This book provides a concise introduction to the history and culture of the American South. Charles Reagan Wilson explores Southern history alongside the creative achievements that have come out of the region, producing a portrait of a complex American place.

Long before the United States was a nation, it was a set of ideas, projected onto the New World by European explorers with centuries of belief and thought in tow. From this foundation of expectation and experience, America and American thought grew in turn, enriched by the bounties of the Enlightenment, the philosophies of liberty and individuality, the tenets of religion, and the doctrines of republicanism and democracy. Crucial to this development were the thinkers who nurtured it, from Thomas Jefferson to Ralph Waldo Emerson, W.E.B. Du Bois to Jane Addams, and Betty Friedan to Richard Rorty. This addition to Oxford's Very Short Introductions series traces how Americans have addressed the issues and events of their time and place, whether it is the Civil War, the Great Depression, or the culture wars of today. Spanning a variety of disciplines, from religion, philosophy, and political thought, to cultural criticism, social theory, and the arts, Jennifer Ratner-Rosenhagen shows how ideas have been major forces in American history, driving movements such as transcendentalism, Social Darwinism, conservatism, and postmodernism. In engaging and accessible prose, this introduction to American thought considers how notions about freedom and belonging, the market and morality - and even truth - have commanded generations of Americans and been the cause of fierce debate.

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Between 1760 and 1800, the American people cast off British rule to create a new nation and a radically new form of government based on the idea that people have the right to govern themselves. This title provides a cohesive synthesis of the military, diplomatic, political, social, and intellectual aspects of the American Revolution, paying special attention to the Revolution’s causes and consequences.

One of the world’s most beloved and bestselling writers takes his ultimate journey -- into the most intriguing and intractable questions that science seeks to answer. In A Walk in the Woods, Bill Bryson trekked the Appalachian Trail -- well, most of it. In In A Sunburned Country, he confronted some of the most lethal wildlife Australia has to offer. Now, in his biggest book, he confronts his greatest challenge: to understand -- and, if possible, answer -- the oldest, biggest questions we have posed about the universe and ourselves. Taking as territory everything from the Big Bang to the rise of civilization, Bryson seeks to understand how we got from there being nothing at all to there being us. To that end, he has attached himself to a host of the world’s most advanced (and often obsessed) archaeologists, anthropologists, and mathematicians, travelling to their offices, laboratories, and field camps. He has read (or tried to read) their books, pestered them with questions, apprenticed himself to their powerful minds. A Short History of Nearly Everything is the record of this quest, and it is a sometimes profound, sometimes funny, and always supremely clear and entertaining adventure in the realms of human knowledge, as only Bill Bryson can render it. Science has never been more involving or entertaining.

By the early twentieth century, it became common to describe the United States as a “business civilization.” President Coolidge in 1925 said, “The chief business of the American people is business.” More recently, historian Sven Beckert characterized Henry Ford’s massive manufactory as the embodiment of America: “While Athens had its Parthenon and Rome its Colosseum, the United States had its River Rouge Factory in Detroit.” How did business come to assume such power and cultural centrality in America? This volume explores the variety of business enterprise in the United States and analyzes its presence in the country’s economy, its evolution over time, and its meaning in society. It introduces readers to formative business leaders (including Elbert Gary, Harlow Curtice, and Mary Kay Ash), leading firms (Mellon Bank, National Cash Register, Xerox), and fiction about business people (The Octopus, Rabbitt, The Man in the Grey Flannel Suit). It also discusses Alfred Chandler, Joseph Schumpeter, Mira Wilkins, and others who made significant contributions to understanding of America’s business history. This VSI pursues its three central themes - the evolution, scale, and culture of American business - in a chronological framework stretching from the American Revolution to today. The first theme is evolution: How has U.S. business evolved over time? How have American companies competed with one another and with foreign firms? Why have ideas about strategy and management changed? Why did business people in the mid-twentieth century celebrate an “organizational” culture promising long-term employment in the same company, while a few decades later entrepreneurship was prized? Second is scale: Why did business assume such enormous scale in the United States? Was the rise of gigantic corporations due to the industriousness of its population, or natural resources, or government policies? And third, culture: What are the characteristics of a “business civilization”? How have opinions on the meaning of business changed? In the late nineteenth century, Andrew Carnegie believed that America’s numerous enterprises represented an exuberant “triumph of democracy.” After World War II, however, sociologist William H. Whyte saw business culture as stultifying, and historian Richard Hofstadter wrote, “Once great men created fortunes; today a great system creates fortunate men.” How did changes in the nature of business affect popular views? Walter A. Friedman provides the long view of these important developments.

