CONTENTS

Preface by Robert J. Allison xi
Chronology by Robert J. Allison xiii

Agricultural Advances: Did the technological revolution benefit farmers? 1
Yes, the use of technology and science expanded the level of agricultural production and bettered the quality of life for farmers. (Elizabeth D. Schafer) 2
No, the technological revolution did not benefit farmers because in the long run it destroyed the self-sufficiency of the family farm and incurred unforeseen ecological costs. (A. Bowdoin Van Riper) 5

Atomic Bomb: Why did President Harry S Truman order the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki? 10
The atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were unnecessary for victory in World War II and were used primarily as a tool to impress and contain the Russians. (Margaret Mary Barrett) 11
President Truman used the atomic bombs in order to bring a quick end to the war. (Margo Dowling) 12

Eugenics: Did the eugenics movement benefit the United States? 17
Yes, the eugenics movement was a Progressive-era attempt to correct social ills. (Lonna Douglass) 17
No, eugenics was a sociopolitical effort to control minorities, immigrants, and impoverished Americans. (Elizabeth D. Schafer) 20

FDR’s Supreme Court: How did the Supreme Court weather the attempt by Franklin D. Roosevelt to increase the number of justices in response to its rescinding New Deal legislation? 24
Though he maintained he was not motivated by politics, Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes displayed political skill in handling the Court-packing crisis by persuading conservative justices to modify their opposition to the New Deal. (Robert J. Allison) 25
Though Franklin D. Roosevelt lost his attempt to control the judiciary, his threat pushed the Supreme Court to amend its views of constitutional power. (Lonna Douglass) 27

Fundamentalism: What role did the fundamentalists play in American society of the 1920s? 32
The power and the purposes of the fundamentalist movement have been misrepresented and oversimplified by historians. (Thomas E. Woods Jr.) 33
The religious fundamentalists of the 1920s embraced modern life and in doing so won significant social gains. (Tona J. Hangen) 36
Religious fundamentalists lost influence in the 1920s because the rise of mass media spread new ideas about science and society. (A. Bowdoin Van Ripper) ........................................ 39

**Good Neighbor:** Was the United States a “Good Neighbor” toward Latin America in the 1930s? ........................................ 45

Yes, the Good Neighbor Policy was a new beginning in U.S. foreign policy in Latin America. (Jürgen Scheunemann) ........................................ 46

No, the Good Neighbor Policy represented an ongoing effort on the part of the U.S. government to maintain U.S. hegemony in Latin America. (Erik Benson) ........................................ 48

**Great Depression: Causes:** What caused the Great Depression? ........ 54

The Great Depression was caused by a global economic crisis as well as poor investment practices in the United States. (Lonna Douglass) ........................................ 55

The Great Depression was caused by a decline in spending and consumption in the United States, not simply by the stock-market crash or the mistakes of the Federal Reserve. (Brett Flehinger) ........................................ 57

**Great Depression: Ending:** What ended the Depression—the New Deal or World War II? ........................................ 62

World War II, with little help from New Deal programs, brought America out of the Great Depression. (Margaret Mary Barrett) ........................................ 63

Far from ending the Great Depression, the New Deal was an obstacle to recovery because it was not designed to restore national prosperity. (Thomas E. Woods Jr.) ........................................ 65

**Great Migration:** What caused the Great Migrations? ................... 70

The Great Migrations of African Americans from the rural South to the industrial North was the result of economic changes over which they had little control. (Elizabeth D. Schafer) ... 71

A close examination of the Great Migrations reveals a complex and diverse story of men and women making decisions based on personal considerations. (Christopher W. Schmidt) ........................................ 74

**Harlem Renaissance:** What caused the Harlem Renaissance? ........ 78

The Harlem Renaissance was as much a political and social movement as a cultural expression of African American life. (Keith P. Griffier) ........................................ 79

The Harlem Renaissance was a cultural and intellectual expression of African American life that was also affected by white “Negrophiles.” (Tracy J. Prince) ........................................ 82

**Huey Long:** Was Huey Long a progressive reformer or a dangerous demagogue? ........................................ 86

Huey Long was a populist reformer who politically pursued and achieved an important social agenda. (Elizabeth D. Schafer) ................................. 87

Huey Long was a dangerous demagogue who dominated Louisiana with an iron fist and exploited reform rhetoric. (Anthony Connors) ........................................ 90

