

Robert D. Marcus and David Burner. *America Since 1945*, Fifth edition. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991. Pp. viii, 413. Paper, \$19.95.

Those who teach survey classes in American history are constantly searching for supplemental readings to compensate for deficient texts and insufficient lecture time. Clearly, there is no singular publication that satisfies everyone's agenda, but the fifth edition of *America Since 1945* by Robert Marcus and David Burner is one to be seriously considered.

Divided into six chronological units, each major period and article are prefaced by introductory comments. One-half of the articles are new selections and reflect the need for the additions of recent topics and the re-thinking of history. Of the 34 selections, ten are primary documents. For the most part, secondary sources are well-chosen and significant. I have predicated my judgment about the articles upon their utility for the undergraduate survey course. I considered perhaps only five of the articles inappropriate.

The first section, concerning 1945-1952, offers the usual interpretations of the beginnings of the Cold War by Averill Harriman and revisionist Barton Bernstein. "Nixon Agonistes" by Gary Wills is interesting if only because it offers a defense of the "Checkers speech" by allowing that it was one of the few possibilities open to save Nixon's career after Eisenhower's abandonment. The rise of "Levittowns" and consequent social implications are well-illustrated by the new addition from Kenneth Jackson's *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*.

The second section, which starts with a revisionist treatment of Eisenhower's presidency by Fred Greenstein, is highlighted by Burner's article from his book *The Torch Is Passed*. Clearly one of the best entries, Burner manages to present John F. Kennedy as the epitome of the "liberal cold warrior" and provides a balanced defense of both players in the Cold War. The "Army-McCarthy Hearings" by Thomas Reeves is seriously flawed by an inadequate introduction. Despite my foreknowledge of the scenario, I had difficulty determining the charges against David Schine and his connection to McCarthy.

Part three, the largest of the sections, dealing with 1962-1968, is the most useful. Providing the missing link in many textbooks, this section illustrates the civil rights movement in academic and personal perspectives, the Great Society, the beginning of the New Left, and excerpts of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*. "Heroes of the Civil Rights Movement" by Howell Raines is a collection of oral interviews with those directly involved in the freedom rides, marches, sit-ins, and demonstrations. Equally poignant is "Breaking with the Past" by Anne Moody as she depicts "life in the trenches" as an early worker with the NAACP in Mississippi. Balance in the attitudes toward the battle for civil rights is achieved with the additions of King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," and "On Revolution" by Malcolm X. A frequently omitted topic in textbooks, the Great Society is discussed in "The War on Poverty" by Charles Murray and Johnson's speech, "The Great Society."

The Vietnam War is discussed in three articles, only one of which I would recommend for undergraduates. Gibson's "The Tet Offensive and a Double Reality" is too esoteric for most undergraduates, and McPherson's "Hawk vs. Dove" is marred by an obvious bias. Michael Herr's "Report from Vietnam" appears to parallel the day-to-day reality of the war. Jonathan Schell's article on Watergate is remarkable for its perspective but, even to those who experienced it, obscure and difficult to untangle. "Letter to Ms." is a delightful addition and reflects the changing roles in women's lives as few publications have done.

Considering that part six was published in 1991, it is tainted by its omissions. Although containing such highly significant additions as "Joey's Problem," "The End of Nature," and "The Chicano Community," it is seriously flawed by the lack of information on "Glasnost," "perestroika," and Eastern Europe. In fact, these omissions make some of Paul Kennedy's "The United States in Relative Decline" appear outdated. The new primary source, "Supreme Court Cases on Abortion," is appropriate but requires very careful reading.

This work could be easily incorporated into a graduate history course and, with the above exceptions as noted, into a survey course. The primary sources would be useful also as lecture material.

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