

Americans "have cause for complaint" regarding Spanish treatment, "disruption of their culture was inevitable" and "for every cruelty levied against the Indians, there were acts of [Spanish] kindness." The book stops short of employing the White Legend to defend Spanish imperialism, but just barely in parts. Symbolically, a depiction of Santiago, the patron saint of Spanish soldiers, trampling an Acoma Indian rebel was chosen for the book's dust jacket.

Although biased, the authors weave rich Spanish legends and important historical detail into their text. References are also made to recent archival discoveries. In fact, the volume's greatest strength is its documentation, recorded in bibliographic essays at the end of each chapter, a summary commentary on sources, and a thorough 18-page bibliography.

But *Quest for Empire*'s overall value would have been markedly improved with additional editing. The narrative is sometimes repetitive and even contradictory. Organizational problems are reflected in a discussion of thirteenth-century Franciscan origins 124 pages after a description of the order's sixteenth-century arrival in the Southwest. Coverage of the Mexican era is so sparse (a brief paragraph in the case of New Mexico) that it may have been prudent to simply end the book with Mexican independence in 1821.

Who should read *Quest for Empire*, and how might it best be used? College students can benefit from the book's extensive documentation. But with its Spanish bias and various editing problems, *Quest for Empire* is best used as a library reference tool, rather than as a Southwest history text.

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**Drew Gilpin Faust. *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996. Pp. xvi, 326. Cloth, \$29.95. ISBN 0-8078-2255-8.**

In an award-winning new book, Drew Gilpin Faust provides another side to the Civil War: the experiences of slaveholding women in the South. After mining the diaries, letters, essays, memoirs, fiction, and poetry of more than 500 Confederate women, Faust pledged herself to writing an accessible yet scholarly work on this important topic. "After two decades as an academic historian, I sometimes fear I no longer can communicate in a manner that will engage a general reader," she writes, "but the compelling nature and human drama of this war story have made me want to try." The results are happy ones for teachers, as this is a volume that will overcome the usual undergraduate resistance to serious monographs.

Faust provides a surprising amount of evidence that significant numbers of middle and upper-class women in the South left their homes during the war to undertake paid work. Although they went to work out of necessity, this transformation caused considerable strain on the southern notion of ladylike behavior. "The idea of a lady having

to face and transact business with any and everybody is alone suited to the Northern women of brazen faces," wrote one Georgia wife. "But I say if it is necessary, our ladies ought to shopkeep and do everything else they can to aid in the great struggle for Liberty." Many became teachers, government workers, and nurses, but they had to face comments from their friends and relatives about not developing masculine attributes, such as muscular arms. Former southern belles also endured painful separations and worrying about their husbands' infidelities. Some dreaded pregnancy and spoke of unwanted mouths to feed; a few even established sexual liaisons outside marriage.

The burden of southern history, Faust argues, weighs just as heavily upon women and African Americans, but it is "constructed rather differently." While chronicling the clear power relations between men and women in the Old South, her work does not suggest that white women "identified" with the oppression experienced by their slaves. Nor does she believe, as Anne Firor Scott has argued, that southern women were empowered by their expanded war time roles. On the contrary, "the appeal, the character, and the extent of southern feminism has been shaped by women's sense of their own limitations." Civil War disappointments and desperation explain why southern suffragettes lacked the confidence of their northern sisters, she concludes.

Scholars teaching classes in the Old South, Women's History, and the Civil War will find that Faust's book complements other sources. Her discussion of Confederate politics and public policy decisions will help students realize that women had opinions on "serious" topics, even if their lives were mainly involved in maintaining a family and a plantation. The chapter called "We Little Knew: Husbands and Wives" would lend itself to a good discussion about how war inevitably means different things to men and women, when men go off to fight and women remain home to wonder what will happen next. Because of the ample quotes and selections from popular culture, even survey teachers will find this book useful for lecture material.

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**William A. Link, ed. *The Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths and Other Documents of Social Reform in the Progressive Era South*. Boston & New York: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996. Pp. x, 166. Cloth, \$35.00; ISBN 0-312-12251-9. Paper, \$9.99; ISBN 0-312-10590-8.**

The Progressive Era South is rich in its journals, novels, short stories, and articles expressing reform-minded concern. From the pens of native Southerners, as well as those who have visited from both abroad and other parts of the United States, came informative but often critical pieces that provided a basis for much of the early twentieth-century progressive legislation. The literature is not always easy to find, and thus it is most useful to have a publication that brings together some of the more salient commentaries on issues such as race, prohibition, child labor, African-American education, and southern women. William A. Link has read widely in this literature and selected well. The slim volume