

# The Artios Home Companion Series

## Unit 25: From the Moon to Malaise

### Teacher Overview

Despite the turbulence of the 1960s, the decade closed on a high note with the Apollo 11 space mission, by which the first humans in history landed on the moon. On July 20, 1969, Americans Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin separated the Lunar Module Eagle from the Command Module Columbia and set down on the lunar surface. Six hours later, on July 21, Armstrong became the first man to walk on the moon, proclaiming to a worldwide television audience that the event was “one small step for [a] man, one giant leap for mankind.” Fulfilling the goal set eight years earlier by the late President John F. Kennedy of “landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to the Earth” before the decade was out, the Apollo 11 mission brought Space Race victory to the United States and raised national hopes for a new era of peace, prosperity, and international cooperation.

Unfortunately, things went terribly wrong in the 1970s.

The United States was supposed to be a superpower, yet American forces proved powerless to stop a tiny guerrilla force in Vietnam. Support for Israel in the Middle East triggered a rash of terrorism against American citizens traveling abroad, as well a punitive oil embargo that stifled the economy and forced American motorists to wait hours for their next tank of gasoline.

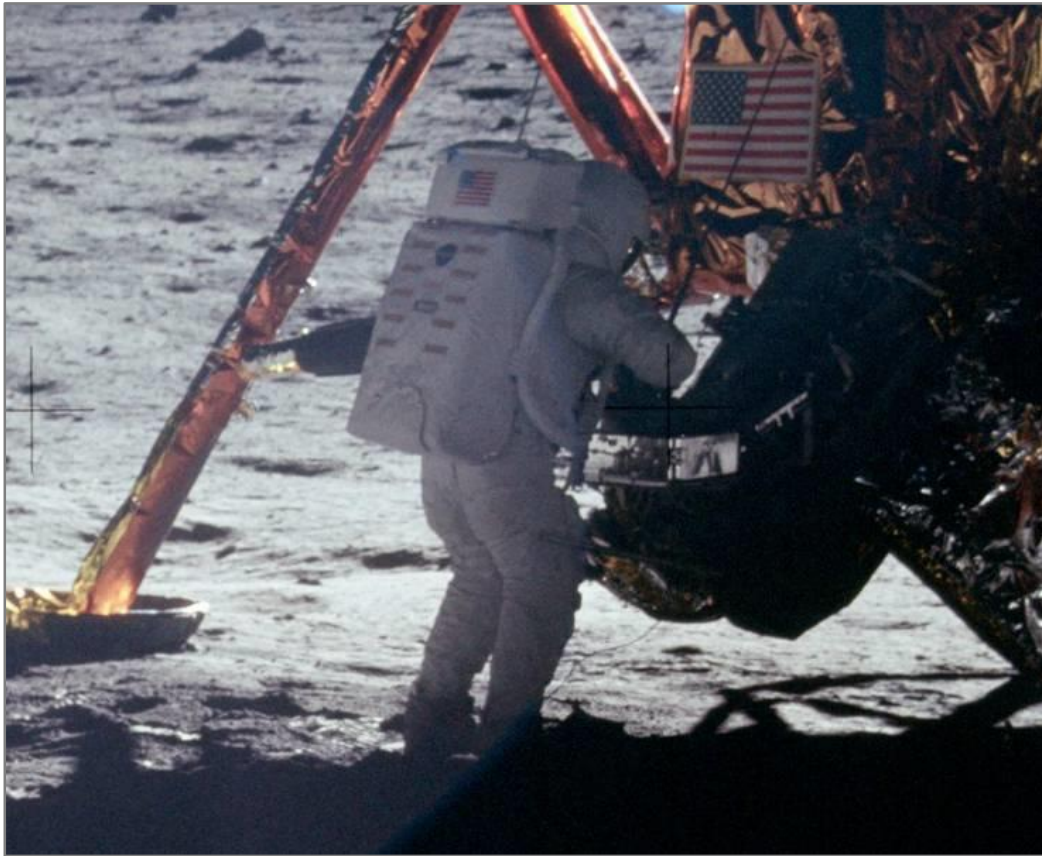
A hostile new government in Iran held fifty-two American citizens hostage before the eyes of the incredulous world. The détente with the Soviet Union from the Nixon years dissolved into bitter animosity when a second arms control agreement failed in the Senate and a Soviet army of invasion marched into Afghanistan. The United States military juggernaut seemed to have reached its limits.

