

The 1970s: Toward a Conservative America

Teaching Resources

Chapter Instructional Objectives

After you have taught this chapter, your students should be able to answer the following questions:

1. How and why did America experience a severe economic crisis in the 1970s?
2. What effect did Richard Nixon's presidency have on domestic politics?
3. How did expanding social activism lead to a conservative reaction at the end of the decade?
4. Why did President Jimmy Carter fail to develop an effective style of leadership? How did foreign affairs affect his administration?

Chapter Annotated Outline

- I. The Nixon Years
 - A. Nixon's Domestic Agenda
 1. Nixon's policies heralded a long-term Republican effort to trim back the Great Society and shift some federal responsibilities back to the states.
 2. The 1972 revenue-sharing program distributed a portion of federal tax revenues back to the states as block grants.
 3. Nixon reduced funding for most War on Poverty programs and dismantled the Office of Economic Opportunity in 1971.
 4. He impounded billions of dollars appropriated by Congress for urban renewal, pollution control, and other environmental issues, and he vetoed a 1971 bill to establish a comprehensive national child-care system, fearing that such "communal approaches to child rearing" would "Sovietize" American children.
 5. As an alternative to Democratic social legislation, the administration put forward

its own anti-poverty program by proposing a Family Assistance Plan that would provide a family of four a small but guaranteed annual income; the bill floundered in the Senate, leaving the issue of welfare reform a contentious one for the next thirty years.

6. Nixon agreed to the growth of major **entitlement programs** such as Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security.
 7. In 1970, Nixon signed a bill establishing the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and in 1972, he approved legislation creating the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).
- B. Détente
 1. Nixon's policy of **détente** was to seek peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union and Communist China and to link these overtures of friendship with a plan to end the Vietnam War, a war fought ostensibly to halt the spread of communism.
 2. Nixon traveled to China in 1972 in a symbolic visit that set the stage for the establishment of formal diplomatic relations.
 3. He then traveled to Moscow to sign the first Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) between the United States and the Soviet Union.
 4. The treaty limited the production and deployment of ICBMs and ABMs and signified that the United States could no longer afford massive military spending to regain the nuclear and military superiority it had enjoyed after World War II.
 - C. Nixon's War
 1. In March 1969, to convince North Vietnam that the United States meant business about mutual troop withdrawal, Nixon ordered clandestine bombing raids on neutral Cambodia, through which the

North Vietnamese had been transporting supplies and reinforcements.

2. When the intensified bombing failed to end the war, Nixon and Henry Kissinger adopted a policy of Vietnamization—the replacement of American troops with South Vietnamese forces.
 3. Antiwar demonstrators denounced the new policy, which protected American lives at the expense of the Vietnamese; on October 15, 1969, millions of Americans joined a one-day “moratorium” against the war, and a month later more than a quarter of a million people mobilized in Washington in a large antiwar demonstration.
 4. Nixon’s response was to label student demonstrators as “bums” and his statement that “North Vietnam cannot defeat or humiliate the United States. Only Americans can do that.”
 5. Nixon’s secret bombing of Cambodia culminated in a 1970 American incursion into Cambodia to destroy enemy havens there; though only a short-term setback for the North Vietnamese, it helped to destabilize Cambodia, exposing it to takeover by the Khmer Rouge later in the 1970s.
 6. When the *New York Times* uncovered the secret invasion of Cambodia, an antiwar national student strike ensued; at Kent State University, National Guardsmen fired into a crowd at an antiwar rally, killing four and wounding eleven, and, soon afterward, National Guardsmen stormed a dormitory at Jackson State College, killing two black students.
 7. More than 450 colleges closed in protest, and 80 percent of all campuses experienced some kind of disturbance; in June 1970, a Gallup poll identified campus unrest, not the war, as the issue that most troubled Americans.
 8. Congressional opposition to the war also intensified with the invasion of Cambodia; in June 1970, the Senate expressed its disapproval for the war by repealing the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution and cutting off funding for operations in Cambodia.
 9. Soldiers themselves were showing mounting opposition to their mission; those who refused to follow combat orders increased, and thousands deserted. Of the majority who fought on, many sewed peace symbols on their uniforms, and incidents of “fragging” occurred.
 10. In 1971, Americans were appalled by revelations of the sheer brutality of the war when Lieutenant William L. Calley was court-martialed for atrocities committed in the village of My Lai.
 11. The anti-war movement was weakened in part by internal divisions within the New Left and by Nixon’s promise to continue troop withdrawals, end the draft, and institute an all-volunteer army by 1973.
 12. The Paris peace talks had been in stalemate since 1968; in late 1971, as American troops withdrew, Communist forces stepped up their attacks on Laos, Cambodia, and South Vietnam.
 13. Nixon stepped up the military actions with the “Christmas bombings”; the Paris Peace Accords were signed on January 27, 1973.
 14. The South Vietnamese government soon fell to Communist forces; horrified Americans watched as American embassy personnel and Vietnamese citizens struggled to board helicopters leaving Saigon before North Vietnamese troops entered the city.
 15. On April 29, 1975, Vietnam was reunited, and Saigon was renamed Ho Chi Minh City in honor of the Communist leader who had died in 1969.
- D. The 1972 Election
1. The shooting of conservative southerner George Wallace, which left him paralyzed from the waist down, and the disarray within the Democratic party over Vietnam and civil rights gave Nixon’s campaign a decisive edge.
 2. Nixon’s advantages against his opponent, Senator George McGovern, were that his policy of Vietnamization had virtually eliminated American combat deaths by 1972, Kissinger’s declaration that “peace is at hand” raised voters’ hopes for a negotiated settlement, and a short-term upturn in the economy favored the Republicans.
 3. Nixon easily won reelection with 61 percent of the popular vote, carrying every state except Massachusetts and the District of Columbia, although Democrats maintained control of both houses of Congress.
- E. Watergate
1. Watergate was a scandal that began with a break-in at the Democratic National Committee’s headquarters at the Water-

gate apartment complex in Washington, D.C.; not just an isolated incident, it was part of a broad pattern of illegality and misuse of power that flourished in the crisis atmosphere of the Vietnam War.

