

Out of Our Past: The Forces That Shaped Modern America Study Guide

Out of Our Past: The Forces That Shaped Modern America by Carl Neumann Degler

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Plot Summary

Out of Our Past by Carl Degler is, as the sub-title suggests, the story of what shaped modern America. Appropriately, the work starts with America's very beginnings with the arrival of the Puritans who left England in the sixteenth century to seek religious tolerance. Their goal was to make a home in a place where they would not be persecuted for their religious beliefs. The colonies were formed by the Puritans whose high moral character was entrenched in the heart and soul of the new settlements. And at least elements of their values have remained part of America.

The first three hundred years of the new country was spent populating the vast region that stretched from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Europeans were drawn to the new country not just for the ability to practice their faith in peace but because the new country's rich and fertile lands that beckoned to them could be had for a pittance. The colonies offered a new life full of promise. Earning a living in America was a departure from what Europeans had grown accustomed to. There was a distinct class system in the Old World where the acquisition of wealth was limited to those of high birth. In the New World, a capitalistic society was budding. There was less distance between rich and poor and, mobility from the bottom of society could catapult an ambitious person to the top literally overnight.

During the seventeenth century a sense of nationalism and pride in being American began to gain strength. America opened its doors to other Europeans in addition to the English. The new immigrants brought with them a willingness to work hard along with new cultures and languages that made America unique and diverse. As the colonies began to compete for trade with England and gain an imposing economic presence, the motherland levied heavy taxes on America which led to rebellion. After the Sugar Tax, Tea Tax, Stamp Act and other English laws placed unfair taxes on the colonies, the country finally had enough. The colonies took up arms and were able to claim their independence after victory against England in the American Revolution.

America declared that all men were created equal. Historic figures led the country to a new pride and world standing. George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton, to name a few, were early leaders who were passionately isolationist. Washington warned against becoming involved in foreign entanglements. Jefferson considered Americans superior to Europeans and disdained the thought of becoming involved in European battles. The Monroe doctrine was the first to edge away from this policy in that it warned that US military might could be used in the event other powers attempted to intervene in North or South American affairs or invade any of their regions.

The Industrial Revolution and the resultant urbanization led to great and lasting transformation. The once predominantly agrarian society turned into one centered in large cities. Manufacturing brought factories and the demand for labor seemed unending. Rural Americans found they had better opportunities in the city and the influx of immigrants increased like never before. During the Civil War, machinery advanced



because women and immigrants who weren't as skilled as the men who were off fighting were filling the majority of labor needs.

The Civil war was the South's war for independence. The north had begun to abolish slavery but the South clung to the system. The South also viewed the regulations from the Federal government as favoring the northern states. After the bloody, hard fought war, the Union emerged victoriously and the black man was free. It took decades for the south to reconcile its relationship with the black man and come out of the economic hole into which the war had placed it.

America reluctantly became involved in World War I in 1914 after which foreign policy became more idealistic and aggressive. Under President Wilson, America's new policy placed on the table the potential that it would help preserve peace in the world. The Great Depression nearly destroyed the economy and the fundamentals of the United States. Many enduring social programs and policies were instituted during this time under the administration of President Franklin Roosevelt, one of the most popular presidents of all time. World War II brought down the threat of Nazism only to be looking a new threat in the face—Russia and Communism.

The decades in which the US opposed Communist aggression was known as the Cold War. America and its allies were able to beat back the Communist invasion and occupation in Korea which then led to the Vietnam War—the only modern war in which America did not emerge victoriously. During the administration of President Carter, there was a return to a more humane foreign policy. President Reagan followed suit by establishing an under secretary of state for human rights.

Chapter I: The Beginnings

Chapter I: The Beginnings Summary and Analysis

The first one-hundred years after the the death of Elizabeth in 1603 is considered the first century of the modern world. This era includes the beginnings of modern science with the work of Galileo and Newton, the first expression of modern democracy, the end of religious dominance and the start of religious tolerance, and the achievement of constitutional and representative government in England. It was also the time of the first English settlers in the New World where new ideas and practices and ideas were being molded and tested.

1. Capitalism Came in the First Ships

The rich fertile lands of the New World endowed it with much promise which lured broad multitudes of Europeans. The first three hundred years of America focused on populating its vast expanse that was seemingly endless. Most new-comers could own land for a pittance. Not all were successful, but the majority were and encouraged the constant influx of immigrants. Some European members of the aristocracy attempted to erect reproductions of feudal manors, but had little success because there was no scarcity of land. But the attempts to perpetuate European social systems were frustrated. The class system in America was a flexible one that allowed a successful person to move from the bottom to the top. New England specifically repudiated European class systems from its early establishment. Wealth, not family or heritage, would come to determine class in the New World.

The calling of a Christian was an important element of Puritan thought. If a man was "called" to be successful in business, there was no blame. In fact, a successful businessman was the glorification of God. Quakers, who were centered in Philadelphia, believed in financial success but lived simply and saved for catastrophes. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the Middle West became more populated and the concepts established by the Puritans were stripped of their theological origins. The virtue of wealth and work were merged and carried the brand of Puritanism.

2, Were the Puritans "Puritanical"?

Puritanism like Protestantism rejected the monastic and aesthetic ideals of medieval Catholicism. Puritanism was not anti-enjoyment but took a cautionary stand. Wine was from God - drunkenness was from the Devil. John Cotton saw no problem with dancing and took a stance against Roger Williams' belief that women should be veiled in church. While Puritans in England insisted that organs be removed from churches, some high profile American Puritans like Samuel Sewell and John Milton were lovers of music.

While some historians have linked sexual repression with New England Puritanism, there is evidence that sex was not repulsive to them. Celibacy was not a sign of merit



and marriage was seen as a sign of respectability. Puritan men were expected to be married. Puritan churches did not prescribe punishment for sexual transgressions among their memberships.

Puritans valued knowledge and education. The education of their ministers was the best learning of its time. For a sect in which reading the Bible was essential, elementary schools were essential for teaching the populace to read. Early New England laws required that a teacher be hired for every fifty families in a township. No other colony in the New World had such high educational standards. Quakers did not hold the same regard for education. William Penn said children who read too many books took focus off meditation. Virginia had schools but they were not accessible to the entire population.

America can look to religion for its foundation in higher education. Puritans founded Harvard. Dartmouth and William & Mary were among eight other colleges that were founded by churches. Churches have held their role in expanding higher education throughout the history of America. The impact of religion was felt in every aspect of life in early America including the government. In those early times, there was not a freedom from religion nor a defined separation of church and state. Those concepts only developed as the country did. In later years, to Virginians, like Thomas Jefferson, the goal was the removal of religion as a threat to freedom.

3. Rights of Englishmen

The whole concept of self-government in the New World originated in Virginia. In the early 1600s, the Crown prohibited legal authority for colonists to assemble. The colonists persisted however and finally in 1639, the King allowed for representative assembly in Virginia. The initial charter for the Massachusetts government described the operation of a corporation more than a community. Its transformation into a true commonwealth was achieved when governing responsibilities were opened to church members. And since Massachusetts was a Puritan colony and most citizens were members of the church, it was not seen as restrictive.

While representative government was successful in the seventeenth century, it was also the era in which the idea of democracy - government by the consent of those governed - was born. The strength of local governments in America stems from the English heritage of early settlers. The two primary forms of local government - town and county - were the result of geographical concerns and the individual motivations of the settlers. One of the main departures from English government was the distance that governments in the colony put between their operations and the influence of the church. These differences were contributing factors that led to the American Revolution.

4. Black People in a White People's Country

It was not until the late seventeenth century that slavery took hold in America. There were very few slave plantations in the entire century. As slavery grew so did racial discrimination. Scholar Alexis de Tocqueville pointed to slavery as the origin of American



prejudice against the black man. There was no mention of slavery in early governmental documents of Virginia until 1660. Many historians feel that blacks enjoyed the same status as that of indentured servants in those early years.

Simply because the black person differed in so many ways from the white Englishman, it is not plausible to think they were treated as equals. Blacks from Africa were heathens in a time when it was important to be a Christian. American colonists only had to look to English settlements in Bermuda and the Caribbean to emulate discriminatory practices against black people. There is evidence of mistreatment of blacks in Virginia and Maryland as early as the 1630s. Early evidence of slavery is found in 1646 when a black woman and boy were sold to Stephen Charlton for his use and the use of his heirs forever. As legal status questions arose, it was necessary to write a clarification of the status of blacks into law. The full impact of American slavery was not apparent until it was expanded in the nineteenth century.



Chapter II: The Awakening of American Nationality

Chapter II: The Awakening of American Nationality Summary and Analysis

The first half of the eighteenth century was the golden age of American culture. It abandoned comfort for elegance. The new society mirrored that of western European culture. American cities like Boston and New York resembled London. Indians had been driven hundreds of miles west. Although the colonies were modeled after European society, an independent mentality was burgeoning.

1. Country Cousins

Arts and literature in the New World lagged far behind that of centuries old Europe. Architecture was one area in which American standards mirrored that of old Europe.

2. Material Foundations

The economic history of the US is also the history of the development of the capitalistic system. Economics was largely centered in agriculture during the eighteenth century. But the century also saw the rise of successful merchants. The colonies were considered to be England's greatest financial asset. The great majority of America's wealth was amassed from trade. To ensure the success of trade, roads were built over old Indian paths. Small ships, called packet ships, traveled between the main American port cities facilitating the movement of commodities. New inroads to other cities also encouraged the movement of people.