Diplomatic history is the critical study of the management of relations between nation-states. Based on significant historical case studies - the American Revolution, the origins of the Great War and its aftermath, Versailles, the Iraq War, and diplomacy in the age of globalization - this book locates the universal role of diplomatic negotiation.

“This short introduction to American slavery begins with the Portuguese capture of Africans in the 1400s and, drawing upon the scholarship of numerous historians as well as the analysis of primary documents, explores the development of slavery in the American colonies and later, the United States of America. It analyzes early legislation in Virginia that differentiated Indians and Africans from Europeans and
began the process of stratifying society based on racial categories. Unlike some recent scholarship, it is attentive to the actual labor that enslaved people performed, reminding us that more than anything else, slavery was a system of forced labor that produced wealth for a new nation. And, it considers the tensions that arose between enslaved and enslavers as they interacted with one another, exerting control and undermining efforts at domination. Throughout, it explores slavery within the context of moral contradiction that included the development of an ideology that valorized freedom alongside a practice and justification of slavery that deemed inferior and denied freedom to a large swath of the population. The book explores conflicts between abolitionists who worked to eliminate slavery and pro-slavery advocates who worked doggedly to sustain the power and wealth they derived from the institution. It ends with the abolition of slavery in America following the Civil War"

This clear and concise new introduction examines all the major debates and issues using a wide range of well-known examples. It discusses the challenge of using verbal and written language to analyse a visual form. Dana Arnold also examines the many different ways of writing about art, and the changing boundaries of the subject of art history. Topics covered include the canon of Art History, the role of the gallery, 'blockbuster' exhibitions, the emergence of social histories of art (Feminist Art History or Queer Art History, for example), the impact of photography, and the development of Art History using artefacts such as the altarpiece, the portrait, or pornography, to explore social and cultural issues such as consumption, taste, religion, and politics. Importantly, this book explains how the traditional emphasis on periods and styles originates in western art production and can obscure other critical approaches, as well as art from non western cultures. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

More than one hundred and fifty years after the first shots were fired on Fort Sumter, the Civil War still captures the American imagination, and its reverberations can still be felt throughout America's social and political landscape. Louis P. Masur's The U.S. Civil War: A Very Short Introduction offers a masterful and eminently readable overview of the war's multiple causes and catastrophic effects. Masur begins by examining the complex origins of the war, focusing on the pulsating tensions over states rights and slavery. The book then proceeds to cover, year by year, the major political, social, and military events, highlighting two important themes: how the war shifted from a limited conflict to restore the Union to an all-out war that would fundamentally transform Southern society, and the process by which the war ultimately became a battle to abolish slavery. Masur explains how the war turned what had been a loose collection of fiercely independent states into a nation, remaking its political, cultural, and social institutions. But he also focuses on the soldiers themselves, both Union and Confederate, whose stories constitute nothing less than America's Iliad. In the final chapter Masur considers the aftermath of the South's surrender at Appomattox and the clash over the policies of reconstruction that continued to divide President and Congress, conservatives and radicals, Southerners and Northerners for years to come. In 1873, Mark Twain and Charles Dudley wrote that the war had "wrought so profoundly upon the entire national character that the influence cannot be measured short of two or three generations." This concise history of the entire Civil War era offers an invaluable introduction to the dramatic events whose effects are still felt today.

