americans in Havana led our government to send the battleship the *Maine* to that city. On the night of February 15, 1898, the *Maine* was blown up by an explosion, which killed 260 of the men; and an American naval board of inquiry later reported that the ship was destroyed by a submarine mine. Our consul-general, Fitzhugh Lee,

said: "I do not think it was an act of four or five subordinate officers." Yet there was a widespread feeling in the United States that the Spanish government was responsible.¹⁸

1920

By 1920, blame had been spread in a more evenhanded fashion. History textbooks began adding some of the other individuals or events that were considered the main protagonists for war in 1898: Señor Dupuy de Lome, the yellow journalists, and an anti-Spanish attitude in the country all aided in getting the United States involved in this war.

Our Intervention in Cuba

Prudence and humanity alike forbade the continuance of these horrible conditions at our very doors. The platforms of both the great parties in 1896 expressed sympathy for the Cuban insurgents, and both Houses of Congress passed resolutions for the recognition of Cuban independence. President McKinley labored hard to get Spain to grant the island some degree of self-government and spoke in a hopeful tone in his message to Congress of December, 1897. But in the early weeks of 1898 events occurred which roused public indignation to a pitch where it drowned the voices of diplomacy. On February 9, a New York paper published the facsimile of a private letter written by the Spanish minister at Washington, Senor de Lome. The letter characterized President McKinley as a "cheap politician who truckled to the masses." The country was still nursing its indignation over this insult to its chief executive when it was horrified by the news that on the evening of February 15 the battleship *Maine*, on a friendly visit in the harbor of Havana, had been sunk by a terrific explosion, carrying two officers and 266 men to the bottom. The Spanish government immediately accepted the resignation of Senor de Lome and expressed its sorrow over the "accident" to the American warship. But the conviction that the *Maine* had been blown up from the outside seized on our people with uncontrollable force. Flags, pins, and buttons with the motto "Remember the *Maine!*" appeared all over the land. The spirit of revenge was nurtured by the "yellow journals." Congress was waiting eagerly to declare war.¹⁹

1933

By the 1930s, some textbooks called into question the idea that the Spanish were to blame for the destruction of the USS Maine.

The Battleship "Maine" Is Blown Up in Havana Harbor (1898)

At this juncture the United States sent the battleship *Maine* to Havana to protect American interests. This formidable sea-fighter arrived in January, 1898, and steamed past the battlements of Morro Castle to her anchorage in the harbor. On the evening of February 15, when most of the crew of the *Maine* had turned in, there came a blinding flash, accompanied by a roar. Fragments were seen flying through the air. From the crew's quarters came groans, and cries for help. There followed a lurching motion, then a heavy list, and the ship began to sink. Captain Sigsbee directed the lowering of the boats, and gave the order: "Abandon ship." Two officers and 266 men found their graves in the mass of twisted steel. A cry of horror arose in the United States. "Can it be that the Spaniards anchored the *Maine* over a mine with the purpose of destroying her?" they asked. "Is this their method of diminishing our naval power?" When a board of experts reported that the condition of the armor-plates showed that the *Maine* had been blown up from the outside, war was inevitable. "Remember the *Maine*" became the slogan of the nation. It has never been proved that the destruction of the *Maine* was due in any way to the Spanish government.²⁰

1961

This textbook was written in the midst of the Cold War, a time when most Americans would have considered communist Cuba a more significant concern than the nation of Spain—perhaps explaining why this textbook takes a slightly different view than earlier ones.

America Went to War with Spain in 1898

At midnight on February 15, 1898, while the battleship *Maine* was at anchor in Havana harbor, an explosion sent her to the bottom. More than 250 officers and sailors died. Next morning, American newspapers told in

banner headlines how the battleship had been "blown up" and American sailors "murdered" in time of peace. From the commander of the *Maine* came a quiet word asking Americans to "withhold judgment"—that is, to accuse no one until the cause was known.

To this day, no one knows how the ship was destroyed. Spanish officials claimed the *Maine's* sides were blown out by an explosion of her powder magazine. Other investigators stated her sides were blown in by a torpedo or a bomb. There was a possibility that Cuban rebels might have set off the explosion, hoping the United States would blame Spain and so give the Cubans support in their fight for freedom. Many people jumped to the conclusion that Spanish officials had planted a mine beneath the *Maine*. This was almost certainly not true. Spanish leaders were trying desperately to avoid war with the United States. They had nothing to gain by destroying the *Maine*. Unfortunately, people did not stop to think and reason. In the streets, in the newspapers, even in the halls of Congress, there rose a clamor for war. "Remember the *Maine!*" was the cry that echoed throughout the country.²¹

1986

In the 1980s, students learned that there may have been a number of reasons why the USS Maine sank that evening as well as why the United States and Spain ended up in a war. What was missing, as in every textbook that discussed the event, was an analysis of whether the United States had the right to go to war over what might have been an accident. In the end, U.S. history textbooks all seem to agree that since the country ended up becoming a world power following this war, the ends justify the means.

