

How U.S. history fits into world history

By CARL HARTMAN
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A new book argues that even in its earliest days, the new nation of the United States took strong stands in dealing with other countries.

The book, "Dangerous Nation," is written by Robert Kagan, veteran of four years in the State Department under President Reagan.

He says that Alexander Hamilton, born on a Caribbean island, wanted a maritime empire like Britain's.

"But most of Hamilton's colleagues, such as the Virginians Washington and Jefferson and the Pennsylvanian (Benjamin) Franklin were determined territorial imperialists who looked westward across the continent for America's destiny," he writes.

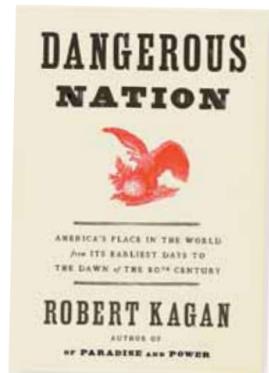
Anyone looking westward in 1776 was bound to see territory claimed at various times by Britain, France and Spain, all major powers.

Kagan sees the Declaration of Independence, asserting God-given human rights without regard to nationality, as bringing in a new idea for international relations. He sees that idea as often violating the old rule that governments need not meddle in the domestic affairs of another, no matter how brutal and despotic the other may be.

"Americans from the beginning were interested not only in protecting and advancing their material well-being," Kagan writes, but they also believed their own fate was "tied to the cause of liberalism and republicanism both within and beyond their borders."

He ends his book with the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, promising another book to complete a two-volume history of U.S. foreign policy. That conflict with Spain about Cuba, he says, signaled a debate on that policy.

"It echoed similar debates stretching back to the birth of the nation," he writes. "It also foreshadowed the debates that would recur throughout the 20th century and into the 21st between those who sought to employ America's increasing power to advance American influence and principles, and those who worried about the harmful effects of such an approach both to democratic institutions at home and to peoples and nations abroad."



"Dangerous Nation: America's Place in the World From Its Earliest Days to the Dawn of the Twentieth Century" by Robert Kagan (Knopf, 527 pages)

Romantic reads

Books you just might fall in love with — or through

By RON BERTHEL
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Valentine's Day might be great for couples, but for others — namely, those without significant others — it could be another story.

Take heart, though. A number of recent books offer plenty of advice, from making a date to taking a mate, that might hold the solution for anyone longing to hold someone.

Getting serious is no laughing matter, except, perhaps, in "Opening Lines, Pinky Probes, and L Bombs: The Girls & Sports Dating and Relationship Playbook" (Santa Monica Press, \$14.95 paperback).

Justin Borus and Andrew Feinstein, creators of the syndicated "Girls & Sports" comic strip, use dozens of their strips to help illustrate this colorfully busy guide to dating and its potential consequences, even marriage.

Besides the strips, there are sidebars, charts, graphs, words of wisdom and sports-influenced strategies that offer guidance about first dates, blind dates, online dating, phone and e-mail techniques, dinner dates, where to find dates, and other topics.

Specific information describes how to use the "pinky probe" to determine if that first date might end in a first kiss; how to recover from being dumped; and how to react when she drops the "L bomb" — that is, says "I love you" — for the first time.

There's even a mathematical formula to help a man determine if a girl is too young for him to date (along with advice to simply ignore the result).

For the boyfriend as well as the wannabe boyfriend, there's "A Practical Handbook for the Boyfriend: For Every Guy Who Wants To Be One, For Every Girl Who Wants To Build One!" (Hyperion, \$22.95).

