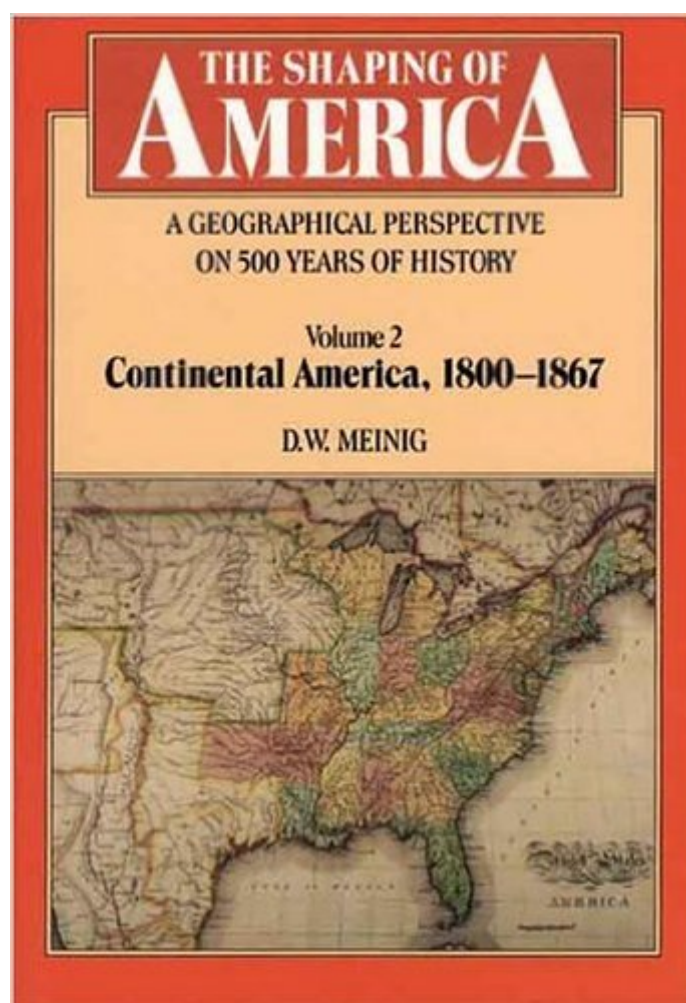


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# The Shaping Of America: A Geographical Perspective On 500 Years Of History, Vol. 2: Continental America, 1800-1867 (Paperback)



## Synopsis

Between 1800 and 1867 America experienced a dramatic expansion in territory, population, economy and political tension that culminated in the Civil War. In this volume the author offers an interpretation of the American past by bringing a different geographical perspective to this period.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Each of the three volumes of Meinig's history finished so far has simply whet my appetite for the next. This third volume is that much sharper and better-focused than the prior two, making it an unforgettable experience to read. From how the experience of settling Oregon differed from Utah or California, to the way the choice of where railroads were laid affected both patterns of settlement and ecology, to how the relationship between U.S. railroads and European steamship lines affected patterns of settlement by different ethnic groups, he is always enlightening. This is a book that will change how you look at the country and how you look at history. I can't recommend it enough.

Meinig's literary style makes this book on American historical geography interesting and very "readable". I would highly recommend the Shaping of America series for the geographer, history buff or anyone just interested in a new perspective on the evolution of the United States.

From the very start Mr. Meinig teaches the reader, even learned ones, a new way of seeing how

America was settled. His perspective includes all members of the societies which he covers. While the book is very factual, it is written in such a way that it opens one's imagination. By using a geographical viewpoint, you are able to 'see' the topics he covers. My only criticism is that he does not reference his quotes in a traditional manner, though a quick perusal of the bibliography shows they are valid. Once you realize that he includes an extensive list of sources, this concern disappears. I recommend this to anyone who wants to discover more about the discovery of our land.

This is a really good book. The maps alone are worth it. Meinig represents the underpublicized geographic view of history, giving a different and needed perspective in American studies. All three of his works in this series are excellent. Following on his earlier work in historical geography, Meinig's position shows how regions, rather than political divisions of "states" contribute to our nation's development, as well as showing how the "state" concept applies. This book, focusing on Western expansion, Civil War, sectionalism, etc. further represents the important geographic influences in development of the "United" States of America. This book should be of interest to any general reader wanting a serious and unique view of socio-historical studies.

At times enlightening, the first volume of Meinig's "Shaping of America" series is a worthy companion to American history books about the same topic. As a geographer, Meinig's concern isn't so much the history of the United States--in fact, he assumes that the reader already knows quite a bit about the topic. Rather, he is attempting to understand and represent why the Americas--specifically North America--became the continent it did, with the cultural characteristics it has. As such, models of cultural interaction are key. Meinig's presentation is a bit grand--he could have used a more effective editor. Run-on sentences and grand adjectives pepper the text, and the organization (especially in the first section) could have been clearer. Still, this is a very important book in a very important series, because it provides a geographical perspective--one that previously had been ignored--on American history. As such, it makes a good companion to traditional histories of the North American continent.

Cantora is the best book that I read that was assigned by a schoolteacher. Even if I hadn't read for a grade at the time I first read it, my thoughts about it would have remained the same. It was very popular with my 11th grade English class (three years ago), and most of the students kept reading passed the days' assigned pages. Although I'm a person that's inclined to read sci-fi books, I found

nothing in Cantora that I didn't like. Depicting a young woman's family history through several generations, this is a book that everyone can relate to, and even though it is a fictionalized history, it is believable that it could be mistaken for a real family history. Whether it's based on a real history or not, I do not know. Culture and struggle is everywhere in Cantora, and the characters are very well developed. In each generation, there is some sort of struggle against tradition, and it deals mainly with the women of the family. Cantora is a fast read because the the pages are not filled with many words that a person might look up. This is a real advantage that the book has for those people who aren't fond of reading. Many excellent are filled with hard language. But because Cantora has simple language, everyone, and I mean EVERYONE, will get hooked by the second page. Even the people who are most notorious for hating to read will find nothing boring in this book. I guarantee that non-readers and readers who prefer different genres will find out that this is an excellent book. It is impossible to actually loathe this novel. Cantora really needs to be more widely reconized.

I could not put this book down. There is so much culture in this book. Who can't relate to Rosario's story? The love sick girl who will do anything for her love, inculd leave her family. The symbolism that Medina uses is beautiful, as is the lesson about life. The end definatly left me smiling, as it takes an unexpected, but joyous switch. I especially like how the book is written in two clear time periods, seperated by styles of type, which is a plus for any younger readers. I hope that it will leave you smiling too! :-)

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