At home, the news was no better. The worst political scandal in United States history forced a president to resign before facing certain impeachment. Months of investigation turned into years of untangling a web of government deceit. Details of illegal, unethical, and immoral acts by members of the White House staff covered the nation’s newspapers. Upon resignation, the president was granted a full and complete pardon. Many Americans wondered what happened to justice and accountability.

The booming economy sputtered to a halt. Inflation approached 20% and unemployment neared 10%—a combination previously thought to be impossible. Crime rates rose as tales of the decaying inner cities fell on deaf ears. A nuclear disaster of unspeakable proportions was barely averted at the Three Mile Island fission plant in Pennsylvania.

Many Americans coped with the current ailments by turning inward. Outlandish fashion and outrageous fads such as streaking, mood rings, and pet rocks became common. Younger Americans finished their workweeks and sought escape in discotheques. Controversy surrounding decaying morality surfaced with regard to increased drug use, sexual promiscuity, and a rising divorce rate. As a result, Christian leaders and organizations spoke out, hoping to change the direction in which the nation was headed.

The United States celebrated its bicentennial anniversary in 1976 without the expected accompanying optimism. Instead, while many reflected on the past laurels of American success, an overarching question was on the minds of the American people: what had gone wrong?



Neil Armstrong descending from the Lunar Module to become the first human to set foot on the moon

## Reading and Assignments

In this unit, students will:

- Complete four lessons in which they will learn about **a time of discouragement and disillusionment during the 1970s**, journaling and answering discussion questions as they read.
- Define vocabulary words.
- Visit [www.ArtiosHCS.com](http://www.ArtiosHCS.com) for additional resources.

## Vocabulary

**Lesson 1:**  
complicitous

**Lesson 2:**  
inflation  
malaise

**Lesson 3:**  
juggernaut

**Lesson 4:**  
none

## Leading Ideas

### Honesty is a character quality to be desired

*The Lord detests differing weights, and dishonest scales do not please Him.*

— Proverbs 20:23

### The Bible provides the ethics upon which to judge people and nations.

— Exodus 20:1-17

### God is sovereign over the affairs of men.

*From one man He made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and He marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.*

— Acts 17:26

## Key People, Places, and Events

President Richard Nixon

James McCord

The “Plumbers”

Daniel Ellsberg

Committee to Re-elect the President

Attorney General John Mitchell

G. Gordon Liddy

Bob Woodward

Carl Bernstein

George McGovern

Archibald Cox

Bob Haldeman

John Ehrlichman

Vice-President Spiro Agnew

John Dean

*U.S. v. Nixon*

Watergate

Stagflation

Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)

*Apartheid*

Whip Inflation Now (WIN)

President Gerald Ford

President Jimmy Carter

1972 Olympics

1980 Olympic Boycott

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini

Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi

Camp David Agreement

Salt II

Premier Leonid Brezhnev

The Irish Republican Army (IRA)

The New Right

The Religious Right

Pat Robertson

Christian Broadcasting Network

Jerry Falwell

Vatican II

## Lesson One

### History Overview and Assignments

# Undoing a President

The worst political scandal in United States history forced a president to resign before facing certain impeachment. Months of investigation turned into years of untangling a web of government deceit. Details of illegal, unethical, and immoral acts by members of White House staff covered the nation's newspapers. Upon resignation, the president was granted a full and complete pardon. Many Americans wondered what happened to justice and accountability.



The Watergate office complex—site of the infamous 1972 break-in that led to the first presidential resignation in American history—is still in use in Washington, D.C.

## Reading and Assignments

- Review the vocabulary, then read the article: *Undoing a President*.
- Narrate about today's reading using the appropriate notebook page. Be sure to include key people, events, and dates within the narration.
- In lieu of answering discussion questions, write a five paragraph essay summarizing the events surrounding the Watergate Scandal and Nixon's subsequent resignation. Be prepared to share this essay.
- Define the vocabulary word in the context of the reading and put the word and its definition in the vocabulary section of your history notebook.
- Be sure to visit [www.ArtiosHCS.com](http://www.ArtiosHCS.com) for additional resources.

