AMERICAN HISTORY

Alan Brinkley

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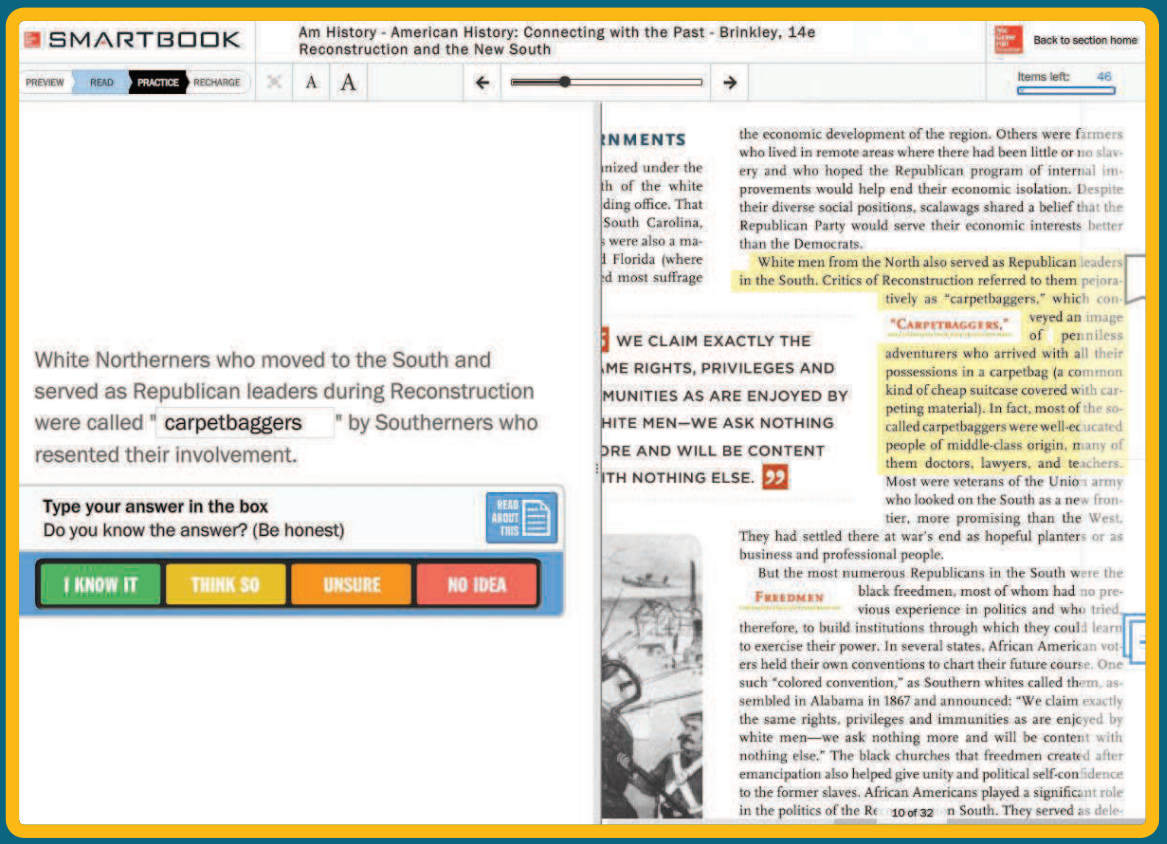

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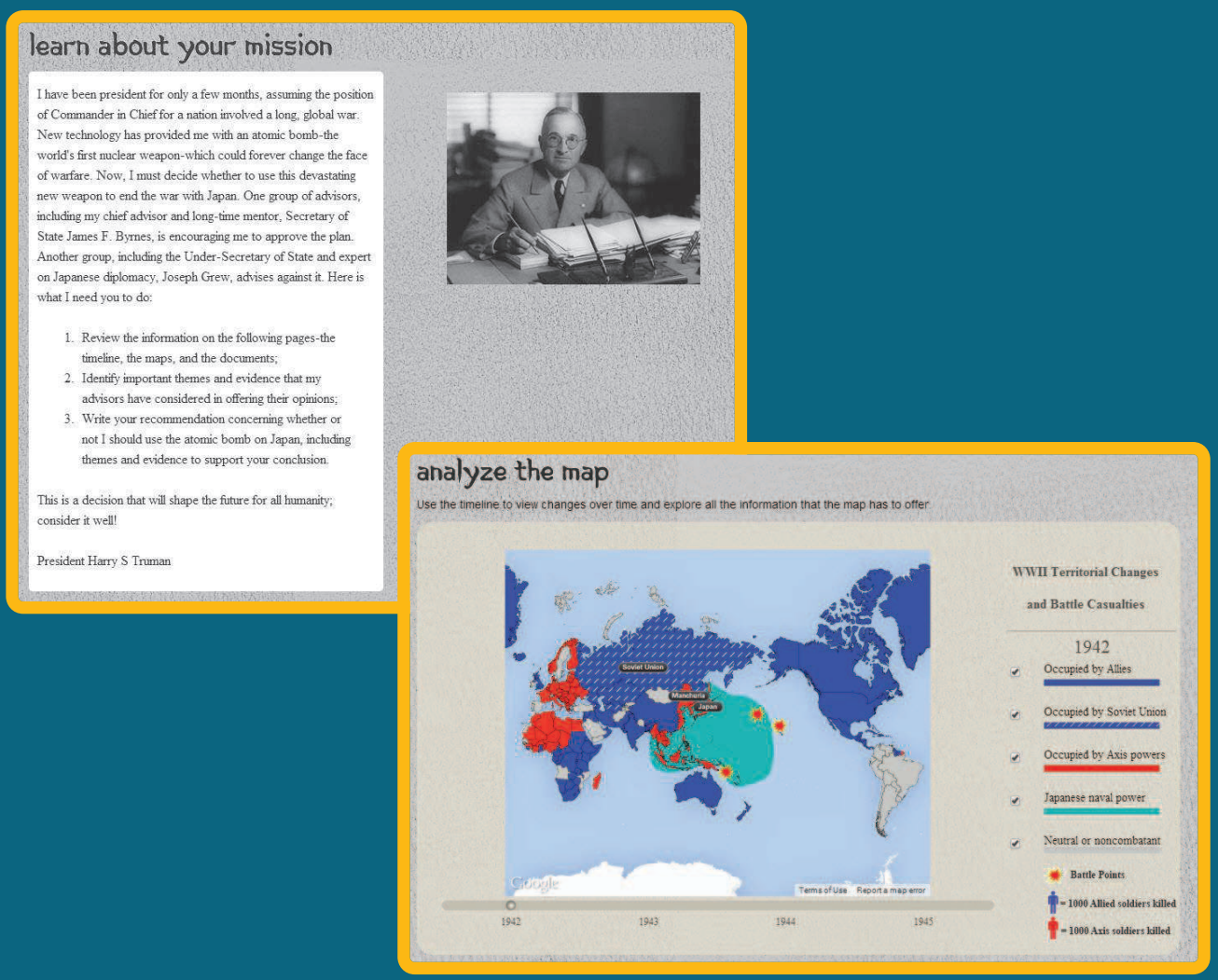