When people of one colony met with people of another, they found that they were quite similar to each other which fostered the concept of unity. Businessmen and lawyers began to see commonality with their counterparts in other colonies. Associations were established and nurtured. A periodical that was published during the years 1713-45 ran news about all thirteen colonies. The leaders of the major cities knew each other well and understood their roles in American society.

3. A Poor Man's Country

Land was cheap in 18th century America. Benjamin Franklin in 1751 said that land was so plentiful and cheap that a man who knows husbandry can, in a short period of time, earn and save enough money to buy land the size of a plantation. Most available land was owned and not leased to tenant farmers. One of the driving forces behind the American Revolution was the right to own property. Wealth was, by far, the dominant factor in determining class and wealth was inexorably tied to property. Men quickly rose



from the lowest class to the highest. There are multiple historical sources that confirm social mobility in the colonial years.

Wealth in the colonies, like in Europe, was pyramidal. But there were some important distinctions. The absence of hereditary wealth allowed for different players. Wide-ranging property ownership brought the top and bottom closer together. Colonial America was an egalitarian society in which the majority of its members possessed land and could read and write which fostered the concept of equality.

4. Not All Colonials Were Englishmen

American diversity had its roots in the eighteenth century. Prior to that time, most colonists were English. But the economic opportunities that America held became a magnet to other Europeans. Communities comprised of Finns, Swedes, French and Jews began to spring up. The greatest influx of non-English immigrants occurred in the 18th century with the Scots, Irish and Germans. Evidence of the impact of the Irish in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania is still obvious in modern times. The Germans were so prevalent in Pennsylvania that Benjamin Franklin doubted they would ever blend in with the rest of the colonists.

Each group of new immigrants brought with them different religious and cultural elements. Language and custom were diverse. By mid-eighteenth century, religious diversity was recognized as an American peculiarity. This diversity also opened the door for the acceptance of secularism. Religion was not the focus of the lives of many of the people. By the time of the American Revolution, church attendance was thought to be at an all time low. The Great Awakening represented a renewed interest and devotion to religion. Inspired evangelical preachers like George Whitfield and Jonathan Edwards helped to spread and inspire this renewal. Moralism is associated as much with religious revivals, like the Awakening, that occur from time to time as it is with America's Puritanical beginnings.

5. A Paradise for Women

Women in America had privileges that women of the Old World did not have. Since it was a daunting task to travel to America and deal with its wide-openness and even wilderness, men far outnumbered women. Some thought women were treated better because they were relatively scarce. There is evidence and documentation that women were truly treated as the fairer sex in America compared to their European counterparts. The growing demands for labor provided women the opportunity to work outside the home which laid the groundwork for an independent spirit to grab hold within the female population. Women were also allowed to act in a legal capacity for their husbands who were often away. Married women in America had more property rights than did European married women.

6. Americans Have New Rights

A clarion cry among the colonists during the American Revolution was for their rights as Englishmen. However, the colonists had already put their own spin on some of these



rights and, indeed, even created new ones. A problem that existed between the colonists and the English was caused by the colonists redefining laws and rights. By mid-eighteenth century, most colonial governments were headed by a Royal Governor assigned by the King.

While English constitutions were heading toward the absolute power of the Parliament, American colonies were heading down a different path. American colonies relied on the written word of their charters or constitutions which enumerated specific powers while to the English "constitutional" law referred to the conglomeration of all their laws and customs.

This drift in ideology set the stage for bitter conflict. The English felt that the colonies were subject to the legislative powers of the parliament. While the English were under this impression, the colonists were becoming more independent-minded and had developed self-reliance and their own own concepts of government. The English idea of representative government was transformed by the Americans to fit their ideology and was probably the single-most important element to bring about the ultimate break between the colonies and England. The spirit of democracy was alive in the colonies and had set them at odds with the motherland. A Supreme Court was put in place to abolish laws that were not rooted in the Constitution.

7. "All of Us Americans"

In the years following 1740, the colonists began to think of themselves more and more as Americans. Although it would take years, it was this mentality that persisted and culminated in 1776 with the American Revolution. It was during the wars in which colonists fought with the British against France, that the differences between England and America became obvious. Americans referred to the English soldiers as Europeans. A scholar who examined the press of the early 1760s found numerous references to "America" or "American." The English language was changed in America to include Indian and Dutch words. By the late 1760s, relations between the colonies and England worsened. Compared to the decadence of England, some saw America as the hope of the world. Americans saw themselves as morally superior and self-righteous to the British. Americans were ready to part ways with England.



Chapter III: A New Kind of Revolution

Chapter III: A New Kind of Revolution Summary and Analysis

The American Revolution was unique in that never before had a colonial people been successful in rebelling against its mother country. The revolution inspired others in France, Spain and Portugal. Also unprecedented was the fact that the revolution did not slow the development of America.

1. Causes Were Consequences

The cost of protecting England's interests in the colonies and other regions of the world became prohibitive. In order to raise revenues, the Parliament began attaching duties to imports and instituted new taxation in the colonies. Some of the more famous laws were the Stamp Act, the Tea Act, the Sugar Act and the Molasses Duty. Americans had grown independent and deeply resented England's renewed attempts to control their country. Britain saw the colonies as part of its Empire while the colonists considered themselves as Americans. America was on the road to independence and it was not deterred when England eased up on taxes and duties. John Adams commented that the Revolution had begun long before the war began. In July 1775, the Continental Congress announced that America had taken up arms to defend its freedom.

2. New Governments in Old Charters

In search of a new government after its break with England, America looked to John Locke, the English theorist of the 17th century whose philosophy provided justification for the Revolution. The Maryland Convention of 1776 spoke for all the colonies when it asserted that government originated from the people and for the good of all. As the new constitution was developed it was basically a continuation of the colonial experience and the concepts and ideals that developed during that time. Even during the colonial period, there was a growing belief in the separation of powers of the three branches of government. Since the colonies had grown and prospered because of property ownership, much attention was given to property rights in the establishment of the new government.

3. Revolutionaries Can Be Conservative

The men of the revolution were described as radical or conservative. Sometimes the same man was, at different times, called both. For example, John Adams was considered to be radical in 1776 and conservative in 1790. But the terms meant different things at different times. Before 1776, the term radical referred to anyone who took a hard line against British rule. These "radicals" included Sam Adams, Tom Paine and John Adams. Conservatives at that time were those who wanted to negotiate and



compromise with the British. These men included Robert Morris, John Dickinson and Joseph Galloway.

After the Revolution, the two factions had issues with central authority versus state authority. The Articles of the Confederation of 1781 encompassed the radical position and the Constitution of 1787 represented the conservative view. The power of the central government was made obvious when the Whiskey Rebellion that broke out in Pennsylvania in 1794 was quickly snuffed out with overwhelming military power. Once the new constitution was ratified, the radicals fell in line but did not abandon the concept of state sovereignty and continued to fight against too much central control. Followers of Thomas Jefferson felt that "the federal government should be rarely heard and even more rarely seen" (page 96). Alexander Hamilton was on the other side of the debate, envisioning a central bank and increased federal authority. Tension between Jefferson and Hamilton led to the inconsistent history of the relationship between government and the economy. The Federalists favored the aristocracy while the Jeffersonians favored the agrarian class. The first generations of Americans established the intellectual framework of the nation.

4. Conservatives Can Be Innovators

The federal Constitution in 1788 established the concept of the separation of church and state. Prior to that time, a man's religion had an impact on whether or not he could serve his country. By the early 19th century, states began adopting the same proclamation in their constitutions. While the Constitution prohibits mixing church and state, it does not disallow politicians to publicly evoke their personal religious views.

The principal of the separation of church and state was a side-effect of the Revolution as was the proclamation in the Declaration of Independence that all men were created equal. The concept of equality helped the position of women. There was a stark inequality in the education of women versus men, however, with only 40 percent of women being literate. Both women and blacks would later draw upon the noble words of the Declaration in the struggle for their rights. Politics began to encompass a broader swath of the populace—ordinary men were electing ordinary men to represent them. Another result of the war was the expansion of the American economy which lasted throughout the nineteenth century.

There was no significant change to society in those who led the country. After the war, the colonial ruling class was still running the country. Documentation provides evidence that some seventy-five percent of those who occupied offices before the war held office afterward. There was no revolutionary force that rose from the bottom of society to claim leadership roles as is often the case in insurgencies. The war severed ties to British rule; however, very little else changed in the aftermath of the war.



Chapter IV: To Make a More Perfect Union

Chapter IV: To Make a More Perfect Union Summary and Analysis

The conquest and the settling of the vast geographic regions of America was the biggest challenge facing the nation between the War of 1812 and the Spanish-American War of 1898.

1. Agrarian Imperialism

In 1800, the US stretched no farther inland than the Mississippi River. Florida was still owned by the Spanish and encompassed the Gulf coast to the Mississippi. In less than thirty-five years, the nation expanded to the size it is today. The West was free for the taking but was a dangerous region due to the Indians pushed from other homelands that populated the area.

The Louisiana Purchase literally doubled the size of the republic at the time. After land was recovered in the War of 1812, John Quincy Adams was able to purchase the rest of Florida in 1819. The Republic of Texas was established as an independent entity from Mexico and was later annexed as part of America which led to conflict between the US and Mexico, a country that feared the US would try to move south and take it over. The huge country allowed for diverse societies to develop which ultimately led to a conflict between North and South over the expansion of slavery.