2. Its origins were rooted in Nixon's ruthless political tactics, his secretive style of governing, and his obsession with the anti-war movement.
 3. Nixon's first administration repeatedly authorized illegal surveillance of citizens such as a courageous former Defense Department analyst, Daniel Ellsberg, who leaked *The Pentagon Papers*, a classified study of American involvement in Vietnam that detailed many American blunders and misjudgments, to the *New York Times*.
 4. To discredit Ellsberg, White House underlings broke into his psychiatrist's office to look for damaging information; when the break-in was revealed, the court dismissed the government's case against Ellsberg.
 5. In another abuse of presidential power, the White House established a clandestine intelligence group known as the "plumbers" to plug government information leaks and implement tactics such as using the IRS to harass the administration's opponents.
 6. The activities of the "plumbers" were financed by massive illegal fundraising efforts by Nixon's Committee to Re-Elect the President (known as CREEP).
 7. In June 1972, five men with connections to the Nixon administration were arrested for breaking into the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee at the Watergate apartment complex in Washington.
 8. The White House denied any involvement in the break-in, but investigations revealed that Nixon ordered his chief of staff to instruct the CIA to tell the FBI not to probe too deeply into connections between the White House and the burglars.
 9. In February 1973, the Senate established an investigative committee that began holding nationally televised hearings in May, during which Jeb Magruder confessed his guilt and implicated former Attorney General John Mitchell, White House counsel John Dean, and others. Dean, in turn, implicated Nixon in the plot, and another Nixon aide revealed that Nixon had installed a secret taping system in the Oval Office.
 10. Nixon stonewalled the committee's demand that he surrender the tapes, citing executive privilege and national security.
 11. After subpoenas ordered him to do so, Nixon released a heavily edited transcript of the tapes, peppered with the words "expletive deleted" and containing a suspicious eighteen-minute gap covering a crucial meeting of Nixon and his staff on June 20, 1972, three days after the break-in.
 12. On June 30, 1974, the House of Representatives voted on three articles of impeachment against Nixon: obstruction of justice, abuse of power, and subverting the Constitution.
 13. Nixon released the unexpurgated tapes, which contained evidence that he ordered a cover-up; facing certain conviction if impeached, on August 9, 1974, Nixon became the first U.S. president to resign.
 14. Vice President Gerald Ford was sworn in as president; a month later, he granted Nixon a "full, free, and absolute" pardon "for all offenses he had committed or might have committed during his presidency," to spare the country the agony of rehashing Watergate in a criminal prosecution.
 15. Congress adopted several reforms in response to the abuses of the Nixon administration and to contain the power of what became known as the "imperial presidency."
 16. In 1974, a strengthened Freedom of Information Act gave citizens greater access to files that federal government agencies had amassed on them.
 17. The Fair Campaign Practices Act of 1974 limited campaign contributions and provided for stricter accountability and public financing of presidential campaigns, but it contained a loophole for contributions from political action committees (PACs).
 18. Watergate's most significant legacy was the nationwide cynicism that followed in its wake.
- II. Battling for Civil Rights: The Second Stage
- A. The Revival of Feminism
1. Feminism was the most enduring movement to emerge from the 1960s; as the women's movement grew from influences such as Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, it generated an array of women-oriented services and organizations.

2. In 1972, Gloria Steinem and other journalists founded *Ms.* magazine, the first consumer magazine aimed at a feminist audience, and formerly all-male bastions such as Yale, Princeton, and the U.S. Military Academy admitted women for the first time.
 3. Several new national women's organizations emerged, and established groups such as the National Organization for Women (NOW) continued to grow.
 4. The National Women's Political Caucus, founded in 1971, promoted the election of women to public office; their success stories included Congresswomen Shirley Chisholm, Patricia Schroeder, and Geraldine Ferraro and Governor Ella T. Grasso.
 5. Women's political mobilization resulted in significant legislative and administrative gains, such as Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments Act, which prohibited colleges and universities that received federal funds from discriminating on the basis of sex.
 6. Affirmative action was extended to women in 1967; in 1972, Congress authorized child-care deductions for working parents; in 1974, the Equal Credit Opportunity Act improved women's access to credit.
 7. Another battlefield for the women's movement was the Equal Rights Amendment, which read, "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State on the basis of sex"; despite an extension of the deadline until 1982, the ERA fell short of the required three-fourths majority for ratification.
 8. Nonwhite and working-class women saw the feminist movement as catering to self-seeking white career women; the movement also faced growing social conservatism among Americans.
 9. Phyllis Schlafly led the anti-feminist backlash; in advocating traditional roles for women and by asserting that women would lose more than they would gain if the ERA passed, her organization resonated with those who were troubled by the rapid pace of social change. Schlafly helped to defeat the ERA in 1972.
 10. The gay liberation movement achieved greater visibility in the 1970s as gay communities gave rise to hundreds of new gay and lesbian clubs, churches, businesses, and political organizations.
11. Some cities passed laws barring discrimination on the basis of sexual preference.
 12. Gay rights came under attack from conservatives who believed that protecting gay people's rights would encourage immoral behavior; anti-gay campaigns sprang up around the country.
- B. Enforcing Civil Rights
1. Although the civil rights movement was in disarray by the late 1960s, minority group protests over the next decade continued to win social and economic gains.
 2. Affirmative action, which had expanded opportunities for African Americans and Latinos, also proved divisive.
 3. *Bakke v. University of California* (1978) was a setback for proponents of affirmative action and prepared the way for subsequent efforts to eliminate those programs.
 4. The court-mandated busing of children to achieve school desegregation proved to be the most disruptive social issue of the 1970s.
 5. In *Milliken v. Bradley* (1974), the Supreme Court ordered cities with deeply ingrained patterns of residential segregation to use busing to achieve integration, which sparked intense and sometimes violent opposition, such as that in Boston in 1974 to 1975.
 6. Threatened by court-ordered busing, many white parents transferred their children to private schools, resulting in "white flight" that increased racial imbalance, while many black parents who opposed busing called instead for better schools in predominantly black neighborhoods.
 7. The decision that initiated the tumult over busing—*Brown v. Board of Education* (1954)—also triggered a larger judicial revolution. Traditionally, liberals had favored *judicial restraint*, which roughly meant that courts defer to legislative actions. After many years, the liberal espousal of judicial restraint finally triumphed in 1937, when the Supreme Court reversed itself and let stand key New Deal laws—to the shock and outrage of conservatives.
 8. That history explains a puzzling response to *Brown*: respected liberal jurists and legal scholars, while favoring racial equal-