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AMERICAN HISTORY

Connecting with the Past

FIFTEENTH EDITION

ALAN BRINKLEY
Columbia University

Mc Graw Hill Education

AMERICAN HISTORY: CONNECTING WITH THE PAST, 15E
Alan Brinkley

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BRIEF CONTENTS

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Alan Brinkley is the Allan Nevins Professor of History at Columbia University. He served as University Provost at Columbia from 2003 to 2009. He is the author of *Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin, and the Great Depression,* which won the 1983 National Book Award; *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People; The End of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War; Liberalism and Its Discontents; Franklin D. Roosevelt;* and *The Publisher: Henry Luce and His American Century*. He was the chair of the board of the National Humanities Center, the chair of the board of the Century Foundation, and a trustee of Oxford University Press. He is a member of the Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 1998–1999, he was the Harmsworth Professor of History at Oxford University, and in 2011–2012, the Pitt Professor at the University of Cambridge. He won the Joseph R. Levenson Memorial Teaching Award at Harvard, and the Great Teacher Award at Columbia. He was educated at Princeton and Harvard.

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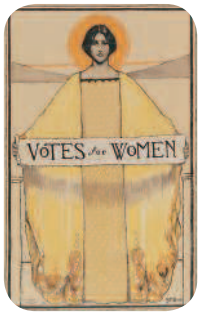

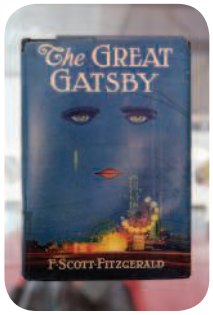

27 THE COLD WAR 732

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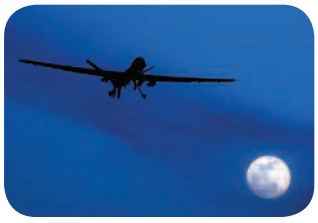

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PREFACE

WHY do so many people take an interest in history? It is, I think, because we know that we are the products of the past–that everything we know, everything we see, and everything we imagine is rooted in our history. It is not surprising that there have been historians throughout almost all of recorded time. It is only natural that we are interested in what the past was like. Whether we study academic history or not, we all are connected to the past.

Americans have always had a love of their own history. It is a daunting task to attempt to convey the long and remarkable story of America in a single book, but that is what this volume attempts to do. The subtitle of this book, "Connecting with the Past," describes this edition's focus on encouraging readers to be aware of the ways in which our everyday experiences are rooted in our history.

Like any history, this book is a product of its time. It reflects the views of the past that historians continue to develop. A comparable book published decades from now will likely seem as different from this one as this book appears different from histories written a generation or more ago. The writing of history changes constantly–not, of course, because the past changes, but because of shifts in the way historians, and the publics they serve, ask and answer questions about the past.

There have always been critics of changes in historical understanding. Many people argue that history is a collection of facts and should not be subject to "interpretation" or "revision." But historians insist that history is not and cannot be simply a collection of facts. They are only the beginning of historical understanding. It is up to the writers and readers of history to try to interpret the evidence before them; and in doing so, they will inevitably bring to the task their own questions, concerns, and experiences.

Our history examines the experience of the many different peoples and ideas that have shaped American society. But it also requires us to understand that the United States is a nation whose people share many things: a common political system, a connection to an integrated national (and now international) economy, and a familiarity with a shared and enormously powerful mass culture. To understand the American past, it is necessary to understand both the forces that divide Americans and the forces that draw them together.

It is not only the writing of history that changes with time–the tools and technologies through which information is delivered change as well. Created as an integral part of the content of this fifteenth edition are an array of valuable learning resources that will aid instructors in teaching and students in learning about American history. These resources include:

- Smartbook®–an online version of this book that adapts to each student's reading experience by offering self-quizzing and highlighting material that the student is struggling with.
- Connect History®–homework and quizzing exercises including map understanding, primary source analysis, image exploration, key terms, and review and writing questions.
- Insight®–a first-of-its-kind analytics tool for Connect assignments that provides instructors with vital information about how students are performing and which assignments are the most effective.
- Interactive maps–more than thirty maps in the ebook and Connect can be manipulated by students to encourage better geographical understanding.
- Critical Missions®–an activity that immerses students in pivotal moments in history. As students study primary sources and maps, they advise a key historical figure on an issue of vital importance–for example, should President Truman drop the atomic bomb on Japan?
- A Primary Source Primer–a video exercise with multiple-choice questions teaches students the importance of primary sources and how to analyze them. This online "Introduction to Primary Sources" is designed for use at the beginning of the course, to save valuable class time.

In addition to content and scholarship updates throughout, we have added 4 new "Consider the Source" boxed features that explore the topics of family time; wartime oratory; black history; and race, gender, and military service. Our concluding chapter, "The Age of Globalization," now brings *American History* up-to-date through the summer of 2014 and includes coverage of the 2008 financial crisis, the rise of the Tea Party, the 2012 election, the Affordable Care Act, and the ongoing federal gridlock.

I am grateful to many people for their help on this book–especially the people at McGraw-Hill who have supported and sustained it so well for many years. I am grateful to Laura Wilk, Rhona Robbin, Art Pomponio, April Cole, Stacy Ruel, Emily Kline, and Carrie Burger. I am grateful, too, to Deborah Bull for her help with photographs. I also appreciate the many suggestions I have received from students over the last several years, as well as the reviews provided by a group of talented scholars and teachers.

