

Southern California. With its historical overview, it might also serve as interesting supplemental reading in a standard history course on the high school or college level. Given its clear and interesting presentation, this book might prove a boon to history teachers striving to interest a sports obsessed society in something beyond next year's pennant race.

University of Notre Dame

Edmund F. Wehrle

***Work and the Waterways: An Aural History of Midwestern Workers.* One Audio Tape (60 minutes) and Teacher's Guide. Loyola University of Chicago and the Chicago Maritime Society, 1987. Order from the Chicago Maritime Society, c/o The Newberry Library, 80 West Walton St., Chicago, IL 60610. \$13.00.**

This package consists of a cassette containing about thirty folk songs, a two-part program outline, many discussion questions, an explanation of each song, and some material discussing the general use of music in understanding the past. The cassette also includes considerable lecturing about the life of workers in the Midwest that is done pleasantly and well, and dramatic speaking done by actors who are impersonating early nineteenth-century workers. All of this is intended to impart a sense of "you are there."

The songs are well chosen and well sung, although they are done more in an operatic than lower-class folk song style. Almost invariably, singers chosen for such recordings have a voice and style like television announcers on the national networks. Consequently, they do not sound very authentic. Dramatic speaking on this cassette manages to convey a feeling of authenticity much more successfully than the songs. Even so, the grammar of the speakers is so unrealistically good that they have a tough time preventing their twentieth-century culture from showing through.

The package contains some well-chosen documentary excerpts from contemporary newspapers. These could be reproduced for students and should considerably enhance the value of the material. The writers break the presentation into two units, but there is enough flexibility to allow a teacher to present the whole thing in one day, or if preferred, more than two days might be spent presenting the material. Overall, the written portion of *Work and the Waterways* is well done. The authors show good judgment in what to emphasize and in the choice of suggested questions.

This material would be most appropriate for public school students, but it could certainly be used in community and senior colleges as well. In most courses in the latter, however, more traditional materials would probably better accomplish the objectives that this publication is intended to achieve.

University of North Texas

E. Dale Odom

Waldo Heinrichs. *Threshold of War: Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Entry into World War II.* New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988. Pp. 279. Cloth, \$21.95.

With the wealth of available articles, biographies, edited diaries, and monographs that examine various facets of American entrance into World War II, the classroom teacher faces the dilemma of choosing one or two selections from a giant historiographical buffet table, for neither time nor appetite allows for the consumption of the entire intellectual feast. With the publication of Waldo Heinrichs's *Threshold of War*, the selection process has thankfully become a bit easier.

Threshold of War examines the nine months from Lend-Lease to Pearl Harbor. Based both on recent published scholarship and extensive examination of primary sources, the book provides an almost day-to-day treatment of the myriad of simultaneous issues, pressures, and dangers that confronted the country. The author's previous work in diplomatic and naval history is evident in his impressive mining of relevant state, war, and navy department records. This is not a narrowly based, one-archive study.

At the center of the book, and properly so, is Franklin D. Roosevelt. He was in charge. He was the commander-in-chief. All the formal and informal national security threads led to the President's hands. At the same time, however, Roosevelt's management of national security affairs did not occur in a vacuum. A variety of personal, political, constitutional, and bureaucratic constraints could and did influence FDR's actions. Exactly when and how much such factors influenced the President, however, is difficult to gauge. Roosevelt scholars know only too well the President's reluctance to share his thoughts with others, whether by word or pen, and this reluctance has often forced historians to surmise as to what FDR's true thoughts and intentions were. Heinrichs is well aware of the elusive quality of Roosevelt and why disagreement among Roosevelt scholars has been the norm for over forty years.

Heinrichs's picture of Roosevelt is that of a leader whose gaze fell primarily on Europe. Although understandably concerned for domestic objectives, FDR "entirely lacked an isolationist mentality." He had no illusions about Hitler's Germany and sincerely viewed Nazi military success in 1940-1941 as a direct threat to the Americas. As a result, the Atlantic barrier had to be upheld, even at the risk of war. As Heinrichs correctly emphasizes, "the president focused on threats to the safety of the United States in a most direct and visceral sense." With the German invasion of Russia in June 1941, this focus meant that Roosevelt would do everything possible to help the Soviet Union, for that titanic struggle at the gates of Moscow directly affected the United States.

These fundamental beliefs, however, existed within a presidential environment often marked by ambiguity, intrigue, and procrastination, partly as the result of FDR's own personality and partly because of his concern over isolationist strength. Added to that environment were multiple contradictions that constantly gnawed at the President. How could he increase American naval strength in the Atlantic without weakening the deterrent value of the Pacific fleet? How could he delay possible conflict in the Pacific without at the same time seeming to appease Japanese expansion? How could he help the Soviets and the British while simultaneously meeting the critical needs of his own military forces? These contradictions stemmed from the fundamental problem of 1941 that Roosevelt could never ignore: the military weakness of the United States.

Heinrichs's book is outstanding, deserving to be read and studied. Its style is clear, its research thorough, and its conclusions persuasive. For those college professors looking for something that falls between the extensive detail of Robert Dallek's meaty *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy* and the interpretive sweep of Robert Divine's concise *Roosevelt and World War II*, Waldo Heinrichs's *Threshold of War* should be the choice.

Cedar Valley College

Calvin L. Christman

CORRECTION

The review of *The Lessons of the Vietnam War: A Modular Textbook* in the Fall, 1989, issue (p. 102) contained the wrong prices. The Teacher's Edition is \$34.95, and the Student Edition is \$24.95.