ity, objected to the decision itself for violating principles of judicial restraint they had spent lifetimes defending.

9. What ultimately persuaded them was a shift in the big issues coming before the court. When property rights had been at stake, conservatives favored activist courts willing to curb anti-business legislatures. Now that personal rights came to the fore, it was liberals' turn to celebrate activist judges and, preeminently, the man whom President Eisenhower appointed chief justice of the Supreme Court in 1953, Earl Warren.
10. A popular Republican governor of California, Warren surprised many, including Eisenhower, by his robust advocacy of civil rights, and, increasingly, of civil libertarian issues. If conservatives found reason to bewail judicial activism, there was no one they blamed more than Chief Justice Warren.
11. In *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965), the Supreme Court struck down an 1879 state law prohibiting the purchase and use of contraceptive devices by couples as a violation of their constitutional right of privacy.
12. *Griswold* opened the way for *Roe v. Wade* (1973), which declared the anti-abortion laws of Texas and Georgia unconstitutional. Abortions performed during the first trimester were protected by the right of privacy (following *Griswold*).
13. For the women's movement and liberals generally, *Roe v. Wade* was a great, if unanticipated, victory; for evangelical Christians, Catholics, and conservatives generally, it was a bitter, indigestible pill. Other rights-creating issues—what conservatives interpreted as “coddling” criminals, prohibiting school prayer, protecting pornography—had a polarizing effect. But *Roe v. Wade* was in a class by itself. In 1976, opponents convinced Congress to deny Medicaid funds for abortions, an opening round in a protracted campaign against *Roe* that continues to this day.

III. Lean Years

A. Energy Crisis

1. After twenty-five years of world leadership, the economic dominance of the United States had begun to fade.
2. By the late 1960s, the United States was buying more and more oil on the world

market to keep up with shrinking domestic reserves and growing demand.

3. In 1960, oil-producing developing countries formed the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).
 4. Just five of the founding countries—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iran, Iraq, and Venezuela—were the source of more than 80 percent of the world's crude oil exports.
 5. Between 1973 and 1975, OPEC raised the price of a barrel of oil from \$3 to \$12; by the end of the decade the price was at \$34 a barrel, setting off a round of furious inflation in the oil-dependent United States.
 6. In 1973, OPEC instituted an oil embargo against the United States, Western Europe, and Japan in retaliation for their aid to Israel during the Yom Kippur War.
 7. The embargo lasted until 1974 and forced Americans to curtail their driving or spend hours in line at the pumps.
 8. As Americans turned to more fuel-efficient foreign-made cars, the domestic auto industry with little to offer except “gas-guzzlers” slumped, further weakening the American economy.
 9. The energy crisis was an enormous shock to both the American economy and psyche, yet Americans used even more foreign oil after the energy crisis than they had before.
- #### B. Environmentalism
1. After 1970, many baby boomers left the counterculture behind and settled down to pursue careers and material goods.
 2. These young adults sought personal fulfillment as well through fitness, heightened environmental awareness, or the spiritual support offered by the human-potential (New Age) movement and alternative religious groups.
 3. A few baby boomers still pursued the unfinished social and political agendas of the 1960s by joining the left wing of the Democratic party or establishing community-based organizations, thus continuing their activism on a grassroots level.
 4. Many of these activists helped to invigorate the emerging environmental movement that had been energized by the publication in 1962 of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, a powerful analysis of the impact of pesticides on the food chain.
 5. The Alaskan pipeline, oil spills, and the

