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David Goldfield; et al. *The American Journey: A History of the United States.* Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1998. xxxi + 1037 pp. $57.33 (paper), ISBN 978-0-13-031766-7.

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The American Journey, by David Goldfield, et al., is the latest U.S. history text from Prentice Hall. The authors note in the preface their desire to write a text that will not only engage students' minds but also avoid the academic trendiness that has crept into the discipline over the past twenty years. The authors see many of today's debates (i.e., multiculturalism and identity, social and political history, and bottom-up and history of the elite) as "unnecessarily confusing." Instead, *The American Journey* seeks to emphasize the integration of social and political history, weaving the stories of major and minor players as well as particular groups into the larger narrative. The journey to which the text's title refers is "the emergence of distinctively American ideals and the way the conflict between those ideals and reality has shaped the nation's development" (p. xxi).

This new textbook has much to recommend it. Readers should have little trouble following the material presented, as the text follows a crisply-focused chronology. Chapters are preceded by an outline and a list of key topics to be explored. An opening story draws students into the important themes to come (though I would say the vignettes in Nash and Jeffrey, et al., *The American People*, are more engaging than these general offerings). A chronology is strategically placed in the early pages of the chapters. Geographical literacy is stressed by the use of over one hundred maps, many of which should be a substantial benefit in aiding students with not only physical locations but also spatial relationships. Another notable pedagogical tool located in each chapter is the "American Views" box. This insert contains a relevant primary source document (letters, newspapers, government documents, diaries, etc.) intended to direct students' attention to a major theme within the chapter. An introduction and prereading questions are also included. Many of these primary source documents could effectively be used by the instructor during class time to generate discussion and provide useful practice in the art of doing history.

An excellent feature of each chapter is the summary tables that provide an overview of many complex issues. These should be quite useful for both students and instructors. Various summary tables include England's colonies in the seventeenth century with information regarding the date of founding, religion, economy, and governmental structure. Later as students attempt to digest the information regarding the imperial breakdown between Britain and the American colonies, a summary table lists the various restraints placed by Britain on the colonies–legislative action, territorial expansion, trade, and the imposition of new taxes. The summary tables in Volume II are equally appealing, including a fine recap of the various issues in the "culture wars" of the 1920s. Finally, a thoughtful summary in the text's last chapter offers interpretations as to why 40 million Americans are poor. To draw the attention that these summary tables deserve, it might be best to put the first couple on an overhead transparency for the entire class to view, thus reinforcing their importance and usefulness to the students.

Each chapter in the text averages around thirty pages of well-crafted narrative. An important thread that is woven through the fabric of the American experience is the importance of religion. The authors of *The American Journey* have not shied away from stressing the importance of religion throughout their story. Students can plainly see that it has been both a rich source of strength and a reflection of more troubling aspects of the society. Chapter 10, "The Jacksonian Era, 1824-45," carefully delineates the egalitarian impulse at work in shaping the Age of Jackson, then forcefully links the Second Great Awakening with its "salvation open to all" and the political democracy that stressed "one man, one vote" (p. 290-91). The connections between the new evangelical Protestantism and the varieties of reform in Antebellum America are concisely presented in Chapter 14, "Reforming Antebellum Society, 1815-1850." Later chapters remind readers of the intimate tie between religious faith and freedom for former slaves in the post-Civil War era,

the gospel of prosperity in the 1950s, and the disjointed search for spiritual grounding in the present.

Chapters dealing with the coming of the Civil War and the war itself are especially well written. All of the familiar political issues are discussed from the Wilmot Proviso of 1846 to Lincoln's election in 1860, but along the way, students are encouraged to view these issues as the participants did; that is, as an effort by both North and South to gain moral and political advantage at the other's expense. Two chapters are allotted for discussion of the war with the chapter break being at 1863 when the Confederacy was already losing the war over slavery in many parts of the South. By late 1863, Lincoln could effectively articulate the meaning of the war for northern soldiers and civilians at the dedication of the federal cemetery at Gettysburg. Jefferson Davis, however, was left little to say in the wake of a worsening military situation. Increasingly, the Confederacy had to rely on Robert E. Lee whose brilliance was somewhat exaggerated by his inept Union counterparts. Even under the best of conditions, the newly formed Confederacy would have faced an uphill battle; but as battlefield defeats mounted, the Confederacy disintegrated–politically, economically and emotionally. The Union victory, though, was not, as Karl Marx had anticipated, a victory for the working class; instead, it was the industrialists and entrepreneurs who would be the benefactors.

Volume II does well in developing major themes that have shaped the twentieth century–the growth of presidential power and the federal bureaucracy, the Cold War consensus and America's loss of hegemony beginning in the 1970s. Clearly, the Great Depression and New Deal mark a major divide in American history. While the New Deal failed to restore prosperity, it did bring partial economic recovery and the federal government's role in regulating the economy was greatly expanded. So too was the power of the Chief Executive expanded as President Franklin Roosevelt took the initiative in defining public policy, drafting legislation, and communicating with the nation. The coalition of minorities, industrial workers, previously uninvolved citizens, and white southerners made the Democrats the dominant national party, but that same coalition often limited the New Deal's effectiveness, especially in the efforts to address racial and gender discrimination. Following WWII, President Harry Truman's efforts to protect the New Deal and Fair Deal programs and expand economic opportunity gave American's confidence that the programs were permanent if incomplete. The Cold War consensus of the 1950s, while providing the overarching goal of containment, narrowed foreign policy options by casting every issue in terms of U.S.-Soviet rivalry. The turbulent '60s shattered the consensus and ultimately forced the United States to confront a world it could not run. The profound social and economic revolutions, including the changing population mix and new living and working arrangements further eroded the '50s era of confidence. The stories and well chosen quotes of participants add to the readability and provide the humanizing touch that should encourage students to want to continue reading. One can imagine the dilemma for many American women in the 1950s when faced with the competing images of Betty Crocker the homemaker and Marilyn Monroe the sexpot.

All chapters conclude with a substantial bibliography of both recommended and additional reading sources. Review questions at the end of the chapters may also be used to help students locate the major themes and concepts more effectively. A somewhat less useful feature of the text is the highlighting of key terms within the text. These terms are then defined in a glossary at the end of the book. The terms, for the most part, are defined in the context of the narrative and one may doubt how often students will take the time to flip back and forth in the course of their reading. A full complement of instructional materials is also offered for both students and instructors. For students, there are study guides; a brief booklet, *Reading Critically about History*, intended to provide students with helpful strategies for reading the textbook; and another booklet, *Understanding and Answering Essay Questions*, that suggests guidelines for students in writing essay answers. For instructors, there is a computerized testing program, transparencies, a collection of primary source documents, an instructor's resource manual and a CD-ROM component that features historical photographs, interactive study questions and the complete text of *The American Journey*.

The American Journey is a well researched, well organized text for college students. It offers a fine balance of political and social history and–perhaps its most endearing trait–it's a fun read. Students should also enjoy the substantial number and variety of photographs, political cartoons and paintings that grace many of the pages throughout both volumes. This text should take its place alongside the most successful in today's highly competitive market.

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