

support for his arguments. History teachers will find this a rich source to support lessons in post-war America.

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David Farber, ed. *The Sixties: From Memory to History*. Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 1994. Pp. 333. Cloth, \$47.50. ISBN: 0-8078-2153-5. Paper, \$17.95. ISBN: 0-8078-4462-4.

Having lived through many of the events of the 1960s, having tried to teach a few generations of undergraduates about those events, and having read innumerable historical accounts of the decade and its aftermath, I did not approach the present volume with the anticipation of discovering any unique insights. It is a delight to report that my initial skepticism was without basis as *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, edited by David Farber, is a thoughtful collection of essays, written primarily by a generation of younger historians whose personal "memory" of the era is more distant than those who have heretofore written about the tumultuous 1960s. Farber's introduction as well as his concluding essay set forth the broad framework in which most of the contributors have assumed their assignments on such topics as economic growth and liberalism, the war in Vietnam (policy makers and the news media), race and ethnic relations, youth culture and sexual values, the status of women, the nature and role of the federal government, contours of political debate ("politics of civility"), and the system of private enterprise. Helping define a common focus for their varied topics were the "fundamental questions about how much America changed in the 1960s and why it changed." The answers they sought, Farber states, centered on "two related concepts: cultural authority and political legitimacy."

Indeed, though it is impossible to generalize about an edited volume containing ten distinctive essays that range over topics of extraordinary complexity, the twin themes of cultural authority and political legitimacy do provide a certain interpretive and methodological consistency. With few exceptions, the writers raise in their analyses important and perceptive questions and issues. The connection between cultural authority (how and in what manner Americans and their institutions defined themselves and pursued their goals) and political legitimacy (the ways in which personal and institutional goals seek realization in the public arena) inform all the essays in different respects and lead to interesting comparisons. For instance, the sixties produced not only profound changes in racial and gender relations, sexual values, and political protest but in the institutional basis by which foreign policy, government, and private enterprise was pursued. What these essays help us to see—and Farber is particularly good at aiding us in this task—is the interrelationship between these experiences. The effect is to expand the context in which the often told stories about racial protest or the war in Southeast Asia are understood in relationship to complex cultural, economic, and social changes as well as traditional liberal and conservative politics. The "politics of resentment," which Richard Nixon's elections of 1968 and 1972 were constructed upon, signaled not only the end of the sixties era but attitudes that were deeply rooted in the political culture of that period as well.

College and secondary teachers can derive considerable value from *The Sixties* collection as a means of complicating and clarifying for many young people today what they think of that era—if they think about it at all. The awareness of *The Sixties'* authors that many of the issues and the problems we presently face can be understood only by perceiving the distinctive conditions that shaped the 1960s gives added importance to their writings. As David Farber notes in his introduction, "Our problems in the 1990s are different from theirs, sometimes because their solutions became a part of our problems." For that insight alone, this book deserves to be read and pondered by all.

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