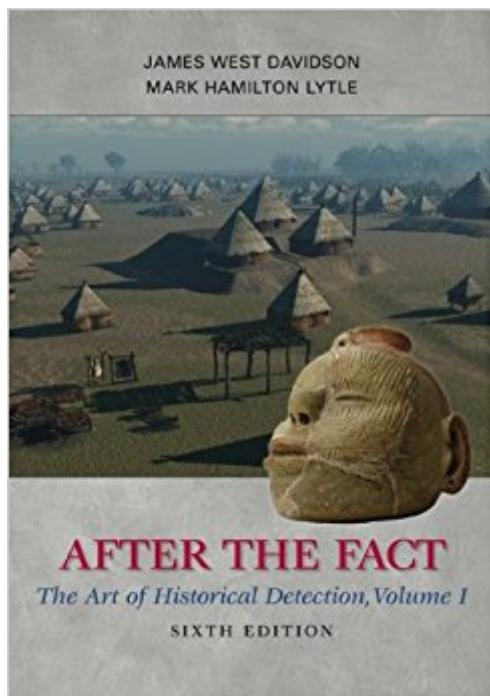


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# After The Fact: The Art Of Historical Detection, Volume I



## **Synopsis**

For more than twenty-five years, *After the Fact* has guided students through American history and the methods used to study it. In dramatic episodes that move chronologically through American history, this best-selling book examines a broad variety of topics including oral evidence, photographs, ecological data, films and television programs, church and town records, census data, and novels. Whether for an introductory survey or for a historical methods course, *After the Fact* is the ideal text to introduce readers, step by step, to the detective work and analytical approaches historians use when they are actually doing history.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Mark H. Lytle received his Ph.D. from Yale University and is Professor of History and Environmental Studies. He has served two years as Mary Ball Washington Professor of American History at University College, Dublin, in Ireland. His publications include *The Origins of the Iranian-American Alliance, 1941-1953*, *After the Fact: The Art of Historical Detection* (with James West Davidson), *America's Uncivil Wars: The Sixties Era from Elvis to the Fall of Richard Nixon*, and, most recently, *The Gentle Subversive: Rachel Carson, Silent Spring, and the Rise of the Environmental Movement*. He is co-editor of a joint issue of the journals of *Diplomatic History* and *Environmental History* dedicated to the field of environmental diplomacy. James West Davidson received his B.A. from Haverford College and his Ph.D. from Yale University. A historian who has pursued a full-time

writing career, he is the author of numerous books, among them *After the Fact: The Art of Historical Detection* (with Mark H. Lytle), *The Logic of Millennial Thought: Eighteenth Century New England*, and *Great Heart: The History of a Labrador Adventure* (with John Rugge). He is co-editor with Michael Stiff of the *Oxford New Narratives in American History*, in which his most recent book appears: 'They Say': Ida B. Wells and the Reconstruction of Race.

I had to buy this for a pre-graduate level historiography class. Honestly, I have never read a worse book about the methods of history. While the authors do succeed in describing HOW to go about writing history and exploring the past, they completely fail to achieve it on their own. My main problems with the book are as follows: \*Lack of documentation of sources. Each chapter is followed by a very brief list of books recommended for further reading, but there is no structure in the book lists. Also, when other sources are referenced or quoted within the text proper, there is absolutely no documentation of which source was used or who is being quoted. It seems as though the authors want readers to take their word for the information presented. I would suggest that the authors learn how to use Chicago Manual of Style like every respectable historian worth his/her salt has to. \*Incredibly obvious pro-white/pro-European biases. The job of a good historian is to limit the influences of biases on the interpretation of the past. When Native Americans are mentioned, they are ALWAYS treated as inferior to whites, both in the primary sources (which go undocumented) and in the words of the authors. This is absolutely disgusting and it is NOT good history writing. \*The authors fail to execute the methods they describe. The ending of each chapter reveals that most of what is discussed is nothing more than conjecture. Without proper documentation of sources within the chapters, it becomes obvious that the authors wrote the book as a way to "strut their stuff" more so than actually provide accurate accounts of the past. I would NOT recommend this book as a permanent staple in a historian's or historiographer's personal library. While the methods Davidson and Lytle discuss are important, their outlines of methods are the only good things that can be taken away from this book. The rest is, essentially, biases interspersed with undocumented garbage.

Both Volume I and Volume II are extremely useful in American History classes. These books generate thinking skills that are much needed by students and greatly appreciated by teachers..

This book we used as a second text for my history class. It's has great additional information that went along with our textbook. It's a good read.

this work is not only insightful it is also highly readable and very interesting for undergraduate students so I plan to use it in my own future courses

This book was a pleasure to read. The authors wrote about "historical detection" from the mindset of forensic scientists. The breadth and depth of historical events covered in a book of this size is impressive. I recommend this book (without reservation) to those interested in history.

I don't remember this one

I got this as an optional reading material for my history class, it's very interesting if you enjoy learning more about the person and not just the dates and facts. I was only assigned about 5 readings out of the book, but I've read the entire book, and I'm considering other volumes!

lot of highlighted sections seems too used. Would rather get some other book for a little bit more money that has no highlighting and underlines.

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