Both President Cleveland and President McKinley had tried to persuade Spain to give the Cuban people more say about their government. They failed to make much impression. Tension increased. Then, in January 1898, President McKinley sent a battleship, the U.S.S. *Maine*, to Cuba. There had been riots in Havana, the capital city. McKinley sent the *Maine* to protect American citizens there against possible attack.

On February 15, while the *Maine* lay at anchor in Havana Harbor, a tremendous explosion rocked the ship. Of the 350 men aboard, 266 were killed. The *Maine* sank to the bottom.

To this day no one knows for sure what happened. Many Americans jumped to the conclusion that the Spanish had sunk the ship with a mine, a kind of underwater bomb. The navy conducted an investigation. It concluded that the *Maine* had been destroyed by a mine. Another American investigation in 1911 also judged that an explosion from outside had destroyed the ship.

The Spanish government claimed the disaster was caused by an explosion inside the *Maine*. This is certainly possible. A short circuit in the ship's wiring might have caused the *Maine's* ammunition to explode, for example. It is difficult to imagine that the Spanish would have blown up the ship. The last thing Spain wanted was a war with the United States. Emotions were inflamed on all sides. The Spanish government, or some individual officer, may indeed have been responsible. Or it is possible that the Cuban rebels did the job, knowing that Spain would be blamed.

In any case, a demand for war against Spain swept the United States. In New York City a man in a Broadway bar raised his glass and proclaimed, "Remember the *Maine!*" This became a battle cry similar to "Remember the Alamo!" during the Texas Revolution of the 1830s.²²

Causes of the Stock Market Crash

Following the stock market crash in 1929, the United States was stricken by an economic depression unparalleled in world history. Breadcrumbs, stories of people losing everything, Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal, and the rise of fascist dictators: textbooks are replete with these familiar stories. While U.S. history textbooks have debated what caused the economic crash, there has never been a single consensus among them.

1933

Written just four years after the stock market crash, this passage claimed that the real culprit was the return to the gold standard. Considering when this textbook was written and published, it is also interesting to note the optimistic tone it offered its students.

World-Wide Business Depression Causes "Hard Times"

This statement is by no means belied by the fact that in 1930 millions were thrown out of work. The business depression of that year was world-

wide, and cannot be blamed upon conditions peculiar to the United States. It was in part a reaction from too rapid business expansion, and in part the result of a general decline in commodity prices following the return of many countries to the gold standard. With the increased demand for gold the value of that metal rose, and so each dollar purchased more in wheat, or iron, or leather. Falling prices have a depressing effect on business, however, bringing reduced production, unemployment, and the other accompaniments of "hard times." When there has been a general adjustment to the new price level, the American industrial machine will get under way with full steam once more, the idle will be drawn back to work, and a new era of prosperity will open.¹

1944

The historiography of the crash has usually focused on Herbert Hoover as the wrong man at the wrong time. Portrayed as aloof and unsympathetic to the common man, Hoover has generally received negative reviews for his reaction to this situation. When this textbook was published, Roosevelt was heading toward his fourth presidential reelection, the U.S. economy had rebounded, and the chances of victory in World War II did not seem as discouraging as it had three years earlier. From a historiographical standpoint, Hoover's reputation never really stood a chance.

In the autumn of 1929, just as the country seemed safe and sound on the "high plateau of permanent prosperity," except for farmers, the business boom attributed to Republican statecraft burst with a resounding crash. The prime stocks of the leading corporations fell nearly forty points on the average in a single day. October 29, when more than 16,000,000 shares were dumped on the market at the New York Stock Exchange. This panic was followed by the explosion of banks, railway companies, and private concerns, by increasing woes among farmers already in straits, by the closing of factories, shops, and offices, and by a steep decline in the opportunities of employment for artists, writers, musicians, architects, engineers, playwrights, and teachers—indeed the whole white-collar class—from New York to California. In the opening months of 1933, it was estimated, 12,000,000 men and women were out of work. Ruin and hunger, if not starvation, haunted not only the shacks of tenants and

sharecroppers on the land, not only the back streets inhabited by industrial and professional classes, but also the grand avenues of great cities.

For a moment leaders in business and politics thought that this was "just another panic." President Hoover said: "We have passed through no less than fifteen major depressions in the last century. . . . We have come out of each . . . into a period of prosperity greater than ever before. We shall do so this time." But as the depression dragged through tedious months and into years, belief in "prosperity just around the corner" turned into doubt or despair. As this revulsion of feeling intensified, trust in the "natural" and "normal" processes of "recovery" declined, and leaders in the economic, intellectual, and moral life of the nation vehemently declared their unwillingness to endure the crisis with pious resignation as a visitation of God or of natural forces beyond human control. Long years of research, debate, agitation, and legislative gains in respect of social improvement had prepared multitudes of Americans for a different attitude toward poverty, unemployment, and misery in "God's own country."²

1974

Students were informed in the early 1970s that while there were arguably a number of causes for the stock market crash, in the end the rich and powerful in the United States really did not seem to be hurt by all that had transpired.

The depression in the United States was touched off by distress in the New York Stock Exchange. For several years the prices of stocks had been rising. People bought stocks because they thought they could get rich easily. They gambled on the stock market by buying on margin, that is, buying on credit from brokers. This kind of speculation was all-right only so long as stock prices continued to climb, as nearly everybody expected they would.