## Vocabulary

complicitous

## Key People, Places, and Events

President Richard Nixon

James McCord

The “Plumbers”

Daniel Ellsberg

G. Gordon Liddy

Vice President Spiro Agnew

Committee to Re-elect the President

Bob Woodward

Carl Bernstein

George McGovern

Archibald Cox

Bob Haldeman

Attorney General John Mitchell

John Ehrlichman

John Dean

*U.S. v. Nixon*

Watergate

*Adapted for High School from the book:*

### ***U.S. History Online Textbook***

*source: ushistory.org*

### ***Undoing a President***

On June 17, 1972, five men were arrested after breaking into the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee located in the Watergate Hotel in Washington, D.C. The burglars were not ordinary thieves. They carried wiretaps to install on telephones. They brought cameras to photograph documents. Four of the five criminals were anti-Castro Cubans who had been previously hired by the CIA. The fifth was James McCord, the security advisor for Nixon’s campaign staff known as the Committee to Re-Elect the President, or CREEP. Although the incident didn’t immediately make the front pages of the major newspapers, it would soon become the most notorious political scandal in American history.

In the heated climate of the late 1960s and early 1970s, President Nixon believed strongly that a war was being fought between the conservative, middle- and working-class Americans and liberal

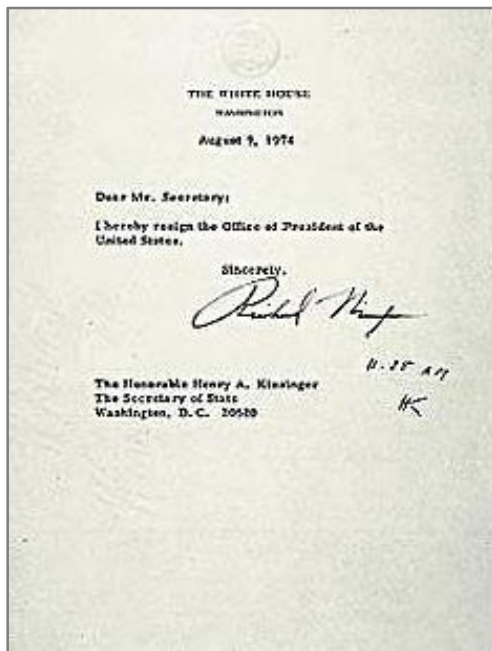
counterculture figures who sought to transform American values.

Nixon would stop at nothing to win this war of hearts and minds, even if it meant breaking the law.

In 1971, a White House group known as the “Plumbers” was established to eliminate administration leaks to the press. Their first target was Daniel Ellsberg, the Pentagon staff member who had leaked the *Pentagon Papers*, a highly critical study of America’s Vietnam policy intended to be used internally by the government, to the *New York Times*. The Plumbers vandalized the office of Ellsberg’s psychiatrist, hoping to find discrediting information on Ellsberg to release to the public.

Later that year, Attorney General John Mitchell resigned to head CREEP. The campaign raised millions of dollars in illegal contributions and laundered several hundred thousand for “plumbing activities.” A White House advisor named G.

Gordon Liddy suggested that the Democratic headquarters be bugged and that other funds should be used to bribe, threaten, or smear Nixon's opponents. After the arrest of the burglars, Nixon suggested payments of hush money to avoid a connection between Watergate and the White House. He suggested that the FBI cease any investigation of the break-in. He recommended that staffers perjure themselves if subpoenaed in court.



President Nixon's letter of resignation (above) is addressed to the secretary of state—who at the time was Henry Kissinger—in keeping with a law passed by Congress in 1792. When Kissinger initialed the document at 11:35 a.m., Nixon's resignation became official.

The Watergate cover-up was initially successful. Despite a headline story in the Washington Post by Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein suggesting White House involvement, Nixon went on to win 49 of 50 states in the November 1972 presidential election against George McGovern.

When the burglars were tried in January 1973, James McCord admitted in a letter that members of the Nixon Administration

ordered the Watergate break-in. A Senate committee was appointed to investigate, and Nixon succumbed to public pressure and appointed Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox to scrutinize the matter.



