

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book has been long in the making. I come to it as an American who spent most of his childhood and adolescence in other countries—first the Far East, then Europe. But I also come to it as a white Anglo-Saxon whose family was always quietly though never ostentatiously conscious of an American ancestry extending back to the early seventeenth century and before that to minor and major English aristocracy (or so some of my ancestors liked to believe). I have thus sought to come to grips with my country without ever actually having “grown up” in it. I am thus perhaps differently conscious of its promises and its failures than someone whose formative years were concretely in this land. I write this book in the period following the election of Donald Trump as president—and do so with a sense of the dangers of loss.

Over the years, I have taught versions of this book. Its origins come from a sudden decision between Steven Hahn, Charles Nathanson, and myself, all of us then in different departments at the University of California, San Diego. Fueled no doubt by a little too much spirit, we agreed that the university needed a course on this topic and eight weeks later found ourselves teaching it. What follows in this book owes much to those friends and that original course, as well as to the contributions in a subsequent year of Professor Rachel Klein. Subsequently, I have taught the entire material by myself. Steven is now at the University of Pennsylvania; Chuck passed away in 2003—I mourn him and dedicate this book to his memory.

Most of my debts will appear in the footnotes to this book. Aside from those mentioned above, I might note in particular the work of Alex Gourevitch, Alexander Keyssar, Maurice Isserman, Leon Fink, Rogers Smith, Peter Irons, Todd Gitlin, Michael Schudson, Sherry Turkle, and James Miller. Wilson Carey McWilliams's *The Idea of Fraternity in America* has informed me since before

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