Outside the market there were signs that prosperity was weakening. Much of the prosperity had been founded on the construction and automobile industries. In 1925, the construction of homes had reached a value of 5 billion dollars; in 1929, the value fell to 3 billion. By 1929, too, sales of automobiles and related products had declined. Some stock operators began to quietly dispose of their holdings. In September 1929, the stock

market broke and then recovered. On October 24, called "Black Thursday," prices broke sharply, and many investors lost money. On the following day, President Hoover assured the people that what had happened was not very serious.

Then, on Tuesday, October 29, the big crash came. In a day of wild trading, a day that turned out to be the most devastating in the history of the Stock Exchange, nearly 16.5 million shares of stock exchanged hands. The frenzied selling went on for two weeks, until the value of the stocks on the Wall Street exchange had declined about 40 percent.

Leaders in government and business tried to bolster sagging spirits. When men and women everywhere were being wiped out financially, John D. Rockefeller, for example, came out with an optimistic statement. He said that the country was sound and added that "my son and I have for some days been purchasing sound common stocks." Many people applauded Rockefeller, but Eddie Cantor, a popular comedian, commented later, "Sure, who else had any money left?"

The mighty crash on Wall Street brought the prosperity of the twenties to a disastrous end. Although the crash was not the only cause of the Great Depression that followed, it was a contributing factor.³

1999

At the end of the twentieth century, students began to read more detailed accounts of what happened to the American economy and its impact on U.S. citizens. Future historiographers will probably have no difficulty in reading within this text a cautionary tale of the 1990s' "internet bubble" and the "speculative frenzy" that occurred at that time.

Speculation

As prices rose, more and more people began speculating. Speculation is engaging in a risky business venture on the chance that a quick or sizable profit can be made.

People bought shares they thought would rise in price quickly, and after prices went up they would sell the stocks for a profit.

To maximize the potential profits on their investments, speculators commonly bought stock on margin. To buy stock in this way one made a

small cash down payment and borrowed the rest from a stockbroker. For example, for \$2,000 a person could buy 100 shares on margin rather than pay cash for 10 shares of stock at \$200 per share. The purchaser simply put down 10 percent of the price (or \$20 per share) and borrowed the other \$18,000 from a broker, who would then hold the shares of stock as collateral for the loan. So long as prices continued to rise, investors could sell the stock later, repay the loan, and reap the profit.

STOCK MARKET BEGINS TO DECLINE

Some bankers, brokers, and economists were concerned, however, because they knew the stocks for many companies were greatly overpriced in comparison to the earnings and profits the companies were making. Yet most investors were swept along on the tide of the day's optimism. Meanwhile, the market continued its dizzying climb. By the end of 1929, brokers' loans to those who had bought on margin exceeded \$7 billion. The Federal Reserve Board tried to restore stability to the market by advising banks not to loan money for buying stocks on margin, but few banks listened.

In September 1929, the market started to waver as some professional speculators sensed danger and began to pull out, and prices slipped. Late in October real disaster struck. On Thursday, October 24, almost 13 million shares of stocks were frantically traded. As stocks' values dropped below the amounts borrowed to purchase them, brokers demanded that investors repay their loans. If they could not, the brokers offered the stock for sale.

BLACK TUESDAY

Recognizing what was going on, investment bankers tried to shore up market prices by purchasing as many shares as they could. The effort was not enough to stabilize an overvalued market. On October 29—Black Tuesday—the bottom fell out. Some 16 million shares were sold, causing such a collapse that by mid-November the average price of securities had been cut nearly in half. This cost investors about \$30 billion, a sum that represented almost one-third of the value of all goods and services produced in the United States in 1929. The loss was equal to the total wages

of all Americans that year. About 1.5 million Americans had been involved in purchasing stock. Many investors lost their entire life savings.

It was the failure of banks that hit people the hardest. Banks loaned money to brokerage houses, which in turn bought stock themselves or loaned money to investors for speculative stock purchases. When loan payments were not forthcoming, many banks went bankrupt. In the aftermath, millions of people who had never bought stock but had trustingly kept their money in savings accounts lost everything as the banks closed. The collapse of the stock market was only a prelude to a catastrophic economic decline from which the United States did not recover for 12 years. The causes of the Great Depression were so complex that economists have debated the issue ever since.⁴

37

Social Security Act

Today, Social Security is a political football, but U.S. history textbooks have sung its praises since the 1940s. Indeed, textbooks have called the concept of Social Security a "bold" initiative, a "supreme achievement," or something that "few people seriously question."

1948

Although both FDR and his New Deal were things of the past, many of his ideas and political appointees were still entrenched in Washington, DC, in 1948. The memory of the late president, the victory in World War II, and the end of the Great Depression were still very much part of the political and cultural landscape.

The Social Security Act

Chief among these laws of the summer of 1935 was the Social Security Act of August 14, which President Roosevelt himself, on signing, declared to be the "supreme achievement" of his administration. It was an attempt to remedy the glaring inequalities between great wealth and dire poverty,

cult of leisure." The GOP national chairman falsely charged that every worker would have to wear a metal dog tag for life.