The Founding Fathers who drafted the United States Constitution in 1787 distrusted political parties, popular democracy, centralized government, and a strong executive office. Yet the country's national politics have historically included all those features. In American Political History: A Very Short Introduction, Donald Critchlow takes on this contradiction between original theory and actual practice. This brief, accessible book explores the nature of the two-party system, key turning points in American political history, representative presidential and congressional elections, struggles to expand the electorate, and critical social protest and third-party movements. The volume emphasizes the continuity of a liberal tradition challenged by partisan divide, war, and periodic economic turmoil. American Political History: A Very Short Introduction explores the emergence of a democratic political culture within a republican form of government, showing the mobilization and extension of the mass electorate over the lifespan of the country. In a nation characterized by great racial, ethnic, and religious diversity, American democracy has proven extraordinarily durable. Individual parties have risen and
fallen, but the dominance of the two-party system persists. Fierce debates over the meaning of the U.S. Constitution have created profound divisions within the parties and among voters, but a belief in the importance of constitutional order persists among political leaders and voters. Americans have been deeply divided about the extent of federal power, slavery, the meaning of citizenship, immigration policy, civil rights, and a range of economic, financial, and social policies. New immigrants, racial minorities, and women have joined the electorate and the debates. But American political history, with its deep social divisions, bellicose rhetoric, and antagonistic partisanship provides valuable lessons about the meaning and viability of democracy in the early 21st century. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Richard Whatmore examines the diverse, interconnected relationships between political history, theory, and action. Considering the work of Michel Foucault, John Pocock, Quentin Skinner and other key theorists, this book highlights the connections between past and present political systems, and the ongoing relevance of the field today.

Gardens take many forms, and have a variety of functions. They can serve as spaces of peace and tranquility, a way to cultivate wildlife, or as places to develop agricultural resources. Globally, gardens have inspired, comforted, and sustained people from all walks of life, and since the Garden of Eden many iconic gardens have inspired great artists, poets, musicians, and writers. In this Very Short Introduction, Gordon Campbell embraces gardens in all their splendour, from parks, and fruit and vegetable gardens to ornamental gardens, and takes the reader on a globe-trotting historical journey through iconic and cultural signposts of gardens from different regions and traditions. Ranging from the gardens of ancient Persia to modern day allotments, he concludes by looking to the future of the garden in the age of global warming, and the adaptive spirit of human innovation. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

This fast-paced narrative charts the history of the US Navy from its birth during the American Revolution through to its current superpower status. The story highlights iconic moments of great drama pivotal to the nation’s fortunes: John Paul Jones’ attacks on the British during the Revolution, the Barbary Wars, and the arduous conquest of Iwo Jima. American Naval History: A Very Short Introduction illuminates the changes—technological, institutional, and functional—of the U.S. Navy from its days as a small frigate navy through the age of steam and steel to the modern era of electronics and missiles. Renowned naval historian Craig L. Symonds captures the evolving culture of the navy and debates between policymakers about what role the institution should play in world affairs. Internal and external challenges dramatically altered the size and character of the navy, with long periods of quiet inertia alternating with periods of crisis that spurred rapid expansion. The history of the navy reflects the history of the nation as a whole, and its many changes derive in large part from the changing role of the United States itself. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

In A Short History of the United States, National Book Award winner Robert V. Remini offers a much-needed, concise history of our country. This accessible and lively volume contains the essential facts about the discovery, settlement, growth, and development of the American nation and its institutions, including the arrival and migration of Native Americans, the founding of a republic under the Constitution, the emergence of the United States as a world power, the outbreak of terrorism here and abroad, the Obama presidency, and everything in between.

This new edition of Brogan’s superb one-volume history – from early British colonisation to the Reagan years – captures an array of dynamic
personalities and events. In a broad sweep of America's triumphant progress. Brogan explores the period leading to Independence from both
the American and the British points of view, touching on permanent features of 'the American character' - both the good and the bad. He
provides a masterly synthesis of all the latest research illustrating America's rapid growth from humble beginnings to global dominance.