2. More than Sentiment

Due to the size of the new nation, many Europeans predicted that America could not stay united. There was no way to communicate on a regular basis and no adequate transportation into the west. These needs made way for the Transportation Revolution. It began at the end of the 18th century with improved roads. The building of canals, the Erie Canal among them, by 1840 totaled some 3,300 miles. The development of the steamboat facilitated moving trade and travelers through river systems. The crown jewel of the Transportation Revolution was the railroad that became a reality at the end of the 1820s. It is impossible to exaggerate the economic and social benefits of the railroad. Political leaders saw the importance of improved transportation and documentation provides evidence that state and local governments financed these transportation advancements. Communications took a giant step with the invention in 1844 of the telegraph by Samuel Morse.

3. The Factory Comes



Advancements in transportation and communication made way for the expansion of manufacturing beginning in 1816. The issuance by the federal government of a protective tariff evened the playing field and enabled US manufacturing to compete with foreign manufacturers. Women made up twenty-five percent of the million factory workers in 1850. Eli Whitney was the first to demonstrate the possibilities of mass-production with the manufacture of his muskets in 1798. There was a natural shift away from agriculture and by 1860, less than sixty percent of the labor force was in farming. The region with the least amount of manufacturing was the south.

4. Does Land Make A People?

Historian Frederick Turner felt that America was defined more by the settling of the west than by its European heritage. It was the vast land that was available to the people, he asserted, that fostered America's democratic society and rugged individualism. Evidence that Turner's thesis had validity are the constitutions of the western states that contained more liberal ideologies than those back east. The free and vast land provided a chance for peaceful political and social experimentation. However, there are examples of other nations with massive empty lands that did not result in democracies—a tribute to the American spirit.

Historian David Potter was quick to point out that both men and women contributed to the taming of the west. The settling of the frontier with its resultant expanding agriculture served to improve the wages of urban workers. They were paid well in order to compete with the allure of the frontier. Potter wrote that the American character was molded by the abundance of both land and industry. The frontier was an economic safety-valve. During economic panics, urban workers could, as Horace Greeley said, "Go west, young man." The frontiers provided opportunities for both social advancement and wealth accumulation.



Chapter V: The Great Experiment

Chapter V: The Great Experiment Summary and Analysis

The age of Andrew Jackson was also known as the Age of the Great Experiment because many Europeans looked at America as the "great experiment." By the end of the 1850s, America had established the modern political party system and the concept of government of the people was permanently in place.

1. Let the People Rule

Every man (at least white man) had a stake in society regardless of wealth and position. The right to vote was based solely on having citizenship. There was no longer a requirement to be a property owner. Governors were elected by the citizens of the state, not appointed by the central government. Judges were also elected by the people and states wrote their own constitutions. The Age of Andrew Jackson was characterized by a deeply held belief in the wisdom of the people. Americans had developed a sense of self-worth and not only demanded the vote but access to holding office as well. Jackson led by example by removing all partisans from his administration.

At the same time, Jackson increased the strength of the presidency and asserted himself as the direct representative of the people. He encouraged the election of the president directly through vote by the people. He established the right of the president to control his cabinet. Neither Jackson nor Polk was reluctant to exercise the power of the veto. Polk exploited the power of Commander-in-Chief during the Mexican War.

2. "All Men Are Created Equal"

The new democratic spirit was apparent throughout American society. Americans were clear in their goal of making their society equal and open. America was the land of opportunity for the laboring class. The average citizen lived well. There were poor people and slums developing and there were rich people at the other end of the spectrum. But always the opportunity existed for people to succeed and do well. There was a fluidity between class lines that allowed for upward mobility.

3. Jacksonian Liberalism

Andrew Jackson himself was the living example of the potential that America held for the average man. He was born into a poor Carolina back-country family yet rose to the highest office in the nation. He connected with the average person who saw himself in him. He was the first president who had not come from the establishment. Jackson became the symbol of the common man. When Jacksonians spoke of economic freedom, what they meant was freedom of opportunity. Jackson set the framework of American business by proclaiming that government would not interfere in the

competitive system to favor one citizen over the other. Jackson was an advocate of governmental support of internal improvements such as road and canal construction. Jackson was on both the side of business and the worker. Under Jackson, the Supreme Court handed down decisions that made the way for labor to organize.

4. On the Road to Damascus

There were many other changes during the Great Experiment other than just those of a political nature. The ideals of the previous era of urbanity and reason were replaced by the natural, simple and ordinary. The basic institutions of society were called into question and reform was in the air. Reformers of the era were, in the main, advocates of natural law and rights. As a departure from the past, reform in the 19th century penetrated into all levels of society—not just the elite segment. The 19th century reformer was inspired by compassion and humanity. Americans came to believe that they were the hope for the world. It was also during this time that the importance of education for all Americans came to the forefront. America has never lost the connection with the humanitarianism and the spirit of optimism that developed during the Jackson era. There was one issue that confounded the country and stubbornly refused to go away. The issue of slavery divided the country more than any other before or since.



Chapter VI: The American Tragedy

Chapter VI: The American Tragedy Summary and Analysis

To many Europeans, America was unparalleled in intelligence and prosperity but had a cancer that threatened to destroy it. Slavery was a denial of what America stood for.

1. The Peculiar Institution

Northern states began to find slavery, a hold-over from colonial days, repugnant. Slavery had disappeared or was disappearing from most of the North. Some southern leaders were looking for the same transformation to one day happen in the South. But two factors deterred any hope that the South would abandon slavery. There was an increased demand for cotton and the southern states ramped up production, turning to its slaves to meet labor demands. The vast majority of southerners were not plantation owners and were not slave owners. However, hatred for the black was the most pronounced among poor whites. Non-slave owners supported slavery because it kept blacks in their place. Profits and fear of the black man led the South to continue to support slavery.

2, All Slaves Are Black

To many whites, blacks were happy to be slaves or else they would not have tolerated it. The white man would have taken action to change his status. That mindset has endured through the years making many whites continue to look down on blacks as an inferior race. Very few revolts by slaves can be documented. Even the Underground Railroad only helped several thousand slaves escape compared to the millions that were in the system. Bonding between master and slave decreased desires to revolt. Many slaves were loyal to their masters who treated them in a benevolent, paternalistic way. Many slaves simply knew no other way of life.

The absence of revolt does not equate with contentment. Songs of the slave reveal their pain: "Nobody knows the trouble I've had" (page 184). Another sign that blacks did not enjoy their lot was the reverence in which they held their emancipator, Abraham Lincoln. Blacks were no more content being slaves than people of any other race would have been. But freed slaves did not automatically enjoy liberty. The freed black man was a pariah in the south. He was shunned and could not earn a living. A doctrine of black inferiority was written by a southern ethnologist in the 1850s that described blacks as incapable of self-government and standing at the lowest scale of human beings.

3. But All White People Are Not Free

All southerners felt the impact of slavery although most were not slave owners. It was slave owners who dominated all aspects of southern life. Slave owners commanded



farms with the richest soil. The courts favored them and the laws prescribed severe penalties for white southerners who threatened the slavery system. Blacks were considered incompetents and were not allowed to testify in court even if they witnessed a crime. Slave owners dominated the political leadership in the southern states. The choice for the south between slavery and equality was the former. Reform was not wanted in the south and reformers were not welcomed. First signs of violence stemmed from southerners passionate about defending slavery. Between 1830 and 1860, there were many assaults on abolitionists and anti-slavery proponents. There was a growing awareness in the south that their ideas departed greatly from those in the north. Solidifying these distinctions were incidents like the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the Dred Scott decision and the John Brown raid. In 1860, the south declared its desire to withdraw from the union. The Civil War was the South's war for independence.

4. The American Dilemma

The South's demand for independence fueled the causes of the reformers in the North. Leading up to the war, the South not only insisted that the North help preserve slavery, but it also wanted slavery to be expanded into border states. The Republican Party was formed in 1854 and was dedicated to curtailing these demands from the South. There were heroic figures who crusaded against slavery like Owen Lovejoy, John Brown and many others. The Republicans were united in their goal of stopping the spread of slavery. Republicans departed from abolitionists in that they did not consider blacks equal to whites. Even Lincoln said as much in some speeches. Daniel Webster leveled criticism at the south for bringing the country to war just for the right to spread slavery. In 1860, after all efforts were frustrated for resolution, the South saw secession as the only answer.

Chapter VII: Bringing Forth a New Nation

Chapter VII: Bringing Forth a New Nation Summary and Analysis

Two key factors led to the Civil War: the rising call for reform and the strong sense of nationalism. To preserve the union and its "nationalism," the North was willing to fight for it.

1. A People's War

The passion from the great struggle lasted far beyond the conclusion of the war. Over 500 novels on the Civil War were published between 1862 and 1948 including Uncle Tom's Cabin and Gone With the Wind. There are still books written about the war in modern times. The Civil War hit home like none before or since. The emotionalism involved in the war was apparent when considering that the Union army was largely a volunteer army. The soldiers on both sides felt the cause was worth dying for. Women contributed to the efforts as scouts, spies and couriers. Since so many men were away at war, women filled vacant positions at home, especially teaching positions. Women were inspired to write. In the South, women had to tend to the farming and had more responsibilities and suffering than ever before. Clara Barton, founder of the Red Cross, said in 1888 that in the relatively short number of years of the war, women had advanced fifty years.

2. A Businessman's Government

The impetus for the war originated in the South. In addition to the slavery issue, southern leaders were unhappy with what they perceived as favoritism shown to northern shipping and manufacturing businesses by the federal government. Businessmen in the north actually benefited from the war by the secession of southern competitors. Legislation that was passed during this time set the stage for a Republican party that advocated for an economic climate in which new entrepreneurs flourished for the next forty years.