Social Security was largely inspired by the example of some of the more highly industrialized nations of Europe. In the agricultural America of an earlier day, there had always been farm chores for all ages, and the large family had cared for its own dependents. But in an urbanized economy, at the mercy of boom-or-bust cycles, the government was now recognizing its responsibility for the welfare of its citizens. By 1939 over 45 million people were eligible for Social Security benefits, and in subsequent years further categories of workers were added and the payments to them were periodically increased.⁷

38

The Bataan Death March

On December 8, 1941 (December 7 in Hawaii), just hours after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the Japanese military invaded the Philippine Islands. The fighting in the Philippines was a disaster for the U.S. and Filipino military. Believing that they were soon going to be resupplied by an American convoy of navy ships, which never came, the soldiers held out against the Japanese for four months with few, if any, rations, little ammunition, and no chance of being rescued. With no other options the American and Filipino forces were forced to capitulate. After the surrender, the Japanese began to round up prisoners and marched the starving, exhausted men fifty-five miles in the hot tropical sun, beating, torturing, and killing their captives along the way.

Following World War II, U.S. history textbooks almost always glorified the war, but the story of the "losers" in the Philippines, forgotten about by their government during the effort, seemed to have suffered the same curse when it came to our postwar textbooks.

1946

In the aftermath of the war, students were given little information about the fighting and suffering in the Philippines.

The ensuing months were indeed a stiff measure of the staying power of the American nation. Instead of collapsing, as some optimists had freely predicted, Japan continued to win impressive victories. A full-fledged invasion force was launched at the Philippine Islands.⁸

1961

Although this textbook selection actually mentioned the Bataan Death March, it offered neither details nor an explanation of what happened to the troops after their imprisonment.

Guam and Wake Island were quickly conquered in spite of the heroic resistance of American troops there. The Japanese landed in the Philippines and captured Manila, the capital, in less than a month. The American commander, General Douglas MacArthur, retreated to Bataan Peninsula. There he set up headquarters in the fortress of Corregidor on Manila Bay. For more than three months American troops held out against Japanese attacks. Food ran short, and the number of sick and wounded grew. At last the men of Bataan had to surrender and start a "death march" to Japanese prisons.⁹

1974

While still not going into any great detail, this textbook did inform students that these soldiers were an inspiration to the nation.

The only source of inspiration in the gloomy winter of 1941/42 came from Bataan and Corregidor in the Philippine Islands. There, outnumbered American and Filipino defenders held off the Japanese for five months. The death tolls at Bataan and Corregidor were staggering. A great number of the troops were Mexican Americans who had been stationed in the Philippines because, like many Filipinos, they spoke Spanish. Although the troops were captured, their fighting spirit inspired Americans at home.¹⁰

1995

While extremely brief, this selection gave some details as to what happened to the American and Filipino soldiers on the Bataan Peninsula.

Mistreatment of Prisoners

During the war, stories trickled out about the mistreatment of prisoners. Afterward, Americans learned horrifying details about brutal events such as the *Bataan Death March*. After the Japanese captured the Philippines in 1942, they forced about 60,000 American and Filipino prisoners to march 100 miles (160 km) with little food or water. About 10,000 people died or were killed.¹¹

of Censorship prepared a code that was accepted voluntarily by the newspapers, although they could hardly refuse as long as the government controlled most of the sources of news. Reports from the war fronts were censored by the Army and Navy.¹²

1974

A quarter-century later, students learned that arguably the biggest issue with the Japanese American internment was the question of loyalty. Ironically, few, if any, textbooks during this time mention those Japanese Americans who served with distinction fighting with the 442 Regimental Combat Team during the war.

Violations of free speech and personal liberty were relatively few. Organized hate campaigns against Germans and Italians were rare. But an important exception to the government's good record on civil liberties was its treatment of Japanese Americans on the West Coast. In February 1942, Roosevelt authorized the army to exclude all persons of Japanese ancestry from "military areas" on the West Coast. Of the 112,000 persons affected by the order, 70,000 were American citizens born in the United States.

The story of Japanese American internment during World War II, though present in almost every U.S. history textbook from 1945 to the present, has only recently been given significant attention. And only of late have textbooks fully admitted that what happened to these citizens during the war was easily one of the greatest abuses of civil liberties and civil rights in American history.

1947

Written immediately after World War II, this textbook gave brief mention to the abuse of civil liberties.

Civil Liberties

World War II found less suppression of divergent views than had World War I. The one great restriction of personal liberties was the movement of the people of Japanese ancestry from the Pacific Coast to the interior. The great majority of Americans were but little limited in expressing their views. The Supreme Court was liberal. The Office of War Information (OWI) was concerned most largely with foreign propaganda. A Director

Later, the commanding general on the West Coast ordered the Japanese Americans to special camps surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by soldiers. Beginning in July 1942 some of the Nisei, citizens born in the United States of Japanese parents, were allowed to leave the camps to attend college, harvest crops, resettle in the Middle West, or volunteer for duty with the army. All first had to be cleared as loyal by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

In December 1944, the Supreme Court ruled on two cases questioning the constitutionality of the evacuation. In one case, the Court said that the government's action was constitutional because it was prompted by "military necessity." In the other case, announced the same day, the Court said that the government could not keep a loyal citizen from returning to his or her home.¹³

1995

With U.S. history textbooks adopting a more multicultural perspective in the 1970s and following the 1990s' Reagan administration apology for the treatment of Japanese Americans during the war, the historiography of this story changed dramatically.