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Columbia University
New York, NY

AMERICAN HISTORY CONNECTS STUDENTS TO THE RELEVANCE OF HISTORY THROUGH A SERIES OF ENGAGING FEATURES

PATTERNS OF POPULAR CULTURE

BASEBALL AND THE CIVIL WAR

LONG before the great urban stadiums, long before the lights and the cameras and the multimillion-dollar salaries, long before the Little Leagues and the high school and college teams, baseball was the most popular game in America. And during the Civil War, it was a treasured pastime for soldiers, and for thousands of men (and some women) behind the lines, in both North and South.

The legend that baseball was invented by Abner Doubleday, who probably never even saw the game, came from Albert G. Spalding, a patriotic sporting-goods manufacturer eager to prove that the game had purely American origins and to dispel the notion that it came from England. In fact, baseball was derived from a variety of earlier games, especially the English pastimes of cricket and rounders. American baseball took its own distinctive form beginning in the 1840s, when Alexander Cartwright, a shipping clerk, formed the New York Knickerbockers, laid out a diamond-shaped field with four bases, and declared that batters with three strikes were out and that teams with three outs were retired.

Cartwright moved west in search of gold in 1849, ultimately grew rich, and settled finally in Hawaii (where he brought the game to Americans in the Pacific). But the game did not languish in his absence. Henry Chadwick, an English-born journalist, spent much of the 1850s popularizing the game (and regularizing its rules). By 1860, baseball was being played by college students and Irish workers, by urban elites and provincial farmers, by people of all classes and ethnic groups from New England to Louisiana. It was also attracting the attention of women. Students at Vassar College formed "ladies" teams in the 1860s, and in Philadelphia, free black men formed the first of what would become a great network of African American baseball teams, the Pythians. From the beginning, they were barred from playing against most white teams.

When young men marched off to war in 1861, some took their bats and balls with them. Almost from the start of the fighting, soldiers in both armies took advantage of idle moments to lay out baseball diamonds and organize games. There were games in prison camps; games on the White House lawn (where Union soldiers were sometimes billeted); and games on battlefields that were sometimes interrupted by gunfire and cannonfire. "It is astonishing how indifferent a person can become to danger," a soldier wrote home to Ohio in 1862. "The report of musketry is heard but a very little distance from us, . . . yet over there on the other side of the road is most of our company, playing Bat Ball." After a skirmish in Texas, another Union soldier lamented that, in addition to casualties, his company had lost "the only baseball in Alexandria, Texas." Far from discouraging baseball, military commanders—and the U.S. Sanitary Commission, the Union army's medical arm—actively encouraged the game during the war. It would, they believed, help keep up the soldiers' morale.

Away from the battlefield, baseball continued to flourish. In New York City, games between local teams drew crowds of ten or twenty thousand. The National Association of Baseball Players (founded in 1859) had recruited ninety-one clubs in ten northern states by

PATTERNS OF POPULAR CULTURE FEATURES

These twenty-six features bring fads, crazes, hang-outs, hobbies, and entertainment into the story of American history, encouraging students to expand their definition of what constitutes history, and to think about how we can best understand the lived experience of past lives.

CONSIDER THE SOURCE

RACE, GENDER, AND MILITARY SERVICE

MUCH CAN BE LEARNED ABOUT A SOCIETY'S VALUES from how it handles the raising of an army. In wartime, nations typically clarify the terms of citizenship and service—asking some people to fight, others to stay home, and appealing to the public for participation and support. The government sets the terms of service, but they must align with popular values to be successful.

During World War I, as part of the
the war, the government dissemin
documents). The first poster was part
was part of a campaign to sell "lib
roughly two-thirds of the war's $ 32 b
not only served in the military and
By the time of the war on terrorism
military recruitment had changed dram
World War I, and the draft had been s
volunteer force. This put a high premiu
for those purposes remained just as illu
2006, the U.S. Army launched its "Army

WORLD WAR I—1917–1918

WARTIME POSTERS

GEE !! I WISH I WERE A MAN
JOIN The NAVY
UNITED STATES NAVY RECRUITING STATION

the army builds not only physical but also mental and emotional strengths in its recruits. The second images shows the welcoming attitude of today's army.

UNDERSTAND, ANALYZE, AND EVALUATE

1. How do the posters use images of women or the home to encourage either enlistment or financial support for the war?
2. What do these posters say about contemporary understandings of gender roles? What did the state and society expect from men. What did they expect from women?
3. Like almost all recruiting posters of World War I, these two depict white people—despite the fact that many African Americans and ethnic minorities served as well. What does that say about mainstream attitudes toward race and ethnicity during World War I?

WAR ON TERRORISM—2006–2014

ARMY RECRUITMENT AND MARKETING

IT'S A TRAINING GROUND LIKE NO OTHER BECAUSE OURS IS A GROUND FORCE LIKE NO OTHER.

U.S. Army

U.S. Army

MAKE CONNECTIONS

1. How do these sources portray the army? How are they persuasive? Is the ongoing war against terrorism invoked in any way?
2. How are ethnicity and gender portrayed differently in these documents than in the 1917 and 1918 posters?
3. All four images were created for the government and military—but do they say anything about popular attitudes? Explain.

600

Consider the Source Features

These features guide students through careful analysis of historical documents, both textual and visual, and prompt them to make connections with contemporary events. New topics in this edition include family time; wartime oratory; black history; and race, gender, and military service.

AMERICA IN THE WORLD

The Age of Revolutions

THE American Revolution was a result of specific tensions and conflicts between Britain and its North American colonies. But it was also a part, and a cause, of what historians have come to call an "age of revolutions" that spread through much of the Western world in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The modern idea of revolution—the overturning of old systems and regimes and the creation of new ones—was largely a product of the ideas of the Enlightenment. Among those ideas was the notion of popular sovereignty, articulated by the English philosopher John Locke and others. Locke argued that political authority did not derive from the divine right of kings or the inherited authority of aristocracies but, rather, from the consent of the governed. A related Enlightenment idea was the concept of individual freedom, which challenged the traditional belief that governments had the right to prescribe the way people act, speak, and even think. Champions of individual freedom in the eighteenth century—among them the French philosopher Voltaire—advocated religious toleration and freedom of thought and expression. The Swiss-French Enlightenment theorist Jean-Jacques Rousseau helped spread the idea of political and legal equality for all people—the end of special privileges for aristocrats and elites, the right of all citizens to participate in the formation of policies and laws.

