Part Instructional Objectives

After you have taught Part 7, your students should be able to answer the following questions:

1. In what ways did the presidency of Ronald Reagan impact the United States during the 1980s?
2. How did Presidents Reagan and Bush deal with the Middle East?
3. In what ways was the Clinton presidency a departure from the previous two presidencies?
4. How did the new technology of the computer revolution shape American society between 1980 and 2000?
5. What is meant by the term "culture wars"?
6. How did George W. Bush win the 2000 presidential election?
7. In what ways did the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the United States alter American society?
In a 1972 interview, former president Richard M. Nixon remarked, “History is never worth reading until it’s fifty years old. It takes fifty years before you’re able to come back and evaluate a man or a period of time.” Nixon’s comments remind us that writing recent history poses a particular challenge; not knowing the future course of events, we can’t say for certain which present-day trend will prove to be the most important. Part Seven is therefore a work-in-progress; its perspective will change as events unfold. At this point, it focuses on five broad themes: the ascendance in American politics of the New Right, the impact of economic globalization, social conflicts stemming from cultural diversity, the revolution in information technology, and the end of the Cold War and the rise of Muslim terrorism.

**Government**

With Ronald Reagan’s election in 1980, “New Right” conservatism began its ascendance. The conservatives’ agenda was to roll back the social welfare state created by liberal Democrats during the New Deal and the Great Society. Presidents Reagan, George H. W. Bush, and George W. Bush cut taxes, limited the regulatory activities of federal agencies, transferred some powers and resources to state governments, and appointed conservative-minded judges to the federal courts. The most important change in the federal welfare system, however, came during the Clinton administration in 1996, with new legislation designed to shift families from dependency on welfare payments to employment in the labor market. Evangelical Christians and conservative lawmakers brought abortion, gay rights, and other cultural issues into the political arena, setting off controversies that revealed sharp divisions among the American people.

**Diplomacy**

In a surprising development in the late 1980s, the Soviet Union and its satellite Communist regimes in
Eastern European suddenly collapsed. The Soviet demise produced, in the words of President George H. W. Bush, a “new world order” and left the United States as the only military superpower. Accepting that role, the United States worked to counter civil wars, terrorist activities, and military aggression in many parts of the world and especially in the Middle East. In 1991, it fought the Persian Gulf War in response to Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait and, in the late 1990s, led military action and peacekeeping efforts in Serbia and Bosnia. In 2001, in response to terrorist attacks on New York and Washington by the radical Islamic group Al Qaeda, President George W. Bush attacked Al Qaeda’s bases in Afghanistan. He then ordered an invasion of Iraq in 2003 that quickly toppled the regime of dictator Saddam Hussein but triggered civil chaos and a violent insurgency that is still ongoing.

**Economy**

The American economy grew substantially during the quarter century beginning in 1980, thanks to the increased productivity of workers and the controversial tax and spending policies of the federal government. Tax cuts for wealthy Americans spurred investment and government spending for military purposes boosted production; these policies also created huge budget deficits, a dramatic increase in the national debt, and a widening gap between rich and poor Americans. Equally significant, the end of Cold War allowed the spread of capitalist enterprise around the globe. As multinational corporations set up manufacturing facilities in China and other low-wage countries, they undercut industrial production and wage rates in the United States and helped to create a massive American trade deficit. Because of the trade and budget deficits, American prosperity rested on an increasingly shaky foundation.

**Society**

The increasing heterogeneity of American society—in demographic composition and in cultural values—was yet another characteristic of life in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Increased immigration from Latin America and Asia added to cultural tensions and produced a new nativist movement. Continuing battles over affirmative action, abortion, sexual standards, homosexuality, feminism, and religion in public life took on an increasingly passionate character, inhibiting the quest for politically negotiated solutions.

**Science and Technology**

One effect of faith-based politics was a significant challenge to scientific evidence and research, most especially against the claims of evolution and the advent of stem-cell research. Even the dramatic changes in technology, which boosted economic productivity and provided easy access to information and entertainment, posed new challenges. Would cable technology, with its multitude of choices, further erode a common American culture? Would the World Wide Web facilitate the outsourcing of American middle-class jobs? Would computer technology allow corporations—and government agencies—to track the lives and limit the freedom of American citizens? Like any revolution, the innovations in computer technology had an increasingly significant impact on many spheres of American life.

A “new world order,” a New Right ascendancy, a new global economy, massive new immigration, and a technological revolution: We live in a time of rapid political and social changes and continuing diplomatic and technological challenges that will test the resiliency of American society and the creativity of American leaders.
Chapter 30

The Reagan Revolution and the End of the Cold War
1980–2001

Teaching Resources

Chapter Instructional Objectives

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

1. How did the domestic policies of presidents Reagan and Bush reflect the rise of conservatism?
2. How and why did the Cold War conclude with an American victory in 1991?
3. How did the end of the Cold War precipitate the reemergence of regional, ethnic, and religious conflicts in Eastern Europe?
4. How effective was the Clinton presidency at home and abroad?

Chapter Annotated Outline

I. The Rise of Conservatism

A. Reagan and the Emergence of the New Right

1. The personal odyssey of Ronald Reagan embodies the story of “New Right” Republican conservatism. Before World War II, Reagan was a well-known movie actor—and a New Deal Democrat and admirer of Franklin Roosevelt. He turned away from the New Deal partly out of self-interest and partly out of principle.