Richard Nixon delivers his trademark "V for Victory" sign with both arms as he prepares to leave the White House for the last time on August 9, 1974.

Complicitous in the cover-up, many high-level White House officials resigned including Nixon's Chief of Staff, Bob Haldeman, and his Advisor on Domestic Affairs, John Ehrlichman. In an unrelated case, Vice-President Spiro Agnew resigned facing charges of bribery and tax evasion. Nixon's own personal counsel, John Dean, agreed to cooperate with the Senate and testified about Nixon's involvement in the cover-up. In a televised speech, Nixon assured the American public, "I am not a crook." It seemed like a matter of Nixon's word against Dean's until a low-level aide told the committee that Nixon had been in the practice of taping every conversation held in the Oval Office.

Nixon flatly refused to submit the tapes to the committee. When Archibald Cox

demanded the surrender of the tapes, Nixon had him fired. Public outcry pressed Nixon to agree to release typewritten transcripts of his tapes, but Americans were not satisfied. The tape transcripts further damaged Nixon. On the tapes he swore like a sailor and behaved like a bully. Then there was the matter of 17 crucial minutes missing from one of the tapes.

Finally, in *U.S. v. Nixon*, the Supreme Court declared that executive privilege did not apply in this case, and Nixon was ordered to give the evidence to Congress.

By this time, the House Judiciary Committee had already drawn up Articles of Impeachment, and Nixon knew he did not have the votes in the Senate to save his presidency.

On August 8, 1974, Nixon resigned the office, becoming the first president to do so. His successor, Gerald Ford, promptly awarded Nixon a full pardon for any crimes he may have committed while in office. The press and the public cried foul, but Ford defended his decision by insisting the

nation was better served by ending the long, national nightmare.

During his years in office, Nixon had brought a controversial end to the Vietnam War, opened communication with Red China, watched NASA put astronauts on the moon, and presided over a healing period in American history in the early 1970s. Despite these many accomplishments, Watergate's shadow occludes Nixon's legacy.



Though Richard Nixon will forever be remembered for the Watergate scandal, his foreign policy accomplishments are worth noting. Here, Nixon reviews troops during his historic visit to China that helped lessen diplomatic tensions.

## Lesson Two

### History Overview and Assignments The Sickened Economy

The booming economy sputtered to a halt. Inflation approached 20% and unemployment neared 10% - a combination previously thought to be impossible. Crime rates rose as tales of the decaying inner cities fell on deaf ears. A nuclear disaster of unspeakable proportions was barely averted at the Three Mile Island fission plant in Pennsylvania.



Jimmy Carter used his “common man” image to defeat Gerald Ford and capture the White House in 1976. This campaign shirt assures voters that there is more to Carter than just his previous job as a peanut farmer.

#### Reading and Assignments

- Review the discussion questions and vocabulary, then read the article: *The Sickened Economy*.
- Narrate about today’s reading using the appropriate notebook page. Be sure to answer the discussion questions and include key people, events, and dates within the narration.
- Define the vocabulary words in the context of the reading and put the word and its definition in the vocabulary section of your history notebook.
- Visit [www.ArtiosHCS.com](http://www.ArtiosHCS.com) for additional resources.

#### Vocabulary

inflation  
malaise

#### Key People, Places, and Events

Stagflation

Whip Inflation Now (WIN)

President Gerald Ford

Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)

President Richard Nixon

President Jimmy Carter

#### Discussion Questions

1. In your own words, explain the concept of inflation.
2. What were the factors leading to the 1970s phenomenon of “stagflation?”



3. How did President Nixon try to fight inflation? Was he successful? Why or why not?
4. How did President Ford try to fight inflation? Was he successful? Why or why not?
5. How did President Carter try to fight inflation? Was he successful? Why or why not?

*Adapted for High School from the book:*

## ***U.S. History Online Textbook***

*source: ushistory.org*

### ***The Sickened Economy***

**Malaise Noun.** 1) An indefinite feeling of debility or lack of health.  
2) A vague sense of mental or moral ill-being.

People can feel malaise. Nations can feel malaise. Economies can feel malaise. In the mid-1970s much of America suffered a collective malaise.

Nothing fuels a strong case of malaise like a sputtering economy. The United States had grown accustomed to steady economic growth since the end of World War II. Recessions had been short and followed by robust economic growth. For the first time since the Great Depression, Americans faced an economy that could result in a lower standard of living for their children.

