

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Silicon, Scandals, and Slumps: The Ultimate College Historian Challenge

Develop critical synthesis skills by analyzing the geopolitical shifts, bipartisan policy evolutions, and technological disruptions that defined the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

1. The 1978 Camp David Accords, a landmark of Jimmy Carter's foreign policy, primarily mediated a peace treaty between which two nations?

Answer: B) Egypt and Israel

The Accords led to the 1979 Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty, the first time an Arab state recognized Israel's right to exist, showcasing Carter's emphasis on human rights and diplomacy.

2. The 'Contract with America,' led by Newt Gingrich in 1994, was a legislative agenda that successfully helped the Republican party gain control of both houses of Congress for the first time in 40 years.

Answer: A) True

The 1994 midterm elections, known as the Republican Revolution, utilized this specific policy platform to shift the political landscape toward more conservative fiscal and social policies.

3. In 1979, the United States economy faced a period of stagnant growth coupled with high inflation, a phenomenon economists termed ____.

Answer: C) Stagflation

Stagflation challenged the prevailing Keynesian economic theories of the time, leading to a shift toward the neoliberal and monetarist policies of the 1980s.

4. What was the primary significance of the 1992 Los Angeles Riots in terms of modern social discourse?

Answer: C) They exposed deep-seated racial tensions and systemic issues within urban policing.

Triggered by the acquittal of officers in the Rodney King beating, the riots forced a national conversation on police brutality and the economic abandonment of inner cities.

5. The 1997 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was designed to increase trade barriers between the U.S., Canada, and Mexico to protect domestic manufacturing.

Answer: B) False

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NAFTA actually aimed to eliminate most tariffs and trade barriers, creating a trilateral trade bloc and fostering globalization, despite criticism regarding job outsourcing.

6. The _____, passed in 2001, significantly expanded the government's authority to conduct surveillance and wiretapping in the name of national security.

Answer: B) USA PATRIOT Act

Enacted shortly after the 9/11 attacks, the PATRIOT Act remains a focal point of debate regarding the balance between civil liberties and national security.

7. How did the 1973 'War Powers Resolution' seek to limit the authority of the executive branch?

Answer: A) By requiring the President to consult Congress before committing troops to combat.

Passed over Nixon's veto, this was a direct response to the 'Imperial Presidency' and the perceived overreach following the secret bombings of Cambodia during the Vietnam War.

8. The 'Iran-Contra Affair' involved the Reagan administration illegally selling weapons to Iran to fund anti-communist rebels in Nicaragua.

Answer: A) True

This scandal bypassed the Boland Amendment and Congressional oversight, marking a significant controversy regarding executive transparency and foreign intervention.

9. The Supreme Court case _____ (2010) fundamentally changed campaign finance by allowing corporations to spend unlimited funds on independent political broadcasts.

Answer: C) Citizens United v. FEC

This ruling interpreted corporate funding of independent political broadcasts as 'free speech' protected under the First Amendment, leading to the rise of Super PACs.

10. In the context of the early 2000s, what was the primary driver of the 'Subprime Mortgage Crisis'?

Answer: B) The deregulation of financial institutions and high-risk lending practices.

Excessive risk-taking by banks, coupled with complex financial instruments like mortgage-backed securities, led to the collapse of the housing bubble and the subsequent Great Recession.