"Though the U.S. Constitution was ratified in 1788, its impact on our lives is as recent as today's news. Claims and counterclaims about
the constitutionality of governmental actions are a habit of American politics. This document, which its framers designed to limit power,
often has made political conflict inevitable. It also has accommodated and legitimized the political and social changes of a vibrant,
powerful democratic nation. A product of history's first modern revolution, the Constitution embraced a new formula for government: it
restrained power on behalf of liberty, but it also granted power to promote and protect liberty. The U.S. Constitution: A Very Short
Introduction explores the major themes that have shaped American constitutional history-- federalism, the balance of powers, property,
representation, equality, rights, and security. Informed by the latest scholarship, this book places constitutional history within the
context of American political and social history. We do not operate today under the same Constitution created by our founding fathers or
the Constitution as completed by the Bill of Rights in 1791 or even the one revised by the Reconstruction amendments. Nor are we the same
nation. As our circumstances have changed, so has our Constitution.Today we face serious challenges to the nation's constitutional legacy.
Endless wars, a sharply divided electorate and deadlocked government, economic inequality, immigration, cybersecurity and privacy, and
foreign interference in the nation's democratic processes, among a host of other issues, have placed demands on government and on society
that test our constitutional values. Understanding how the Constitution has evolved will help us adapt its principles to the challenges of
our age"--

Intended for those interested in the African continent and the diversity of human history, this work looks at Africa's past and reflects on
the changing ways it has been imagined and represented. It illustrates key themes in modern thinking about Africa's history with a range of
historical examples.

Citizen soldier and sailor vs. standing armed forces -- The struggle for military professionalism -- Technology, mechanization, and the
world wars -- The limits of power -- Conclusion: The armed forces and perennial problems,

For better or worse--be it militarily, politically, economically, technologically, or culturally--Americans have had a profound role in
shaping the wider world beyond them. The United States has been a savior to some, a curse to others, but either way such views are often
based on a caricature of American actions and intentions. American Foreign Relations, then, is a subject of immense global importance that
provokes strong emotions and much debate, but often based on deep misunderstanding. This Very Short Introduction analyzes the key episodes,
themes, and individuals in the history of American foreign relations. While discussing diplomacy and the periods of war that have shaped
national and international history, it also addresses such topics as industrialization, globalization, imperialism, and immigration.
Covering the Revolution through the War on Terror, it examines the connections between domestic politics and foreign affairs, as well as
the importance of ideals and values. Sharply written and highly readable, American Foreign Relations offers a clear-eyed narrative of
America's role in the world and how it has evolved over time. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University
Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject
quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics
highly readable.

There are many stories we can tell about the past, and we are not, perhaps, as free as we might imagine in our choice of which stories to
tell, or where those stories end. John Arnold's Very Short Introduction is a stimulating essay about how we study and understand history.
The book begins by inviting us to think about various questions provoked by our investigation of history, and explores the ways these
questions have been answered in the past. Concepts such as causation, interpretation, and periodization, are introduced by means of
concrete examples of how historians work, giving the reader a sense of the excitement of discovering not only the past, but also ourselves.
India is widely recognised as a new global powerhouse. It has become one of the world’s emerging powers, rivalling China in terms of global influence. Yet people still know relatively little about the economic, social, political, and cultural changes unfolding in India today. To what extent are people benefiting from the economic boom? Does caste still exist in India? How is India’s culture industry responding to technological change? And what of India’s rapidly changing role internationally? This Very Short Introduction looks at the exciting world of change in contemporary India. Craig Jeffrey provides a compelling account of the recent history of the nation, investigating the contradictions that are plaguing modern India and the manner in which people, especially young people, are actively remaking the country in the twenty first century. One thing is clear: India is a country that is going to become increasingly important for the world over the next decades. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

In 1607, Powhatan teenager Pocahontas first encountered English settlers when John Smith was brought to her village as a captive. In 1920, the ratification of the 19th Amendment gave women the constitutional right to vote. And in 2012, the U.S. Marine Corps lifted its ban on women in active combat, allowing female marines to join the sisterhood of American women who stand at the center of this country's history. Between each of these signal points runs the multi-layered experience of American women, from pre-colonization to the present. In American Women’s History: A Very Short Introduction Susan Ware emphasizes the richly diverse experiences of American women as they were shaped by factors such as race, class, religion, geographical location, age, and sexual orientation. The book begins with a comprehensive look at early America, with gender at the center, making it clear that women's experiences were not always the same as men's, and looking at the colonizers as well as the colonized, along with issues of settlement, slavery, and regional variations. She shows how women's domestic and waged labor shaped the Northern economy, and how slavery affected the lives of both free and enslaved Southern women. Ware then moves through the tumultuous decades of industrialization and urbanization, describing the 19th century movements led by women (temperance, moral reform, and abolitionism). She links women's experiences to the familiar events of the Civil War, the Progressive Era, and World War I, culminating in 20th century female activism for civil rights and successive waves of feminism. Ware explores the major transformations in women's history, with attention to a wide range of themes from political activism to popular culture, the work force and the family. From Anne Bradstreet to Ida B. Wells to Eleanor Roosevelt, this Very Short Introduction recognizes women as a force in American history and, more importantly, tells women's history as American history. At the core of Ware's narrative is the recognition that gender - the changing historical and cultural constructions of roles assigned to the biological differences of the sexes - is central to understanding the history of American women's lives, and to the history of the United States. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Original edition has subtitle: a concise history.