The American Revolution was the first and in many ways the most influential of the Enlightenment-derived uprisings against established orders. It served as an inspiration to people in other lands who were trying to find a way to oppose unpopular regimes. In 1789, a little over a decade after the beginning of the American Revolution, revolution began in France. The monarchy was abolished (and the king and queen publicly executed in 1793), the authority of the Catholic Church was challenged and greatly weakened, and at the peak of revolutionary chaos during the Jacobin period (1793–1794), more than 40,000 suspected enemies of the revolution were executed and hundreds of thousands of others imprisoned. The most radical phase of the revolution came to an end in 1799, when Napoleon Bonaparte, a young general, seized power and began to build a new French empire. But France's *ancien régime* of king and aristocracy never wholly revived.

The American and French Revolutions helped inspire uprisings in many other parts of the Atlantic world.

STORMING THE BASTILLE This painting portrays the storming of the great Parisian fortress and prison, the Bastille, on July 14, 1789. The Bastille was a despised symbol of royal tyranny to many of the French, because of the arbitrarily arrested and imprisoned people who were sent there. The July assault was designed to release the prisoners, but in fact the revolutionaries found only seven people in the vast fortress. Even so, the capture of the Bastille—which marked one of the first moments in which ordinary Frenchmen joined the Revolution—became one of the great moments in modern French history. The anniversary of the event, "Bastille Day," remains the French national holiday. (© Musee de la Ville de Paris, Musee Carnavalet, Paris, France/The Bridgeman Art Library)

UNDERSTAND, ANALYZE, AND EVALUATE

1. How did the American Revolution influence the French Revolution?
2. What other nations were affected by the example of the American Revolution?
3. What was the significance of the revolution in Haiti, and how much attention did it get in other nations?

America in the World Essays

These fifteen essays focus on specific parallels between American history and that of other nations, and demonstrate the importance of the many global influences on the American story. Topics like the global industrial revolution, the abolition of slavery, and the origins of the Cold War provide concrete examples of the connections between the history of the United States and the history of other nations.

Understand, Analyze, and Evaluate Review Questions

Appearing at the end of every feature essay, these questions encourage students to move beyond memorization of facts and names to explore the importance and significance of the featured content.

DEBATING THE PAST

THE NEW DEAL

FOR many years, debate among historians over the nature of the New Deal mirrored the debate among Americans in the 1930s over the achievements of the Roosevelt administration. Historians struggled, just as contemporaries had done, to decide whether the New Deal was a good thing or a bad thing.

By far the dominant view of the New Deal among scholars has been an approving, liberal interpretation, and the first important voice of that view was Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., who argued in the three volumes of *The Age of Roosevelt* (1957–1960) that the New Deal marked a continuation of the long struggle between public power and private interests. Roosevelt had moved that struggle to a new level, challenging the unrestrained power of the business community and offering far more protection for workers, farmers, consumers, and others than they had enjoyed in the past.

The first systematic "revisionist" interpretation of the New Deal came in 1963, in William Leuchtenburg's *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal*. Leuchtenburg was a sympathetic critic, arguing that most of the limitations of the New Deal were a result of the restrictions imposed on Roosevelt by the political and ideological realities of his time—that the New Deal probably could not have done much more than it did. Nevertheless, Leuchtenburg could not agree with others who called the New Deal a revolution in social policy. He was able to muster only enough enthusiasm to call it a "halfway revolution," one that enhanced the positions of some previously disadvantaged groups (notably farmers and factory workers) but did little or nothing for many others (including blacks, sharecroppers, and the urban poor). Ellis Hawley augmented these moderate criticisms of the Roosevelt record in *The New Deal and the Problem of Monopoly* (1966). In examining 1930s economic policies, Hawley argued that New Deal efforts were in many cases designed to enhance the position of private entrepreneurs—even, at times, at the expense of some of the liberal reform goals that administration officials espoused.

Much harsher criticisms of the New Deal emerged in the 1960s and later. Barton Bernstein in a 1968 essay concluded that the Roosevelt administration may have saved capitalism, but it failed to help—and in many ways actually harmed—groups mo[...] Radosh, Thomas Ferguson, and, more recently, Colin Gordo[...] They cited the close ties between the New Deal and internation[...] the liberalism of the 1930s was a product of their shared inte[...] stabilizing capitalism.

Most scholars in the 1980s and 1990s, however, seemed largely to have accepted the revised liberal view: that the New Deal was a significant (and, most agreed, valuable) chapter in the history of reform, but one that worked within rigid, occasionally crippling limits. Much of the recent work on the New Deal has focused on the constraints within which it was operating. The sociologist Theda Skocpol (along with other scholars) has emphasized the issue of "state capacity" as an important New Deal constraint; ambitious reform ideas often foundered, she argued, because no government bureaucracy had sufficient strength and expertise to shape or administer them. James T. Patterson, Barry Karl, Mark Leff, and others have emphasized the political constraints the New Deal encountered. Both in Congress and among the public, conservative inhibitions about government remained strong.

Frank Freidel, Ellis Hawley, Herbert Stein, and many others point as well to the ideological constraints affecting Franklin Roosevelt and his supporters. Alan Brinkley, in *The End of Reform* (1995), described an ideological shift in New Deal liberalism that shifted from the initial regulatory view of government to one that envisioned relatively little direct governmental interference in the [...]

FDR IN ALBANY Before he became president, Franklin Roosevelt served as governor of New York, where he developed a reputation of being an activist working to confront the Great Depression. In this 1930 photograph, he is sitting at his desk in the state capitol. Two years later, he would be elected president. (© AFP/Getty Images)

embraced measures that unleashed the power of the market did prosperity begin to return.

The phrase "New Deal liberalism" has come in the postwar era to seem synonymous with modern ideas of aggressive federal management of the economy, elaborate welfare systems, a powerful bureaucracy, and large-scale government spending. Many historians of the New Deal, however, would argue that the modern idea of "New Deal liberalism" bears only a limited relationship to the ideas that New Dealers themselves embraced. The liberal accomplishments of the 1930s can be understood only in the context of their own time; later liberal efforts drew from that legacy but also altered it to fit the needs and assumptions of very different eras.

UNDERSTAND, ANALYZE, AND EVALUATE

1. What is the conservative view of the New Deal?
2. How did the political atmosphere of the 1930s limit the New Deal?
3. Did the New Deal save capitalism? If so, how and why?