2. Ronald Reagan came to national prominence in 1964. Speaking to the Republican convention on national television, he delivered a powerful speech supporting the presidential nomination of arch-conservative Barry Goldwater. Just as the “Cross of Gold” speech elevated William Jennings Bryan to fame in 1896, so Reagan’s address—titled “A Time For Choosing” and delivered again and again throughout the mid-1960s—secured his political future.

3. His impassioned rhetoric supporting limited government, low taxation, and law and order won broad support among citizens of the most populous state and made him a force in national politics.


5. In 1964 the conservative message preached by Ronald Reagan and Barry Goldwater appealed to few American voters. Then came the series of events that mobilized opposition to the Democratic Party and its liberal agenda: a stagnating economy, the failed war in Vietnam, African American riots, a judiciary that legalized abortion and enforced school busing, and an expanded federal regulatory state. By the mid-1970s conservatism commanded greater popular support.

6. Strong “New Right” grassroots organizations spread the message. In 1964, 3.9 million volunteers had campaigned for Barry Goldwater, twice as many as worked for Lyndon B. Johnson; now they swung their support to Ronald Reagan.

7. The most striking new entry into the conservative coalition was the Religious Right. Drawing its membership from conservative Catholics and Protestant evangelicals, the Religious Right condemned growing public acceptance of divorce, abortion, pre-marital sex, and feminism. Charismatic television-evangelists, such as Pat Robertson, the son of a United States
Senator, and Jerry Falwell, the founder of the Moral Majority, emerged as the champions of a faith-based political agenda.

B. The Election of 1980
1. In the election of 1980 President Jimmy Carter’s sinking popularity virtually doomed his campaign. When the Democrats renominated him over his liberal challenger, Edward (Ted) Kennedy of Massachusetts, Carter’s approval rating was stunningly low—a mere 21 percent of Americans believed he was an effective president.

2. The reasons were readily apparent. Economically, millions of citizens were feeling the pinch from stagnant wages, high inflation, crippling mortgages, and an unemployment rate of nearly eight percent. Diplomatically, the nation blamed Carter for failing to respond strongly to Soviet expansion and to the Iranian hostage crisis.

3. Reagan effectively appealed to the many Americans who felt financially insecure. In a televised debate between the candidates, Reagan emphasized the economic plight of working- and middle-class Americans in an era of “stagflation”—stagnant wages amid rapidly rising prices.

4. In November the voters gave a clear answer. They repudiated Carter, giving him only 41 percent of the vote. Independent candidate John Anderson garnered 8 percent and Reagan won easily, with 51 percent of the popular vote nationwide and higher percentages in the South.

5. Equally important, the Republicans elected thirty-three new members of the House of Representatives and twelve new senators, which gave them control of the U.S. Senate for the first time since 1954.

6. Superior financial resources contributed to the Republican success: two-thirds of all corporate donations to political action committees (PACs) went to conservative Republican candidates. While the Democratic Party saw its key constituency—organized labor—dwindle in size and influence, the GOP used its ample funds to reach voters through a sophisticated campaign of television and direct mail advertisements.

7. This aggressive campaigning continued the realignment of the American electorate that had begun during the 1970s.

The core of the Republican Party remained the relatively affluent, white, Protestant voters who supported balanced budgets, opposed government activism, feared crime and communism, and believed in a strong national defense.

8. But “Reagan Democrats” had now joined the Republican cause; prominent among these formerly Democratic voters were southern whites, who opposed civil rights legislation, and Catholic blue-collar workers, who were alarmed by anti-war protestors, feminist demands, and welfare expenditures.

9. The Religious Right was another significant contributor to the Republican victory. The Moral Majority claimed that it registered two million new voters for the 1980 election, and the Republican Party’s platform reflected its influence. The platform called for a constitutional ban on abortion, voluntary prayer in public schools, and a mandatory death penalty for certain crimes.

10. Ultimately, politics in a democracy is “the art of the possible” and savvy politicians know when to advance and when to retreat. Having attained two of his prime goals—a major tax cut and a dramatic increase in defense spending—Reagan did not carry through on his promises to scale back big government and the welfare state. When Reagan left office in 1989, federal spending stood at 22.1 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) and federal taxes at 19 percent of GDP, both virtually the same as in 1981. In the meantime, the federal deficit had tripled in size, and the number of civilian government workers had increased from 2.9 to 3.1 million. This outcome—so different from the President’s lofty rhetoric—elicited harsh criticism from conservative commentators. As one of them angrily charged, there was no “Reagan revolution.”

11. That verdict was too narrow. Despite its failed promises, the presidency of Ronald Reagan set the nation on a new political and ideological path. Social welfare liberalism, ascendant since 1933, was now thoroughly on the defensive. Moreover, the Reagan presidency restored popular belief that America—and individual Americans—could enjoy increasing prosperity.

A. Reaganomics

1. In his first year of office, Reagan and his chief adviser, James A. Baker III, moved quickly to set new government priorities. To roll back the expanded liberal state, they launched a coordinated three-pronged assault on federal taxes, social welfare spending, and the regulatory bureaucracy. To win the Cold War, they advocated a vast increase in defense spending. And to match the resurgent nations of Germany and Japan, whom the United States had defeated in World War II and then helped to rebuild, they set out to restore American leadership of the world’s capitalist societies.

2. To achieve this goal, the new administration advanced a new set of economic and tax policies. Quickly dubbed “Reaganomics,” these policies sought to boost the economy by increasing the supply of goods. The theory underlying “supply-side economics,” as this approach was called, emphasized the need to increase investment in productive enterprises.

3. Taking advantage of Republican control of the Senate and his personal popularity following a failed assassination attempt, Reagan won congressional approval of the Economic Recovery Tax Act (ERTA). The act reduced income tax rates paid by most Americans by 23 percent over three years.

