


# The Oxford Companion to United States History (Oxford Companions)

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**The Oxford Companion to United States History (Oxford Companions)**
From Oxford University Press

Here is a volume that is as big and as varied as the nation it portrays. With over 1,400 entries written by some 900 historians and other scholars, it illuminates not only America's political, diplomatic, and military history, but also social, cultural, and intellectual trends; science, technology, and medicine; the arts; and religion.

Here are the familiar political heroes, from George Washington and Benjamin Franklin, to Abraham Lincoln, Woodrow Wilson, and Franklin D. Roosevelt. But here, too, are scientists, writers, radicals, sports figures, and religious leaders, with incisive portraits of such varied individuals as Thomas Edison and Eli Whitney, Babe Ruth and Muhammed Ali, Black Elk and Crazy Horse, Margaret Fuller, Emma Goldman, and Marian Anderson, even Al Capone and Jesse James. The *Companion* illuminates events that have shaped the nation (the Great Awakening, Bunker Hill, Wounded Knee, the Vietnam War); major Supreme Court decisions (*Marbury* v. *Madison*, *Roe* v. *Wade*); landmark legislation (the Fugitive Slave Law, the Pure Food and Drug Act); social movements (Suffrage, Civil Rights); influential books (*The Jungle*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*); ideologies (conservatism, liberalism, Social Darwinism); even natural disasters and iconic sites (the Chicago Fire, the Johnstown Flood, Niagara Falls, the Lincoln Memorial). Here too is the nation's social and cultural history, from Films, Football, and the 4-H Club, to Immigration, Courtship and Dating, Marriage and Divorce, and Death and Dying. Extensive multi-part entries cover such key topics as the Civil War, Indian History and Culture, Slavery, and the Federal Government.

A new volume for a new century, *The Oxford Companion to United States History* covers everything from Jamestown and the Puritans to the Human Genome Project and the Internet--from Columbus to Clinton. Written in clear, graceful prose for researchers, browsers, and general readers alike, this is *the* volume that addresses the totality of the American experience, its triumphs and heroes as well as its tragedies and darker moments.

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## Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
From abortion to "Babe" Didrikson Zaharias, Abrams vs. United States to the Zenger trial, and abstract impressionism to Dr. Marie Zakrzewska, *The Oxford Companion to United States History* is an encyclopedic overview covering the pre-Columbian era to the election of George W. Bush in 2000.

The *Companion* examines the notable men and women and major events in U.S. history, such as wars or the Depression, as well as ideas and ideologies, technological innovations and economic developments, and long-term processes such as immigration and urbanization. Each entry is written by an authority on the subject, thoroughly cross-referenced in the 78-page index, and arranged alphabetically for easy reference. The alphabetic organization makes for some strange (or amusing) combinations of people on the same page: Billy Graham and Martha Graham; "Mother" Jones and Michael Jordan; Persian Gulf War and Petroleum Industry; Income Tax, Federal, and Indentured Servitude.

A browser's delight, but full of solid scholarship, *The Oxford Companion to United States History* deserves the treatment its editors recommend--as "a work to be thumbed and worn out, not a book to be put behind glass on a shelf!" Absolutely essential for the well-stocked history library. --*Sunny Delaney*

From Library Journal
With this long-awaited update to The Oxford Companion to American History (1966), social historian Boyer (Univ. of Wisconsin; Notable American Women) has put together an extraordinary single-volume compendium of 1400 entries on U.S. history with the assistance of more than 900 contributors, including many well-recognized scholars. This edition is not only a resource on history itself but a measure of how the discipline has changed over the past generation. While Boyer's work continues to include entries on great people and politics, it also presents topics as diverse as the environment and the Human Genome Project and individuals as varied as Black Elk and Bill Gates. This especially user-friendly work is arranged alphabetically, with numerous cross references and an extensive index. The entries are highly readable, and most have a short bibliography. The only challenge some will find in using this work is reading the small typeface. Otherwise, this is an excellent selection for both public and academic libraries. Highly recommended. Daniel Liestman, Kansas State Univ. Libs., Manhattan
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From Booklist
Every library should have at least one up-to-date, single-volume reference companion to U.S. history. Considering its prestigious Oxford University Press parentage and its reasonable price, this one will be hard to beat.

Exercising a praiseworthy degree of common sense, Oxford has avoided cumbersome arrangement by topical area or chronology. Instead, all 1,400 signed entries are presented in alphabetical order. Therefore, readers may move easily and quickly to any desired topic. Easy access to the mass of information presented in this source is also facilitated by *see* and *see also* references and an index.

Coverage begins with the colonial period. More than 900 scholars have contributed entries on people, places, events, ideologies, historical and social processes, inventions, technological changes, economic developments, conflicts, arts, and religion. Examples include *Business cycle; Coolidge, Calvin; Donner*

*party; Drugs; Faulkner, William; FBI; Freedmen's Bureau; Immigrant labor; Mardi Gras; Mexican War; Pony Express; Vaudeville*; and *Women's rights movements*. The entry *Hispanic Americans* is typical of the longer entries. In 2,500 words it describes the Hispanic-American community; traces its history from colonial times to 2000; notes prominent Hispanic American politicians, artists, and athletes; and characterizes the contemporary Hispanic American experience.

It is convenient that so much information is contained in one volume. However, the trade-off is the small font size, and even researchers young enough to do without reading glasses will appreciate a reader's magnifying glass whenever they may be using the book for more than a few minutes at a time. Also, this is not a good choice if illustrations are important because, other than 25 black-and-white maps, the volume is not illustrated.

There are a few comparable reference sources on U.S. history. *The American Heritage Encyclopedia of American History* (Holt, 1998), though not quite as current, has 500 illustrations, which might make it a preferred choice for junior and senior high schools. It also has a broader chronological range, because its coverage begins with pre-Columbian times. Facts On File's *Dictionary of American History: From 1763 to the Present* [RBB Je 1 & 15 01] has fewer and generally shorter entries. *The Oxford Companion to United States History* is highly recommended for high-school, public, and academic libraries needing an authoritative single-volume resource on the topic. *RBB*
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**Ruth Michel:**

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