- Love Canal situation helped galvanize public opinion on environmental issues.
6. Nuclear energy became a subject of citizen action in the 1970s; public fears were confirmed in 1979, when a nuclear plant at Three Mile Island came critically close to a meltdown. Activism, combined with fear of the potential dangers of nuclear energy, convinced many utility companies to abandon nuclear power.
 7. Americans' concerns about environmental issues helped to turn environmentalism into a mass movement; the first Earth Day was held in 1970, and 20 million citizens gathered in communities across the country to express their concern for the endangered planet.
 8. In 1969, Congress passed the National Environmental Policy Act, which required the developers of public projects to file an environmental impact statement, and in 1970, Nixon established the EPA and signed the Clean Air Act, which toughened standards for auto emissions in order to reduce smog and air pollution.
 9. The Endangered Species Act of 1973 expanded the Endangered Animals Act of 1964, granting endangered species protected status.
 10. In a time of rising unemployment and reindustrialization, activists clashed head-on with proponents of economic development, full employment, and global competitiveness.
 11. The rise of environmentalism was paralleled by a growing consumer protection movement to eliminate harmful consumer products and to curb dangerous practices by American corporations.
 12. After decades of inertia, the consumer movement reemerged in the 1960s under the leadership of Ralph Nader, whose *Unsafe at Any Speed* (1965) attacked GM for putting style ahead of safe handling and fuel economy in its engineering of the Corvair.
 13. Ralph Nader's Public Interest Research Group became the model for other groups that later emerged to combat the health hazards of smoking, unethical insurance and credit practices, and other consumer problems.
 14. The establishment of the federal Consumer Products Safety Commission in 1972 reflected the growing importance of consumer protection in American life.
- C. Economic Woes
1. Owing to a steadily growing federal deficit and spiraling inflation—coupled with a reduced demand for American goods—in 1971 the dollar fell to its lowest level on the world market since 1949, and the United States posted its first trade deficit in almost a century.
 2. The gross domestic product (GDP), which had averaged 4.1 percent per year in the 1960s, dropped to only 2.9 percent in the 1970s, contributing to a noticeable decline in most Americans' standard of living.
 3. Inflation forced consumer prices upward; housing prices more than doubled, making homeownership inaccessible to a growing segment of the working and middle classes.
 4. The inflationary crisis helped to forge new attitudes about saving and spending: investors fought inflation through the stock market and mutual funds, while millions of Americans did without savings altogether and coped with inflation by going into debt.
 5. Unemployment peaked at around 9 percent in 1975 and hovered at 6 to 7 percent in the late 1970s as a record number of baby boomers competed for a limited number of jobs.
 6. This devastating combination of inflation and unemployment was termed “stagflation” and bedeviled presidential administrations from Nixon to Reagan, whose remedies, such as deficit spending and tax reduction, failed to eradicate the double scourge.
 7. American economic woes were most acute in the industrial sector, which entered a prolonged period of decline, or deindustrialization.
 8. Many U.S. firms relocated overseas, partly to take advantage of cheaper labor and production costs; by the end of the 1970s, the hundred largest multinational corporations and banks were earning more than a third of their overall profits abroad.
 9. In the Rust Belt, huge factories were fast becoming relics; many workers moved to the Sun Belt, where “right-to-work” laws made it difficult to build strong labor unions and made these states inhospitable to organized labor.
 10. As foreign competition cut into corporate profits, industry became less willing to bargain; union membership dropped from

28 to 23 percent of the American workforce in the 1970s and to only 16 percent by the end of the 1980s.

11. Some companies moved their operations abroad; in a competitive global environment, labor's prospects seemed dim.

IV. Politics in the Wake of Watergate

A. Jimmy Carter: The Outsider as President

1. Jimmy Carter won the 1976 presidential election with 50 percent of the popular vote to Gerald Ford's 48 percent by playing up his role as a Washington outsider and pledging to restore morality to government.
2. Despite his efforts to overcome the post-Watergate climate of skepticism and apathy, Carter never became an effective leader, and his outsider strategy distanced him from traditional sources of power.
3. Inflation was Carter's major domestic challenge; to counter inflation, interest rates were raised repeatedly, and they topped 20 percent in 1980.
4. Carter expanded the federal bureaucracy by enlarging the cabinet with the creation of the Departments of Energy and Education and approved environmental protection measures such as a "Superfund" to clean up chemical pollution.
5. Carter, however, continued Nixon's efforts to reduce the scope of federal activities by reforming the civil service and deregulating the airline, trucking, and railroad industries; deregulation dropped prices but resulted in cutthroat competition that drove many firms out of business and encouraged corporate consolidation.
6. Carter's attempt to resolve the energy crisis faltered; in his "malaise" speech, he called energy conservation efforts "the moral equivalent of war," yet his efforts to decontrol oil and natural gas prices as a spur to domestic production and conservation failed.
7. In early 1979 a revolution in Iran curtailed oil supplies, leading to a 55 percent increase in the price of gas and long gas lines; that summer, Carter's approval rating dropped to 26 percent—lower than Richard Nixon's during the worst part of the Watergate scandal.

B. Carter and the World

1. In foreign affairs, Carter made human rights the centerpiece of his policy: He criticized the suppression of dissent in the

Soviet Union, withdrew economic aid from countries that violated human rights, and established the Office of Human Rights in the State Department.

2. In 1977, Carter signed a treaty that turned over control of the Panama Canal to Panama effective December 31, 1999, in return for which the United States retained the right to send its ships through the canal in case of war.
3. Hopes for Senate ratification of the SALT II treaty collapsed when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in December 1979; Carter responded by canceling American participation in the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow and providing covert assistance to an Afghan group calling themselves *mujahideen*, thereby helping to establish the now-infamous Taliban.
4. It was in the Middle East that President Carter achieved both his most stunning success and his greatest failure.
5. He successfully brokered a "framework for peace" between Israel and Egypt at Camp David that included Egypt's recognition of Israel's right to exist and Israel's return of the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt.
6. Less successful was Carter's foreign policy toward Iran.
7. In 1979, the shah of Iran's government was overthrown by fundamentalist Muslim leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, after which the Carter administration admitted the deposed shah to the United States for medical treatments.
8. Iranian fundamentalists seized the U.S. Embassy in Tehran in November 1979 and took fifty-two American hostages, demanding that the shah be returned to Iran for trial and punishment.
9. The United States refused that demand; instead, Carter suspended arms sales to Iran, froze Iranian assets in American banks, and threatened to deport Iranian students in the United States.
10. A failed military rescue reinforced the public's view of Carter as being ineffective, and the crisis paralyzed his presidency for the next fourteen months.

