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## UNIT 1 COLONIAL SOCIETY 1

### Issue 1. Did the Chinese Discover America? 2

**YES:** Gavin Menzies, from *1421: The Year China Discovered America* (William Morrow, 2003) 5

**NO:** Robert Finlay, from “How Not to (Re)Write World History: Gavin Menzies and the Chinese Discovery of America,” *Journal of World History* 15 (June 2004, pp. 229–242) 14

Gavin Menzies surmises that between 1421 and 1423 a Chinese fleet spent four months exploring the Pacific coastline of North America and leaving behind substantial evidence to support his contention that the Chinese discovered America long before the arrival of European explorers. Robert Finlay accuses Menzies of ignoring the basic rules of historical study and logic to concoct an implausible interpretation of Chinese discovery based upon a misreading of Chinese imperial policy, misrepresentation of sources, and conjecture that has no evidentiary base.

### Issue 2. Was the Settlement of Jamestown a Fiasco? 24

**YES:** Edmund S. Morgan, from *American Slavery, American Freedom* (W. W. Norton, 1975) 28

**NO:** Karen Ordahl Kupperman, from *The Jamestown Project* (Harvard University Press, 2007) 37

Professor Edmund S. Morgan argues that Virginia’s first decade as a colony was a complete “fiasco” because the settlers were too lazy to engage in the subsistence farming necessary for their survival and failed to abandon their own and the Virginia’s company’s expectations of establishing extractive industries such as mining, timber, and fishing. Professor Karen Ordahl Kupperman argues that Jamestown was America’s first successful colony because in its first decade of trial and error “the ingredients for success—widespread ownership of land, control of taxation for public obligations through a representative assembly, the institution of a normal society through the inclusion of women, and development of a product that could be marketed profitably to sustain the economy—were beginning to be put in place by 1618 and were in full operation by 1620, when the next successful colony, Plymouth, was planted.”

### Issue 3. Was Conflict Between Europeans and Native Americans Inevitable? 50

**YES:** Kevin Kenny, from *Peaceable Kingdom Lost: The Paxton Boys and the Destruction of William Penn’s Holy Experiment* (Oxford University Press, 2009) 54

**NO:** **Cynthia J. Van Zandt**, from *Brothers Among Nations: The Pursuit of Intercultural Alliances in Early America, 1580–1660* (Oxford University Press, 2008) 60

Kevin Kenny argues that European colonists' demands for privately owned land condemned William Penn's vision of amicable relations with local Native Americans to failure and guaranteed hostilities that ultimately destroyed Indian culture and produced the extermination of even the most peaceful tribes in Pennsylvania. Cynthia J. Van Zandt claims that trade alliances between English colonists and Native Americans continued even despite military hostilities between the two groups and fell victim not to racial or cultural differences, but rather from conflicts among the various European nations vying for hegemony in the New World.

#### **Issue 4. Was the Salem Witchcraft Hysteria a Product of Women's Search for Power? 72**

**YES:** **Lyle Koehler**, from *A Search for Power: The "Weaker Sex" in Seventeenth-Century New England* (University of Illinois, 1980) 75

**NO:** **Laurie Winn Carlson**, from *A Fever in Salem: A New Interpretation of the New England Witch Trials* (Ivan R. Dee, 1999) 84

Lyle Koehler argues that the Salem witchcraft hysteria is best understood from the perspective of differential relationships in a patriarchal Puritan society whereby the female accusers of "witches" exercised an unconscious search for power to overcome their own subordination in a rapidly changing world. Laurie Winn Carlson believes that the witchcraft hysteria in Salem was the product of people's responses to physical and neurological behaviors resulting from an unrecognized epidemic of encephalitis.

#### **Issue 5. Was There a Great Awakening in Mid-Eighteenth-Century America? 97**

**YES:** **Thomas S. Kidd**, from *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America* (Yale University Press, 2007) 101

**NO:** **Jon Butler**, from "Enthusiasm Described and Decried: The Great Awakening as Interpretative Fiction," *Journal of American History* (September 1982) 110

Thomas Kidd insists that preachers such as George Whitefield engineered a powerful series of revivals in the mid-eighteenth century that influenced all of the British North American colonies and gave birth to a spirit of evangelicalism that initiated a major alteration of global Christian history. Jon Butler claims that to describe the religious revival activities of the eighteenth century as the "Great Awakening" is to seriously exaggerate their extent, nature, and impact on pre-revolutionary American society and politics.

## **UNIT 2 REVOLUTION AND THE NEW NATION 123**

#### **Issue 6. Was the American Revolution Largely a Product of Market-Driven Consumer Forces? 124**

**YES:** **T. H. Breen**, from *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (Oxford University Press, 2004) 128

**NO:** Carl Degler, from *Out of Our Past: The Forces That Shaped Modern America*, 2nd ed. (Harper Collins Publishers, 1959, 1970) 137

Professor T. H. Breen maintains that “the colonists’ shared experiences as consumers provided them with the cultural resources needed to develop a bold new form of political protest”—the nonimportation agreements which provided “a necessary if not causal link” to the break with England. Professor Carl N. Degler argues that the American Revolution was a political rebellion led by a group of reluctant revolutionaries who opposed parliament’s attempt to impose taxes without the consent of the colonists.