Relocation of Japanese Americans

The war brought suffering to many Japanese Americans. Most Japanese Americans lived on the West Coast or in Hawaii. Many of those on the West Coast were successful farmers and business people. For years, they had faced prejudice, in part because of their success.

After Pearl Harbor, many people on the West Coast questioned the loyalty of Japanese Americans. Japanese Americans, they said, might act as spies and help Japan invade the United States. No evidence of disloyalty existed. Yet the President agreed to move Japanese Americans to inland camps set up by the Wartime Relocation Agency (WRA). About 120,000 Japanese Americans were forced to sell their homes and businesses at great loss.

In WRA camps, Japanese Americans lived in crowded barracks behind barbed wire. Most were American citizens. They could not understand why they were singled out for such treatment. German Americans and Italian Americans were not sent to camps. Even Japanese Americans in Hawaii were not moved to camps.

In 1944, the Supreme Court ruled that the camps were a necessary wartime measure. Only after the Allies were certain of victory were Japanese Americans allowed to return to their homes.

LOYAL SERVICE AND A DELAYED APOLOGY

Even though they and their families were treated unfairly, thousands of Japanese American men served in the armed forces. Most were put in segregated units and sent to fight in Europe. There, they won many honors for bravery. The 442nd Nisei Regimental Combat Team became the most highly decorated military unit in United States history. Years later, Americans began to recognize the injustice that had been done to Japanese Americans. In 1988, Congress reviewed the government's wartime policy toward Japanese Americans. Lawmakers admitted that they could not right the wrong that had been done. They did, however, vote to apologize to Japanese Americans who had been driven from their homes in World War II. They also approved a payment of \$20,000 to every survivor of the camps.¹⁴

40

Rosie the Riveter

During World War II, over six million women in the United States went into the industrial factories, most for the first time, and took over jobs that the men fighting overseas once held. With the U.S. industrial output twice that of the entire Axis powers combined, these women's contribution to the war effort was a profound one.

1944

Toward the war's end, many young men returned home with a desire to go back to their old jobs. While many felt that "Rosie the Riveter" had done a great service during wartime, it was now her duty to return home and allow men the chance to get back to work. This textbook argued that women working outside the home helped contribute to a series of societal ills.

In these circumstances, especially with so many mothers employed for long hours, by day or by night, outside the home, family life was not only shattered but hordes of young children were turned into the streets to fend for themselves. Older children left school in droves to work in factories for

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fabulous wages and, refusing to return to schools, took their lives into their own keeping. With children unguided by teachers or parents, juvenile delinquency and crimes increased to an extent that threatened the moral basis of American society. In August 1943, J. Edgar Hoover, head of the federal police force, exclaimed: "The tragedy revealed by our latest survey is found in the fact that the arrests of boys and girls seventeen years of age increased 17.7% [last year]. In reviewing the further trends for the past six months we find an 89% increase in the arrests of girls for offenses against common decency."

While various women's organizations were rejoicing in the equalities of opportunity, honors, and monetary rewards offered to women by the war and were pushing the recruiting of women for war work of all kinds, individual women, and to some extent organized women, began to appreciate the social peril of juvenile delinquency and also the problems of caring for the babies of mothers engaged in war work. Amid the pressures for complete concentration on war, therefore, women interested in social welfare urged that responsibility for looking after the children be mainly assumed by governments, federal, state, and local.

There was no doubt that families were undergoing disintegration; for men were being drafted for war, women drawn into the auxiliary armed forces, war production, and civilian defense, children of school age crowding into war industries, adolescents left to roam the streets for excitement, and the energies of parents distracted from the care of homes and children. The fact was indisputable and its social import was recognized by leaders in public affairs. It was discussed in newspapers, in meetings of organizations concerned with public welfare, in journals devoted to surveys of social and economic conditions, and in popular magazines. It was emphasized during debates in Congress over a proposal to defer pre-Pearl Harbor fathers.¹⁵

1950

Into the 1950s, the story of what women did on the home front during the war was often a barely mentioned topic in most U.S. history textbooks.

People did all sorts of extra or unusual jobs during the war. They helped as airplane spotters and air-raid wardens. They assisted in hospitals and in

entertaining servicemen. Millions gave blood, which could be stored and shipped for use in saving the lives of the wounded. Women took jobs in shipyards, airplane factories, and in other types of work previously done chiefly by men.¹⁶

1966

In this selection, students not only read about the numerous and important roles women played during the war but also were given a brief background to women's struggles in this country.