Inflation, which had crept along at one to three percent for the previous two decades, exploded into double digits. Full employment, defined as five percent or less, had been achieved in most years since 1945. Now the unemployment rate was nearing the dangerous ten percent line. Americans asked the question: what went wrong?

Economists had long held that inflation

and unemployment were polar forces. High inflation meant a great deal of spending; therefore, many jobs should be created. Unemployment created jobless Americans with less money to spend; therefore, prices should stay the same or fall. Surprisingly, the United States experienced high unemployment and high inflation simultaneously in the 1970s—a phenomenon called “stagflation.” Experts and non-experts debated the roots of this problem with differing opinions.

One factor was the price of oil. When Israel defeated its Arab neighbors in the Yom Kippur War of 1973, Arab oil producers retaliated against Israel’s allies by leading the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to enact an embargo. Oil prices skyrocketed immediately in the United States as demand outstripped supply. Automobiles sat in long gas lines at service stations.

Oil prices also influence the prices of all consumer goods. Products that require oil to produce now cost more. Any commodity shipped by truck or airplane passed its new expenses off to the consumer. As the decade progressed, the embargo was lifted, but

OPEC steadily raised prices each year. The price of a gallon of gasoline more than tripled between 1970 and 1980.



The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries—or OPEC—consists of member nations that currently supply more than 40% of the world’s oil.

Richard Nixon tried to fight inflation first by cutting government spending, but ultimately by imposing wage and price controls on the entire nation. Gerald Ford watched the inflation rate soar above 11 percent in 1974. He enacted a huge publicity campaign called Whip Inflation Now (WIN), which asked Americans to voluntarily control spending, wage demands, and price increases. The economy, along with Watergate

disillusionment, led Ford to suffer defeat to Jimmy Carter in the 1976 presidential election.



Gerald Ford hoped to curb the inflation rate with his “Whip Inflation Now!” or “WIN” campaign of 1974. Despite this effort, inflation continued to rise throughout the 1970s.

Carter tried tax and spending cuts, but the annual inflation rate topped 18 percent under his watch in the summer of 1980. At the same time, the unemployment rate fluctuated between six and eight percent. Economic woes may well have been the decisive factor in Carter’s defeat to Ronald Reagan in the election of 1980.

## Lesson Three

### History Overview and Assignments Foreign Woes

A hostile new government in Iran held fifty-two American citizens hostage before the eyes of the incredulous world. The détente with the Soviet Union from the Nixon years dissolved into bitter animosity when a second arms control agreement failed in the Senate and a Soviet army of invasion marched into Afghanistan. The United States military juggernaut seemed to have reached its limits.



Palestinian terrorists were responsible for the murder of 11 Israeli athletes, coaches, and judges during the 1972 Olympics. The kidnapers blew up the helicopter with the hostages inside. The terrorists were hoping to force the release of 200 Arabs being held in Israeli prisons.

#### Vocabulary

juggernaut

#### Key People, Places, and Events

1972 Olympics  
1980 Olympic Boycott  
Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini  
President Jimmy Carter  
Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi  
Camp David Agreement  
Salt II  
Premier Leonid Brezhnev  
The Irish Republican Army (IRA)  
*Apartheid*

#### Reading and Assignments

- Review the vocabulary, then read the article: *Foreign Woes*.
- As you read today's article, make a list of all of the foreign issues and conflicts that were being faced during this time. On a piece of paper, make two columns. In the first column, list the countries involved in the conflict or issue. In the second column, describe in detail the issue that was being faced.
- Narrate about today's reading using the appropriate notebook page. Be sure to include key people, events, and dates within the narration.
- Define the vocabulary word in the context of the reading and put the word and its definition in the vocabulary section of your history notebook.
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## U.S. History Online Textbook

source: ushistory.org

### Foreign Woes

America sank deeper into malaise when it looked around at what was going on in the rest of the world.

The decade began with America's longest war ending in its first decisive military defeat in its 200-year-history. Diplomacy seemed powerless to stop the economic dependence of the United States on the volatile Middle East for a steady supply of oil. Terrorists from this region and others threatened heads of state and ordinary citizens around the globe. In South Africa, the system of racial segregation called *apartheid* escalated, igniting resistance when non-white political representation was abolished in 1970 and non-whites were deprived of their citizenship.