It was the south that bore the burden of the destruction brought on by the war. It was the tactic of Union generals like Grant and Sherman who supported the complete destruction of the South's economy in order for it to be truly broken and defeated. The value of the south decreased at least by half. The problem of labor faced the South after the war since its labor force had been taken from it. The emancipated slaves were looking for work but the plantation owners couldn't afford to hire them because they suffered from a severe lack of capital. Sharecropping and crop liens did not prove to be successful. Poverty in the south endured. President Franklin Roosevelt referred to the economic problems of the south during his presidency.

3. A Nationalist's Dream



The end of the war meant the end of fifty years of conflict over slavery. The Union was saved and indestructible. The feeling of nationalism began to return to all regions of the country. Immigration was bringing in new workers who would become citizens. Many immigrants were part of the Union army. While the majority of Union soldiers were volunteers, it had been necessary to pass the first conscription act. The Grand Army of the Republic, a veteran's organization, was a symbol of the national feeling which was spawned by the war.

4. The Twilight of the States

Another result of the war was the increased power of the federal government over states which had at one time claimed to be sovereign. The war had been a costly one and not equaled until World War I. The federal government stimulated the economy by printing money and strengthened revenues through new taxation.

At the time of the Emancipation Proclamation issued by President Lincoln, not one slave was freed. It was the Thirteenth Amendment that abolished slavery throughout the nation several years later. The Fourteenth Amendment allowed for the greatest expansion of federal power in the history of the country. This amendment was enacted to protect the newly freed slaves. But the amendment went far beyond its original intent and weakened the power of the states in a much broader sense. For one, it made the civil rights of minorities in each state a matter of federal interest. Lincoln had transformed the presidency to its most powerful to date.

5. The New World Power

London was surprised that the United States emerged more powerful and united than before the war. Lincoln had said that the war would prove "that among free men there can be no successful appeal from the ballot to the bullet" (page 227). Following the war, the country's proclamation that all men were created equal would be tested.



Chapter VIII: Dawn Without Noon

Chapter VIII: Dawn Without Noon Summary and Analysis

More than a century after the Civil War, the racial issue is one that still evokes emotions and conflict.

1. Equality by Force

During Reconstruction, the identity and the place for the black man in white society was still uncertain. Guns had officially abolished slavery but they did not change hearts and minds. A political cold war existed in which dealing with the black man evoked deep emotions of hate, bitterness and pain. The black man was not treated as an equal in the northern states. Only in the state of New York and some New England states could a black man vote. The Republican Radicals accomplished the enactment and ratification of the 14th and 15th amendments which made black men full citizens and equal under law. But in the south, political leaders saw the movements toward equality for the blacks as wicked and a scourge to society.

The Black Codes were drawn up by southern politicians which outlined policies about the blacks that fell far short of complete equality. However, it was probably a more accurate forecast of how blacks would be treated far into the future. Northern politicians saw the Codes as the South's refusal to admit their defeat. Lincoln's successor Andrew Johnson was bound by his predecessor's policy to be lenient on the southern states in an effort to unite and speed up reconstruction. The Radicals didn't trust the southern politicians and wouldn't seat them in Congress until the blacks were made full citizens with equal rights. By their intransigence, the southern states gave the Radicals leverage to revamp the social structure of the south. Suffrage was not fully embraced in the North so it was difficult to expect acceptance in the South. The Radicals ultimately had their way with the passage of the 15th Amendment in 1869.

2. How Black was Black Reconstruction

The view that the North destroyed the economy of the South during Reconstruction with the military, carpetbaggers and scalawags is at least part myth. In truth the number of soldiers assigned to the South was very small. President Grant intervened militarily in 1871 when there were widespread assaults on blacks by the Ku Klux Klan. Federal laws were enacted to help fight opposition to black suffrage. There were charges of corruption among Radicals in league with newly freed blacks. While there is some documentation of pilfering and other chicanery on the part of carpetbaggers and others, it was not widespread. However, it was a wedge issue for southern politicians to demonstrate that granting full citizenship and rights to blacks was rife with risk and danger for the society at large.



3. Caste Will Out

The problem with Reconstruction was that it failed. Instead of helping to blend blacks into Southern society, it drove the South to stronger resistance and more bitterness. Neither side was blameless. The South was immovable and the North bungled the opportunity with over-zealous idealism. After the failure at the first phase of Reconstruction, the south was left to figure out its own race problem. Contrary to conventional wisdom, the South was not of one mind and was confused and confounded by the issue. Blacks were allowed to hold office in state legislatures but only from black districts.

Looking back, historian Howard Rabinowitz concluded that integration did not exist anywhere in the post-war South. Laws supporting segregation began to appear, the first in 1881 in Tennessee. The Farmers Revolt in the early 1890s led to laws that separated blacks from whites in public places and removed black voters from politics. The Mississippi Constitutional Convention of 1890 was the first to remove the right for blacks to vote. Other states followed its model. By the turn of the century, more laws were enacted that further narrowed and eliminated the rights of blacks. These laws that prevailed in the south until 1965 and were blatantly racist were known as the Jim Crow Laws—named not for a person but for a movement. The southern solution to its race problem was to create a caste system in which blacks were at the bottom rung.

4. The South Knows the Negro Best

The North came to accept the southern solution for racism. The Radicals receded as political leaders and the zealotry for reform waned. The North looked at the South as an economic ally and chose to assume that the south knew the black man best. The Courts began to support the South's treatment of the blacks. In the Plessy decision, the Supreme Court found that a Louisiana law that prohibited blacks from riding in white railroad cars was not unconstitutional as long as the accommodations were the same. Despite the soaring rhetoric - all men are created equal and the like - by the time World War I was being waged, there was little difference between the way blacks were treated in America and the way they were treated in South Africa. Not until the 1930s, did the courts begin to eat away at inequality. The school desegregation decision was handed down by the Supreme Court in 1954. Legal prohibitions against interracial marriage were overturned in 1967. The fight for complete equality still inches along.



Chapter IX: Machines, Men, and Socialism

Chapter IX: Machines, Men, and Socialism Summary and Analysis

America emerged as the industrial leader of the world during the greatest industrial expansion of all time in the years following the war, 1865 through 1914. The era placed great demands on labor and the importance and power of labor unions grew.

1. Revolutionary Challenge

America tripled in population during the years 1860 and 1914 but the labor force grew at a pace of over five times during the same period. As industry expanded, railroads were expanded across the nation. America had more success during the industrial revolution compared to European countries because of the seemingly endless natural resources of land, coal, iron, copper, precious metals, lumber—all rich and seemingly untapped. Although the construction of railroads and other trends towards a more robust manufacturing economy were begun before the War, afterward efforts were resumed and intensified. Although it cannot be measured exactly, there is evidence that the government invested heavily in the surge of industrialism. America also had a great advantage in labor with the influx of literally millions of immigrants looking for work. The introduction of machinery, both domestic and foreign, into the mix was a boon to both the manufacturer and his workers.

Some of the entrepreneurs who led the revolution like Rockefeller, Vanderbilt, Guggenheim and Carnegie among others originated surprisingly from the lower strata of society. However, there is evidence that some of the industrial leaders of the day were well educated and from wealthy families. The leaders of the Industrial Revolution were an American mixture represented by all social classes. Some of the leaders proved to be greedy and ruthless and there were social implications that came into question causing the path to America's leadership in the Industrial Revolution to be a rocky one.

2. The Industrial Leviathan

Competition proved to be essential for America's success in industry. There were many mergers and joint ventures to strengthen market share. One of the greatest consolidation movements of American industry took place around the turn of the century during the era of the Sugar Trust, the Beef Trust, the Oil Trust and the Money Trust. U. S. Steel was established in 1901 and was the first billion dollar corporation. In 1910, the vast majority of railroads were owned by just four companies. While consolidation was one sign of America's maturing economy, the growth of investment banking was yet another. The concentration of power led to the establishment of sociopolitical controls to protect the public at large such as the Interstate Commerce Commission created in



1887 and the Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890. These regulations were created to limit the power of a few and prevent monopolies that could be destructive to the economy and nation.

3. The Reconstruction that Took

The Industrial Revolution was not limited to the North. There was an understanding that a robust economy in the South would benefit the entire nation and business world. The government began to establish tariffs that would benefit the south resulting in a dramatic increase in southern industry. By 1915, 60 percent of cotton was produced in the South. Industry was drawing the South back into mainstream America.

4. Dollars Mean Success

The rise of industry underscored the sense of nationalism and success across the country. Material success was not seen as sinful or greedy—it was a virtue. Such success was even advocated by the clergy. Success was tied to the American dream. It brought in even more immigrants and the legend of the rags to riches road to success was seen as a reality.

5. The Workers' Response

Industrial capitalism created the vast labor movement in the years following the Civil War. And to protect laborers against the powerful industrialists in the quest for financial success, labor unions were formed. Up until that point, labor was seen as a commodity at the disposal of the titans of industry. It was the labor movement that ultimately forced industry to be humane as well as productive. Naturally, there was resistance to the demands of the labor movement. However, labor unions were seen as presenting no threat to capitalism. "Labor Unions are for the working man and against no one" (page 290).

6. Nobody Here But Us Capitalists

It was surprising to some that labor did not succumb to the lures of socialism. This lack of interest in the socialist movement underscored the political and economic conservatism of American labor and the American people in general. In Europe, labor's movement to socialism was accepted and even expected. The weakness of a real class system in America was a contributing factor to the strength that the majority of its people found in capitalism. The dream and the evidence that anyone could succeed to lofty heights supported capitalism. Another difference with Europe was that American men could vote long before the Industrial Revolution which was not true abroad.