### **Issue 7. Was the Constitution of the United States Written to Protect the Economic Interests of the Upper Classes? 146**

**YES:** Howard Zinn, from *A People’s History of the United States* (Harper Collins, 1999) 150

**NO:** Gordon S. Wood, from “Democracy and the Constitution,” in Robert A. Goldwin and William A. Schambra, eds., *How Democratic is the Constitution?* (American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1980) 161

According to radical historian Howard Zinn, the Founding Fathers were an elite group of northern money interests and southern slaveholders who used Shays’ Rebellion in Massachusetts as a pretext to create a strong central government, which protected the property rights of the rich to the exclusion of slaves, Indians, and non-property-holding whites. Professor of history Gordon S. Wood views the struggle for a new constitution in 1787–1788 as a social conflict between upper-class Federalists who desired a stronger central government and the “humbler” Anti-Federalists who controlled the state assemblies.

### **Issue 8. Did Alexander Hamilton’s Policies Lay the Foundation for America’s Economic Growth in the Early National Period? 173**

**YES:** John Steele Gordon, from *An Empire of Wealth: The Epic History of American Economic Powers* (Harper Collins, 2004) 177

**NO:** Joyce Appleby, from *Inheriting the Revolution: The First Generation of Americans* (The Belknap Press, 2000) 186

Historian John Steele Gordon claims that Hamilton’s policies for funding and assuming the debts of the confederation and state governments and for establishing a privately controlled Bank of the United States laid the foundation for the rich and powerful national economy Americans enjoy today. Joyce Appleby argues that Jefferson democratized Hamilton’s accomplishments, dismantled the Federalist fiscal program, reduced taxes, and freed money and credit from national control.

### **Issue 9. Did Andrew Jackson’s Removal Policy Benefit Native Americans? 202**

**YES:** Robert V. Remini, from *Andrew Jackson and His Indian Wars* (Viking Penguin, 2001) 206

**NO:** Alfred A. Cave, from “Abuse of Power: Andrew Jackson and the Indian Removal Act of 1830,” *The Historian* (Winter 2003) 215

Robert V. Remini insists that President Andrew Jackson demonstrated a genuine concern for the welfare of Native Americans by proposing a voluntary program that would remove the Five Civilized Tribes west of the Mississippi River where they could avoid dangerous conflict with white settlers and preserve their heritage and culture. Alfred A. Cave accuses Andrew Jackson of abusing his power as president by failing to adhere to the letter of the Indian Removal Act by transforming a voluntary program into a coercive one and by ignoring the provisions in his own removal treaties that promised protection to the various southern tribes.

**Issue 10. Did the Industrial Revolution Provide More Economic Opportunities for Women in the 1830s? 225**

**YES:** Nancy F. Cott, from *The Bonds of Womanhood: “Woman’s Sphere” in New England, 1780–1835* (Yale University Press, 1977, 1997) 229

**NO:** Gerda Lerner, from “The Lady and the Mill Girl: Changes in the Status of Women in the Age of Jackson,” *The Majority Finds Its Past: Placing Women in History* (Oxford University Press, 1979) 240

According to Professor Nancy F. Cott, when merchant capitalism reached its mature phase in the 1830s, the roles of the middle-class family became more clearly defined, and new economic opportunities opened within a limited sphere outside the home. According to Professor Gerda Lerner, while Jacksonian democracy provided political and economic opportunities for men, both the “lady” and the “mill girl” were equally disenfranchised and isolated from vital centers of economic opportunity.

**UNIT 3 ANTEBELLUM AMERICA 255**

**Issue 11. Was Antebellum Temperance Reform Motivated Primarily by Religious Moralism? 256**

**YES:** W. J. Rorabaugh, from *The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition* (Oxford University Press, 1979) 259

**NO:** John J. Rumbarger, from *Profits, Power, and Prohibition: Alcohol Reform and the Industrializing of America, 1800–1930* (State University of New York Press, 1989) 266

W. J. Rorabaugh points out that in the first half of the nineteenth century evangelical Christian ministers portrayed liquor as the tool of the Devil and developed temperance societies as socializing institutions to ease social tensions and anxieties that contributed to alcohol consumption. John J. Rumbarger concludes that nineteenth-century temperance reform was the product of a pro-capitalist market economy whose entrepreneurial elite led the way toward abstinence and prohibition campaigns in order to guarantee the availability of a more productive work force.

**Issue 12. Was the Mexican War an Exercise in American Imperialism? 278**

**YES:** Walter Nugent, from “California and New Mexico, 1846–1848: Southward Aggression II,” *Habits of Empire: A History of American Expansion* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2008) 282

**NO:** **Norman A. Graebner**, from “The Mexican War: A Study in Causation,” *Pacific Historical Review* (August, 1980) 295

Professor Walter Nugent argues that President James K. Polk was a narrow-minded, ignorant but not stupid individual with one big idea: use the power of the presidency to force Mexico to cede California and the current Southwest to the United States. Professor of diplomatic history Norman A. Graebner argues that President James Polk pursued an aggressive policy that he believed would force Mexico to sell New Mexico and California to the United States and to recognize the annexation of Texas without starting a war.