Key Terms

entitlement programs Government programs that provide financial benefits to which recipients are entitled by law. Examples include Social Security,

Medicare, unemployment compensation, and agricultural price supports. (896)

détente From the French word for “a relaxation of tension,” this term was used to signify the new foreign policy of President Nixon, which sought a reduction of tension and hostility between the United States and the Soviet Union and China in the early 1970s. (898)

deregulation Process of removing or limiting federal regulatory mechanisms, justified on the basis of promoting competition and streamlining government bureaucracy. President Carter began deregulation in the 1970s, starting with the airline, banking, and communications industries. The process continued under subsequent administrations. (918)

Lecture Strategies

1. Write a lecture exploring the impact of the Nixon administration on domestic policy. Nixon’s “new federalism” called for revenue sharing that provided the states with funds to use as they saw fit. The importance of this development was not realized until the Reagan administration ended the program, leaving states and cities starved for funds. The establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration benefited a variety of communities and individual workers. A bold proposal for welfare reform fell victim to attacks from both the left and the right. Perhaps the most ironic development occurred in the Supreme Court, where Nixon had been able to appoint four new justices. That court ruled in favor of forced busing in order to achieve racial balance and ended the states’ ban on abortion.
2. Create a lecture analyzing the Watergate scandal. “Dirty tricks,” White House “plumbers,” taping in the Oval Office—these dramatic revelations from the Watergate hearings should be discussed. It is important for students to understand the importance of the struggles between the president and the special prosecutors and the implication of those struggles for constitutional government. Note the impeachment hearings and the discovery of the “smoking gun” tape. Consider the effect of Nixon’s resignation on politics through the rest of the decade and on Clinton’s impeachment hearings in 1999.
3. Compose a lecture examining the expansion of environmentalism into a national movement during the 1970s. Beginning with *Silent Spring* (1962),

awareness of the threat of chemical and radioactive pollution energized a grassroots movement. Issues such as oil spills, the Alaska pipeline, ozone depletion, and toxic waste disposal precipitated the establishment of government standards and procedures for the reduction of air, water, and ground pollution. The tension between ecological soundness and maintenance of economic growth needs to be considered.

4. Write a lecture exploring the impact of the Supreme Court’s decision in *Roe v. Wade*. How did the court come to accept the notion that there is a constitutional right to privacy? What does the decision actually call for? Did the court allow for “abortion on demand,” as is claimed by the anti-abortion movement? How did opposition to the decision become so well organized? The continuing importance of abortion in the national political debate requires that students understand how the issue originally evolved.
5. Create a lecture examining the controversial adoption of affirmative action policies. The extent to which affirmative action caused “reverse discrimination,” as was alleged in the *Bakke* case, should be discussed. Students need to consider whether affirmative action is an appropriate remedy for discrimination. How and when should it be applied? What about “quotas”? Is there a level playing field? How can a society establish equality of opportunity?

Reviewing the Text

These questions are from the textbook and follow each main section of the narrative. They are provided in the Computerized Test Bank with suggested responses, for your convenience.

The Nixon Years (pp. 896–902)

1. Why is the Nixon presidency considered a transitional one between the liberalism of the preceding decades and the conservatism that emerged in the 1980s?
 - Nixon operated within the context of a Congress controlled by the Democrats—a legacy of the New Deal and Great Society eras.
 - Nixon also inherited the quagmire of Vietnam, which forced him to act as a transitional figure in managing the war.
 - The working-class people that Nixon was appealing to, known as the “silent majority,” wanted health care and social security to in-

crease as part of the legacy of the New Deal coalition, forcing Nixon to meet their needs. Nixon was strongly influenced by Daniel Moynihan, a White House adviser on urban affairs.

- Nixon himself was actually not a laissez-faire conservative at heart, and was really a technocrat experimenter with the mechanics of government.
2. What do we mean when we say that Nixon was a “realist” in foreign affairs?
 - This meant advancing the national interests at all costs, including military aggression against Third World nations. Commitment to allies, extending democracy abroad, and championing human rights all came second. These efforts required the use of secrecy, violations of the Constitution, and bypassing Congress, a tactic that eventually brought down the Nixon administration.
 3. Why did it take Nixon four years to reach a settlement with North Vietnam?
 - It took four years due to North Vietnamese stubborn resistance on the battlefield and in negotiations in Paris, Nixon wanted to continue fighting the conflict with American money and did not want to be the first president to lose a U.S. war, Nixon’s escalation of the bombing campaign in Laos and Cambodia despite Vietnamization convinced the North Vietnamese that he was not serious about negotiating an end to the war, and the election of 1972 finally forced him to produce concrete results in Paris.
 4. How do you account for the Watergate scandal? What was its significance?
 - The increasing level of secrecy and use of illegal methods to obtain political advantage by the Nixon regime produced the conditions for the break-in and ensuing scandal. The significance of the scandal stems from its cancerous impact on the Nixon presidency. The Nixon White House attempted to cover up the break-in, leading to congressional hearings and Nixon’s eventual resignation from office.

Battling for Civil Rights: The Second Stage (pp. 902–910)

1. What were the sources of growth for the women’s rights movement?
 - The stimulus of the black civil rights movement, other major social reform movements of the era, positive signals from Washington D.C. in the

form of legislation, and the change-of-life experiences by middle-aged women like Betty Friedan who wrote the *Feminine Mystique*, the bible of the feminist movement.

2. Why did enforcing civil rights prove more controversial than passing civil rights legislation?
 - White resistance in the south at the local and state level to integration presented a formidable obstacle to applying the legal tenets of civil rights legislation. Local whites lobbied Congress, formed official white citizen’s councils, and also utilized violence through the KKK to stop implementation of civil rights legislation.
 - Enforcing civil rights was also a judicial and executive function that presidents and southern judges were responsible for. Political concerns often derailed presidential enforcement of civil rights.
3. Why did the conservative/liberal alignment on judicial restraint change after 1954?
 - Traditionally, it had been liberals who favored judicial restraint, meaning that the courts must defer to legislatures. Many felt that the *Brown* decision of 1954 violated judicial restraint.
 - Big issues that came before the courts after 1954 altered liberal thinking. Now that personal rights were the major issue, liberals argued for activist judges and conservatives argued for judicial restraint, the reverse of pre-1954.