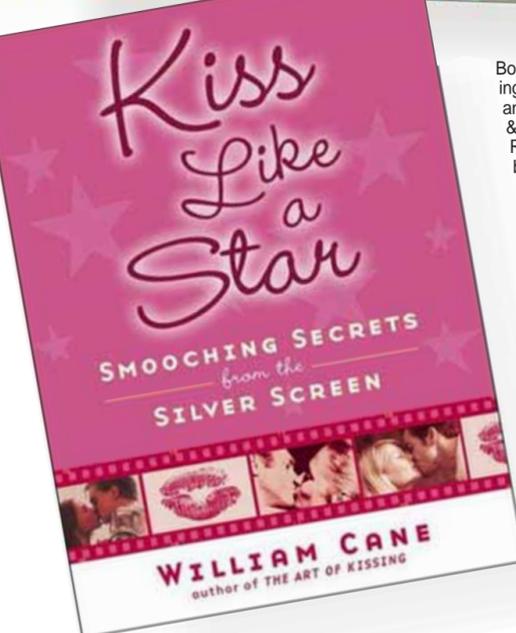
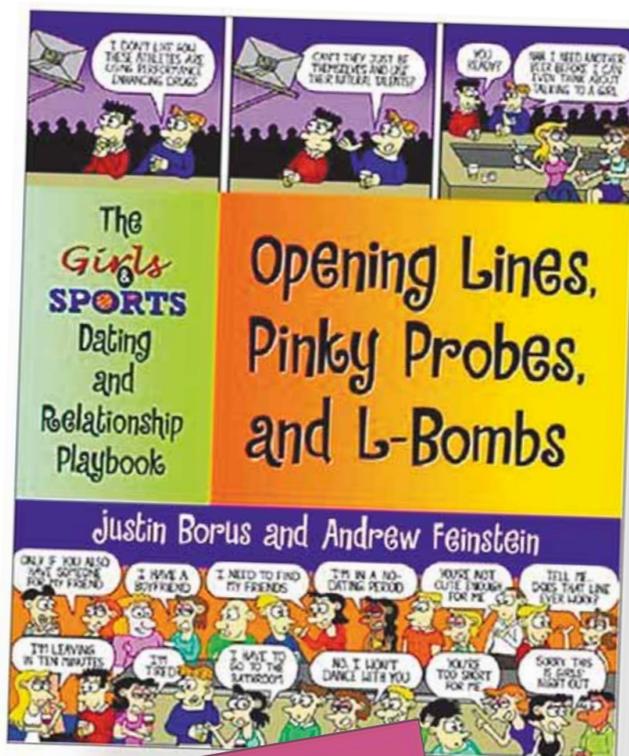
Felicity Huffman of "Desperate Housewives" and best friend Patricia Wolff offer men advice on getting the girl and — "the really tricky part" — keeping her. Their chunky, colorful, pocket-size guide uses advice, inspiration and translation to help a guy understand the woman in his life.

There are tips for finding a girlfriend, both online and off, how to behave on the first date, the role of money in a relationship, how to (and how not to) dress, gift-giving and intimacy, all designed to help prepare men for their role as boyfriends.

Most telling, perhaps, is Chapter 5: "When Do You Become a Boyfriend and Who Decides?"

"She does."
End of chapter.

It's hard to imagine why a woman would want to think like a man,

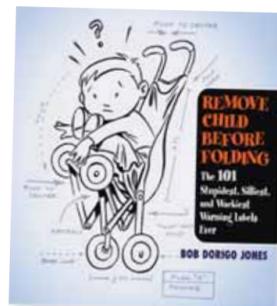


Books including "Opening Lines, Pinky Probes, and L Bombs: The Girls & Sports Dating and Relationship Playbook" (Santa Monica Press, \$14.95 paperback), top, and "Kiss Like a Star" (St. Martin's Griffin, \$11.95 paperback) might help you land a date for Valentine's Day or ensure you keep the one you already have.

except, perhaps, to attract one. Hence, there's "Think Like a Guy: How To Get a Guy by Thinking Like One" (St. Martin's Griffin, \$12.95) by Giuliana DePandi, anchor for cable TV's E! News.

Working on the fairly safe theory that men and women think differently from each other, DePandi has assembled 66 tips to help women understand what's going on in a guy's head, what turns him on and off, and just how the heck men view women, anyway.