Chapter X: Out of Many, One

Chapter X: Out of Many, One Summary and Analysis

Between 1820 and 1930, over 62 million people sought a better life in foreign lands, two-thirds of whom came to America. The immigrants coming to America were the most diverse in nationality compared to those of any other host country.

1. The Widening Stream

There was a peak of the "old immigrants" - those from northern and western Europe - in the 1850s and a second peak of "new immigrants" - those from eastern and southern Europe and Russia, including many Jews. One of the main reasons for these massive immigrations was simply what people heard about America in general and from friends and relatives. America was hope and America was the future.

2. Hewers of Wood and Drawers of Water

Just after the Civil War, the US Treasury put a value to immigrants. Each was considered to be worth \$800 to the national economy. Good money for those days. By 1880, immigrants comprised nearly one-third of the labor force. The immigrant labor force was predominantly male which, it was felt, added depth to production. Many immigrants were unskilled and found themselves at the bottom rung of the labor force. Prior to the Industrial Revolution, immigrants had made a tremendous contribution to clearing the vast wilderness that made up a large portion of the nation. Immigrants were credited with settling agrarian regions in the Dakotas and other outlying regions. After 1890, the majority of immigrant labor was found in factories. An unintentional consequence of hiring unskilled immigrants was the advent of mechanisms and machines that were easier to understand and operate. The influx of immigrants followed the same pattern as the ups and downs of the business cycle.

3. Immigrants Have Votes

The political impact of the immigrant was powerful. Irish immigrants, in particular, were natural leaders in big city politics. After the First World War, the "new immigrants" became prominent in politics—DiSalle of Toledo and LaGuardia in New York as examples. The immigrant politicians were not only instrumental in the advancement of their own countrymen, they had impact on all elections. Modern historians agree that the political history of America is not complete without the consideration of the immigrant influence and leadership. Ethnic groups still have political clout in modern times. Every national candidate is mindful of the Jewish vote and is careful in their policies toward Israel and Palestine.

4. Melting Pot or Salad Bowl



It is not an overstatement to say that immigration shaped America's economy and politics. Most immigrants were big city dwellers because that's where the jobs were. The influx of immigrants with their exotic customs and languages into the big cities caused those in rural America, where most American citizens lived, to become wary of them and their politics, some feeling there was something sinister about them. The main reason for the robust growth of America's big cities was the immigration of millions. Immigrants are responsible for the establishment of two of the three major religions in the nation - Catholicism and Judaism.

In 1908 during the peak of immigration, Israel Zangwill, an English Jew, wrote a play about American immigrants. It was entitled "The Melting Pot." It told the story of the immigrants to America and was a successful play and later was adapted into a popular novel. It was an apt title because America was the most diverse country on earth.

Immigration is still strong in America as witnessed by the multitudes from Mexico, the Caribbean and Asia who want to enter the country.

5. Who Are Americans?

American anti-foreigner sentiment followed the same pattern as immigration. There was resentment among Americans about the impact that "foreigners" were having in the political realm and on religion. There were violent acts committed against Roman Catholics in the mid-1800s. This resistance to them did not slow the influx of immigrants. Those who were anti-immigrant during the first wave of immigration in the 1800s were called the Know-Nothings. At the end of the 19th century, the American Protective Association, another anti-immigrant group, emerged. The group was actually more anti-Catholic than anti-immigrant. The APA was exposed for the half-truths and lies it spread including that the Catholic Church was evil.

The APA and other similar groups proposed ways to limit immigration and ways to discriminate and select immigrants who were "more desirable" than others. Some suggested a literacy test that Europeans could pass but others from more backward countries could not. Madison Grant, President of the New York Museum of Natural History, proclaimed the superiority of the Nordic and Alpine races - both referring to Europeans. The first official restriction on immigration was instituted in the 1920s. The laws limited immigration to 150,000 in 1924 and there was a selection process that would decide what peoples would comprise that number. Despite protests from liberal politicians and those from countries who felt discriminated against, the immigration policy remained for the next forty years. Under the leadership of Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, the policy was abandoned for one that opened the doors of opportunity to a wider range of immigrants.



Chapter XI: Alabaster Cities and Amber Waves of Grain

Chapter XI: Alabaster Cities and Amber Waves of Grain Summary and Analysis

In modern times, the majority of the civilized world has become urbanized. The United States became part of the urban revolution during the latter half of the 19th century. Prior to that time most people were farmers and depended on good-sized towns in the region to serve their needs. By 1920, the census reflected that over half of Americans lived in cities.

1. The Lure of the City

Man was only able to urbanize because there was enough farmland for willing farmers to provide sufficient food for them and their families. The growth of city populations can also be tied directly to the growth of industry. Generally speaking, there was a move from the farm to the city because it was felt that there were more opportunities for success in the urban setting.

2. The Speedtime of the City

The decade of the 1880s shows the biggest growth ever in America. Recessionary times after the war saw industry and urbanization converge to create boon times. The Midwest showed the most growth although the west was having significant increases in population as well. The census that showed the growth of cities also confirmed the decrease of the populations in rural areas. By 1910, urban populations were limited to a relatively few number of large cities. The growth of suburban communities was also on the rise.

3. People Make Cities

In the 1880s, many of those moving from rural communities to large cities were shocked by the lack of sanitation and were disappointed that many streets weren't paved, even in the very large cities. Most cities seemed to have had no city planning or scenarios to deal with the expanding populations. The rural people were also disappointed that for the most part their kids had no place to play and they had no recreational opportunities to enjoy. Crowding was another issue that cities dealt with as it occurred. Tenements were introduced in New York as early as the 1830s.

During most of the 19th century, the size of the city was limited because of slow-moving horse-drawn trollies. Populations increased with the advent of rapid transportation in the cities: elevated steam trains in New York and Boston and cable cars in Philadelphia and



Chicago. A transportation breakthrough came in the 1880s when Richmond, Virginia, introduced the electric trolley.

4. But Cities Also Make People

American values were long-represented by urban standards. However, the rural man viewed life differently as the city man. They differed in material aspirations and the rural man was accustomed to a community in which he had a lot in common with his neighbors. The city man was more independent and might well have absolutely nothing in common with his neighbor. The rural man had lived an existence largely in the outdoors while the city man lived inside. Life was fast in the city. Life in the country was a slower pace. The country man was more likely to hold onto old values and be more considerate of others. In the city there was a pressure to compete and succeed which fostered rudeness and lack of compassion for others.

Despite their large populations, there are more lonely people in large cities. Many new arrivals found the loneliness the hardest aspect of city life. The suicide rate in the city is much higher. In 1860, the suicide rate was 3 in 100,000 by the urbanized 1922, the rate had tripled. The rural community enjoyed a longer natural life span than did city dwellers.

5. The Hand That Feeds Is Bitten

With the industrialization and urbanization in the late nineteenth century, farm production saw dramatic growth. Annual exportation of agricultural commodities increased sevenfold. There was legislation that helped the agrarian industry. For example, the Homestead Act of 1862 transferred public lands into private holdings. The railroad also opened up land for exploitation. During the Civil War, the lack of men on farms resulted in advancement in technology to foster production. These innovations greatly increased production. For example, a bushel of corn could be shelled by a steam sheller in one and a half minutes. By hand it took 100 minutes. Due to the influx of immigrants into the urban areas to meet labor needs, farmers were tasked with serving an ever-increasing market. The robust entrance of the American farmer into the global market, caused great despair to European farmers. However, as time passed, the American farmer felt the bite of being part of the global market themselves.

6. The Farmer Comes of Age

Due to the globalization of agriculture, successful farmers were forced to become savvy businessmen. The idyllic image of Jefferson's pastoral agrarian was replaced by farmers who no longer just wanted to make a living into businessmen who wanted to make money. The more accustomed the farmer became to the delights of the world at large the more meager his rural existence seemed. By early 20th century, urban values had overcome rural values and there was no longer a sharp difference between rural and city dwellers.

7. The Farmer as Politician



In the last decades of the 19th century, political pressure groups like the Patrons of Husbandry and various Farmers Alliances were organized to meet the challenges of declining profits. In 1892, the People's Party was formed and proved to have surprising political clout. The Populist Revolt resulted in the capturing of US Senate and congressional seats as well as several gubernatorial chairs. At the beginning of the 20th century, profits increased for farmers due to a decrease in trade with European countries. However, this brief hopeful time was interrupted by World War I causing a depressed farm market that endured well into the 1930s.



Chapter XII: New World A-Comin'

Chapter XII: New World A-Comin' Summary and Analysis

The Progressive Movement of the early twentieth maintained old traditions, equality and humanitarianism despite the advancements of industry and urbanization. There was worry that this "new world" would threaten Christianity.

1. Jesus vs. Ricardo

There was a "challenge in the city" to hold onto the values inherent in Christianity. There were churches established to help the populace in dealing with the stresses of the city. In 1887, an Episcopalian group organized a Church Association for the Advancement of the Interest of Labor. The Salvation Army was imported from England in the 1870s to support the laboring class that showed a lack of involvement in religion. The most powerful speaker for the doctrine of the social gospel was Walter Rauschenbusch of the Rochester Theological Seminary. His popular books stressed the social mission of Christianity. Both Protestant and Catholic churches fought against racism. The Evangelical movement surfaced in the mid-1970s and has proven to have political and social influence through current times.