Lean Years (pp. 911–917)

1. Why did the United States enter an energy crisis in the 1970s?
 - Once the leading producer of oil in the world, by the late 1960s the United States was heavily dependent on importing oil, mostly from the Persian Gulf.
 - Emerging Muslim states controlled the supply of oil through conspiring in restraint of trade through the formation of OPEC.
 - In 1973 U.S. support of Israel in the Yom Kippur War alienated emerging Muslim states and led to an oil embargo, crippling the United States. Conditions became worse after the Iranian hostage crisis of 1979.
2. What were the major concerns of the environmentalist movement?
 - The major causes included the energy crisis, the realization of the finite nature of U.S. resources,

the influence of the counterculture and its rights of nature ethos, and the overabundance of material goods and conspicuous consumption that fed a baby boomer desire to enjoy the quality of life they were purchasing.

3. What were the causes and effects of deindustrialization?
 - *Causes:* Outdated equipment from the World War II era, Japanese and German competition from rebuilt and modernized factories, the reduction of natural resources like iron ore due to constant overproduction, and advances in international shipping decreased the cost of foreign competition.
 - *Effects:* A decline in the steel industry, the death of numerous communities, an increase in unemployment in the industrial sector, a rise in the service sector, a decrease in power held by unions and union membership by the working class, and an increase in anti-tax sentiment.

Politics in the Wake of Watergate (pp. 917–922)

1. Why did Jimmy Carter have so much trouble managing the economy?
 - When the oil embargo of 1979 led to a downturn in the U.S. economy in the form of inflation, Carter's lack of experience as an outsider in Washington politics, his reliance on other outsiders as advisors, the problem of stagnation, a low approval rating, and his penchant for micro-management prevented him from dealing effectively with the energy crisis.
2. What distinguished Carter's conduct of foreign policy from Nixon's? Which foreign policy would you say was more successful? Nixon's or Carter's?
 - Carter's foreign policy avoided the use of secrecy and violations of congressional oversight. Carter emphasized human rights and peacemaking, which included bringing Israel and Egypt together after decades of violence and tension. Carter attempted in Latin America to reverse Yankee imperialism and the communist containment theory of Nixon and his predecessors.
 - Nixon was more successful than Carter in terms of projecting American power around the globe and dealing with tensions in the Soviet Union and the Middle East. Carter appeared soft on foreign military challenges. The bungled attempt to free the Iranian hostages doomed Carter's reelection in 1980. But Nixon's secret

policy of war escalation marked him as a ruthless politician by the American public.

Chapter Writing Assignments

These questions appear at the end of Chapter 29 in the textbook. They are provided in the Computerized Test Bank with suggested responses, for your convenience.

1. What impact did the Nixon administration have on American politics?
 - Nixon helped to increase cynicism by American people regarding domestic and foreign policy decisions by major leaders due to his secrecy surrounding the Watergate investigation and war escalation in Southeast Asia.
 - Nixon also helped to increase the power of the presidency over the other two branches of government. In the wake of the Nixon years, Congress passed legislation to curb the powers of the president.
 - Nixon also helped to shift American domestic politics to the right by calling attention to the problems of the countercultural and civil rights movements and encouraging a "silent majority" to retake American society from leftists.
2. Why are the 1970s considered an era of "declining expectations" for Americans?
 - Declining expectations arose from a downturn in the economy, deindustrialization, rising unemployment, a rise in inflation, the energy crisis, an increase in government corruption and secrecy leading to public cynicism, the countercultural movement emphasized anti-consumerism, realization of environmental problems, the failure of the civil rights movement to achieve equality for African Americans, and the failure of the United States to win the Vietnam War despite a generation of sacrifice.
3. What were the major causes of the apparent weakening of the United States as a superpower during this period?
 - A declining economy due to the Vietnam War and the deindustrialization of the American heartland, a rising energy crisis due to OPEC, corruption and secrecy in the Nixon administration in the form of Watergate, the escalation of the Vietnam War to Cambodia and Laos, loss of credibility abroad and at home due to the civil rights movement and Vietnam conflict, the rise of Third World nations, the increase in Soviet military power, congressional attempts to limit

the expanded powers of the presidency in the wake of the Nixon administration, and the emphasis on human rights and peacemaking by the Carter administration pulled the United States out of an imperial mode of foreign policy.

Class Discussion Starters

1. What were some significant revelations of malfeasance in the Watergate affair?

Possible answers

- The illegal collection of campaign funds before the 1972 election by the Committee to Re-Elect the President.
- Illegal wiretaps by the White House “plumbers” to find the source of leaks to the press.
- The burglary of the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee for reasons that are still not clear.
- The payment of hush money to the Watergate burglars.
- The “smoking-gun” tape in which Nixon ordered a cover-up of the Watergate break-in.
- The order not to investigate connections between the break-in and the White House.
- Nixon’s reluctance to turn over the Oval Office tapes.

2. What was the impact of the energy crisis?

Possible answers

- The OPEC oil embargo led to shortages of gasoline and a sharp increase in gas prices.
- The search for domestic oil supplies led to the opening of the vast Alaskan oil field, threatening environmental damage.
- Nuclear power generators were built despite questions of safety and the problem of the disposal of nuclear waste.
- The public began to buy more fuel-efficient foreign cars, causing a crisis in the American automobile industry.
- President Carter tried unsuccessfully to mobilize the nation with an energy conservation program (“the moral equivalent of war”).