For example: Tip No. 16 advises: "Don't obsess over babies and puppies. ... Don't get all mushy over them. Otherwise he'll think you want a baby right now." "Don't drag him to all your outings," warns Tip No. 47. "It's bad enough you have to put up with your co-workers. Don't make him suffer, too."



"Remove Child Before Folding: The 101 Stupidest, Silliest, and Wackiest Warning Labels Ever" by Bob Dorigo Jones (Warner Books)

Don't eat this book of weird warnings

By RON BERTHEL
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

There's a sleeping aid whose label cautions "May cause drowsiness," at which time you probably should not use the propane torch that comes with the warning, "Never use when sleeping."

Because, if you do, you might want to have on hand the bandages with the box that helpfully advises, "For external use only."

As silly as they might sound, these are sincere warning labels on real products sold in the United States. These and dozens more are featured in the book "Remove Child Before Folding: The 101 Stupidest, Silliest, and Wackiest Warning Labels Ever."

Author Bob Dorigo Jones is the founder of M-LAW, the Michigan Lawsuit Abuse Watch, an anti-lawsuit watch group that receives hundreds of submissions to its annual contest to find the weirdest warning labels.

The most recent winner, a toilet-cleaning brush that comes with the warning, "Do not use for personal hygiene," is in the book, along with such worthy contenders as slippers ("Do not eat") and a box of frozen mozzarella sticks ("Product becomes hot after cooking").

Don't say you haven't been warned, but here are more examples of kooky caveats from the book:

- "Do not eat toner" (on a printer cartridge).
- "Never iron clothes while they are being worn" (on a household iron).
- "Caution: This is not to be used by children under 3 yrs. of age" (on a child's toy badge that proclaims "I am 2.")
- "Harmful if swallowed" (on a fishing lure with a three-pronged hook).
- "This product moves when used" (on a child's scooter).
- "Ovenware will get hot when used in oven" (on a baking utensil).
- "Does not supply oxygen" (on a simple paper dust mask).
- "Do not iron" (on all California Super Lotto tickets).
- "Do not use ... as a projectile in a catapult or similar hurling mechanism" (on a CD player).
- And arguably the best advice comes with a professional kitchen knife: "Never hold a knife whilst arguing."

PUBLISHERS WEEKLY BEST SELLERS

HARDCOVER FICTION

1. "Plum Lovin'" by Janet Evanovich (St. Martin's)
2. "For One More Day" by Mitch Albom (Hyperion)
3. "White Lies" by Jayne Ann Krentz (Putnam)
4. "Cross" by James Patterson (Little, Brown)
5. "Hannibal Rising" by Thomas Harris (Delacorte)
6. "You Suck: A Love Story" by Christopher Moore (William Morrow)
7. "The Hunters" by W.E.B. Griffin (Putnam)
8. "Next" by Michael Crichton (HarperCollins)

9. "The Castle in the Forest" by Norman Mailer (Random House)
10. "The Suspect" by John Lescroart (Dutton Adult)

NONFICTION/GENERAL

1. "The Best Life Diet" by Bob Greene (Simon & Schuster)
2. "You: On A Diet: The Owner's Manual for Waist Management" by Michael F. Roizen, Mehmet C. Oz (Free Press)
3. "The Audacity of Hope" by Barack Obama (Crown)
4. "The Secret" by Rhonda Byrne (Beyond Words)
5. "The Innocent Man: Murder and

Injustice in a Small Town" by John Grisham (Doubleday)

6. "Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid" by Jimmy Carter (Simon & Schuster)
7. "Jim Cramer's Mad Money: Watch TV, Get Rich" by James J. Cramer with Cliff Mason (Simon & Schuster)
8. "Marley & Me" by John Grogan (Morrow)
9. "The Proper Care and Feeding of Marriage" by Dr. Laura Schlessinger (HarperCollins)
10. "I Feel Bad About My Neck: And Other Thoughts on Being a Woman" by Nora Ephron (Knopf)



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