During World War II, many more women than ever before disregarded the old saying that "woman's place is in the home." Actually this idea of "woman's place" had been diminishing for many years. In 1880, when most women agreed with men that woman's place was indeed in the home, only 2 1/2 million women were gainfully employed. By 1920, the number had risen to 5 million, and by 1940, to 11 million. It was the war, however, with its demands for manpower, that shattered most of the remaining prejudices against working women. By 1943, an additional 2 million women went to work in war plants, actually replacing men who had left for the armed services. And, for the first time, the American armed forces, which had previously used women only as nurses, now organized corps of women to substitute for men in non-combatant jobs. More than 250,000 women entered the Army (as Wacs), the Coast Guard (as Spars), the Navy (as Waves), and the Marine Corps. In the services, women worked as machinists, storekeepers, and office workers; they operated radios, and drove jeeps and trucks. When people recovered from their surprise at seeing women in these new roles, they began to speak of "the girl behind the man behind the gun."

Given the opportunity, women showed that they had the ability to work side by side with men, and to work just as effectively. By the end of the war, virtually the only jobs that remained closed to women were those that required extraordinary physical strength.¹⁷

1996

By the 1990s, students learned that women could not only handle this physical labor but that their work was also an inspiration to countless others. This textbook also

added the presence of African American women to the narrative and briefly explained the role they played.

Women in the war effort. The need for workers opened economic opportunities for women. Now, instead of being dissuaded from taking jobs as they had been during the depression, they were urged to go to work. Six million women joined the 12 million already in the labor force. They took on a wide variety of jobs and surprised the men who had said they were too weak and delicate to be lumberjacks, blast furnace operators, stevedores, or blacksmiths. They proved that they could handle all these jobs. And they also operated complex machines in shipyards and airplane factories. Many for the first time could show their talents as doctors, dentists, chemists, and lawyers. "Rosie the Riveter" became an inspiration for all Americans.

Black women benefited, too. Before the war a greater percentage of black women worked than white. But they were generally restricted to low-paying jobs as domestic servants or farm laborers. When war came, they found more interesting and better-paying jobs. Nearly half a million black women who had worked as domestics left that work during the war to take positions in factories.

When World War II ended, it seemed that once again women might be forced to leave their jobs to make places for returning servicemen. But this time a much larger proportion was offered work in peacetime production. Prodded by war, the nation discovered its women and helped women discover themselves.¹⁸

41

The Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

On August 6 and 9, 1945, the United States dropped two atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The war in the Pacific quickly came to a close, and the United States found itself in the position of being the only global nuclear power. While there is no question as to what happened, over the past sixty years there has been much debate over whether or not the United States should have used this weapon.

1947

Immediately following World War II, U.S. history textbooks focused on the role of the atomic bombs in hurrying the end of the war. Few, if any, considered the bombs' impact on Japanese civilians, or dared to raise the question of their necessity in bringing the war to a close.

The Japanese war came to a climax early in 1945. The bloody conquests of Iwo Jima and Okinawa gave bases either for the direct invasion of Japan or for landings in China. The Chinese were having better success on the mainland. The end of the European war released large British and

American naval units, and also large and experienced armies. Russia finally declared war on Japan and invaded Manchuria. The United States unveiled its newest weapon, the atomic bomb, demonstrating twice—first at Hiroshima and then at Nagasaki—that a good-sized city could almost be erased from the map in one blinding flash. Confronted by this combination of forces Japan surrendered August 14—the formal surrender being accepted by General MacArthur on September 2, 1945.¹⁹

1954

As the nuclear arms race went into full swing, this text appeared to focus primarily on the development of the bombs themselves, somewhat apart from the broader strategic questions of their role in ending the war.

The Atomic Bomb

The real meaning of the ultimatum was made clear on August 6, 1945, when an American superfortress dropped a new kind of bomb over the Japanese city of Hiroshima. The possibility of the development of an atomic bomb had been clearly established by scientific discoveries made in 1939. Shortly after the United States became involved in the war, the development of the bomb was undertaken as a top-secret military project.

Leading atomic scientists of the world, including some who had come to this country as refugees from Axis oppression, were engaged in the project. In July, 1945, a test bomb was successfully exploded at Los Alamos, New Mexico. President Truman fully recognized the fearful potentialities of such a weapon. He considered its use justifiable as a means of bringing about a rapid conclusion of the war.

The single bomb dropped over Hiroshima, a city of 375,000, had an explosive power equal to that of twenty thousand tons of TNT. At one blow, the heart of the city was destroyed and three fifths of its population wiped out. Two days later a second and more powerful bomb was dropped on the city of Nagasaki. One-third of the city was destroyed.²⁰

1966

Still in the shadow of the Cuban Missile Crisis, students in the mid-1960s had to contemplate the possibility of a nuclear war. This selection let students know that a nuclear holocaust might be the end result; if a "lasting peace" was not found.

On August 6, 1945, the first atomic bomb used in warfare was dropped from an American airplane onto the city of Hiroshima in Japan. Three days later, a second bomb fell on Nagasaki, another Japanese city. More than 150,000 Japanese died in the resulting holocausts. Thousands of others suffered dreadful after effects.

