

book would be too advanced for significant use at the secondary school level, although it could be useful for Advanced Placement (AP) courses in world history, usually taught in the tenth grade of high school. One other possible concern is that this text is focused exclusively on the Italian Renaissance era, and would not be significantly useful for teaching and understanding of a broader context of European Renaissance history. However, Peter Burke in *The Renaissance* has captured in definition and brief description the essence of the sixteenth-century Italian Renaissance and its influence on Western civilization.

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Michael B. Young. *Charles I.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997. Pp. vii, 223. Cloth, \$49.95; ISBN 0-312-16515-3. Paper, \$17.95; ISBN 0-312-16516-1.

W.M. Spellman. *John Locke.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997. Pp. xi, 165. Cloth, \$49.95; ISBN 0-312-16511-0. Paper, \$18.95; ISBN 0-312-16512-9.

Michael B. Young's *Charles I* is useful not only for his excellent review of the reign of that king but also for his discussion of the literature on the period. Even sophisticated historians might be impressed with how people studying the same documents can reach such contradictory conclusions.

Young himself is no admirer of Charles I, whom he presents as a devious and vengeful incompetent who got off to a bad start and, unable to learn from experience, never did recover. He did not try to work with Parliament but rather threatened and tried to intimidate it. He levied forced loans, jailed people who refused to pay them, and housed troops in private homes. His prerogative took precedence over the common law. Considering himself answerable only to God, he used ambiguous language in order to avoid outright lying and later interpreted his statements as he pleased. He was dishonest even with his own ministers. He was "a stubborn, imperious, dangerous man."

Charles accepted the Petition of Rights of 1628 with such ill-grace that the House of Commons began to catalogue its grievances, and he finally had to re-affirm his intention to honor it but then distributed his earlier response rather than the later one. Vindictive and inflexible, and always equating criticism with disloyalty, he jailed his critics wholesale. Among them were nine members of the Parliament of 1629. He allowed Sir John Eliot to die in prison in 1632 and kept two others in prison until 1640, when he had to appease public opinion before the meeting of the Short Parliament.

From 1629 to 1640 Charles avoided a contest with Parliament by ruling without it. In 1640, however, he had to recall Parliament to pay for his projected war against the Scots. This was the Short Parliament, which Charles dissolved after only three weeks because of the complaints about his Personal Rule. In 1642 he had to summon

Parliament again. Still he had not learned: He tried to arrest five members of Parliament, and this time he got Civil War. Charles's enemies were no better than he was, and he was beheaded on 30 January 1649 in what Young calls a case of judicial murder by an "outrageously illegal tribunal."

While most historians think of John Locke as a political writer, W.M. Spellman presents him as fundamentally a religious thinker. The "undertaking which united all of his diverse interests was the clarification and solidification of a traditional Christian world-view during an age when the buttresses of the ancient faith were under severe strain from a number of quarters."

In religion and psychology as much as in politics, Locke was ahead of his time. In his powerful *A Letter Concerning Toleration* he made a strong case for religious toleration: The state should "permit a healthy diversity in religious thought and worship" not only because we can never be sure that we are right and because pretending to believe what we do not believe is unacceptable to God but also because insistence on conformity leads to civil unrest. Locke did exclude Catholics and atheists from his toleration.

Probably the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, in which Locke denies the existence of innate ideas, is his most important and courageous work. All knowledge comes from the perception of our senses. Conscience is whatever a person is taught is morally right, and we have to act on our beliefs even though we have no way of knowing that they are true. Since nothing is innate, there can be no such thing as original sin.

Such revolutionary ideas were dangerous, and Locke was unable to follow them where they should have led him. Instead he concluded that it is possible through "a true science of human conduct" to achieve true moral knowledge, which would agree with the law of nature and the law of God. Instead of trying to figure out what those laws are and how reasonable men can discover what they are, Locke falls back on the New Testament. Reasonable men would agree on "the truths of Revelation."

Without innate moral truths the teaching of morality becomes all the harder, and in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, which has more to do with creating a gentleman than with education, Locke emphasizes the importance of building Christian character over the acquisition of information. The danger here is that Locke's "education" is actually indoctrination, and thus he anticipates what has been the overriding function of schooling ever since.

Locke wrote *The Two Treatises of Government* not as a defense of the Revolution of 1688-89 but rather much earlier, in 1679 to 1681, during the Exclusion Controversy, the period when some Englishmen were trying to keep Charles's Catholic brother James from succeeding him as King.

The *Second Treatise* is by far the better known. Originally people lived in a state of nature, governed only by natural law, which men can discover through the use of their reason and which every man can enforce. Because some people violate the law

of nature and individuals cannot adequately enforce it, people form a civil society by entering a social compact to establish a government. If the government becomes oppressive, it has dissolved itself and the people can enter into a new compact. Thus the people are more important than the government: another revolutionary idea.

Again Locke *assumes* that reasonable men can agree on what constitutes natural law, and he is inadequate also when he argues that men acquired property by combining their labor with it in the state of nature. He does not explain how some people deserve to have property to which they do not apply their labor; he accepted slavery and even invested in the Royal African Company; and he advocated the dispossession of the native Americans.

Though Spellman oversimplifies Locke and is inadequate on the inconsistencies of this brave man, both of these books should be useful to history teachers on any level as well as to the best high-school students and in upper-level courses in college. In the case of Locke, however, there should always be a teacher who can point out, as Spellman does not, that the state of nature is a fiction, the social compact a myth, and the concept of natural law useful only as an excuse for fruitless intellectualizing.

The drawback of these books is that both are overpriced and thus too expensive to ask undergraduates to buy.

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Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, eds. *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England: Roles, Representations and Responsibilities*. London: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc., 1997. Pp. xi, 266. Paper, \$17.75.

Sarah Shaver Hughes and Brady Hughes, eds. *Women in World History*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1997. Vol. 2--Readings from 1500 to the Present. Pp. xviii, 275. Paper, \$22.95.

These two works are aimed at the women's history classroom, but are very different in format and execution. With the surge in enthusiasm in women's history, both of these books should provoke great interest; however, they represent very different models of thought and application to the classroom.

Gender in Eighteenth-Century England is a collection of secondary sources covering the role of women in areas such as gender relations, working life, politics, and society. The work is divided into four parts: Social Reputations; Work and Poverty; Politics and the Political Elite; and Periodicals and the Printed Image. Each section contains either two or three articles. Most of the articles are based on case studies of one or several women, although there is some valuable demographic information given.