This volume in Oxford's A Very Short Introduction series offers a concise, readable narrative of the vast span of American history, from the earliest human migrations to the early twenty-first century when the United States loomed as a global power and comprised a complex multi-cultural society of more than 300 million people. The narrative is organized around major interpretive themes, with facts and dates introduced as needed to illustrate these themes. The emphasis throughout is on clarity and accessibility to the interested non-specialist.

This Very Short Introduction provides a narrative interpretation of key themes that emerge in the history of Asian migrations to North
America, highlighting how Asian immigration has shaped the evolution of ideological and legal interpretations of America as a 'nation of immigrants'.

The iconic images of Uncle Sam and Marilyn Monroe, or the "fireside chats" of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the oratory of Martin Luther King, Jr.: these are the words, images, and sounds that populate American cultural history. From the Boston Tea Party to the Dodgers, from the blues to Andy Warhol, dime novels to Disneyland, the history of American culture tells us how previous generations of Americans have imagined themselves, their nation, and their relationship to the world and its peoples. This Very Short Introduction recounts the history of American culture and its creation by diverse social and ethnic groups. In doing so, it emphasizes the historic role of culture in relation to broader social, political, and economic developments. Across the lines of race, class, gender, and sexuality, as well as language, region, and religion, diverse Americans have forged a national culture with a global reach, inventing stories that have shaped a national identity and an American way of life. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

A concise examination of the central role of legal decisions in shaping key social issues explores topics ranging from Native American affairs and slavery to business and home life as well as how criminal and civil offenses have been addressed in positive and negative ways. Original.

This volume in Oxford's A Very Short Introduction series offers a concise, readable narrative of the vast span of American history, from the earliest human migrations to the early twenty-first century when the United States loomed as a global power and comprised a complex multi-cultural society of more than 300 million people. The narrative is organized around major interpretive themes, with facts and dates introduced as needed to illustrate these themes. The emphasis throughout is on clarity and accessibility to the interested non-specialist.

Together these countries pioneered new technologies that have made them ever richer.

Familiar figures - missionaries, explorers, trappers, traders, prospectors, gunfighters, cowboys, and Indians - appear in these pages. So do renowned individuals such as Daniel Boone, Thomas Jefferson, Teddy Roosevelt, and John Wayne. But their stories contribute to a history of the American West that is longer, larger, and more complicated than we were once told.

New York Times Bestseller In the most ambitious one-volume American history in decades, award-winning historian and New Yorker writer Jill Lepore offers a magisterial account of the origins and rise of a divided nation, an urgently needed reckoning with the beauty and tragedy of American history. Written in elegiac prose, Lepore’s groundbreaking investigation places truth itself—a devotion to facts, proof, and evidence—at the center of the nation’s history. The American experiment rests on three ideas—“these truths,” Jefferson called them—political equality, natural rights, and the sovereignty of the people. And it rests, too, on a fearless dedication to inquiry, Lepore argues, because self-government depends on it. But has the nation, and democracy itself, delivered on that promise? These Truths tells this uniquely American story, beginning in 1492, asking whether the course of events over more than five centuries has proven the nation’s truths, or belied them. To answer that question, Lepore traces the intertwined histories of American politics, law, journalism, and technology, from the colonial town meeting to the nineteenth-century party machine, from talk radio to twenty-first-century Internet polls, from Magna Carta to the Patriot Act, from the printing press to Facebook News. Along the way, Lepore’s sovereign chronicle is filled with arresting sketches of both well-known and lesser-known Americans, from a parade of presidents and a rogues’ gallery of political mischief makers to the intrepid leaders of protest movements, including Frederick Douglass, the famed abolitionist orator; William Jennings Bryan, the three-time presidential candidate and ultimately tragic populist; Pauli Murray, the visionary civil rights strategist; and Phyllis Schlafly, the uncredited architect of modern conservatism. Americans are descended from slaves and slave owners, from conquerors and the conquered, from immigrants and from people who have fought to end immigration. "A nation born in contradiction will fight forever over the
meaning of its history," Lepore writes, but engaging in that struggle by studying the past is part of the work of citizenship. "The past is an inheritance, a gift and a burden," These Truths observes. "It can't be shirked. There's nothing for it but to get to know it."