4. Reagan’s Budget Director David Stockman hoped to match this sizable reduction in tax revenue with a comparable cutback in federal expenditures. To meet this ambitious goal, he proposed substantial cuts in Social Security and Medicare.

5. In a futile attempt to balance the budget, Stockman advocated spending cuts on programs for food stamps, unemployment compensation, and welfare assistance—such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC).

6. Military spending accounted for the bulk of the growing federal deficit, and President Reagan was its strongest supporter.

7. The combination of lower taxes and higher defense spending led to a skyrocketing national debt. By the time Reagan left office, the federal deficit had tripled—rising from $930 billion in 1981 to $2.8 trillion in 1989.

8. Advocates of Reaganomics also asserted that excessive regulation by federal government agencies impeded economic growth. Some of these bureaucracies, such as the U.S. Department of Labor, had risen to prominence during the New Deal.

9. The Reagan administration also limited the regulatory efforts of federal agencies by staffing them with leaders who were hostile to their mission. James Watt, an outspoken conservative who headed up the Department of the Interior, opened public lands for use by private businesses—oil and coal corporations, large-scale ranchers, timber companies.

10. The Sierra Club and other environmental groups roused enough public outrage about these appointees and their policies that the administration changed its position.

11. During President Reagan’s second term, he significantly increased the EPA’s budget, created new wildlife preserves, and added acreage to the National Wilderness Preservation System and animals and plants to the endangered species lists.

B. Reagan’s Second Term

1. In 1984 Reagan won a landslide victory over Democrat Walter Mondale and his running mate Geraldine Ferraro, the first woman to run on a major-party ticket.

2. Reagan’s second term was marred by the Iran-Contra affair—an arms-for-hostage deal in which the United States had covertly sold arms to Iran in an attempt to gain its help in freeing some American hostages held by pro-Iranian forces in Lebanon.

3. Some of the profits generated by the arms sales were diverted to the Contras, counter-revolutionaries in Nicaragua, whom the administration supported in their attempt to overthrow the leftist regime of the Sandinistas.

4. The illegal and unconstitutional diversion of funds seemed to have been the idea of Marine Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North, a National Security Council aide at the time, though one key memo seemed to link the White House to his plan.

5. Congress investigated, but White House officials testified that the president knew nothing about the diversion of profits from arms sales. In an example of
Reagan’s “Teflon presidency,” the public seemed untroubled by the scandal, though it did weaken his presidency.

6. Reagan reordered the federal government’s priorities, but he failed to reduce its size or scope.

7. Reagan’s spending cuts and antigovernment rhetoric shaped the terms of political debate for the rest of the century.

8. One of Reagan’s most significant legacies was his conservative judicial appointments—Antonin Scalia, Anthony Kennedy, and Sandra Day O’Connor, the first woman ever to serve on the Supreme Court.

9. The national debt tripled during Reagan’s tenure from the combined effects of increased military spending, tax reductions for high-income taxpayers, and Congress’s refusal to approve deep cuts in domestic programs; by 1989 the national debt had climbed to $2.8 trillion—more than $11,000 for every American citizen.

10. Budget and trade deficits contributed to the U.S. shift in 1985 from a creditor to a debtor nation.

III. Defeating Communism and Creating a New World Order

A. The End of the Cold War

1. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War were the most dramatic developments in foreign affairs during the 1980s and early 1990s. The fall of the Soviet regime was the result of external pressure from the United States and the internal weaknesses of the Communist economy and society.

2. To defeat the Soviets, the administration pursued a two-pronged strategy. First, it abandoned the policy of “détente” and set about to rearm America. This build-up in American military strength, reasoned Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, a determined hard-liner, would force the Soviets into an arms race that would strain their economy and undermine support for the Communist regime. Second, the president supported the policy of CIA Director William Casey to fund guerillas who were trying to overthrow pro-communist governments in Angola, Mozambique, Afghanistan, and Central America—and thereby roll back Soviet influence in the Third World.

3. These strategies succeeded because they exploited the internal weaknesses and policy mistakes of the Communist regime. Its system of state-socialism and central economic planning had transformed Russia from an agricultural to an industrial society. But it had done so very inefficiently—lacking the discipline and opportunities of a market economy, most enterprises hoarded raw materials, employed too many workers, and did not develop new products.

4. Mikhail Gorbachev, a young Russian leader who became General Secretary of the Communist Party in 1985, recognized the need for internal economic reform, technological progress, and an end to the Afghanistan War. His policies of glasnost (openness) and perestroika (economic restructuring) spurred widespread criticism of the rigid institutions and authoritarian controls of the Communist regime.

5. To lessen tensions with the United States, Gorbachev met with Reagan in 1985 and the two leaders established a warm personal rapport. By 1987 they agreed to eliminate all intermediate-range nuclear missiles based in Europe. A year later Gorbachev ordered Soviet troops out of Afghanistan and Reagan replaced many of his hard-line advisers with policy makers who favored a renewal of détente.

6. As Gorbachev’s reforms revealed the flaws of the Soviet system, the peoples of eastern and central Europe demanded the ouster of their Communist governments. In Poland the Roman Catholic Church and its Pope—Polish-born John Paul II—led the effort to overthrow the pro-Soviet regime.