Terrorism was on the rise around the globe. The world watched in horror as Arab gunmen cut down eleven Israeli weightlifters at the 1972 Olympics in Munich. The Irish Republican Army (IRA) killed thousands of English and Irish citizens attempting to receive recognition for their cause—an independent homeland. Despite an auspicious start, U.S. relations with the Soviet Union deteriorated by the end of the decade. Americans began to see the world slipping into anarchy and felt powerless to fix the problem.

In 1979, the new Islamic fundamentalist government of Iran captured 52 Americans at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, and the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini took power. A fanatical extremist, Khomeini denounced all but the most zealous Muslims and

demanded the return of their exiled former leader, Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi (who had come to the U.S. for cancer treatment), in exchange for the lives of the hostages.



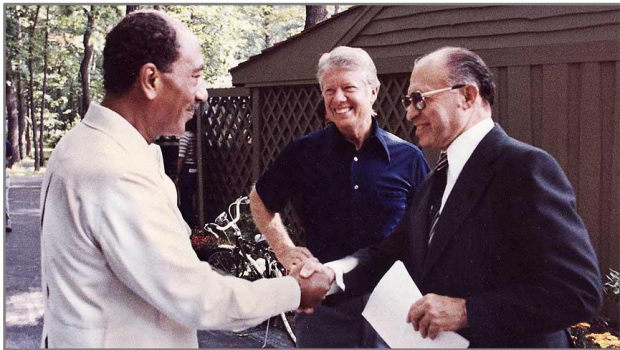
Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was the impetus for the 1979 seizure of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran by the Iranian government. The terrorists demanded the return of their former leader Pahlavi in exchange for the lives of 52 American hostages.

For 444 days, outraged Americans looked on helplessly as their fellow citizens were held in confinement and news broadcasts showed images of Iranians burning American flags and changing anti-American slogans. A rescue effort ordered by President Carter crashed in the desert in April 1980, and the hostages weren't released until January 20, 1981, the day the U.S. inaugurated its next president.



After the Iranian government took 52 Americans hostage at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran in 1979, President Carter mounted a rescue effort that ended in tragedy. Eight American pilots participating in “Operation Eagle Claw” lost their lives when two aircraft collided.

One exception to these negative trends was the Camp David Agreement, brokered by Carter in 1978. These accords resulted in mutual recognition between Israel and Egypt, a giant first step toward a lasting peace.



Though Jimmy Carter’s presidency is often remembered for creating a sense of “malaise” throughout America, Carter was able to take a great step toward peace in the Middle East. Here, Carter, Anwar Sadat, and Menachem Begin celebrate the signing of the Camp David Accords.

But the U.S.-USSR détente arranged by Nixon and Kissinger was crumbling by the end of the decade. A second arms limitation treaty between the superpowers known as SALT II was delivered to the Senate—only to be rejected. The USSR now surpassed the United States in nuclear warheads. The Cold War became frostier.

A Marxist revolution in Nicaragua brought greater fears of communism spreading to the Western Hemisphere. Finally, in 1979 the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan with combat troops from the Red Army. Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev insisted that Afghani leaders had requested military assistance, but American diplomats were dubious.

Fearing Soviet expansion into the Middle East, the Carter Administration strongly condemned the action and levied a wheat boycott on the Soviet Union. The 1980 Olympic Games held in Moscow were boycotted by the United States.

America’s claim to dominant status in the world had been seriously challenged by the end of the 1970s.