**Influenza Epidemic:** Did the influenza outbreak of 1918–1919 have much impact on the United States, and why is it historically neglected? ........................................ 95

While the Spanish flu epidemic was a significant event, its importance was overshadowed by the battles of World War I. (Robert J. Allison) ........................................ 96

The 1918–1919 flu epidemic contributed to the hedonistic escapism of the 1920s. (Robert J. Allison) ........................................ 98

**Japanese Internment:** Was the internment of Japanese Americans justified during World War II? ........................................ 102

Yes, the internment of Japanese Americans was necessary for national security because some of them were suspected of disloyalty. (Patric O’Brien) ........................................ 103
No, the internment of Japanese Americans was an unnecessary mockery of American claims of fighting a war for freedom. (A. Bowdoin Van Riper) ........................................ 106

**Lindbergh Kidnapping:** Was Bruno Richard Hauptmann guilty of kidnapping and killing Charles A. Lindbergh’s son? .................. 110
Yes, Hauptmann received a fair trial and was guilty of the kidnapping and murder of the Lindbergh baby. (Eli C. Bortman) .... 111
No, Hauptmann was convicted on the basis of fabricated evidence and without proper defense counsel; the trial was a mockery of justice in an atmosphere of public outrage. (Eli C. Bortman) ........................................ 113

**Marcus Garvey:** What kind of a leader was Marcus Garvey? .... 117
Marcus Garvey is best understood as a black working-class leader who had more in common with other working-class leaders than with traditional civil-rights leaders. (Keith P. Griffier) .... 117
Marcus Garvey was a complicated leader who promoted black pride and left a profound, but troubling, legacy that resembled white racism. (Robert J. Allison) .......................... 120

**Mexican Revolution:** Why did the United States oppose the Mexican Revolution, and was it successful in achieving its goals? .................................................. 124
The United States opposed the Mexican Revolution because American business interests in Mexico were threatened. (Robert J. Allison) .................................. 125
Despite President Woodrow Wilson's desire to influence political events in Mexico, American involvement had little direct impact on the Mexican Revolution. (Lonna Douglass) .... 128

**Narcotics:** What led to the war on drugs? ................................. 132
The first war on drugs was provoked by white America’s fears of Asians, who were perceived as drug traffickers. (Joseph Gabriel) .......................................... 133
The origins of the war on drugs had more to do with American economic goals in China than domestic problems. (Robert J. Allison) ........................................ 135

**Native American New Deal:** Was the Indian New Deal a major change in federal policy toward Native Americans? .......................... 139
Yes, the Indian New Deal was a dramatic change in federal policy, allowing Native Americans to develop their own governments and economic policies. (Carlos Turpin) .......................... 139
The Indian Reorganization Act, while implementing some important changes in political and social rights for Native Americans, was also designed to protect first the interests of the U.S. government. (Malinda Maynor) .......... 142

**New Deal:** Was Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal actually “New”? .... 147
Yes, the New Deal represented a fundamental break with the past because it paid attention to people previously ignored in the political process. (Christopher W. Schmidt) ............... 148
No, the New Deal was a continuation of earlier government policies, mainly intended to preserve the capitalist system. (Robert J. Allison) ........................................ 151

**New Deal And Farmers:** Were New Deal policies detrimental to American farmers? .......................................................... 156
Yes, New Deal agricultural policies contributed to the decline of family farms in the United States by not improving their economic status. (Elizabeth D. Schafer) .......................... 157
No, the New Deal stabilized American farm prices, but the conditions faced by American farmers were beyond the control of any government program. (Robert J. Allison) .......... 160

**New Woman:** Who was the “New Woman”? .............................. 165
The New Woman of the Progressive era (1890–1915) represented a popular culture idea embraced by women that
marked a shift in the role of the family in American society. (Clara Bouricius) .......................................... 166

The New Woman of the late nineteenth century was constrained by the culture's concern with body consciousness. (Keren R. McGinity) ........................................ 169

The 1920s: How normal were the 1920s? ........................................ 174

The 1920s were years of great prosperity for the United States. (Robert J. Allison) ........................................ 175

The 1920s were not a "normal" decade at all, but a new period of social activism reflected in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Amendments and by participation in international peace conferences. (Brett Flehinger) ........................................ 177

1930s Civil Rights: What was important about the 1930s Civil Rights struggle? ........................................ 181

In the 1930s African Americans joined with radical forces in the American labor movement in a broad social campaign against economic injustice as the majority of white union members feared blacks and tried to keep them out of the unions. (Keith P. Griffier) ........................................ 182