7. The destruction of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 symbolized the end of the Communist rule in central Europe. Two years later the Soviet Union collapsed. Alarmed by Gorbachev’s reforms, Soviet military leaders seized the premier in August 1991. But widespread popular opposition led by Boris Yeltsin, the president of the Russian Republic, thwarted their efforts to oust him from office. The failure of the coup broke the dominance of the Communist Party. On December 25, 1991, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics formally dissolved to make way for an eleven-member Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The Russian Republic led by Yeltsin assumed leadership of the CIS, but the USSR was no more.
B. The Presidency of George H.W. Bush

1. In 1988 George Bush and his running mate Dan Quayle defeated Democrat Michael Dukakis and Lloyd Bentsen in an exceptionally negative campaign.

2. The judiciary rather than the executive branch determined some of the more significant domestic trends of the Bush era: *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services* (1989) gave states more latitude in restricting abortions and later rulings further restricted abortion rights.

3. Bush also had an opportunity to shape the Supreme Court; in 1990 he nominated David Souter, who easily won confirmation to the Court, and in 1991 nominated Clarence Thomas, who was narrowly confirmed despite charges of sexual harassment against him by Anita Hill.

4. In the wake of the Clarence Thomas hearings, national polls confirmed the pervasiveness of sexual harassment of working women.

5. Bush’s efforts to promote economic growth were crippled by Reagan’s policies, especially the deficit, complicated by the Gramm-Rudman Act, which mandated automatic cuts if budget targets were not met in 1991.

6. Facing the prospect of a halt in nonessential government services and the layoff of thousands of government employees, Congress resorted to new spending cuts and one of the largest tax increases in American history.


8. Reagan’s decision to shift the cost of federal programs to state and local governments also caused problems for Bush; in 1990 a recession began to erode state and local tax revenues.

9. Unemployment rose to 7 percent in 1991, and state and local governments laid off workers even as the demand for social services climbed.

10. These persistent economic problems would prove a crucial factor in denying George Bush a second term as president.


1. The end of the Cold War left the United States as the only military superpower and raised the prospect of a “new world order” dominated by the United States and its European and Asian allies. But there were problems. American diplomats now confronted an array of regional, religious, and ethnic conflicts that defied easy solutions. Those in the Middle East—the oil-rich lands stretching from Afghanistan to Morocco—remained the most pressing and the most threatening to American interests.

2. Like previous presidents, Ronald Reagan had little success in resolving the conflicts between the Jewish state of Israel and its Muslim Arab neighbors. In 1982 his administration initially supported Israel’s invasion of Lebanon to attack forces of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), who had taken over part of that country.

3. As the violence escalated in 1984, the administration urged an Israeli withdrawal and dispatched an American military force as “peacekeepers,” a decision it quickly regretted. Lebanese Muslim militants, angered by American support for Israel, targeted American marines with a truck bomb, killing 241 soldiers; rather than confront the bombers, the administration withdrew American forces.

4. Three years later Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and along the West Bank of the Jordan River—territories occupied by Israel since 1967—mounted an intifada, a civilian uprising against Israeli authority. In response, American diplomats stepped up their efforts to persuade the PLO and Arab nations to accept the legitimacy of Israel and to convince the Israelis to allow the creation of a Palestinian state. Neither initiative met with much success.

5. American policy makers faced a second set of problems in the oil-rich nations of Iran and Iraq. In September 1980 the revolutionary Islamic government of Iran, headed by Ayatollah Khomeini, found itself at war with Iraq, a secular state headed by the ruthless Saddam Hussein and his Sunni Muslim followers.

6. The war started over a series of boundary disputes, in particular access to deep water ports in the Persian Gulf essential to shipping oil, and quickly escalated into a
brutal war of attrition that would claim a million casualties. The Reagan administration ignored Hussein’s brutal repression of his political opponents in Iraq and the murder (using poison gas) of tens of thousands of Iraqi Kurds and Shiite Muslims.

7. Anxious to preserve a balance of power in the Middle East, it provided Hussein with military intelligence and other aid. Finally, in 1988, an armistice ended the inconclusive war, with both sides still claiming the territory that sparked the conflict.

8. On August 2, 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait and threatened Saudi Arabia, compromising Middle East stability as well as U.S. access to oil.


10. In November the Security Council voted to use force if Iraq did not withdraw by January 15 and in a close vote on January 12, the U.S. Senate authorized military action. Four days later President Bush announced to the nation that “the liberation of Kuwait has begun.”

11. The forty-two-day war was a resounding success for the UN’s coalition forces, which were predominantly American, yet Hussein remained in power.

12. At war’s end, the UN passed Resolution 687, which imposed economic sanctions on Iraq until it had submitted to unfettered weapons inspections, destroyed all biological and chemical weapons, and unconditionally agreed not to develop nuclear capability.

13. The euphoria produced at home by the success of the conflict quickly subsided when a new recession showed that the country had serious economic problems.


A. Clinton’s Early Record

1. Raised in Hope, Arkansas, by an alcoholic stepfather who abused his mother, Clinton left home to study at Georgetown University. He won a Rhodes scholarship to Oxford and took a law degree at Yale, where he married a classmate, Hillary Rodham. Returning to Arkansas, he entered politics and won election to six two-year terms as governor.

2. Clinton became the Democratic candidate in the 1992 presidential election, but only after surviving charges that he dodged the draft to avoid service in Vietnam, smoked marijuana, and cheated repeatedly on his wife. Although all of those stories had an element of truth, Clinton adroitly talked his way into the presidential nomination—he had charisma and a way with words. For his running mate he chose Al Gore, a second-term senator from Tennessee.

3. President Bush easily won the Republican nomination over his lone opponent, the conservative columnist Pat Buchanan. But he allowed the Religious Right to dominate the Republican convention and write a conservative platform that alienated many political moderates.