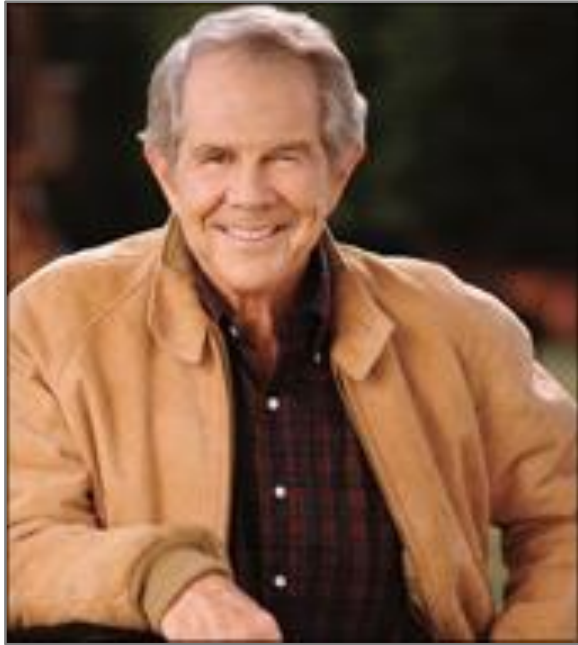
So, Americans started looking inward, inside themselves, in the hope of feeling better.

## Lesson Four

# History Overview and Assignments

## The New Right

As a result of the controversy surrounding decaying morality with regard to drug use, sexual promiscuity, and a rising divorce rate, Christian leaders and organizations spoke out. They hoped to change the direction in which the nation was headed.



Pat Robertson was among the new breed of “televangelists” that rose to political and cultural prominence in the late 1970s and early ‘80s.

### Reading and Assignments

- Review the discussion questions then read the article: *The New Right*.
- Narrate about today’s reading using the appropriate notebook page. Be sure to answer the discussion questions and include key people, events, and dates within the narration.
- Visit [www.ArtiosHCS.com](http://www.ArtiosHCS.com) for additional resources.

### Key People, Places, and Events

The New Right      The Religious Right  
Pat Robertson      Jerry Falwell  
Christian Broadcasting Network  
Vatican II

### Discussion Questions

1. How would you describe a cultural war?
2. Describe the beliefs and concerns of the “New Right.” Be specific.
3. Describe the beliefs and concerns of the “Religious Right.” Be specific.
4. How did the “Religious Right” hope to influence society?

Adapted for High School from the book:

### *U.S. History Online Textbook*

source: [ushistory.org](http://ushistory.org)

*The New Right*

Not everyone was happy with the social changes that sprang forth in America in the

1960s and 1970s. When *Roe vs. Wade* guaranteed the legal right to an abortion, a

fervent pro-life movement took root in response, dedicated to protecting the unborn child.

Conservatives rallied against the eroding traditional family unit. As the divorce and crime rates rose, an increasing number of Americans recognized the liberal welfare establishment's hand in exacerbating the very social maladies it was designed to address. A cultural war unfolded at the end of the 1970s.

Enter the New Right.

The New Right agreed with traditional conservatives that communism should be opposed and government ought to be limited in power, but voiced greater concern about the social and moral degeneration of the culture. Many focused on a particular issue such as abortion, while others decried the rapidly increasing tax burden imposed upon families and businesses. When foreign competition made inroads against American corporations in the 1970s, protest was launched against excessive regulation that stifled their competitive capability.

Another cornerstone of the conservative backlash was the Religious Right, which developed in response to the culture's decaying morality. Despite theological divisions, Christian leaders agreed that America was experiencing a cultural decline. They criticized the liberal media for corrupting America's youth and supported private religious schools and homeschooling as alternatives.

Religious broadcasters in the late 1970s and '80s took advantage of the boom in

cable and satellite television by creating stations and networks that reached more people than ever before.

Evangelical leader Pat Robertson formed the Christian Broadcasting Network to send his message. In 1979, Jerry Falwell formed the Moral Majority to provide financial support to conservative candidates and causes.

Many Catholic Americans joined the effort to reverse immoral cultural trends. The reforming spirit of the Catholic Church had reached its high water mark in the 1960s with a convention called Vatican II, when the requirement was dropped that the Catholic mass be spoken in Latin and lay people were given a greater role in Church services. Support was given for ecumenical outreach to other Christian denominations and Jewish synagogues. During the 1970s concerns about social issues forged connections between Catholic and Protestant leaders. Abortion and family values became areas of common ground.

Like most movements, the New Right contained an extremist element. Racial hatred groups like the Ku Klux Klan and the American Nazi Party joined the outcry, blaming the civil rights movement for the American moral decline. Ultra-libertarian militia groups formed in many states dedicated to attacking the American government they believed had become far too invasive.

There was no doubt a cultural war had begun.