

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Geopolitics & Grub: A 10th Grade Modern US History Feast

Analyze 10 complex shifts in American power and social policy, from the Iran Bait-and-Switch to the nuances of the Great Recession's regulatory legacy.

1. The 1979 Iran Hostage Crisis is often cited as a turning point in American foreign policy. Beyond the immediate rescue attempts, what was the most significant long-term impact on the U.S. political landscape?

Answer: B) A public perception of American weakness that fueled the rise of the New Right and 'Peace through Strength' rhetoric.

The crisis deeply damaged the Carter administration's credibility, leading to a resurgence of conservative foreign policy that emphasized military build-up and assertive global standing.

2. Passed in 1994, the _____ aimed to reduce tariffs and eliminate trade barriers between the U.S., Canada, and Mexico, sparking intense debate over the 'outsourcing' of American manufacturing jobs.

Answer: C) North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)

NAFTA was a cornerstone of 1990s economic policy, representing the shift toward neoliberalism and globalized markets, which had complex effects on the domestic labor force.

3. The 'Contract with America' in 1994 was a legislative agenda proposed by the Democratic Party to expand social safety nets during the Clinton administration.

Answer: B) False

The Contract with America was a Republican initiative led by Newt Gingrich, emphasizing tax cuts, welfare reform, and a smaller federal government.

4. While the 1990s are often characterized by peace and prosperity, the U.S. failed to intervene in which 1994 humanitarian catastrophe, leading to significant soul-searching regarding its role as the 'sole superpower'?

Answer: B) The Rwandan Genocide

The failure to intervene in Rwanda is often cited as a major moral failing of 1990s U.S. foreign policy, contrasting sharply with interventions in Kuwait or the Balkans.

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5. The _____ Act, signed in 2001, significantly expanded the surveillance powers of the U.S. government, sparking a decade-long debate over the balance between national security and civil liberties.

Answer: C) USA PATRIOT Act

The PATRIOT Act stands as the definitive legislative response to 9/11, fundamentally altering Fourth Amendment interpretations regarding digital privacy.

6. The 'Great Recession' of 2008 was primarily triggered by the collapse of which sector of the American economy?

Answer: B) The subprime mortgage and housing market

The housing bubble burst due to risky lending practices and the securitization of subprime mortgages, leading to a systemic failure of major financial institutions.

7. In the landmark 2010 case Citizens United v. FEC, the Supreme Court ruled that corporate funding of independent political broadcasts in candidate elections cannot be limited.

Answer: A) True

This ruling revolutionized campaign finance by treating corporate and union spending as protected free speech under the First Amendment.

8. The 'Arab Spring' of 2011 presented a dilemma for U.S. foreign policy because it forced the government to choose between supporting long-term autocratic allies and which principle?

Answer: C) The democratic aspirations of popular movements

This era highlighted the tension between 'realism' (stability via allies) and 'idealism' (supporting democratic revolutions) in Modern U.S. history.

9. The landmark 2015 Supreme Court decision in _____ legalized same-sex marriage nationwide, reflecting a rapid shift in American social norms and judicial interpretation of the 14th Amendment.

Answer: B) Obergefell v. Hodges

Obergefell v. Hodges is the definitive case for marriage equality, representing a major milestone in 21st-century civil rights history.

10. Which 1970s initiative, though it ultimately failed to be ratified by the states, signaled a massive shift in the focus of the Modern Feminist Movement towards constitutional equality?

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Answer: B) The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA)

The ERA's failure to gain ratification by 1982, despite massive grassroots support, illustrates the ideological polarization that began to define modern U.S. politics.