4. The Democrats mounted an aggressive campaign that focused on Clinton’s domestic agenda: he promised a tax cut for the middle classes, universal health insurance, and a reduction of the huge Republican budget deficit.

5. On election day, Bush could not overcome voters’ discontent over the weak economy and conservatives’ disgust at his tax hikes. He received only 37 percent of the popular vote, as millions of Republicans cast their ballots for Ross Perot, who won more votes (19 percent) than any independent candidate since Theodore Roosevelt in 1912.

6. The president was more successful with the “centrist” New Democrat elements of his political agenda. Shortly before he left office, George Bush had signed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), an arrangement among the United States, Canada, and Mexico to create a free-trade zone covering all of North America.

7. Clinton took meaningful action to reduce the budget deficits of the Reagan-Bush presidencies. In 1993 he secured a five-year budget package that would reduce the federal deficit by $500 billion.

8. Shared sacrifice led to shared rewards. By 1998 Clinton’s fiscal policies had balanced the federal budget and had begun to pay down the federal debt—at a rate of $156 billion a year between 1999 and 2001.

B. The Republican Resurgence

1. In the 1994 midterm elections, Republicans gained control of both houses of Congress, winning the House of Representatives for the first time since 1954.
2. In the House of Representatives, the centerpiece of the new Republican majority was the “Contract with America,” which included constitutional amendments to balance the budget, term limits, significant tax cuts, reductions in welfare and other entitlement programs, anticrime initiatives, and cutbacks in federal regulations.

3. Clinton, bowing to political reality, declared that the “era of big government is over” and attempted to co-opt Republicans by moving his administration to a centrist position.

4. After protracted conflict with Clinton and the Democrats in Congress, the Republicans extracted a pledge from the president that he was committed to ending the budget deficit in 2002, and compromised on a budget that cut $23 billion from discretionary spending.

5. House Republicans were especially determined to cut welfare; in 1996 after vetoing two Republican-authored bills, Clinton signed into law the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act, a historic overhaul of federal entitlements.

6. The Republican takeover of Congress united the Democrats behind the president; unopposed in the 1996 primaries, Clinton was able to burnish his image as a moderate “New Democrat.”

7. In the 1996 elections, Republican Bob Dole made a 15 percent across-the-board tax cut the centerpiece of his campaign, while Clinton emphasized an improved economy.

8. With only 49 percent of the eligible voters casting ballots, Clinton became the first Democrat since Franklin Roosevelt to win reelection.

9. Because Republicans retained a majority of the nation’s statehouses and strengthened their control of Congress, a key factor in Clinton’s second term would be his ability to work with a Republican-dominated Congress.

C. Clinton’s Impeachment

1. Clinton’s attempt to shape a bipartisan political agenda would unravel halfway through his second term when a sex scandal led to his impeachment.

2. In 1998 allegations emerged during an investigation of Paula Jones’s charges of sexual harassment against the president while governor of Arkansas of an affair between Clinton and former White House intern Monica Lewinsky; Kenneth Starr widened his Whitewater investigation to include this scandal.

3. On December 20, 1998, the House of Representatives narrowly approved two articles of impeachment against Clinton: one for perjury and a second for obstruction of justice.

4. Clinton’s approval rating remained high throughout the trial in the Senate; Americans approved of his presidential performance even if they disapproved of his personal morality.

5. Clinton was acquitted on both charges by the Senate; he survived the process, but the scandal, trial, and partisan sentiments that surrounded it limited his effectiveness as president and deepened public cynicism about politics and its practitioners.

D. Foreign Policy at the End of the Twentieth Century

1. A major dilemma facing the Clinton administration was how to conceptualize and implement the United States’ role in the post–Cold War world.

2. Clinton scored some modest successes in his efforts to mediate long-standing conflicts; in 1998 he facilitated an agreement in Northern Ireland between Protestants and Catholics and in 1994 he brought together Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO chairman Yasir Arafat to sign an agreement allowing limited Palestinian self-rule.

3. When Bosnian Serbs formed their own breakaway state and began a campaign of “ethnic cleansing,” the Clinton administration facilitated a peace accord in 1995; a NATO-led peacekeeping force, with 20,000 American troops, ended the fighting, at least temporarily.

4. A new crisis emerged in the region in March 1999 in Kosovo; there NATO, strongly influenced by the United States, intervened to protect ethnic Albanians from Serbians determined to drive them out of the region; NATO succeeded in restoring order to the region, but no long-term solutions were found to the problems of ethnic conflict.

5. Terrorism presented another challenge to world peace in the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City, in which five men, associated with Islamic
extremists, were later sentenced to life in prison, and in the 2000 suicide attack on the USS Cole.
6. The United States immediately blamed Osama bin Laden for the Cole incident, and also suspected him in the 1993 World Trade Center attack.
7. Both the Balkan crises and terrorist activity served as potent reminders that despite the United States’ position as the most powerful nation in the world, America was limited in its ability to achieve its foreign-policy aims.