In February 1947, in *Harper's Magazine*, Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson wrote about the decision to use the bombs:

"The face of war is the face of death; death is an inevitable part of any order that a wartime leader gives. . . . War in the twentieth century has grown steadily more barbarous, more destructive, more debased in all its aspects. Now, with the release of atomic energy, man's ability to destroy himself is very nearly complete. The bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki ended a war. They also made it wholly clear that we must never have another war. This is the lesson men and leaders everywhere must learn, and I believe that when they learn it they will find a way to lasting peace. There is no other choice."²¹

1995

In 1995, the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, came under attack for its display of the airplane that dropped the original atomic bomb on Hiroshima—the Enola Gay. Critics claimed that the exhibit was actually antiwar and brought into question the use of this bomb to end the war. The Smithsonian left the Enola Gay on display, yet with little or no interpretations attached—a stand it seems many textbooks have agreed with since 1945. Students in this 1990s' text, however, were given a number of possible interpretations as to why the bomb was used.

Triumph and Tragedy in the Pacific

The defeat of Japan was now only a matter of time. The United States had three possible ways to proceed. The military favored a full-scale inva-

sion, beginning on the southernmost island of Kyushu in November 1945 and culminating with an assault on Honshu (the main island of Japan) and a climatic battle for Tokyo in 1946; casualties were expected to run into the hundreds of thousands. Diplomats suggested a negotiated peace, urging the United States to modify the unconditional surrender formula to permit Japan to retain the institution of the emperor. At Potsdam, Churchill and Truman did issue a call for surrender, warning Japan it faced utter destruction, but they made no mention of the emperor.

Weather conditions on the morning of August 6 dictated the choice of Hiroshima as the bomb's target. The explosion incinerated 4 square miles of the city, instantly killing more than sixty thousand. Two days later, Russia entered the war against Japan, and the next day, August 9, the United States dropped a second bomb on Nagasaki. There were no more atomic bombs available, but no more were needed. The emperor personally broke a deadlock in the Japanese cabinet and persuaded his ministers to surrender unconditionally on August 14, 1945. Three weeks later, Japan signed a formal capitulation agreement on the decks of the battleship *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay to bring World War II to its official close.

Many years later, scholars charged that Truman had more in mind than defeating Japan when he decided to use the atomic bomb. Citing air force and naval officers who claimed Japan could be defeated by a blockade or by conventional air attacks, these revisionists suggested the real reason for dropping the bomb was to impress the Soviet Union with the fact that the United States had exclusive possession of the ultimate weapon. The available evidence indicates that while Truman and his associates were aware of the possible effect on the Soviet Union, their primary motive was to end World War II as quickly and effortlessly as possible. The saving of American lives, along with a desire for revenge for Pearl Harbor, were uppermost in the decision to bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Yet in using the atomic bomb to defeat Japan, the United States virtually guaranteed a postwar arms race with the Soviet Union.²²

PART VII

The Cold War and Postwar America

Truman's action. Others defended the President's position with equal vigor.

During May and June, the Senate Military Affairs Committee held a series of open hearings at which the administration's military and civilian leaders appeared to explain and defend their policies in the Far East. They insisted that a limited war was the wisest course for the United States to pursue in Korea. At the same time, they made it clear that the United States would oppose Red China's efforts to be admitted to the United Nations and that she would take any measures necessary to prevent Red China from seizing Formosa. It was a long time, however, before the furor over the MacArthur dismissal died down in the United States.⁵

1995

By the mid-1990s, amid a notable revival of Truman's reputation, few textbooks questioned the wisdom of the president's decision to fire such a popular general as MacArthur.

Truman Fires MacArthur

MacArthur complained publicly that politicians in Washington were holding him back. "We must win," he insisted. "There is no substitute for victory." Angry that MacArthur was defying orders, Truman fired the general.

Many Americans were furious. They gave MacArthur a hero's welcome when he returned to the United States. Truman, however, strongly defended his action. He felt that MacArthur's statements undermined attempts to reach a peace settlement. Under the Constitution, he pointed out, the President is commander in chief. As commander in chief, it was Truman—not the general—who had power to make the key decisions about war and peace.⁶

44

McCarthyism

In the 1950s, when the fear of Communist subversion was a real (or perceived) threat for most Americans, a junior senator from Wisconsin, Joseph McCarthy, fanned the flames by claiming that there were Communists within the U.S. government. It then became his "mission" to root them out. With the frequent analogies to the witch hunts in colonial Salem, Massachusetts, McCarthy's story has usually been portrayed in U.S. history textbooks as an example of how paranoid and hysterical people had become in the early days of the Cold War.

1967

This textbook did not mince words about Senator McCarthy and his search for Communists. Not only were words such as "recklessly" and "panic" used to inform students about McCarthy's tactics; this author also went so far as to state that McCarthy did all of this "with no regard for truth."

A Panic About Security

In addition, a few Communists, keeping their party ties secret, as well as some Communist sympathizers, managed to work their way into government posts. There they served as spies for the Soviet Union.

Discovery of this handful of traitors was made at just the time that the Cold War began. Fear spread that there were numerous Soviet agents or sympathizers in the nation. The result was a hysteria much like that of the Alien and Sedition Acts of the 1790's and of the Red Scare following the first World War.

THE DRAGNET APPROACH

Prodded by public opinion, President Truman set up a loyalty check of federal employees. It was, in the main, a check on associations. The attorney general drew up a list of organizations in which Communists had figured. Government employees who had belonged to any of these organizations became suspects.