DEBATING THE PAST ESSAYS

Twenty-five essays introduce students to the contested quality of much of the American past, and provide a sense of the evolving nature of historical scholarship. From addressing the question of "Why do historians so often disagree?" to examining specific differences in historical understandings of the Constitution, the character of slavery, and the causes of the Great Depression, these essays familiarize students with the interpretive character of historical understanding.

LIST OF MAPS

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AMERICAN HISTORY

Connecting with the Past

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1 THE COLLISION OF CULTURES

FIRST ENCOUNTERS WITH NATIVE AMERICANS This 1505 engraving is one of the earliest European images of the way Native Americans lived in the early Americas. It also represents some of the ways in which white Europeans would view the people they called Indians for many generations. Native Americans here were portrayed by Europeans as exotic savages, whose sexuality was not contained within stable families and whose savagery was evidenced in their practice of eating the flesh of their slain enemies. In the background are the ships that have brought the European visitors who recorded these images.

LOOKING AHEAD

1. How did the societies of native peoples in South America differ from those in North America in the precontact period (before the arrival of the Europeans)?
2. What effects did the arrival of Europeans have on the native peoples of the Americas?
3. How did patterns of settlement differ among the Spanish, English, French, and Dutch immigrants to the Americas?

SETTING THE STAGE

THE DISCOVERY OF THE AMERICAS did not begin with Christopher Columbus in 1492. It began many thousands of years earlier when human beings first crossed into the American continents and began to people them. By the end of the fifteenth century CE, when the first important contact with Europeans occurred, the Americas were the home of millions of men and women.

These ancient civilizations experienced many changes and many catastrophes during their long history. But none of these experiences was likely as tragically transforming as the arrival of Europeans. In the short term—in the first violent years of Spanish and Portuguese exploration and conquest—the impact of the new arrivals was profound. Europeans brought with them diseases (most notably smallpox) to which natives, unlike the invaders, had no immunity. The result was a great demographic catastrophe that killed millions of people, weakened existing societies, and greatly aided the Spanish and Portuguese in their rapid and devastating conquest of the existing American empires. Although in the long term European settlers came to dominate most areas of the Americas, the Europeans were never able to eliminate the influence of the existing peoples (whom they came to call "Indians"). Battles between natives and Europeans continued into the late nineteenth century and beyond. But there were also productive interactions through which these very different civilizations shaped one another. They learned from one another and changed each other permanently and profoundly.

AMERICA BEFORE COLUMBUS

We still know relatively little about the first peoples in the Americas. What we do know comes from scattered archaeological discoveries–new evidence from artifacts that have survived over many millennia.

The Peoples of the Precontact Americas

For many decades, scholars believed that all early migrations into the Americas came from humans crossing an ancient land bridge over the Bering Strait into what is now Alaska, approximately 11,000 years ago. These migrants then traveled from the glacial north, through an unfrozen corridor between two great ice sheets, until they reached the nonglacial lands to the south. The migrations were probably a result of the development of new stone tools–spears and other hunting implements–with which migrating people could pursue the large animals that regularly crossed between Asia and North America. All of these land-based migrants are thought to have come from a Mongolian stock related to that of modern-day Siberia. They are known to scholars as the "Clovis" people, named for a town in New Mexico.

The "Clovis" People

The Clovis people established one of the first civilizations in the Americas. Archaeologists believe that they lived about 13,000 years ago. They were among the first people to make tools and to eat other animals. The Clovis are believed to have migrated from Siberia across the Bering land bridge into Alaska. From there, they moved southward to warmer regions, including New Mexico.

More recent archaeological evidence, however, suggests that not all the early migrants came across the Bering Strait. Some migrants from Asia appear to have settled as far south as Chile and Peru even before people began moving into North America by land. This suggests that these first South Americans may have come not by land but by sea, using boats. Other discoveries on other continents made clear that migrants had traveled by water much earlier to populate Japan, Australia, and other areas of the Pacific. Those discoveries suggest that migrants were capable of making long ocean voyages–long enough to bring them to the American coasts.

Archaeologists and Population Diversity

This new evidence suggests that the early population of the Americas was much more diverse and more scattered than scholars used to believe. Some people came to the Americas from farther south in Asia than Mongolia–perhaps Polynesia and Japan. Recent DNA evidence has identified what may have been yet another population group that, unlike most other American groups, does not seem to have Asian characteristics. Thus it is also possible that, thousands of years before Columbus, there may have been some migration from Europe or Africa. Most Indians in the Americas today share relatively similar characteristics, and those characteristics link them to modern Siberians and Mongolians. But that does not prove that Mongolian migrants were the only immigrants to the Americas. It suggests, rather, that Mongolian migrants eventually came to dominate and perhaps eliminate earlier population groups.

The "Archaic" Period

The "Archaic" period is a scholarly term for the history of humans in America during a period of about 5,000 years beginning around 8000 BCE. In the first part of this period, most humans continued to support themselves through hunting and gathering, using the same stone tools that earlier Americans had brought with them from Asia. Some of the largest animals that the earliest humans in America once hunted became extinct during the Archaic period. But archaic people continued to hunt with spears in the area later known as the Great Plains of North America who, then as centuries later, pursued bison (also known as buffalo). Bows and arrows were unknown in most of North America until 400–500 CE.

Later in the Archaic period, population groups also began to develop new tools to perform work. Among them were nets and hooks for fishing, traps for smaller animals, and baskets for gathering berries, nuts, seeds, and other plants. Later, some groups began to farm. Through much of the Americas, the most important farm crop was corn, but many agricultural communities also grew other crops such as beans and squash. In agricultural areas, the first sedentary settlements slowly began to form, creating the basis for larger civilizations.

The Growth of Civilizations: The South

The most elaborate early civilizations emerged south of what is now the United States–in South and Central America and in what is now Mexico. In Peru, the Incas created the largest empire in the Americas. They began as a small tribe in the mountainous region of Cuzco, in the early fifteenth century–spurred by a powerful leader, Pachacuti (whose name meant "world shaker"). His empire stretched along almost 2,000 miles of western South America. It was an empire created as much by persuasion as by force. Pachacuti's agents fanned out around the region and explained the benefits of the empire to people in the areas the Incas hoped to control. Most local leaders eventually allied themselves with the Incas. The empire was sustained by innovative administrative systems and by the creation of a large network of paved roads.