Lecture Strategies

1. How did Ronald Reagan become president? Write a lecture explaining how a cowboy actor became the leader of the free world. Note that Reagan’s background as a movie actor and ad spokesman provided excellent training for politics in the television age. His political career should be traced from the 1964 Republican convention through the governorship of California to the White House.
2. The impact of Reaganomics on the national economy needs to be traced in a basic lecture for the students. Supply-side economic theory called for a tax cut. How might tax cuts stimulate economic growth? How might they limit social welfare programs? Reaganomics also called for a sharp reduction in domestic spending, but Reagan actually increased spending during his presidency. Where did deregulation fit in? How was the federal deficit affected by these policies?
3. Create a lecture analyzing why the Iran-Contra affair brought the Reagan administration into dispute. This requires a discussion of several disparate issues: relations with Iran, the arming and training of the Nicaraguan Contras, the functions of the National Security Council, and the authority for and nature of covert intelligence activities. The illegality of the support for the Contras and the selling of arms to Iran should be stressed.
4. Write a lecture analyzing the lessons of the American victory in the Persian Gulf War of 1990 to 1991. This might be a good time to discuss with students the extent to which the president and Congress each have the constitutional authority to prosecute military intervention overseas. Denial of media access to military action in the Persian Gulf became a controversial issue. Was the Pentagon’s restriction of the press a result of the media’s role in Vietnam? Was there a “Vietnam syndrome” to be overcome? Why was the United States so successful militarily? How did American and coalition forces achieve the dramatic, quick, and relatively casualty-free (for U.S. forces) military victory? What effects did the war have on the countries of the Middle East?
5. Create a lecture explaining Clinton’s failure to enact health-care, Social Security, or Medicare reform during his first term in office. Link these failures with the Republican “revolution” of 1994. How did the Republicans’ “Contract with America” undermine Clinton’s social reforms?
6. President Clinton was only the second president to be impeached by the House of Representatives. Write a lecture discussing the significance of Clinton’s impeachment with students. How does the process of putting the president on trial affect the nation’s political system? Explain the role of the House and Senate in the impeachment process. What happens to the nation’s foreign policy when political leaders are consumed with a legal defense?

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 Rise of Conservatism (pp. 928–933)

1. What were the key groups of the new Republican coalition? Were their goals complementary? Contradictory?
   • The key groups included the Religious Right, working-class voters, disillusioned Democrats, affluent white Protestants, southern whites who left the Democratic party, Catholic blue-collar workers, young voters, and socially mobile residents of rapidly growing suburban communities.
   • They were linked through the shared values of anti-big government, anti-affirmative action, anti-feminism, pro-Christianity, anti-welfare, anti-communism, fear of drugs, and pro-war.
2. What factors led to Ronald Reagan’s election in 1980?
   • Factors included Jimmy Carter’s sinking popularity; the fact that millions of citizens were feeling the pinch from stagnant wages, high inflation, crippling mortgages, and an unemployment rate of nearly eight percent; the nation blamed Carter
The Reagan Presidency, 1981–1989 (pp. 933–938)

1. What were the key elements of Reagan’s domestic policy?
   - Key elements included rolling back the expanded liberal state, lowering federal taxes, reducing social welfare spending, reducing the regulatory bureaucracy, increasing the supply of goods, and higher defense spending to create a large national debt.

2. What limits did Reagan face in promoting conservative goals? What successes did he achieve?
   - Limits included the fact that Congress did not pass all of Reagan’s conservative legislation; environmental groups lobbied against his conservative appointments; appointees like James Watt scandalized the administration through corruption and controversy; and the welfare and bureaucratic state actually expanded under Reagan’s conservative leadership.
   - Successes included an increase in defense spending, a rolling back of regulatory legislation, an increase in U.S. efforts to contain communism abroad, and an increase in military spending.

The Clinton Presidency, 1993–2001 (pp. 946–953)

1. In what ways did Clinton’s administration suggest that he was a “New Democrat”?
   - Like Kennedy, Clinton was a political pragmatist; distancing himself from party liberals and special interest groups. He styled himself as a “New Democrat” who would bring “Reagan Democrats” and middle-class voters back to the party.
   - Clinton dodged the draft to avoid service in Vietnam, smoked marijuana, and cheated repeatedly on his wife, problems that helped define a more humanistic new Democrat.
   - Clinton had charisma and a way with words. For his running mate he chose Al Gore, a second-term senator from Tennessee. Gore was about the same age as Clinton, making them the first baby-boom national ticket, as well as the first all-southern ticket, Democrat or Republican.

2. What was the importance of the Republicans’ “Contract with America”?
   - The contract included constitutional amendments to balance the budget and term limits for members of Congress. It also promised significant tax cuts, reductions in welfare and other entitlement programs, anticrime initiatives, and cutbacks in federal regulations.
• These initiatives, and Republican control of Congress after 1994, represented the completion of the conservative-backed Reagan Revolution of 1980. The president and the Democrats were now on the defensive against a Republican insurgency.

3. What foreign policy challenges did Clinton face, and how did he address them?

• *Somalia incursion:* President Bush had approved American participation in a UN peacekeeping force, and Clinton had added additional troops. When bloody fighting in October 1993 killed eighteen American soldiers and wounded eighty-four, Clinton gradually withdrew the troops.

• *Haiti “peacekeeping”:* Clinton had criticized President Bush’s refusal to grant asylum to refugees from the brutal new Haitian regime. Once in the White House, Clinton reversed his stance: to thwart a massive influx of impoverished Haitian “boat people,” the new president called for Aristide’s return to power. Threatening a U.S. invasion, Clinton forced Haiti’s military rulers to step down. American troops maintained Aristide in power until March 1995, when the United Nations took over responsibility for keeping the peace.

• *Balkans bombing:* In November of 1995 Clinton organized a NATO-led bombing campaign and peacekeeping effort, backed by 20,000 American troops, that ended the Serbs’ vicious expansionist drive in the former Yugoslavia.

• *Islamic Radicalism:* In the Middle East Clinton was as unsuccessful as previous presidents in mediating the long-standing conflict between Jews and Arabs. In 1993 radical Muslim immigrants also set off a bomb in the World Trade Center in New York City. Five years later Muslim terrorists used truck bombs to blow up the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, and in 2000 they bombed the USS Cole in the Yemeni port of Aden.