Though the Scottsboro case of 1931–1936 caused deep divisions in the Civil Rights movement, the prosecution of nine black youths for rape also helped revive that movement by exposing discriminatory practices in the Southern courts. (Robert J. Allison) ........................................ 185

1930s Labor Movement: Did the labor movement miss an opportunity for obtaining advances in the 1930s? .................. 190

Yes, by allying itself with the Democratic Party, the labor movement missed opportunities for more-radical advances in the 1930s. (Edmund F. Wehrle) ........................................ 191

No, organized labor achieved substantial gains in the 1930s, providing its membership with a new level of security. (John Klusinske) ........................................ 194

Progressive Era Women: Was the Progressive Era empowering for women? ........................................ 197

Yes, participation in a major progressive reform—Prohibition—actively politicized and empowered Progressive Era women. (Margaret Carroll-Bergman) ........................................ 198

No, even the few women who wielded power did so within a gender-specific discourse that was ultimately defeating. (Elisabeth Nichols) ........................................ 200

Progressive Movement: Was the Progressive movement really progressive? ........................................ 204

Yes, the Progressives of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were genuine reformers who sought democratic solutions to the problems of industrialism. (Glen Gendzel) ........................................ 205

No, Progressivism was a middle-class attempt to remake the world in its own image rather than broadening the political voice of minorities and promoting acceptance of different cultures. (Robert J. Allison) ........................................ 208

Racism in World War II: Did American racism manifest itself at home and abroad during World War II? .................. 213

During World War II the United States practiced racism against people of color in general, and against Japanese Americans and African Americans in particular. (Josephine C. Bresnahan) ........................................ 214

World War II provided an opportunity for black Americans to pursue full equality with white Americans by providing jobs and positions for minorities in the military. (Lonna Douglass) ........................................ 217

Red Scare: Was the "Red Scare" after World War I a reaction to a genuine communist or anarchist threat, or was it a government attempt by the Wilson administration to silence domestic critics? ........................................ 221
The postwar Red Scare was an overreaction to the Socialist Party, which was already in serious decline, and the threat of communism was exaggerated. *(Margaret Mary Barrett)* 222

The Palmer raids were a legitimate response to a real threat posed by the American Communist Party and its controllers in Moscow. *(Robert J. Allison)* 223

**Sacco and Vanzetti:** Were Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti treated fairly by the American justice system? 228

Sacco and Vanzetti were denied a fair trial and were executed because of prejudice against foreigners and anarchists. *(Eli C. Bortman)* 229

The American system of justice does not offer justice, but instead, as anarchists such as Sacco and Vanzetti discovered, is designed to punish those who will not conform. *(Judith A. Barrett)* 232

**Theodore Roosevelt:** Was Theodore Roosevelt a great president? 240

Yes, Theodore Roosevelt was one of America’s greatest presidents because he enhanced the power and prestige of the position and broadened the role of the United States in the world. *(Elizabeth D. Schafer)* 241

No, although Theodore Roosevelt presented himself as an energetic reformer, he was in fact bent on transforming the presidency into an engine of personal power. *(Thomas E. Woods Jr.)* 244

**United States and the Jews:** Could the United States have saved more European Jews during World War II? 250

The U.S. government understood the position of Jews in Nazi Germany but chose to ignore their plight. *(Jürgen Scheunemann)* 251

The U.S. government believed the best way to save European Jews was to win World War II quickly, not to attempt small-scale rescues or to bomb concentration camps. *(Margo Dowling)* 254

**Urban Bosses:** Were the big-city bosses of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries an obstacle to progress? 259

Political bosses benefited the people in cities they ran and effected some important achievements such as hospitals, bridges, and other large construction projects. *(Michael Mezzano Jr.)* 260

The problems created by urban political bosses outweighed any services they provided. *(Marion Case)* 263

**Washington and Du Bois:** Whose approach, Booker T. Washington’s or W. E. B. Du Bois’s, was most effective in achieving rights for African Americans at the turn of the century? 267

W. E. B. Du Bois’s advocacy of protest for civil and political equality set the standard for future black activism and paved the way for the Civil Rights Movement. *(William Jordan)* 268

Booker T. Washington’s late-nineteenth-century policies of self-help and responsibility provided a wise course for black Americans in the early twentieth century by avoiding social agitation. *(Robert J. Allison)* 271