2. Be It Ever So Small

Wherever it has occurred, industry turn to women and children during increases in the demand for labor. By the early 20th century, women were employed in all but 35 of the 572 occupations listed by the census. Few professions were offered to women other than teaching which they dominated by the end of the century. But with educational opportunities opening up to women the chances for women to hold professional positions increased. Women became less dependent on their families and husbands. It was economic factors that compelled women to seek work outside the house. In 1880, as many as one million children between the ages of ten and fifteen were employed. By 1910, that number peaked at two million. Child labor laws were eventually instituted. Social groups also campaigned to have parks and playgrounds for children to play in. Following these steps, kindergarten, nursery schools and progressive education emerged during the first years of the 20th century.

3. The New Woman

The feminist movement was actually triggered by the new opportunities that the Industrial Revolution and urbanization held for women. Although women were considered a minority they were different than other minorities. Their advancement can be tied directly to the opportunities that were available to them as a result of urbanization and industrialization. The small apartments in the big city with no gardens freed up time for women to pursue work outside the house. Women's groups like the

Junior League and the National Woman's Trade Union sprung up around the turn of the century. In 1901, by an act of Congress the General Federation of Women's Clubs were awarded a national charter. The importance of women in the work place was apparent as well as the diversity of skills and talents they had. They were a benefit to American society.

4. New Politicians with Old Principles

Progressivism swept through the country between 1900 and 1917. Corruption had stained the cities and the movement heralded in new politicians who showed that a city could be run honestly. The movement was an attempt to put the country back on its original path where the American dream was a reality for many. It was a breath of fresh air after the dark days of uncertainty and change. Hope and spiritual uplift flooded back into the hearts and minds of America. Voting was made more credible by instituting the secret ballot. The progressives also attacked the poverty, sickness and degradation that labor had brought onto women and children. They exposed the squalor and crushing congestion in the city. On a Federal level, laws were passed through the Interstate Commerce Commission to curtail corruption on the railroads. The Federal Trade Commission was established in 1914 to regulate business practices. The Progressive Movement also brought in an intangible element that impacted society - moral relativism.



Chapter XIII: The Third American Revolution

Chapter XIII: The Third American Revolution Summary and Analysis

The Great Depression was responsible for the near collapse of the foundations of the nation.

1. Hunger is Not Debatable

The stock market dropped from \$87 billion in 1929 to \$19 billion in 1933. Wholesale prices dropped by 38 percent by 1933. During the years of the Great Depression, the national income fell by half. The stagnation of industry was worsened by the plethora of bank failures. All this led to unemployment of staggering heights. People were starving and "relief gardens" were springing up everywhere so people had something to eat. Desperation, in some cases, led to violence. There was even talk of revolution. People booed and hooted at President Hoover campaigned for re-election. Unemployment had far-reaching social ramifications. In many cases, the man in the family lost his job and the woman became the bread earner. The position of the father in the family was often undermined.

2. The End of Laissez Faire

The largest change in the minds of beleaguered Americans was the role of government in the economy. People were so in need that they abandoned the concept of laissez faire - government having a hands off role in the nation's economy. Many of the government policies that people take for granted today were established during the Depression—most notably Social Security. The Securities and Exchange Commission was created to regulate the stock market. The Tennessee Valley authority was established to control floods and erosion. It was innovative in that its hydroelectric power came from the dams that were constructed by the federal government. Critics feared that the country was creeping toward socialism. Social Security, in particular, has become so entrenched in the psyche of America that no politician, even the most conservative, dares to tamper with it. The Government also established agencies that put people to work - the Civil Works Administration and the Works Progress Administration. It was under the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, one of the most popular presidents of modern times, that these transformations took place.

3. Revolution in Politics

The Depression spawned new political powers: Share the Wealth of Huey Long, the oldsters' rebellion and the Populism of Father Coughlin's crusade for Social Justice. But the most important political power to emerge was the Democratic Party as a major force

led by the popular President Franklin Roosevelt. There was a massive shift from the Republican Party to the Democratic Party during the Depression.

4. Revolution in Labor

The Depression seemed to stimulate a new and aggressive nature in the hearts of labor unions that had lost power in the prosperous twenties. Some of their renewal came directly from the Roosevelt administration in the form of the National Industrial Recovery Act which guaranteed to workers the right to join unions. The Wagner Act established a watch-dog organization where workers could file reports against their employers. The Act also required employers to sign an agreement requiring all of his employees to join the company's union. Employers could not terminate someone because they joined a union. The Wages and Hours Act of 1938 established a minimum wage and maximum hours standard for workers. The NRA under the New Deal worked to equalize pay between the genders.

5. Was It a New or Old Deal

The emergence of the Democratic Party and the New Deal created a new spirit of reform which inspired labor and black people. Not since President Jackson had a president symbolized the hopes and fears of the nation. Not surprisingly, Roosevelt's political opponents despised him which he tossed aside: "I welcome their hatred!"

There remains controversy today as to whether the New Deal was conservative or progressive—the answer is a matter of perspective and a consensus may never be reached. From his writings, many could conclude that FDR was a conservative at heart. However, he had a compassion and empathy for people and he was faced with problems of an apocalyptic nature - a circumstance that ensured no one could be guaranteed what reaction he or she would have. In essence, the New Deal was a revolution of ideas, institutions and practices. It changed the nation forever.



Chapter XIV: The Shaping of American Families

Chapter XIV: The Shaping of American Families Summary and Analysis

The family has always been an important part of American life. Since its beginning, the nation has seen the family change. The role of the woman has transformed from mother and wife to mother and wife and worker. More recently, the woman has become the professional.

1. The Modern Family First Emerges

The American family has evolved from its early years when each member of the family, including children, had to fight the wilderness in order to survive. Most black families from the colonial period through the Civil War were slaves. During the Industrial Revolution beginning in the 19th century when factory workers were in demand, women began to work outside the home. Urbanization brought rural families to the city where, for the first time in their lives, men worked in positions that had nothing to do with land.

Sociologists and historians define the term "modern family" as the model that emerged from the last half of the twentieth century. The family consisted of a mother, father and children who lived under one roof and was also referred to as the nuclear family. In the past economic and social concerns of the extended family were the driving forces of a marriage. The modern family, however, begins with a man and woman having affection for one another and falling in love. The emotions of young women, therefore, took a role in family formation. There was a mutual dependence between husband and wife, although in the 19th century the male was still dominant. It was not until the late 18th and early 19th century that children were viewed as special. Prior to that time they were seen as "small adults."

2. Not All Families Were Happy

During the 19th century, the woman felt very confined to the home. As more work opportunities became available, there were more single women—apparently those who did not want to be tied down to house and children. Proof that there was unhappiness in marriage and that women were growing more independent was the upsurge of divorce that occurred during the Industrial Revolution and urbanization. Women sought moral authority over their families and wanted to be respected and loved. Another freedom that women realized after the turn of the century was the availability of birth control methods that limited the number of children they had.

3. Fighting Fertility



One of the starkest differences between families in the colonial years and those of the modern family involves their size. During the 17th and 18th centuries, the average woman bore six to eight children. By the conclusion of the 19th century, that number fell to three to four. Birth control methods, women working outside of the home and economics all played a part in reducing the number of children a woman had. Feminist movements began to emerge advocating the woman's right to limit the number of children she had. Prior to 1820, there were almost no abortions. By the 1860s, abortions had become common. State laws were enacted to make abortions illegal until the Supreme Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade* in 1973 struck them all down.

4. Below the White Middle Class

Due to slavery, the black family was not able to form and be maintained in the same way as the white family. Slaves could be married and have children, but a slave master could decide to split up the family at will. However, the human urge to have a family was as strong among black people as it was among white. Economics have been the cause for the great number of single-parent homes in the poor black and white communities. Immigrant families were likely to take in boarders. They were accustomed to extended families in their countries of origin and the extra money helped the family.

5. The Last Adjustment

Over the years, the dynamic in the family has changed forever. Women have personal goals both in career and education. Men, as a result, have taken on more responsibilities in the home and in child rearing. The transformation of the family has only been possible because of a mutual love and respect between husband and wife.



Chapter XV: The Making of a World Power

Chapter XV: The Making of a World Power Summary and Analysis

By the 20th century, America was the greatest economic and military power in the world and it was no longer possible to stay out of foreign affairs as it had done in the past.

1. A New Diplomacy for a New Era

In colonial times and for many years after, America took pride in being a different force in the world. It maintained an isolationist policy for many years. In *Common Sense*, Thomas Paine warned against involvement with Europe. Benjamin Franklin and John Adams both considered America morally superior to Europe. Jefferson looked on Europe with disdain and disapproved of war. George Washington warned against foreign entanglements. The Monroe Doctrine set the US policy for years to come. It proclaimed that any efforts to colonize regions in North or South America would be viewed as acts of aggression.

The Industrial Revolution shined a new light on overseas empires for America. President Wilson took a departure from the isolationist view by proclaiming that America could use military force to sustain the idealism of America. All Presidents since Franklin Roosevelt have used American influence and military power to support the idealism of a peaceful world.

2. Looking Outward

The move toward empire by America had always been looming since its early days when the taming of the entire nation was a lofty undertaking.

3. The Most Fateful Step

America's sense of isolation was never more clear than with the outbreak of World War I in 1914. President Wilson claimed neutrality but due in part to the large segment of the community whose roots were in Europe, it became impossible to ignore. Eventually, Wilson saw no way to maintain the neutrality he had initially asserted.

4. The Flight from Commitment

Wilson's promise committed not only military support but also support for the emergence of a new international order. He was disappointed that in the aftermath of the war the US failed to join the League of Nations which he felt would carry out the elements of the Peace Treaty of Versailles. A sign that foreign policy was undergoing a



sea-change were the new international agreements entered into by the US in the early 1920s, which were designed to establish ordered relationships among powers of the Pacific. America naturally became more involved in European affairs because of the increase of American business being conducted abroad.