Chapter Writing Assignments

These questions appear at the end of Chapter 30 in the textbook. They are provided in the Computerized Test Bank with suggested responses, for your convenience.

1. How did the domestic policies of presidents Reagan, Bush, and Clinton reflect the rise of conservatism in American politics?

• All three presidents cut back on social welfare legislation and other entitlement programs, moved the center of American politics toward the right, reduced civil rights legislation, increased the size of the American military, projected military power abroad, and increased the role of religion in American politics.

2. What comparisons can you make between the Iran-Contra scandal of Ronald Reagan’s administration and the impeachment crisis of Bill Clinton’s?

• Both involved issues of presidential power and secrecy that evolved into scandals that rocked their administrations at the end of their second term in office, thereby tarnishing an otherwise successful record of accomplishments.

• Both issues also involved the media, which played a major role in shaping public opinion.

• Both issues included a massive congressional investigation that entailed the expenditure of millions of dollars in taxpayer funds.

3. What new challenges did the end of the Cold War bring to American foreign policy?

• New challenges included the rise of Islamic militancy in the wake of the Soviet collapse in Afghanistan and central Asia, the proliferation of nuclear fission material throughout the eastern European world, the Balkan and African crises, and the Middle East tensions between Israel and Palestinians. These all served as potent reminders of a world in conflict as well as the limits of American power. If not quite as dangerous as the Cold War era, the “new world order” was no less problematic in terms of projecting American military power abroad.

Class Discussion Starters

1. What were some of the important elements in Reagan’s domestic policy?

*Possible answers*

a. A tax cut to stimulate economic growth.

b. A sharp cut in spending for social welfare programs.

c. A sharp increase in defense spending to ensure American superiority over the Soviet “evil empire.”

d. Deregulation of business.

e. Weakening the influence of organized labor.
2. What was the long-range impact of the Reagan presidency?

*Possible answers*

a. The appointment of conservative justices shifted the balance away from the Supreme Court.
b. A vast increase in the national debt resulted from budget and trade deficits.
c. Agreements on arms control with Gorbachev led to a reduction of Cold War tensions.
d. An upward redistribution of income occurred, making the rich richer while the economic status of the rest of the people stagnated or declined.

3. What economic problems beset the first Bush administration in the early 1990s?

*Possible answers*

a. Increased government revenues were needed to address the mounting deficit, leading the president to break his “no new taxes” pledge.
b. State and local governments were overburdened with debt as a result of the withdrawal of federal revenues.
c. A serious recession began in 1990, causing a rise in unemployment and an increase in the number of people living in poverty.
d. There was a sharp increase in business bankruptcies and mortgage defaults.

4. What was the health-care “crisis” of the late 1980s and early 1990s, and why did reform fail?

*Possible answers*

a. Rising medical costs and insurance premiums caused Americans to spend more for health care.
b. About 40 million Americans were without health insurance in 1995.
c. Hillary Clinton’s proposals for health-care reform were vehemently opposed by the pharmaceutical and insurance industries.

5. In what ways did America’s position of power and influence change during the Reagan-Bush years?

*Possible answers*

a. The end of the Cold War made the non-Communist world less dependent on American military power.
b. The rise of Japan and Germany as industrial powers contributed to an American trade imbalance and a weak dollar.
c. The rise of regional conflicts caused other nations to look to the United States for leadership.
d. The growing strength of American military power enhanced the power and prestige of the United States.

6. Why did the Senate fail to convict President Clinton on the articles of impeachment?

*Possible answers*

a. Senators were intimidated by the president’s high public approval ratings.
b. The Democrats united, and enough Republicans joined them to acquit the president.
c. Some senators did not want to subject the nation to the political perils of a presidential trial.
d. Democratic senators did not want to convict a president from their own party.

**Classroom Activity**

1. Bring into class a series of cartoons from the 1980s on a range of subjects that appeal to the students, such as music or other aspects of popular culture. Either photocopy the cartoons for each student, or place each cartoon on an overhead to show to the class during discussion. Ask the students to connect the themes they are learning about (brainstorm on the board for students’ ideas) to the cartoons’ messages.

**Oral History Exercise**

- Ask the students to interview a family member about the experiences they had during the 1980s. Have the students develop a list of themes relating to the 1980s; they can show these themes to the interviewee and have them select those that related to their lives during that decade. Require students to turn in typed transcripts of the interview for feedback in preparation for a paper on the subject.
Working with Documents

COMPARING AMERICAN VOICES

Christianity and Public Life (p. 930)

1. What would Ronald Reagan think of the opinion written by Justice Kennedy, his appointee? Would Reagan agree with it, given his condemnation of those who are intent on “subordinating us to government rule and regulation”?

- Kennedy argued that the Constitution protects homosexual behavior, and allows individuals to pursue private actions without government interference. Reagan, against homosexuality as a social practice and for religious purposes, would have struggled to support this freedom of choice in this particular sector of American life.

2. According to Wildmon and Giamatti, what should be shown on television, and who should make those decisions?

- According to Giamatti, the American people, and not the state, should decide what is shown on television. According to Wildmon, the “moral majority” should decide, based on support by the Christian state. To Giamatti, there should be no limits on the will of the people in shaping television content. For Wildmon, Christian morality should regulate the media.

3. When should the government police private conduct? Consider the criteria outlined in the final paragraph of Justice Kennedy’s opinion.

- In cases involving minors, prostitution in public, or in instances in which one of the parties is being coerced.

