

a full page in size. In a period during which territorial wars are a major aspect, a good map section is a must. This volume and the series are admirable in intent, but have limited usefulness because of that intent, to provide a survey of ever changing interpretations. It will give faculty and students valuable direction on the formation of the regional dynastic states and the varied aspects of their structure and policies (economic, religious, culture, population, and political thought). However, the price eliminates its use as a text and makes it a tough choice for library budgets.

Whitman College

Donald P. King

Sanford Wexler. *Westward Expansion: An Eyewitness History*. New York and Oxford: Facts on File, 1991. Pp. xiii, 418. Cloth, \$40.00.

Glenda Riley. *A Place to Grow: Women in the American West*. Arlington Heights, IL: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1992. Pp. x, 294. Paper, \$21.95.

Westward Expansion is a part of the Eyewitness History series of Facts on File Press, intended as a chronicle of "significant historical events or periods." Volumes in the series present numerous excerpts from a variety of sources, including memoirs, diaries, letters, newspaper articles, official documents—you name it. This volume in the series joins other entries that deal with the French Revolution and Napoleon, the Civil War and Reconstruction, World War I, Women's Suffrage, America's Gilded Age, and Vietnam. Wexler, the author of the present volume, also prepared the one on Vietnam; Joe H. Kirchnerberger prepared the first three mentioned above, and Elizabeth Frost and Judith Clark prepared *Woman's Suffrage and America's Gilded Age*.

Westward Expansion contains ten chapters arranged with strict chronology in mind, but beginning in 1754. This westward expansion, then, commences with those Americans already on the continent. An introduction prepares the reader with a definition of the "West," an explanation of Fredrick Jackson Turner's Frontier Thesis, and a brief review of some of the resulting literature, especially by Ray Allen Billington, a disciple of Turner, although such critics of the thesis as Charles Beard are mentioned.

Each chapter begins with a narrative of the period to which the chapter is devoted; this is followed by a Chronicle of Events, a year-by-year review of dates and events considered pertinent by the author-compiler. For example, "1753: October 31: Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia commissions George Washington to deliver a message to the French commandant at Fort Le Boeuf, demanding the French withdraw from the upper Ohio. December 21: Washington arrives at Fort Le Boeuf in the Ohio territory and informs the commandant, Legardeur de Saint-Pierre, that Virginia demands immediate French withdrawal; the French refuse to leave." After the Chronicle appear several Eyewitness testimonies. To complete our example relative to the quotation from the Chronicle, there is an excerpt of Dinwiddie's commission to Washington, a statement by Washington on it, exchanges of subsequent communications between them, and quite a few excerpts from letters, diaries, and other sources relative to the mission. This theme continues throughout regardless of topic. The concluding chapter deals with The Closing Frontier, meaning it stops in the 1890s. Three appendices are included. Appendix A reproduces fifteen documents ranging from the Proclamation of 1763 to the Louisiana Purchase Treaty to the Timber Culture Act of 1873. Appendix B consists of biographical sketches of major personalities associated with westward expansion. Appendix C is a series of maps illustrating expansion. A complete bibliography and index conclude the book.

There are several illustrations, and they are needed to ease the monotony of the doubled column format. This format is tedious for me; I reach the end of a column and think I need to turn a page, only to have to start over again on the same one. Further, such books always seem large and cumbersome. Still, the book combines a narrative of events in a given period, a chronology, and primary sources. If used with understanding and restraint, it could be of value in the classroom, especially for advanced students. The majority would find it rough going.

A Place to Grow: Women in the American West is dedicated to an old friend of many who are interested in the history of the West and of women in the West. Sandra Myres may have been the pioneer of both, at least in the modern sense. It is similar to *Westward Expansion* in the blending of narrative and documents. Chapters deal with: Women and Stereotypes; Women and Westward Trails; Women Migrants and Native Americans; Women and Work; and Women, Adaptation, and Change. However, each chapter is divided into two or three subheads. For example, Chapter one, which deals with Women and Stereotypes, is divided into segments titled "Some European Misperceptions of Native American Women," "European Views of White Women in the American West," and "African American Women in the West." Without much break within each subsection, the narrative is followed by reproductions of documents in the same type face. Each chapter concludes with a "For Further Reading" listing without annotation.

As with *Westward Expansion*, the eye has a quarrel with the format. There are fewer illustrations in this one, and page after page of the same type face gets to looking like page after page. *A Place to Grow* is less shy about taking positions, which is appropriate because of its purpose. Both have applications and uses for students and teachers. Riley's book can inform and/or remind women as well as men concerning perceptions and reality of women's life in the West. Wexler's includes some women, too, but is not prepared with that specific part of western history foremost. Classroom use for either will come down to what the teacher wishes to accomplish. There are books superior to both to teach the fundamentals of the history of the American West, but both can enrich that history with their documents and the narratives. Neither should be considered leisure reading; these collections are intended for those who want to learn firm positions on specific aspects of western history.

Stephen F. Austin State University

Archie P. McDonald

Mary S. Sheridan, *America: Readings in Themes and Eras*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1992. Pp. xii, 353. Paper, \$29.50.

"Although the selections in this text were made for historic value and topical significance, [Mary S. Sheridan notes that she] also tried to choose materials that I enjoyed and found interesting." In hopes of setting a theme and a tone for *America: Readings in Themes and Eras*, the editor quotes from Ralph Waldo Emerson's *The American Scholar*: "The Literature of the poor, the feelings of the child, the philosophy of the street, the meaning of household life, are topics of the time. . . . I ask not for the great, the remote, the romantic; I embrace the common, I explore and sit at the feet of the familiar, the low. Give me insight into to-day, and you may have the antique and future worlds." These two quotes suggest the major problem with the structure of this book. Unfortunately, the editor didn't listen to Emerson. Like so many of the selections that appear in this book, Sheridan never clarifies her reasons for including them. Instead, she has produced a hodgepodge, chronological glance at American life, that is mostly white male dominated.

The editor identifies five themes—land, government, people, counterpoint, and international perspective—to be analyzed. Musical and poetic selections ring in each of the