3. What were the characteristics of the “Me Decade”?

Possible answers

- The fitness craze.
- The emergence of the health-food industry.
- The expansion of the human-potential movement.
- The emergence of many new religious movements such as Hare Krishna, the Church of Scientology, and the Unification Church (“Moonies”).
- A revival of evangelical Protestantism with its emphasis on being “born again.”

4. What were the main effects of the Carter administration’s foreign policy?

Possible answers

- Human rights considerations came to play a larger role in foreign-policy decisions.
- Peace was established between Israel and Egypt.
- The Panama Canal Treaty was ratified, establishing Panama’s eventual control over the canal.
- Relations with the Soviet Union deteriorated after the invasion of Afghanistan.
- Failure to resolve the Iranian hostage crisis contributed to Carter’s defeat in the 1980 presidential election.

5. What were the major factors in the apparent decline of American prestige during this period?

Possible answers

- The revelations of Watergate and the exposure of widespread illegality in the executive branch of government.
- The defeat of American forces in Vietnam and its subsequent unification under Communist control.
- The OPEC oil embargo, which indicated that the United States was not self-sufficient in energy resources.
- The declining American share of world trade brought about by the rise of Germany and Japan as commercial rivals.
- The failure of the United States to maintain its industrial base, leading to widespread unemployment and a decline in the standard of living for many Americans.

Classroom Activity

1. Bring into class excerpts from *The Pentagon Papers* released by Daniel Ellsberg in 1972 to shed light on U.S. involvement in Vietnam. Showcase particular documents that reveal American goals and policies since the Kennedy administration. Point out that the papers are an indictment of the Democratic administrations of Kennedy and Johnson, and not Richard Nixon. Develop a series of questions either in oral or written form for students to use in examining the documents. This assignment can be used for a paper, in-class discussion, or as a document exercise. You may wish to consult Ellsberg's 2003 book, *Secrets* (see Literature section), to help frame your analysis and set-up of the project.

Oral History Exercise

- Develop an assignment based on student interviews of Americans who experienced the 1970s as children or adults. Ask students what subjects could become a possible focus for questions. Watergate, the energy crisis, the end of the Vietnam War, and the Iranian hostage crisis are a few of the key events and themes presented in the chapter. Most students will likely select a family member, which makes the assignment workable for the students at home. Require students to submit a list of questions ahead of time for approval by the instructor. This assignment serves as a possible paper assignment or an in-class discussion exercise.

Working with Documents

COMPARING AMERICAN VOICES

Debating the Equal Rights Amendment (p. 908)

1. J. Marse Grant and Jerry Falwell were both southern Baptists. Both appealed to the Bible in discussing the ERA. Yet they came to opposite conclusions. How do you explain that?
 - Grant views Christianity as an equalizing force between men and women, whereas Falwell views Christianity through the cultural lens of patriarchy, placing men spiritually over women in a literal translation of the Bible.
2. Senator Sam Ervin Jr. characterizes his opposition to the ERA as being based on “rational” grounds.

What does he mean by that? Would he agree with Falwell that the ERA was “not merely a political issue, but a moral issue as well”?

- Rational means creating laws and policies that recognize the physical and psychological differences between men and women.
 - He would agree with Falwell that the issue is based on moral as well as political aspects, as society has attached social meaning to the physical distinctions created by God, whom Ervin cites as a major influence in creating rational distinctions between men and women.
3. Falwell speaks of women as “the weak vessel.” Why does Elizabeth Duncan Koontz disagree with that characterization? And what does her disagreement suggest to you about the social divisions underlying the debate over the ERA?
 - Koontz argues that the assumption that all women in society need to be protected is outdated and demeaning and a stumbling block to true equality for women. She argues that capitalism acts as an equalizing force, impoverishing both men and women and producing many female-headed households.
 - The social divisions underlining the ERA include class and income divisions among women that augment the moral distinctions made within the women’s rights movement.

VOICES FROM ABROAD

Fei Xiaotong: America’s Crisis of Faith (p. 919)

1. Xiaotong is writing about America as someone schooled in Marxist (or Communist) analysis. Can you point to elements in this essay that indicate that perspective?
 - He is interested in the issue of popular support of the government, the role of the “masses” within a government system, the problems of capitalism and its deep impact on the social system of America, and the role of elites who control American capitalism and social society. He clearly possesses a class outlook that frames his analysis of the United States.
2. Xiaotong agrees with Carter that America’s problem is not the energy crisis but a “crisis of faith.” Does that mean he agrees with the president about the nature of the crisis?

- Carter feels that the nature of the crisis is a spiritual bankruptcy within modern American social values. Xiaotong argues that class exploitation lies at the heart of the crisis of faith, wherein Americans doubt the validity of their society to deliver basic services that also provide social meaning and interpersonal connections.
3. What value, if any, do you think a historian would find in Xiaotong's essay as a historical document?
 - The document is extremely valuable in the following ways: It provides a foreign perspective on American society that supplements American documents, the author is biased but provides a unique and detached examination of U.S. society, and the document sheds light on the development of the writer and Chinese society and its impressions of America as well.

Reading American Pictures

A Near Meltdown at Three Mile Island, 1979 (p. 914)

1. When talk about nuclear energy began, not a lot was said about the fact that the huge plants would have to be placed in somebody's backyard. The first photo shows the neighborhood abutting the Three Mile Island facility. Look carefully at the houses. What sort of people might live there? Would you be happy to live there? What are the social implications of your answer?
 - The neighborhood is a working-class community inhabited by families. Nuclear plants were built in populated areas and within working-class communities. Upper-class Americans prevented nuclear facilities from being built in their backyards, illustrating the class dimension to nuclear proliferation during the 1970s.
2. The second photograph shows President Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, inspecting the facility on April 1, 1979, just as the crisis was ending. Carter had been a nuclear engineer. Do you suppose he was there to offer his expertise? If not, what was he doing there?
 - Carter's role was clearly one of reassurance to a panicked nation over the near meltdown. This propaganda move was vital to increase domestic support of the nuclear industry.
3. The cartoon is a commentary on Carter's visit. What does it portend about the future of nuclear energy in this country? What details in the cartoon can you point to that support your answer?
 - The cartoon implies that the natural environment will be affected by nuclear energy in a negative and major way, hence the exaggerated size of the flower. Details include the large cooling towers and the larger-than-life dandelion.