Law has played a central role in American history. From colonial times to the present, law has not just reflected the changing society in which legal decisions have been made—it has played a powerful role in shaping that society, though not always in positive ways. Eminent legal scholar G. Edward White—author of the ongoing, multi-volume Law in American History—offers a compact overview that sheds light on the impact of law on a number of key social issues. Rather than offer a straight chronological history, the book instead traces important threads woven throughout our nation's past, looking at how law shaped Native American affairs, slavery, business, and home life, as well as how it has dealt with criminal and civil offenses. White shows that law has not always been used to exemplary ends. For instance, a series of decisions by the Marshall court essentially marginalized Amerindians, indigenous people of the Americas, reducing tribes to wards of the government. Likewise, law initially legitimated slavery in the United States, and legal institutions, including the Supreme Court, failed to resolve the tensions stirred up by the westward expansion of slavery, eventually sparking the Civil War. White also looks at the expansion of laws regarding property rights, which were vitally important to the colonists, many of whom left Europe hoping to become landowners; the evolution of criminal punishment from a public display (the stocks, the gallows) to a private prison system; the rise of tort law after the Civil War; and the progress in legal education, moving from informal apprenticeships and lax standards to modern law schools and rigorous bar exams. In this illuminating look at the pivotal role of law in American life, White offers us an excellent first step to a better appreciation of the function of law in our society. About the Series: Oxford's Very Short Introductions series offers concise and original introductions to a wide range of subjects—from Islam to Sociology, Politics to Classics, Literary Theory to History, and Archaeology to the Bible. Not simply a textbook of definitions, each volume in this series provides trenchant and provocative—yet always balanced and complete—discussions of the central issues in a given discipline or field. Every Very Short Introduction gives a readable evolution of the subject in question, demonstrating how the subject has developed and how it has influenced society. Eventually, the series will encompass every major academic discipline, offering all students an accessible and abundant reference library. Whatever the area of study that one deems important or appealing, whatever the topic that fascinates the general reader, the Very Short Introductions series has a handy and affordable guide that will likely prove indispensable.

Essential reading for anyone interested in the African continent and the diversity of human history, this Very Short Introduction looks at Africa's past and reflects on the changing ways it has been imagined and represented. Key themes in current thinking about Africa's history are illustrated with a range of fascinating historical examples, drawn from over 5 millennia across this vast continent. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

In this Very Short Introduction, Alan Taylor presents the current scholarly understanding of colonial America to a broader audience. He focuses on the transatlantic and a transcontinental perspective, examining the interplay of Europe, Africa, and the Americas through the flows of goods, people, plants, animals, capital, and ideas.