VOICES FROM ABROAD

Zhu Shida: China and the United States: A Unique Relationship (p. 940)

1. Ronald Reagan frequently evoked Puritan John Winthrop’s image of America as a shining “city on a hill” and a beacon for mankind. How does Zhu Shida interpret the impact of Puritan ways of thinking on American foreign policy? Based on your reading in this textbook, how accurate is his understanding of American culture?

- Based on the textbook, Shida’s understanding of Puritan character and history in the United States is fairly accurate. Shida argues that Puritan individualism and desire for religious freedom created a strain of liberal individualism in the context of fervent protestant religiosity. He overstates, however, the attention of Puritan America to human rights as a national mission.

2. According to the author, what factors pull China and the United States together? Which ones push them apart?

- Together: Strategically, the White House needs China’s assistance and influence to handle North Korea and nonproliferation issues. America needs China’s cooperation in fighting terrorism. Economic interests also lay at the heart of China-U.S. relations.

- Apart: Cultural differences, racism toward Asians, communism, and the “one China” issue pull the two nations apart.

Reading American Pictures

Image Warfare: Fighting to Define the Reagan Presidency (p. 934)

1. Examine the photo of Reagan at his ranch in California. This image was taken by a White House photographer. What message does the image convey about Reagan as a person? How does this message reinforce the policies created by Reagan that you read about in the text?

- The image of Reagan using a chainsaw demonstrates individualism, a working-class identity, the manliness of the president, and a connection to rural values. This message was vital for the White House and its policies of an aggressive military abroad, a cutting back of social welfare programs at home, and assistance to rural America.

2. What message does the cartoon convey about Reagan policies? How does this differ from the official White House message expressed in the photo of Reagan?
• The cartoon attempts to illustrate that the very values expressed by Reagan in the first image are in reality absent from the policies that he creates. Reagan's policies in reality increased the size of the U.S. budget, retained the basic outlines of the welfare system, and eroded the financial stability of working-class and rural families.

3. Together, what do these two images tell us about the image and reality of the Reagan presidency? Do you think that cartoons or photographs are a more accurate source of information for understanding the historical meaning of a particular president and his administration? Why or why not?

• The images tell us that a contradiction lay at the heart of the Reagan administration, that Reagan was not as successful at re-creating a conservative America as his supporters suggest, and that media and White House spin were vital to projecting an image of Reagan that was not completely true.

• Both sources of information are vital for understanding the meaning and actions of a presidency. Cartoons provide valuable information in part because they include a political message by the artist, but they are also caricatures. Photographs may be more accurate, however, because they depict actual events without including political or social satire on purpose.

Electronic Media

Web Sites

• The National Security Archive
  http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/
  This site, sponsored by George Washington University, provides documents of various Cold War incidents.

• The Cold War International History Project
  http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=topics.home&topic_id=1409
  This site contains another source of primary documents for understanding the key events of the late Cold War era.

• The Gulf War
  http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/gulf/
  This site includes maps, documents, and interviews with decision makers and soldiers.

Films

• Reagan (1998, PBS documentary, 270 minutes)
  This American Experience documentary explores the life of President Ronald Reagan.

• Black Hawk Down (2001, Sony Pictures, 120 minutes)
  This Hollywood re-creation of the Somalia incident captures the American perspective of the brief conflict and occupation.

Literature

• Bill Clinton, My Life (New York: Knopf, 2004)
  The former president's memoir sheds light on his decision making.

  Focusing on the Bush and Walker families, this book also addresses the dangers of political dynasties, the problems of the political system, and wealth and class structure in America.

Additional Bedford/St. Martin’s Resources for Chapter 30

FOR INSTRUCTORS

Transparencies

The following maps and images from Chapter 30 are available as full-color acetates:

• The Wall Comes Down
• Map 30.1 Presidential Election of 1980
• President Reagan at His Ranch in Southern California
• Presidential Landscaping
• Map 30.2 U.S. Involvement in Latin America and the Caribbean, 1954–2000
• Map 30.3 The Collapse of the Soviet Union and the Creation of Independent States, 1989–1991
• Map 30.4 Presidential Election of 1992

Instructor’s Resource CD-ROM

The following maps, figures, and images from Chapter 30, as well as a chapter outline, are available on disc in both PowerPoint and jpeg formats:

• Map 30.1 The Presidential Election of 1980
• Map 30.2 U.S. Involvement in Latin America and the Caribbean, 1954–2000
• Map 30.3 The Collapse of the Soviet Union and the Creation of Independent States, 1989–1991
• Map 30.4 Presidential Election of 1992
• Figure 30.1 The Annual Federal Budget Deficit (or Surplus), 1940–2005
• The Wall Comes Down
• President Reagan at His Ranch in Southern California
• Presidential Landscaping

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 30 include

• The Rise of Conservatism in America, 1945–2000: A Brief History with Documents, by Ronald Story, University of Massachusetts Amherst, and Bruce Laurie, University of Massachusetts Amherst

FOR STUDENTS

Documents to Accompany America’s History

The following documents and illustrations are available in Chapter 30 of the companion reader by Kevin J. Fernlund, University of Missouri-St. Louis:

3. Donald T. Regan, For the Record (1988)
6. David Maraniss, University Students Reflect on the Gulf War (1991)

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 30:

Visual Activity

• Reading American Pictures: Image Warfare: Fighting to Define the Reagan Presidency

Reading Historical Documents Activity

• Comparing American Voices: Christianity in Public Life
• Voices from Abroad: Zhu Shida: China and the United States: A Unique Relationship