Another great civilization emerged from the so-called Meso-Americans, the peoples of what is now Mexico and much of Central America. Organized societies emerged in these regions as early as 10,000 BCE, and the first truly complex society in the Americas–of the Olmec people–began in approximately 1000 BCE. A more sophisticated culture emerged beginning around 800 CE in parts of Central America and in the Yucatán peninsula of Mexico, in an area known as Maya. Mayan civilization developed a written language, a numerical system similar to the Arabic, an accurate calendar, an advanced agricultural system, and important trade routes into other areas of the continents.

Gradually, the societies of the Mayan regions were followed by other Meso-American tribes. They became known collectively (and somewhat inaccurately) as the Aztec. They called themselves Mexica, a name that eventually came to describe people of a number of different tribes. In about 1300 CE, the Mexica established a city, which they named Tenochtitlán, on a large island in a lake in central Mexico, the site of present-day Mexico City. The Mexica soon incorporated the peoples of other tribes into their society as well. It became by far the greatest city ever created in the Americas to that point, with a population as high as 100,000 by 1500, connected to water supplies from across the region by aqueducts. The residents of Tenochtitlán also created large and impressive public buildings, schools that all male children attended, an organized military, a medical system, and a slave workforce drawn from conquered tribes. They gradually established their dominance over almost all of central Mexico, and beyond, through a system of tribute (a heavy tax paid in crops, cloth, or animals) enforced by military power. The peoples ruled by the Mexica maintained a significant element of independence nevertheless, and many of them always considered the Mexica to be tyrannical rulers, but too powerful to resist.

Like other Meso-American societies, the Mexica developed a religion based on a belief in human sacrifice. Unlike earlier societies in the Americas, whose sacrifices to the gods emphasized blood-letting and other mostly nonfatal techniques, the Mexica also believed that the gods could be satisfied by being fed the living hearts of humans. But the Mexica also believed that the gods could be satisfied only by being fed the living hearts of humans. As a result, they sacrificed people–largely prisoners captured in combat–on a scale unknown in other American civilizations.

The Meso-American civilizations were for many centuries the center of civilized life in North and Central America–the hub of culture and trade. Disease and disunity made it difficult for them to survive the European invasions. But they were, nevertheless, very great civilizations–all the more impressive because they lacked some of the crucial technologies that Asian and European societies had long employed. As late as the sixteenth century CE, no American society had yet developed wheeled vehicles.

The Civilizations of the North

The peoples north of Mexico–in the lands that became the United States and Canada–did not develop empires as large or political systems as elaborate as those of the Incas, Mayas,

NORTH AMERICAN MIGRATIONS This map tracks some of the early migrations into, and within, North America in the centuries preceding contact with Europe. The map shows the now-vanished land bridge between Siberia and Alaska over which thousands, perhaps millions, of migrating people passed into the Americas. It also shows the locations of some of the earliest settlements in North America.

• *What role did the extended glacial field in what is now Canada have on residential patterns in the ancient American world?*

and Mexica. They built complex civilizations of great variety that subsisted on hunting, gathering, and fishing. The Eskimos of the Arctic Circle fished and hunted seals; their civilization spanned thousands of miles of largely frozen land, which they traversed by dogsled. The big-game hunters of the northern forests led nomadic lives based on pursuit of moose and caribou. The tribes of the Pacific Northwest, whose principal occupation was salmon fishing, created substantial permanent settlements along the coast and engaged in constant and often violent competition with one another for access to natural resources.

Complex and Varied Civilizations

Another group of tribes spread through more arid regions of the Far West and developed successful communities–many of them quite wealthy and densely populated–based on fishing, hunting small game, and gathering. Other societies in America were primarily agricultural. Among the most elaborate were those in the Southwest. The people of that region built large

HOW THE EARLY NORTH AMERICANS LIVED This map shows the various ways in which the native tribes of North America supported themselves before the arrival of European civilization. Like most precommercial peoples, the native Americans survived largely on the resources available in their immediate surroundings. Note, for example, the reliance on the products of the sea of the tribes along the northern coastlines of the continent, and the way in which tribes in relatively inhospitable climates in the North—where agriculture was difficult—relied on hunting large game. Most native Americans were farmers.

• *What different kinds of farming would have emerged in the very different climates of the agricultural regions shown on this map?*

irrigation systems to allow farming on their relatively dry land. They constructed substantial towns that became centers of trade, crafts, and religious and civic ritual. Their densely populated settlements at Chaco Canyon and elsewhere consisted of stone and adobe terraced structures, known today as pueblos, many of which resembled the large apartment buildings of later eras in size and design. In the Great Plains region, too, most tribes were engaged in sedentary farming (corn and other grains) and lived in permanent settlements, although there were some small nomadic tribes that subsisted by hunting buffalo. (Only in the eighteenth century, after Europeans had introduced the horse to North America, did buffalo hunting begin to support a large population in the region; at that point, many once-sedentary farmers left the land to pursue the great migratory buffalo herds.)

The eastern third of what is now the United States–much of it covered with forests and inhabited by people who have

MAYAN TEMPLE, TIKAL Tikal was the largest city in what was then the vast Mayan Empire. It extended through what is now Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize. The temple shown here was built before 800 CE and was one of many pyramids created by the Mayas. Only a few of these pyramids still survive. (© M.L. Sinibaldi/Corbis)

thus become known as the Woodland Indians–had the greatest food resources of any region of the continent. Many tribes lived there, and most of them engaged in farming, hunting, gathering, and fishing. In the South there were substantial permanent settlements and large trading networks based on corn and other grains grown in the rich lands of the Mississippi River valley. Among the major cities that emerged as a result of trade was Cahokia (near present-day St. Louis), which at its peak in 1200 CE had a population of about 10,000 and contained a great complex of large earthen mounds.

The agricultural societies of the Northeast were more nomadic than those in other regions. Much of the land in the region was less fertile than other regions because farming was newer and less established. Most tribes combined farming with hunting. Farming techniques in the Northeast were usually designed to exploit the land quickly rather than to develop permanent settlements. Natives often cleared the land by setting forest fires or cutting into trees to kill them. They then planted crops–corn, beans, squash, pumpkins, and others–among the dead or blackened trunks. After a few years, when the land became exhausted or the filth from a settlement began to accumulate, they moved on and established themselves elsewhere. In some parts of eastern North America, villages dispersed every winter and families foraged in the wilderness until warm weather returned; those who survived then reassembled to begin farming again.