### **Issue 13. Was John Brown an Irrational Terrorist? 308**

**YES:** **James N. Gilbert**, from “A Behavioral Analysis of John Brown: Martyr or Terrorist?” in Peggy A. Russo and Paul Finkelman, eds., *Terrible Swift Sword: The Legacy of John Brown* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2005) 311

**NO:** **Scott John Hammond**, from “John Brown as Founder: America’s Violent Confrontation with Its First Principles,” in Peggy A. Russo and Paul Finkelman, eds., *Terrible Swift Sword: The Legacy of John Brown* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2005) 317

James N. Gilbert says that John Brown’s actions conform to a modern definition of terrorist behavior in that Brown considered the United States incapable of reforming itself by abolishing slavery, believed that only violence would accomplish that goal, and justified his actions by proclaiming adherence to a “higher” power. Scott John Hammond insists that John Brown’s commitment to higher moral and political goals conformed to the basic principles of human freedom and political and legal equality that formed the heart of the creed articulated by the founders of the American nation.

## **UNIT 4 CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION 329**

### **Issue 14. Was Slavery the Key Issue in the Sectional Conflict Leading to the Civil War? 330**

**YES:** **Charles B. Dew**, from *Apostles of Disunion: Southern Secession Commissioners and the Causes of the Civil War* (University of Virginia Press, 2001) 334

**NO:** **Marc Egnal**, from “Rethinking the Secession of the Lower South: The Clash of Two Groups,” *Civil War History* 50 (September 2004) 342

Charles B. Dew uses the speeches and public letters of 41 white southerners who, as commissioners in 1860 and 1861, attempted to secure support for secession by appealing to their audiences’ commitment to the preservation of slavery and the doctrine of white supremacy. Marc Egnal argues that the decision of Lower South states to secede from the Union was determined by an economically-based struggle between residents with strong ties to the North and Upper South who embraced an entrepreneurial outlook, on one hand, and those who were largely isolated from the North and who opposed the implementation of a diversified economy, on the other hand.

## Issue 15. Are Historians Wrong to Consider the War Between the States a “Total War”? 352

**YES:** **Mark E. Neely, Jr.**, from “Was the Civil War a Total War?” *Civil War History* 50 (2004) 355

**NO:** **James M. McPherson**, from “From Limited War to Total War, 1861–1865,” in *Drawn with the Sword: Reflections on the American Civil War* (Oxford University Press, 1996) 366

Professor Mark E. Neely, Jr., argues that the Civil War was not a total war because President Lincoln and the Union military leaders, such as General William T. Sherman, respected the distinction between soldiers and civilians, combatants and noncombatants. In addition, the North did not fully mobilize its resources nor engage in centralized planning and state intervention as was typical of twentieth-century wartime economies. Professor James M. McPherson argues that the Civil War was a total war. While conceding the distinction between combatants and noncombatants, he insists that the war accomplished the abolition of slavery and the extinction of a national state system—the Confederacy.

## Issue 16. Was Abraham Lincoln America’s Greatest President? 382

**YES:** **Phillip Shaw Paludan**, from *The Presidency of Abraham Lincoln* (University Press of Kansas, 1994) 385

**NO:** **Melvin E. Bradford**, from *Remembering Who We Are: Observations of a Southern Conservative* (University of Georgia Press, 1985) 392

Phillip Shaw Paludan contends that Abraham Lincoln’s greatness exceeds that of all other American presidents because Lincoln, in the face of unparalleled challenges associated with the Civil War, succeeded in preserving the Union and freeing the slaves. Melvin E. Bradford characterizes Lincoln as a cynical politician whose abuse of authority as president and commander-in-chief during the Civil War marked a serious departure from the republican goals of the Founding Fathers and established the prototype for the “imperial presidency” of the twentieth century.

## Issue 17. Did Reconstruction Fail as a Result of Racism? 403

**YES:** **LeeAnna Keith**, from *The Colfax Massacre: The Untold Story of Black Power, White Terror, and the Death of Reconstruction* (Oxford University Press, 2008) 407

**NO:** **Heather Cox Richardson**, from *The Death of Reconstruction: Race, Labor, and Politics in the Post-Civil War North, 1865–1901* (Harvard University Press, 2001) 416

LeeAnna Keith characterizes the assault on the Grant Parish courthouse in Colfax, Louisiana on Easter Sunday in 1873 as a product of white racism and unwillingness by local whites to tolerate African American political power during the era of Reconstruction. Heather Cox Richardson argues that the failure of Radical Reconstruction was primarily a consequence of a national commitment to a free labor ideology that opposed an expanding central government that legislated rights to African Americans that other citizens had acquired through hard work.