

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.

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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

eight chronological eras presented, although the reader can only guess as to their historical significance because no introductory remarks are given for individual time periods. Standard primary source materials, such as Thoreau's *Walden*, the Declaration of Independence, and Andrew Carnegie's "Wealth," are used to illustrate the themes of land, government, and people. Sheridan then concludes each era of study with an innovative attempt to broaden the nature of the themes presented by exploring documents that might refute ideas and concepts suggested earlier under land, government, and people. For example, after the reader is exposed to Turner's "Significance of the Frontier in American History" for land, the Homestead Act of 1862 for government, and *Letters of a Woman Homesteader* for people, counterpoint arguments are offered by Red Jacket, Petalsharo, and Chief Joseph. An excerpt from Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* is used for the international perspective. Although this format is a noble idea, because the editor gives no clue for why these juxtaposition readings are found together, the reader will probably be confused about the placement of some of these counterpoint and international perspective selections.

America: Readings in Themes and Eras also suffers from several other pedagogical shortcomings. Although many of the selections are of historical value, most represent white male America. It is appalling in this day of multiculturalism that not one African-American is mentioned, not Frederick Douglass nor Martin Luther King, Jr. Women and Native Americans do appear, but almost by chance. Anyone interested in pursuing more information about most of the selections would have a difficult time in doing so because the editor's introductions are brief and bibliographical citations incomplete. Five-sixths of the book deals with pre-twentieth century America and examines little or no historical content that physically occurred west of Pittsburgh. The two sections on the twentieth century are such a gamut of topics as to be almost totally meaningless—social security, atom bomb, the environment, abortion, and television.

Sheridan attempts to define American studies and gives a brief history of the movement in her introduction. Like selections found in the rest of the book, the four articles that appear in the appendix under the title "The Field of American Studies" contain little or no explanation as to why they are there. The index to the book is equally brief and offers only a topical approach to the content presented.

If *America: Readings in Themes and Eras* is supposed to reflect what should appear in an introductory American Studies course, then the editor needs to rethink her structure. The world has changed dramatically in the last decade and so has the content and the focus of American history and American studies courses at the precollegiate and collegiate levels. Readers of this book will receive only a distorted, outmoded look at America.

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Bernard Bailyn. *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution.* Enlarged Edition. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992. Pp. xvi, 396. Paper, \$12.95.

Bernard Bailyn redirected much of the scholarship of the era of the American Revolution when he published the first edition of this volume in 1967. His study of the vast pamphlet literature of the era offered a fresh and exciting reinterpretation of political thought and theory from the 1760's through the 1780's. Bailyn rediscovered a debate over the sources and uses of power that had meaning in its own right, contributing centrally to the presentation and resolution of many economic, military, diplomatic, and constitutional questions. Simultaneously, he directed our attention away from classical and Enlightened sources of colonial thought, turning instead to the radical commonwealth heritage of 17th century England. By advancing