In the 1930s. There was a new dread of war—a war that many feared would destroy civilization. Isolationists feared that the nation's fundamental tenets and ideals would be destroyed. When war first broke out in Italy in 1935, President Roosevelt declared that America would not get involved. However, Roosevelt felt growing pressure to abandon his vow chiefly because of the threat that Britain could go down in defeat to the Nazis. But there was no longer any hesitation on the part of Roosevelt or the American public to enter the war when Pearl Harbor was attacked in 1941.

After the defeat of Germany and Japan, there was a growing interest in organizing an international organization that stood for unilateralism and peace. By 1945, there was virtually no opposition to America's participation in the newly established United Nations.

5. Challenge and Response

Following World War II, America established a global military presence. The US military became a presence in Europe and Asia due to their involvement in the war. Although Russia was an Allied power during the second world war, there was immediate suspicion about its intentions following the conflict. Roosevelt was aware that continued world peace was contingent upon relations between the US and the Soviet Union. Many claim that FDR would have never allowed a Cold War to develop between the US and Russia.

Russia began to show its muscle by making demands of loyalty from countries it bordered. This sentiment ultimately led to Russian occupation of the eastern bloc of European countries. Russia's presence in Europe became a lingering threat to western European countries. The Marshall Plan was established under the Truman administration which provided economic support to European countries with the goal of halting Russia's aggression and the spread of communism.

A serious form of aggression into Korea by Communist leaders in 1950 led to the Korean War. The Korean War was the first war in history waged by a collective body. However, it was apparent that America was the real force behind the allied effort. The conflict served to define US foreign policy in Asia. The Korean War ultimately led to US involvement in Vietnam which was the first time in modern history that America had failed to emerge victoriously. America, fairly or unfairly, earned the reputation as a heartless military power. President Carter brought a renewed sense of human rights to America's foreign policy. His successor, President Reagan followed suit in at least one measure by establishing an assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs. The cause of human rights received more attention than it had since 1930.



Characters

Benjamin Franklin

Benjamin Franklin was one of leaders in the New Country who helped steer the colonies to ultimate independence from England. He was known and is still revered in modern times as one of the best-known boosters of America. In 1751, he wrote that land was plentiful "and so cheap. . . that a laboring man that understands husbandry can in a short time save money enough to purchase a piece of land sufficient for a plantation. . . " (page 45). Franklin had the foresight to understand that the vast untamed land that would become America would take many ages to settle.

Franklin touted the security that the purchase of land brought to a young family. The young man who bought a piece of America did not have to worry about his children's futures. Franklin was one of the new country's best admen touting it as the land of opportunity. He contended that a man who was virtually unskilled would be accepted as an apprentice and soon become a journeyman.

Franklin was not just a policy wonk or political operative. He had a compassionate heart that once touched was soft and charitable. In his memoir, *Autobiography*, Franklin wrote of attending a sermon delivered by evangelist George Whitefield who was advocating for the construction of an orphanage in Georgia, a project which Franklin opposed strictly on a fiscal basis. However, the evangelist was known for his oratory skills and by the time he was through with his sermon, Franklin who had vowed not to donate a "copper penny," emptied his pockets "wholly into the collector's dish, gold and all" (page 57).

President Franklin D. Roosevelt

President Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected president during the height of the Great Depression. According to his writings and other documents, many historians and scholars feel that FDR had initially been a conservative. However, the monumental issues that faced the country during the years of the economic decline of America coupled with the compassionate heart that FDR had for his fellow man led him to establish what were considered expansive progressive and extremely liberal policies such as Social Security.

Ultimately, FDR brought the nation out of the spiraling economy. There are anecdotal accounts of FDR being surprised when people shouted at him from the street thanking him for saving their jobs and their homes. FDR was much beloved and was reelected three times. There was an account of a man who told his neighbor he was going to FDR's funeral. The neighbor asked if he knew FDR. The man responded, "No, I didn't know President Roosevelt, but he knew me."



When Italy was invaded by Germany, FDR proclaimed that America would not get involved in the European war. However, as the war waged on and England was threatened to go down to the Nazis, FDR was being pressured to get America involved. When Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941, neither the president nor the country he led had any hesitation about becoming involved in the global conflict.

After the war ended, an imposing new enemy faced the democratic world. Roosevelt knew the importance of relations between the US and Russia. The two countries were involved in an on-going stand-off of dangerous proportions, known as the Cold War, for decades. Many historians feel that had FDR lived, he would not have allowed the Cold War to develop.

George Washington

George Washington was the first president of the United States. He was an isolationist and warned that America should not get involved in foreign entanglements.

Thomas Jefferson

Thomas Jefferson was the third president of the United States. He looked down on Europe. He felt that America was superior to the old world and was totally against getting America involved in any of Europe's conflicts.

Alexis de Tocqueville

Alexis de Tocqueville was a French historian and political observer. He toured the US in the 1830s and wrote an early political science book entitled Democracy in America.

John Peter Zenger

John Peter Zenger was the defendant in a landmark legal case in which it was determined that the truth was a defense against charges of libel. This case laid the groundwork for the freedom of the press.

Anthony Lamb

Anthony Lamb is the personification of the rags to riches potential in America. He was a prisoner waiting for execution when his sentence was commuted. A short number of years later, he was the owner of a successful instrument concern.



President Woodrow Wilson

President Woodrow Wilson was the twenty-eighth president of the United States. He was the first president to depart from the isolationist policy that America had maintained since its beginnings. He proclaimed an idealistic internationalism to the world asserting that America would intervene in support of its allies in the name of liberty and democracy.

President Harry S. Truman

It was under the administration of President Harry S. Truman, America's 33rd president, that The Marshall Plan was established. The plan provided economic support to European countries with the goal of halting Russia's aggression and the spread of communism.

Presidents Kennedy & Johnson

Under the administrations of Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Baines Johnson, America's 35th and 36th presidents, the stringent immigration policies of the 1920s were abandoned in favor of an open door policy to a wider range of immigrants.



Objects/Places

The Declaration of Independence

On July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress made a bold statement encompassed in the Declaration of Independence. The new nation was declaring its independence from England and asserting the profound notion that all men were created equal.

The Monroe Doctrine

The Monroe Doctrine of 1823 warned against foreign powers attempting to intervene or occupy countries or regions in North and South America.

Telegraph

Communications took a giant step with the invention in 1844 of the telegraph by Samuel Morse.

Marbury v. Madison

In the case of Marbury v. Madison, 1803, the Supreme Court found that no legislative or executive power could extend beyond the authority set forth in the Constitution. The case formed the basis for judicial review of legislation.

The Boston Tea Party

The Tea Act led to the Boston Tea Party. America began to challenge the right of the British Parliament to levy new and unfair taxes and duties on the colonies. The colonists threw English tea in the harbor rather than accept it and pay taxes on it.

The Underground Railroad

The Underground Railroad was the most celebrated instrument of protest against slavery. The railroad assisted an average of 2,000 slaves to escape from their masters in the years between 1830 and 1860.

Kansas-Nebraska Act

The enactment of the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 was one of the pivotal events leading to the Civil War. It established the territories of Kansas and Nebraska and



opened them up for settlement. The law allowed these new regions to decide for themselves whether to allow slavery or not.

The Civil War

After the South ignored the federal government's push to abolish slavery and with the South feeling as though it was being punished by unfair taxation, the Civil War began which was actually a fight for the South's independence.

The Great Depression

The Great Depression began with the stock market crash in 1929. The Great Depression nearly destroyed America. FDR led the the country out of the black hole back to ultimate prosperity that did not take hold until the advent of World War II in 1941.

The Cold War

After the Allied victory in World War II, a new enemy emerged from the ranks of the Allies. Russia and communism presented a threat to democracy around the world. The Cold War ensued for decades. It was a time in which the US and its allies fought the spread of communism and the Russians fought to spread it.



Themes

America's Impact & Power

Prior to the emergence of America as an economic force in the 19th century and the personification of a fair and equal democratic society, other countries were headed by either monarchs, despots or barbarians. When America had the audacity to declare that all men - kings and paupers alike - were all equals, it was a concept that had to gain the attention of the rest of the world. For centuries after that proclamation of equality, kings and rulers were still in place but the wind of change was in the air.

The kings and rulers of European countries began to see their populace run for the door hoping to catch the next ship to America where they could live and work on an even playing field with everyone else. While Europeans were losing their populations, America was gaining the labor force that would meet the demands of the Industrial Revolution and ultimately catapult the country into an emerging and daunting economic power. Not only did the immigrants fill the labor needs of the country, they brought with them their distinctive cultures and languages making the US the most diverse country on earth. The diversity of America has proven to be fundamental to its strength and global influence.

As America gained in strength and number, those kings and despots had to experience more than a little confusion and unease. How could it be, they had to wonder, that a nation that looks at everyone as equals have that level of success? They undoubtedly became believers when they began to see America pass them by leaps and bounds in both the economic and militaristic arenas.

In 1914, America abandoned its former isolationist policy and entered World War I. President Wilson told the world that America would not show reluctance to support their allies in the defense of freedom and democracy.

History is an ongoing process and America has not reached the final period in its story. However, as things stand today, there is no country in the world that is more admired by the majority of the world's population. Never before in the history of the world has a country had more global influence and impact than the United States. The single-most glaring difference between the US and other nations has been America's belief that all its people are equal. It is by declaration and law, that Americans are able to live a free life and pursue happiness in a democratic society.

