

might be using in their classes. Finally, the book will be useful in helping teachers to understand the impact of commercial visual media on their students in general.

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**William H. Chafe. *The Unfinished Journey: America Since World War II*. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991. Second edition. Pp. ix, 537. Cloth, \$35.00; Paper, \$17.95.**

This is an updated edition of a popular text by the noted Duke University historian William H. Chafe. The original 1986 volume closed with the re-election of Ronald Reagan; the second edition carries the reader through the presidential campaign of 1988. Chafe's new material depicts a beleaguered Reagan hard pressed by the Iran-Contra scandal, the abortive nomination of Robert Bork to the Supreme Court, and a weakening American economy, who, consistent with his legendary luck, nevertheless manages to rehabilitate his reputation with the INF Treaty with the Soviets and an almost miraculous thaw in the Cold War. Still, Reagan comes across as little more than an "acting" president, a simple, if committed ideologue playing a role others have carefully scripted for him. The Gipper, as Chafe portrays him, calls to mind Mark Twain's comment that the only two traits essential for success in life are confidence and ignorance. George Bush fares no better in Chafe's account of the 1988 election, in which the candidates ignored substantive issues without treating voters to any particular elegance of style. Chafe decries the decline in the length of the average sound bite from 45 seconds in 1980 to nine seconds in 1988. Anything less, he suggests, and campaigns might well be airing only subliminal messages, but, he writes, "in a sense, that was the whole point of the Willie Horton ad."

One should not expect sympathetic treatments of Reagan and Bush. *The Unfinished Journey* is dedicated to "the beloved community," Chafe's term for the contemporary liberals and reformers who fought to end racial segregation, to win equal rights for American women, and to stop the war in Vietnam. Chafe, as he explains his approach, uses "the categories of race, class, and gender as a gauge to measure change and to understand what has occurred in our society." Chafe's preoccupation with the victories and failures of liberalism produces a less methodical coverage than that found in the ordinary text, and allows for some distortion. The politics of the conservative 1950s receive perfunctory treatment. Chafe skillfully describes the struggle for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1968, but says much less about the Republican contest, although it produced the eventual winner, Richard Nixon. A careless student reader might conclude that the New Left outnumbered the Silent Majority. Chafe, to be sure, makes no such claims, and for the most part he manages to combine successfully the new social history with traditional political and diplomatic history. There are two strong chapters on the origins and early years of the Cold War; Chafe argues persuasively that anti-Communist paranoia effectively throttled liberal impulses in the 1950s. There is also an excellent chapter on the civil rights movement, and a lively, if overly sympathetic, section on John F. Kennedy.

Chafe writes well, with an eye for the telling fact, as his figures about the shrinkage of the sound bite suggest. We learn, for example, that the wrestler Gorgeous George was actually a patient at New York's Bellevue psychiatric hospital. We also learn that by the mid-1980s, the interest on the national debt equalled the combined budgets of the departments of Labor, Commerce, Education, Agriculture, and five other major departments. Unfortunately, Chafe also repeats the old canard that President Eisenhower insisted on making every decision on the basis of a one-page memorandum. Despite the occasional lapse, however, *The Unfinished Journey* remains one of the two or three best surveys available on recent American history.

Some instructors may prefer a text with maps and more lavish illustrations, but for a literate and intelligent narrative, *The Unfinished Journey* is an obvious choice.

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**Lillie Patterson. *Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Freedom Movement* New York & Oxford: Facts on File, 1989. Pp. xi, 178. Cloth, \$16.95.**

Martin Luther King, Jr. died more than twenty years ago and it has been more than a quarter of a century since the passage of the historic Voting Rights Act of 1965. Since that time, scholarly works on the civil rights movement and King have been published at a rapidly accelerating rate as those turbulent years recede into historical memory. For secondary school and college students, the civil rights years have a fascinating and even romantic quality that generates interest in American history surveys and in specialized courses either on the movement itself, or on the 1960s. Lillie Patterson has written a book aptly suited for the former course of study. It is part of the Makers of America biography series for young adults and general readers, although college freshmen in a general survey would find it rewarding.

The author has followed a basic chronological chapter organization for the book following the major events in King's life. The first chapter, however, is on the Montgomery bus boycott that initially brought King to national attention. It is an excellent treatment of the Rosa Parks incident, the formation of the Montgomery Improvement Association, and the selection of King as the spokesman for the city's African-American population. The succeeding chapters begin with a chapter on his family and upbringing, followed by chapters on the Little Rock school integration crisis of 1957, the 1960 sit-in movement of black college students, the Freedom Ride protest against segregation in interstate transportation in 1961-1962, the abortive campaign in Albany, Georgia, and the more successful campaign in Birmingham, Alabama, the 1963 March on Washington, the Mississippi Summer Project of 1964 (Freedom Summer), the bloody, but victorious campaign in Selma, Alabama, that led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act, and the later years of King as he opposes the Vietnam War and initiates a "Poor People's Campaign" for economic justice to eliminate poverty in America. Patterson has written a work that has explored the career of Martin Luther King from Montgomery, desegregating public transportation, to his assassination in Memphis, aiding low income striking sanitation workers. She has told the story of the civil rights era in clear, concise, but moving prose that would appeal to general readers and students at the secondary school level. Obviously the book at 178 pages is neither as comprehensive nor as in-depth as some of the recent massive biographies of King and the movement, but it is thorough and covers the major events in his life.

Patterson's inclusion of freedom songs tied to major civil rights events provides a useful teaching tool. Students could be given assignments analyzing the lyrics of such songs as "Birmingham Sunday," which explores the bombing of a black church in which four girls attending Sunday School were killed on September 15, 1963, or "Hallelujah I'm a-Travelin'," sung by some of the Freedom Riders in the early 1960s. Patterson has included significant excerpts from some of the classic speeches and writings of Martin Luther King that could serve as a basis of class assignments: "A Letter from a Birmingham Jail;" "I Have a Dream" speech from the 1963 March on Washington; or his last, almost self-eulogistic speech, "I've Been to the Mountaintop," given on April 3, 1968, the day before he died. Her quotes from the writings and speeches of King are woven nicely through the text.

The book does not explore in depth the last years of King's life when his leadership was being challenged by younger more militant blacks nor the failure of King's venture into the North to obtain open housing in Chicago. Patterson does, however, provide an interesting and