Electronic Media

Web sites

- *Watergate*
<http://watergate.info>
This Australian site deals with Watergate and the fall of Richard Nixon and provides a historical overview as well as audio and written documents.
- *The Oyez Project*
<http://www.oyez.org/oyez/frontpage>
Produced by Northwestern University, this site provides an invaluable resource for more than one thousand Supreme Court cases, with audio transcripts, voting records, and summaries of cases such as *Roe v. Wade*.

Films

- *All the President's Men* (1976, Warner Bros. Pictures, 120 min)
Starring Dustin Hoffman and Robert Redford, this film re-creates the Watergate scandal and investigation by reporters at the *Washington Post*.
- *Little Big Man* (1970, National General Pictures, 120 min)
Directed by Arthur Penn and starring Dustin Hoffman, this film chronicles the fictitious life of a white man raised by a Native American tribe during the late nineteenth century.
- *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Movement 1954–1985* (1987, PBS Series, 12 hours)
Directed by Henry Hampton, this mini-series documentary is perhaps the best general overview of the civil rights movement.

Literature

- Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, *All the President's Men* (New York: Touchstone, Second Edition, 1994)

One of the most important books written on the Watergate scandal that helped to unravel the Nixon administration.

- John Dean, *Blind Ambition* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1976)

An insider's account of the Watergate scandal.

- Daniel Ellsberg, *Secrets: A Memoir of Vietnam and the Pentagon Papers* (New York: Penguin, 2003)

A former member of the Johnson administration reveals the reasons that he leaked government documents to help end the Vietnam War.

Additional Bedford/St. Martin's Resources for Chapter 29

FOR INSTRUCTORS

Transparencies

The following maps and images from Chapter 29 are available as full-color acetates:

- No Gas
- Map 29.1 States Ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment, 1972–1977
- Goldsboro, PA
- Crisis Management
- Nervous Humor
- Map 29.2 From Rust Belt to Sun Belt, 1940–2000

Instructor's Resource CD-ROM

The following maps, figures, and images from Chapter 29, as well as a chapter outline, are available on disc in both PowerPoint and jpeg formats:

- Map 29.1 States Ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment, 1972–1977
- Map 29.2 From Rust Belt to Sun Belt, 1940–2000
- Figure 29.1 U.S. Energy Consumption, 1900–2000
- Figure 29.2 The Inflation Rate, 1960–2000
- No Gas
- Goldsboro, PA
- Crisis Management
- Nervous Humor

Using the Bedford Series with *America's History*, Sixth Edition

Available online at bedfordstmartins.com/usingseries, this guide offers practical suggestions for incorporating volumes from the Bedford Series in History and

Culture into the U.S. History Survey. Relevant titles for Chapter 29 include

- *Mao Zedong and China's Revolutions: A Brief History with Documents*, by Timothy Cheek, *University of British Columbia*
- *Jimmy Carter and the Energy Crisis of the 1970s: The "Crisis of Confidence Speech" of July 15, 1979: A Brief History with Documents*, by Daniel Horowitz, *Smith College*
- *The Oil Crisis of 1973–1974: A Brief History with Documents*, by Karen Merrill, *Williams College*
- *U.S. Environmentalism since 1945: A Brief History with Documents*, by Steven Stoll, *Yale University*
- *Women's Magazines, 1940–1960: Gender Roles and the Popular Press*, Edited with an Introduction by Nancy A. Walker, *Vanderbilt University*
- *Title IX: A Brief History with Documents*, by Susan Ware

FOR STUDENTS

Documents to Accompany *America's History*

The following documents and illustrations are available in Chapter 29 of the companion reader by Kevin J. Fernlund, *University of Missouri–St. Louis*:

1. Dan Rather's Conversation with President Nixon (1972)
2. Richard Nixon, Vietnamization and the Nixon Doctrine (1969)
3. Richard Nixon, The Invasion of Cambodia (1970)
4. Watergate: Taped White House Conversations (1972)
5. Gloria Steinem, Statement in Support of the Equal Rights Amendment (1970)
6. Phyllis Schlafly, *The Power of the Positive Woman* (1977)
7. Gallup Polls, National Problems, 1950–1999
8. Rachel Carson, *And No Birds Sing* (1962)
9. William Serrin, *Homestead* (1970s)
10. Jimmy Carter, The National Crisis of Confidence (1979)
11. Ronald Reagan, Acceptance Speech, National Republican Convention (1980)

Online Study Guide at bedfordstmartins.com/henretta

The Online Study Guide helps students synthesize the material from the text as well as practice the skills historians use to make sense of the past. The following visual and documents activities are available for Chapter 29:

Visual Activity

- Reading American Pictures: *A Near Meltdown at Three Mile Island, 1979*

Reading Historical Documents Activities

- Comparing American Voices: *Debating the Equal Rights Amendment*
- Voices from Abroad: Fei Xiaotong: *America's Crisis of Faith*

Critical Thinking Modules at bedfordstmartins.com/historymodules

These online modules invite students to interpret maps and audio, visual, and textual sources centered on events covered in the U.S. History Survey. The relevant module for Chapter 29 is

- The Rise of the Republican Party in the Sunbelt and the South, 1960–1980