American's Exceptionalism

The Puritans were the first settlers of the America that has evolved in modern times. There is criticism among more progressive circles and countries of the world about America's conservatism. But it was the puritanical thinking and moral fiber of those first settlers who were seeking religious freedom that helped define the new country. The



foundation of America was, in part, based on the tenets of its first occupants. The early building blocks of the country is what has made America stand apart from other world powers.

As the country was formed, it also proclaimed a notion that Americans today take for granted. However, at the time of America's Declaration of Independence, its preamble began with words that the world had never heard before: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." At that time, Europe and all the civilized world was ruled by monarchs and kings who came from long lines of rulers before them. The thought that all men in a nation were the same, were equals, was a profound statement that surely jarred the kingdoms of Europe and beyond. Those bold words were the foundation of the country and the democratic exceptionalism for which America has been known and admired since its inception.

This feeling of exceptionalism was seen in the opinions and policies of the country's early leaders. It was obvious that they felt their country was different and apart from England and Europe and ascribed to an isolationist stance. George Washington warned against becoming involved in foreign entanglements. Thomas Jefferson had a condescending attitude toward Europe, feeling that America was superior to European countries and disdained any notion of becoming involved in their warring.

In America there was no class system. There was very little distance between the rich and the poor. And the mobility from rags to riches was flexible and the poor could become rich overnight. The opportunities that America held for its people had never been experienced in the entire history of the world. A sense of nationalism grew among the people. They loved their country and were proud of what it stood for. It was this American dream that drew a limitless number of immigrants who wanted to share in that dream.

Although America maintained a strongly isolationist policy for most of its history, things changed in 1914 when America somewhat reluctantly became involved in World War I. President Wilson departed from isolationism by declaring that American military force could be used to keep peace in the world and spread its idea of democracy. By the end of World War II, America's military presence was felt around the world. America began being looked to by its allies to protect and defend their freedom. Throughout its history, America has retained the exceptionalism that began with a group of men who refused to be punished for their beliefs.

Turning Points in America

Out of Our Past - The Forces That Shaped Modern America describes the country's progression toward its modern identity and status in the world. Beginning as a colony of one of the most powerful countries in the world, Puritans had fled from England in



search of a place where they could peacefully practice their religion. Decades after settling in the new land, a sense of nationalism and pride in country began to emerge.

The colonies were highly successful in agrarian pursuits and began to formulate a capitalistic society. Soon the New World posed a stiff trade competition for England which began to levy heavy and unfair taxes against the colonies in order to beat back the competition. Probably the most important turning point in the history of the country then occurred. America was able to claim its competition after it defeated England in the American Revolution.

Another important pivotal era for America was the Industrial Revolution and the resultant urbanization of the nation. The country transformed from an agricultural center to a manufacturing giant and big cities began to gain huge populations both from rural areas and through the endless influx of immigrants needed to meet endless demands for labor.

From its beginnings, America had an isolationist foreign policy. However, it was impossible to maintain that stance with the onset of World War I. Becoming involved in the war was a huge turning point for American foreign policy. The isolationist tenets were abandoned for a more idealistic foreign policy that opened up the potential for America's military intervention to keep world peace and man free.

There was no bigger transformation for America as that occurring as a result of the Great Depression. Under President Franklin Roosevelt's administration, new laws and policies impacting society - like Social Security and laws protecting labor and employees - were instituted and have become so entrenched in the America psyche that not even the bravest politician dares to even hint at their undoing.

The turning point for the US as a military power occurred after World War II when America emerged as the most powerful nation in the world. With this status, American troops from that point on have been stationed around the world as a peace keeping presence to which the civilized world has become accustomed and has looked to for protection and support.

Style

Perspective

Out of Our Past - The Forces That Shaped Modern America by Carl Dengler is the third edition of the work which describes the people, events and circumstances that have led to the modern America that has emerged. The book is written in the third person narrative. It is presented in a scholarly manner and one that is based on a vast array of historical resources and materials. Dengler also includes anecdotal accounts which give the work a more personal touch by reaching out for the heartbeat of the society about which he writes. This third edition includes updates and new sections on the role of women in America's advancements as well as that of the family. Adding these sections illustrates Dengler's intent to encompass the full story of America and his recognition that all men and women are created equal.

The manner in which Dengler has written Out of Our Past appears to be a completely unbiased and focused one. It is apparent that he is intent on routing out the facts of the events that took place to shape the United States. He appears to take no side or has no stake in where the facts lead him. Even when describing the Civil War, he describes both sides of the debate even though in hindsight the majority of Americans would give little credence to the south's side of the conflict. While he describes the north as becoming uneasy with slavery, he describes the south as feeling overburdened with unfair taxes in addition to their desire not to emancipate their slaves because they saw it as part of a successful economy.

This work is considered a classic interpretation of America's march toward global dominance as a world and military power. Dengler looks inside the facts and into the heart of America as he draws his conclusions and makes his assertions.

Tone

Out of Our Past - The Forces That Shaped Modern America is written in a scholarly manner and is rich in detail. The conclusions and assertions made in the work are based on the author's research of a vast array of materials and resources. Out of Our Past is an esteemed work and is considered among scholars as a classic interpretation of American history. The author approaches this monumental task with respect and with a goal to seek the truth and present more than one side when the truth is elusive.

Without question, taking on the challenge of summarizing the history of any nation or people is a lofty one. Dengler uses his analytic and interpretative skills to cut through the works of many experts and historians and glean the most relevant and important data to build on his unique historical work—one that focuses on the driving forces that have created the America of modern times.



In its third edition, *Out of Our Past* focuses new sections on the evolution of the family, the role of women and the changing face of US foreign policy over the decades through the Carter and early Reagan administrations. By adding sections on the role of family and women, it illustrates the author's acknowledgment that much more than policy and military actions contribute to the shaping of a country.

Structure

Out of Our Past - The Forces That Shaped Modern America by Carl N. Degler is a large-volume book and is comprised of fifteen lengthy and comprehensive chapters. It should be noted that this is Degler's "Third Edition" of the work. Each chapter is subdivided into sub-sections that relate to the main topic of each chapter. For example, "Chapter I, The Beginnings" has four sub-sections which are entitled, "1. Capitalism Came in the First Ships," "2. Were the Puritans 'Puritanical?'," "3. Rights of Englishmen," "4. Black People in a White People's Country." The remaining fourteen chapters are structured in the same manner.

The time span of the book, which tells the story of the history of America that shaped the modern United States, encompasses the centuries and decades that depict the arrival of the Puritans and the establishment of colonialism all the way through the Cold War and its aftermath. *Out of Our Past* is not a history of America. It is, as its subtitle suggests, focused on the events that have shaped modern America.

There are extensive notes throughout the work that provide source material for some of the assertions made by the author. Following the final chapter of the book is a section entitled "Critical Bibliographical Essay" which provides detailed accounts of the material the author researched and upon which he based the conclusions and assertions that are made in the book. An "Index" provides the pages that cover the main topics covered in the book.



Quotes

"The upper class in America was one into which others might move when they had acquired the requisite wealth. And so long as wealth accumulation was open to all, the class structure would be correspondingly flexible."

Chapter I, page 4

"The Puritans prohibited bear-baiting not because of torture to the bear, but because of the pleasure it afforded the spectators."

Chapter I, page 9

"The economic history of the United States is the history of the rise and development of the capitalistic system."

Chapter II, page 41

"You and I, my dear friend have been sent into life at a time when the greatest lawgivers of antiquity would have wished to live. How few of the human race have ever enjoyed an opportunity of making an election of government for themselves or their children!"

John Adams to Richard Lee, 1776, Chapter III, page 88

"Railroad iron is a magician's rod in its power to evoke the sleeping energies of land and water."

Chapter IV, page 125

"The United States appeared as the bright luminary of the western hemisphere whose radiance will extend across the Atlantic's broad expanse and light the whole world to freedom and happiness."

Chapter V, page 148

"Some Europeans, however, could not fail to notice the fact of human slavery, which, as one English newspaper phrased it in 1845, 'is a canker in the root of the seemingly fair and flourishing plant. . . and threatens to make the great republic of modern times a warning instead of an example to the world at large.'"

Chapter VI, page 175

"By the time of the first World War, it appeared that the American solution to the question of the races was strikingly parallel, if not similar, to that of South Africa."

Chapter VIII, page 256

"Man's control over the forces of nature had progressed so far that man has been able to do far more work in a given time, produce far more product per worker, and a far greater measure than it was possible for him to do twenty or thirty years before."

Chapter IX, page 258



"Cities are paradoxes. Their rapid growth and large size testify to their superiority as a technique for the exploitation of the earth."

Chapter XI, page 347

"The New Deal is an old deal—as old as the earliest aspirations of humanity for liberty and justice and the good life."

Chapter XIII, page 444

"Washington's advice [was] that Americans not 'entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor or caprice.'"

Chapter XV, page 495

Topics for Discussion

What was the role of religion in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries? What role did Puritanism play in the colonies? How did the colonists change Puritanical thought?

What were the differences in the views of Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton? What "classes" or segments of society did each of them advocate? What did their viewpoints lead to?

Describe the Age of the Great Experiment. Why was this era a sea-change for America? Why was Andrew Jackson inspiring and symbolic of the new mindset that permeated into the American psyche?

What were the different mind-sets of the urban versus the rural American prior to the Industrial Revolution? Why did people from rural areas move to urban areas? What value-system eventually came to dominate among the majority of the populace and why?

What were the impacts of the Industrial Revolution and urbanization on society? On women? On immigration?

What social reform occurred as a result of the Great Depression? What agencies were created during the Great Depression and what was their purpose?

Describe the transformation of the family? What is the modern family? How has the role of the woman reshaped the family?