Many of the tribes living east of the Mississippi River were linked together loosely by common linguistic roots. The largest of the language groups was the Algonquian, which dominated the Atlantic seaboard from Canada to Virginia. Another important language group was the Iroquoian, centered in what is now upstate New York. The Iroquois included at least five distinct northern "nations"–the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga,

Mobile Societies

MAYAN MONKEY-MAN SCRIBAL GOD The Mayas believed in hundreds of different gods, and they attempted to personify many of them in various artifacts such as the one depicted on the bowl shown here, which dates from 900–1100 CE. The monkey gods were believed to be twins who took the form of monkeys after being lured into a tree from which they could not descend. According to legend, they abandoned their loincloths, which then became tails, which they then used to move more effectively up and down trees. The monkey-men were the patrons of writing, dancing, and art. (© Collection of the Lowe Art Museum, University of Miami, Gift of the Institute of Maya Studies/The Bridgeman Art Library)

CAHOKIA An artist's rendition of the city of Cahokia circa 1100 CE. Its great earthen mounds, constructed by the Cahokia Indians near present-day St. Louis, have endured into modern times as part of the Missouri landscape. (Courtesy of Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site, Collinsville, Illinois. Painting by William R. Iseminger)

Oneida, and Mohawk–and had links as well with the Cherokees and the Tuscaroras farther south, in the Carolinas and Georgia. The third-largest language group–the Muskogean–included the tribes in the southernmost region of the eastern seaboard: the Chickasaws, Choctaws, Creeks, and Seminoles. Alliances among the various Indian societies (even among those with common languages) were fragile, since the peoples of the Americas did not think of themselves as members of a single civilization.

Tribal Cultures

The enormous diversity of economic, social, and political structures among the North American Indians makes large generalizations about their cultures difficult. In the last centuries before the arrival of Europeans, however, Native Americans–like peoples in other areas of the world–were experiencing an agricultural revolution. In all regions of the United States, tribes were becoming more sedentary and were developing new sources of food, clothing, and shelter. Most regions were experiencing significant population growth. Virtually all were developing the sorts of elaborate social customs and rituals that only stationary societies can produce. Religion was as important to Indian society as it was to most other cultures, and it was usually closely bound up with the natural world on which the tribes depended. Native Americans worshiped many gods, whom they associated with crops, game, forests, rivers, and other elements of nature. Some tribes created elaborate, brightly colored totems as part of their religious ritual; most staged large festivals on such important occasions as harvests or major hunts.

Agricultural Revolution

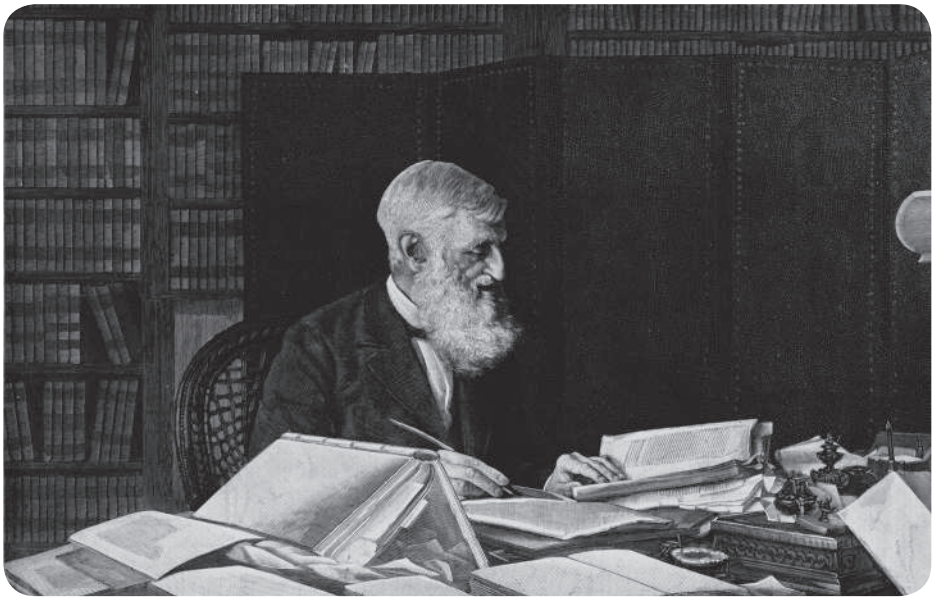
As in other parts of the world, the societies of North America tended to divide tasks according to gender. All tribes assigned women the jobs of caring for children, preparing meals, and gathering certain foods. But the allocation of other tasks varied from one society to another. Some tribal groups (notably the Pueblos of the Southwest) reserved farming tasks almost entirely for men. Among others (including the Algonquins, the Iroquois, and the Muskogees), women tended the fields, while men engaged in hunting, warfare, or clearing land. Iroquois women and children were often left alone for extended periods while men were away hunting or fighting battles. As a result, women tended to control the social and economic organization of the settlements and played powerful roles within families.

EUROPE LOOKS WESTWARD

Europeans were almost entirely unaware of the existence of the Americas before the fifteenth century. A few early wanderers–Leif Eriksson, an eleventh-century Norse seaman, and perhaps others–had glimpsed parts of the New World and had demonstrated that Europeans were capable of crossing the ocean to reach it. But even if their discoveries had become common knowledge (and they had not), there would have been little incentive for others to follow. Europe in the Middle Ages (roughly 500–1500 CE) was not an adventurous civilization. Divided into innumerable small duchies and kingdoms, Europe had an overwhelmingly provincial outlook. Subsistence agriculture predominated, and commerce was limited; few merchants looked beyond the boundaries of their own regions. The Roman Catholic Church exercised a measure of spiritual authority over most of the continent, and the Holy Roman Empire provided at least a nominal political center. Even so, real power was widely dispersed; only rarely could a single leader launch a great venture. Gradually, however, conditions in Europe changed so that by the late fifteenth century, interest in overseas exploration had grown.

Why Do Historians So Often Differ?

