

The course and the anthology attempt to present the wide impact of the war on individual lives and on the nation, to rise beyond questions of policy or military strategy to address moral and theological inquiry. Capps's orientation is clear: The Vietnam War is unfinished, unresolved, and unhealed in the psyche and soul of this nation. Closure and reconstructive healing await understanding, reconciliation, and harmony. The collection provides a broad and fair-minded range of experiences, perspectives, and interpretations of meaning arranged somewhat artificially under four sub-headings: Warriors Testimony; Lessons from the War; Diversities of Experience; and Symbolic Expressions, Ritual Healing.

Although the 36 inclusions are brief and most are significantly truncated from the original, the selections are well-chosen, readable, and pertinent to the volume's theme. The voices range from General William Westmoreland to an interview with General Vo Nguyen Giap; from well-known essays such as William Broyles's "Why Men Love War," James Fallows's "What Did You Do in the Class War, Daddy?," or David Fromkin and James Chace's "What Are the Lessons of Vietnam," to obscure pieces in alumni magazines, religious journals, *Mother Jones*, and the *Utne Reader*, even from Capps's own class. Three interesting essays treat black, Chicano, and American Indian veterans' experiences. The editor's introductory forward sets the tone, but he then allows the excerpts to speak for themselves without editorial remarks.

Although several other very fine anthologies are available for the classroom teacher, including recent mass-circulation readers by Andrew J. Rotter, Jeffrey R. Kimball, George Donelson Moss, Grace Sevy, and Robert J. MacMahon, Capps's is one of the better ones, especially for those who want to stress personal impact, diversity of experiences, and metaphysical import. I commend it highly.

Larry Cable and Walter Capps are dissimilar men—in experience, lifestyle, manner, philosophy, and politics. But they share a common bond in their passionate commitment to the deeper understanding of the rending experience of a war that remains understood superficially and imperfectly. Both invoke the names on the Wall, and all those, Vietnamese and American, who still suffer, as imperative to continue pursuit of the grail of meaning and resolution. In disparate ways, both these books do just that.

Converse College

Joe P. Dunn

***Re-Thinking History* by Keith Jenkins. London and New York: Routledge, 1991. Pp. 77. Cloth, \$10.95.**

Just as Keith Jenkins insists that history is determined by "the politics of truth," so is his attempt to provide an introductory text for the student seeking answers to "What is history" and "What is the nature of history?" This brief volume, polemic in expression and deconstructionist in intent, requires close, even repeated reading. Jenkins is a lecturer in history at the West Sussex Institute of Higher Education and would necessarily be very familiar with the "New History" curriculum that has dominated the public schools of the United Kingdom in the last fifteen years. Jenkins's attack upon Carr, Elton, Marwick, and Collingwood subsumes his criticism of the "evidence-based" curriculum of the "New History" program. In the end, Jenkins has managed to cast serious doubt upon the existence of "truth" in history and, concomitantly, the validity of the social studies curriculum of the U.K.

Jenkins is, as he freely admits, a product of the post-modern world and promotes the deconstruction of history both in content and practice. Perceiving history as a dynamic discipline in which every generation and interest group creates its own history, Jenkins sees history as

historiography. The title is clearly appropriate to his main argument: Because history is interpretive, it requires continual re-thinking and re-organization.

After concluding that history and the past are not isomorphic, the author argues that history and the historian are "theoretically backward," since they do not, as the philosopher of history does, bring their conceptual apparatus to the surface. The historian buries it into the framework of his quest. History is embedded in an intertextual, linguistic construct, and is limited by its epistemology, methodology, and ideology. Stating that "history is never for itself; it is always for someone," Jenkins believes that ideological motivations cause each generation to rewrite its own history. For the potential writer of history Jenkins lists the pressures of publishing: familial obligations, demands of the work-place, and perhaps, most informative, the pressures and restrictions from publishers.

Jenkins's treatment of the nature of history is well-argued. His conception of "truth" as fluid and subject to deconstruction is perhaps the heart of the book. From this springboard he evaluates the fact/interpretation argument, and the questions of bias and empathy. Well-stated, the book effectively argues that interpretative overlays and the absence of bias and empathy are impossible to achieve. Jenkins's use of "traces" for evidence allows him to state his case that "evidence is the term used when . . . traces are used 'in evidence' on behalf . . . an argument (interpretation) and not before."

The last chapter is strong in its definition and history of such terms as the "post-modern world" but very weak in what should be its primary focus: how to "do" history, given all his iconoclastic observation. His advice to the post-modern student is to develop a reflexive attitude toward the search for history. To Jenkins, this means that one must determine one's contextual perspective and select content that would "help us to understand the world that we live in and the forms of history that have both helped produce it and which it has produced."

Jenkins's discourse would be most helpful to the naive historian who has failed to recognize that the tools of his inquiry are often flawed. Naturally, this information lends itself well to class discussions, particularly in graduate courses where students need to be concerned with the basic questions of historical study. For example, he can quickly disabuse those who think that the problems of bias can be circumvented, empathy achieved, and such concepts as continuity and cause and effect employed. His comments concerning publication restrictions are on target and should be a revelation to those who have not yet embarked upon the publication carousel.

Brookhaven College

Sandra Weldin

Piotr S. Wandycz. *The Price of Freedom*. New York: Routledge, Chapman, and Hall, 1992. Pp. xv, 330. Cloth, \$29.95.

Here is a book for students and instructors alike who lack the necessary historical context to make some sense of the often bewildering contemporary events occurring in the erstwhile Soviet Union and its satellites since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the apparent collapse of communism. Piotr Wandycz, Bradford Curfee Professor of History at Yale University and author of numerous works on Poland and East Central Europe, offers a crisp, readable survey of the history of East Central Europe since the middle ages without resorting to historical clichés, oversimplification, or national stereotypes. Within the compass of not quite 300 pages of text, he narrates the political and diplomatic history of the area and at the same time devotes considerable attention to the cultural, social, and economic developments that make the historical events understandable. The author avoids the mere recounting of the separate