Stringent as it was, this measure failed to satisfy public opinion. Eisenhower, when he became President, issued additional orders. On the mere accusation of being a security risk, a federal employee could be fired. The justification offered was that it was better to lose thousands of loyal employees than take a chance on having one security risk on the payroll.

With greater fanfare, investigating committees of Congress and of state legislatures went hunting for Communists and "fellow travelers." The only purpose served by most of these investigations was to win publicity. Charges recklessly harmed many lives and careers.

MCCARTHYISM

In 1950 Senator Joseph R. McCarthy made this activity even more sensational. With no regard for truth, he applied the Communist label to State Department personnel, cabinet officers, generals, professors, librarians, and cleaning women.

Despite his brazenness, McCarthy went almost unchallenged. Believing that he had strong public support, politicians and newspapers feared even to criticize him. At last, when McCarthy charged that the army was honeycombed with Communists, President Eisenhower ordered the army to fight back. Two months of hearings, nationally televised, showed McCarthy as a fraud. The Senate then voted to censure him. The hearings, followed by the Senate vote, helped the nation regain its balance. Panic about home-grown Communists began to ebb. The hunt for Communists

and "fellow travelers," now generally known as McCarthyism, diminished in fervor and scope.

The panic, however, left behind restrictions on American freedoms. In some states no one can be licensed as a barber, notary, or professional wrestler unless he swears that he has not been a Communist. Federal and state employees still have past associations checked. Applicants for many jobs in private industry have their political activities investigated.

Such practices narrow the freedoms which the Bill of Rights was set up to protect. It is an unhappy paradox that these practices were thought necessary on account of a Cold War commitment to protect freedom elsewhere in the world.⁷

1974

The authors of this textbook pulled no punches in informing students that McCarthy was "irresponsible," "unscrupulous," and a "bully."

The Hiss case had made the nation acutely aware of Communist subversion and had set off an anti-Communist crusade. In the campaign of 1948, some Republicans charged the Democratic party with being "soft on communism." But the person who most exploited and abused the Communist issue was Joseph R. McCarthy, a Republican senator from Wisconsin. His actions introduced a new word into the American language: McCarthyism, the making of indiscriminate and irresponsible charges of political disloyalty.

McCarthyism first appeared in February 1950, when the senator claimed that the State Department was "thoroughly infested with Communists." As chairman of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, McCarthy accused and frightened many people over a period of four years. But he never proved his charges. Because of his unscrupulous methods and careless accusations, McCarthy caused much controversy.

Eisenhower's beliefs often differed from those of many members of his party. In his policies on civil liberties he tried to avoid splitting the party. Although Eisenhower disliked Senator Joseph McCarthy's methods, he tried to placate the senator. He stepped up the hunt for subversives in government and fired employees who were viewed as security risks. In August 1954, Congress passed the Communist Control Act. It outlawed the

Communist party. Many people criticized the Eisenhower administration for some of its security policies.

But some extreme conservatives—particularly McCarthy—claimed the administration did not go far enough. McCarthy even accused Eisenhower's choice as ambassador to the Soviet Union of being a "security risk." In December 1953, McCarthy accused the secretary of the army of shielding Communists in the army.

Later the army accused McCarthy of seeking special treatment for an assistant who had been drafted. In April 1954, Congress held hearings on the charges made by McCarthy and by the army. For more than a month the hearings were broadcast on nationwide television. Millions of Americans watched McCarthy bully and insult witnesses, among them high-ranking officers.

McCarthy began to lose his hold on the public, and in December 1954, the Republican-controlled Senate turned against him. It condemned him, by a vote of 67 to 22, for conduct unbecoming a senator. Eisenhower publicly expressed satisfaction with this blow at McCarthyism. The senator's influence dropped abruptly, never to return.⁸

1999

References to McCarthy's witch-hunt tactics and his spreading of paranoia are themes found in most U.S. history textbooks. Disliked by a Republican president and a Republican-led Congress that censured him, McCarthy's story will probably never be debated in textbooks since in the years following this event, there has been little partisan rancor over his deeds and legacy.

Increased fears of communist subversion were fertile ground for more reckless voices. At a Lincoln's Day speech in February 1950, Senator Joseph R. McCarthy of Wisconsin accused the Democratic party of "twenty years of treason." McCarthy charged that Roosevelt had deliberately sacrificed the navy at Pearl Harbor and had "sold out" to the Soviet Union at Yalta. In addition, McCarthy claimed to have a list of "card-carrying Communists" in the State Department.

While McCarthy never produced the list, nor a shred of evidence to support his charges, he ruined the careers of many government officials. A growing atmosphere of hysteria inspired other "witch-hunts." Private

groups used the communist label to drive liberal professors out of colleges. They made sure books they believed to be subversive were removed from schools. They had many broadcasters, writers, and entertainers barred from television and kept many actors from working on the stage and in films. Years later a Senate committee determined that McCarthy's accusations and investigations had been groundless. The use of indiscriminate, unfounded political accusations to destroy or assassinate the character of one's opponent came, in time, to be known as McCarthyism.⁹