EARLY in the twentieth century, when the professional study of history was still relatively new, many historians believed that questions about the past could be answered with the same certainty and precision that questions in more-scientific fields could be answered. By sifting through available records, using precise methods of research and analysis, and producing careful, closely argued accounts of the past, they believed they could create definitive histories that would survive without controversy. Scholars who adhered to this view believed



GEORGE BANCROFT (© Corbis)

PAULINE MAIER (© Charles Maier. Courtesy of the Maier family)

Commerce and Nationalism

Two important and related changes provided the first incentive for Europeans to look toward new lands. One was a result of the significant population growth in fifteenth-century Europe. The Black Death, a catastrophic epidemic of the bubonic plague that began in Constantinople in 1347, had decimated Europe, killing (according to some estimates) more than a third of the people of the continent and debilitating its already-limited economy. But a century and a half later, the population had rebounded. With that growth came a rise in land values, a reawakening of commerce, and a general increase in prosperity. Affluent landlords became eager to purchase goods from distant regions, and a new merchant class emerged to meet their demand. As trade increased, and as advances in navigation and shipbuilding made long-distance sea travel more feasible, interest in developing new markets, finding new products, and opening new trade routes rapidly increased.

A Reawakening of Commerce

Paralleling the rise of commerce in Europe, and in part responsible for it, was the rise of new governments that were more united and powerful than the feeble political entities of the feudal past. In the western areas of Europe, the authority of the distant pope and the even more distant Holy Roman Emperor was necessarily weak. As a result, strong new monarchs emerged and created centralized nation-states, with national courts, national armies, and–perhaps most important–national tax systems. As these ambitious kings and queens consolidated their power and increased their wealth, they became eager to enhance the commercial growth of their nations.

Centralized Nation-States

Ever since the early fourteenth century, when Marco Polo and other adventurers had returned from Asia bearing exotic goods (spices, fabrics, dyes) and exotic tales, Europeans who hoped for commercial glory had dreamed of trade with the East. For two centuries, that trade had been limited by the difficulties of the long, arduous overland journey to the Asian

that real knowledge can be derived only from direct, scientific observation of clear "facts". They were known as "positivists."

A vigorous debate continues to this day over whether historical research can or should be truly objective. Almost no historian any longer accepts the "positivist" claim that history could ever be an exact science. Disagreement about the past is, in fact, at the heart of the effort to understand history. Critics of contemporary historical scholarship often denounce the way historians are constantly revising earlier interpretations. Some denounce the act of interpretation itself. History, they claim, is "what happened," and historians should "stick to the facts."

Historians, however, continue to differ with one another both because the "facts" are seldom as straightforward as their critics claim and because facts by themselves mean almost nothing without an effort to assign meaning to them. Some historical "facts," of course, are not in dispute. Everyone agrees, for example, that the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, and that Abraham Lincoln was elected president in 1860. But many other "facts" are much harder to determine—among them, for example, the question of how large the American population was before the arrival of Columbus, which is discussed in this chapter. How many slaves resisted slavery? This sounds like a reasonably straightforward question, but it is almost impossible to answer with any certainty—because the records of slave resistance are spotty and the definition of "resistance" is a matter of considerable dispute.

Even when a set of facts is clear and straightforward, historians disagree—sometimes quite radically—over what they mean. Those disagreements can be the result of political and ideological disagreements. Some of the most vigorous debates in recent decades have been between scholars who believe that economic interests and class divisions are the key to understanding the past, and those who believe that ideas and culture are at least as important as material interests. Whites and people of color, men and women, people from the American South and people from the North, young people and older people: these and many other points of difference find their way into scholarly disagreements. Debates can also occur over differences in methodology—between those who believe that quantitative studies can answer important historical questions and those who believe that other methods come closer to the truth.

Most of all historical interpretation changes in response to the time in which it is written. Historians may strive to be "objective" in their work, but no one can be entirely free from the assumptions and concerns of the present. In the 1950s, the omnipresent shadow of the Cold War had a profound effect on the way most historians viewed the past. In the 1960s, concerns about racial justice and disillusionment with the Vietnam War altered the way many historians viewed the past. Those events introduced a much more critical tone to scholarship and turned the attention of scholars away from politics and government and toward the study of society and culture.

Many areas of scholarship in recent decades are embroiled in a profound debate over whether there is such a thing as "truth." The world, some scholars argue, is simply a series of "narratives" constructed by people who view life in very different and often highly personal ways. "Truth" does not really exist. Everything is a product of interpretation. Not many historians embrace such radical ideas; most would agree that interpretations, to be of any value, must rest on a solid foundation of observable facts. But historians do recognize that even the most compelling facts are subject to many different interpretations and that the process of understanding the past is a forever continuing—and forever contested—process. ●

UNDERSTAND, ANALYZE, AND EVALUATE

1. What are some of the reasons historians so often disagree?
2. Is there ever a "right" or "wrong" in historical interpretation? What value might historical inquiry have other than reaching a "right" or "wrong" conclusion?
3. If historians so often disagree, how should a student of history approach historical content? How might disagreement expand our understanding of history?

courts. But in the fourteenth century, as the maritime capabilities of several western European societies increased and as Muslim societies seized control of the eastern routes to Asia, there began to be serious talk of finding a faster, safer sea route to Asia. Such dreams found a receptive audience in the courts of the new monarchs. By the late fifteenth century, some of them were ready to finance daring voyages of exploration.

The first to do so were the Portuguese. They were the preeminent maritime power in the fifteenth century, in large part because of the work of one man, Prince Henry the Navigator.

Prince Henry the Navigator

Henry's own principal interest was not in finding a sea route to Asia, but in exploring the western coast of Africa. He dreamed of establishing a Christian empire there to aid in his country's wars against the Moors of northern Africa; and he hoped to find new stores of gold. The explorations he began did not fulfill his own hopes, but they ultimately led farther than he had dreamed. Some of Henry's mariners went as far south as Cape Verde, on Africa's west coast. In 1486 (six years after Henry's death), Bartholomeu Dias rounded the southern tip of Africa (the Cape of Good Hope); and in 1497–1498 Vasco da Gama proceeded all the way around the cape to India. In 1500, the next fleet bound for India, under the command of Pedro Cabral, was blown westward off its southerly course and happened upon the coast of Brazil. But by then another man, in the service of another country, had already encountered the New World.

Christopher Columbus

Christopher Columbus, who was born and reared in Genoa, Italy, obtained most of his early seafaring experience in the service of the Portuguese. As a young man, he became intrigued with the possibility, already under discussion in many seafaring circles, of reaching Asia by going not east but west. Columbus's hopes rested on several basic misconceptions. He believed that the world was far smaller than it actually is.