In a miracle of concision, Paul S. Boyer provides a wide-ranging and authoritative history of America, capturing in a compact space the full story of our nation. Ranging from the earliest Native American settlers to the presidency of Barack Obama, this Very Short Introduction offers an illuminating account of politics, diplomacy, and war as well as the full spectrum of social, cultural, and scientific developments that shaped our country. Here is a masterful picture of Americas achievements and failures, large-scale sociohistorical forces, and pivotal events. Boyer sheds light on the colonial era, the Revolution and the birth of the new nation; slavery and the Civil War; Reconstruction and the Gilded Age; the Progressive era, the Roaring Twenties and the Great Depression; the two world wars and the Cold War that followed; right up to the tragedy of 9/11, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the epoch-making election of Barack Obama. Certain broad trends shape much of the narrative—immigration, urbanization, slavery, continental expansion, the global projection
of U.S. power, the centrality of religion, the progression from an agrarian to an industrial to a post-industrial economic order. Yet in underscoring such large themes, Boyer also highlights the diversity of the American experience, the importance of individual actors, and the crucial role of race, ethnicity, gender, and social class in shaping the contours of specific groups within the nations larger Tapestry. And along the way, he touches upon the cultural milestones of American history, from Tom Paines The Crisis to Allen Ginsbergs Howl. American History: A Very Short Introduction is a panoramic history of the United States, one that covers virtually every topic of importance--and yet can be read in a single day.

The war instinct is part of human nature, but the means to fight war depend on technology. Alex Roland traces the co-evolution of technology and warfare from the Stone Age to the age of cyberwar, describing the inventions that changed the direction of warfare throughout history: from fortified walls, the chariot, battleships, and the gunpowder revolution to bombers, rockets, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and nuclear weapons. In the twenty-first century, new technologies continue to push warfare in unexpected directions, while warfare stimulates stunning new technological advances. Yet even now, the newest and best technology cannot guarantee victory. Brimming with dramatic narratives of battles and deep insights into military psychology, this book shows that although military technologies keep changing at great speed, the principles and patterns behind them abide.

"The population of the United States has diverse sources: territorial acquisition through conquest and colonialism, the slave trade, and voluntary immigration, which has been the greatest instrument of population expansion and has been central to the transition in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries from a rural-agricultural to an urban-industrial society. Recognition of the need for labor to develop and expand economic activity has been central to policies and laws enabling mass immigration. Many Americans, too, value the memory of immigrant ancestors, and are sentimentally inclined to immigrant strivings. Alongside the embrace of immigration has been the perception that immigration destabilizes social order, cultural coherence, job markets, and political alignments. In some observers that recognition has been animated by racist appraisals of various immigrant peoples and by nativism, a general dislike of people and things foreign to Americans. The century and a half of American nationhood has been characterized by both support for openness to immigration and embrace of a cosmopolitan formulation of American identity and for restrictions and assertions of belief in a core Anglo-American national character. The book traces three massive waves of immigration from the mid-nineteenth century to the present, and analyses the nature of immigration as a purposeful, structured activity, attitudes supporting or hostile to immigration, policies and laws regulating immigration, and the nature of and prospects for assimilation. This second edition takes account of the dramatic developments since 2011, including the crisis along the southwestern border and the intense conflict over illegal immigration"--

When Europeans first arrived in North America, between five and eight million indigenous people were already living there. But how did they come to be here? What were their agricultural, spiritual, and hunting practices? How did their societies evolve and what challenges do they face today? Eminent historians Theda Perdue and Michael Green begin by describing how nomadic bands of hunter-gatherers followed the bison and woolly mammoth over the Bering land mass between Asia and what is now Alaska between 25,000 and 15,000 years ago, settling throughout North America. They describe hunting practices among different tribes, how some made the gradual transition to more settled, agricultural ways of life, the role of kinship and cooperation in Native societies, their varied burial rites and spiritual practices, and many other features of Native American life. Throughout the book, Perdue and Green stress the great diversity of indigenous peoples in America, who spoke more than 400 different languages before the arrival of Europeans and whose ways of life varied according to the environments they settled in and adapted to so successfully. Most importantly, the authors stress how Native Americans have struggled to maintain their sovereignty—first with European powers and then with the United States—in order to retain their lands, govern themselves, support their people, and pursue practices that have made their lives meaningful. Going beyond the stereotypes that so often distort our views of Native Americans, this Very Short Introduction offers a historically accurate, deeply engaging, and often inspiring account of the wide array of Native peoples in America. About the Series: Combining authority with wit, accessibility, and style, Very Short Introductions offer an introduction to some of life's most interesting topics. Written by experts for the newcomer, they demonstrate the finest contemporary
thinking about the central problems and issues in hundreds of key topics, from philosophy to Freud, quantum theory to Islam.