

are chapters dealing with foreign reaction to the Holocaust and the varied wartime experiences of Jews outside Germany.

Yet this book has several shortcomings that should be mentioned. First among these would be brevity: *The Holocaust* is only 103 pages, meaning that sufficient depth is at times a problem. For example, chapter seven, on Holocaust deniers, attempts to summarize this important debate and several of the more prominent authors in just four pages of text; while it is certainly necessary to expose students to this topic, it simply requires more space than this to do it justice. Also the bibliography: It is brief on most of the book's themes, at times suggesting only one or two titles for further reading, and leaves out some important current scholarship.

How might an instructor best use these books? The brief length of the texts means they are logical choices for freshman/sophomore level courses on twentieth-century European history, world history, or Western civilization; instructors searching for texts for upper-level courses or an offering on modern Germany, however, will likely desire more in-depth coverage of the subject matter. This is especially true of the Neville volume. Any decision ultimately would depend on the level of the class and the overall goals for the course.

These two volumes are also effective as sources for lecture material. Especially instructors responsible for twentieth-century European or world history survey courses who are not specialists in the areas of German history or the Holocaust will find these books helpful in organizing main ideas for their class lectures. Main themes, as well as conflicting viewpoints, are neatly laid out and explained, with enough detail to serve as a useful basis. Important interpretations are also nicely summarized: In McDonough's chapter dealing with the Holocaust, for example, the positions and arguments of Christopher Browning and Daniel Goldhagen are succinctly explained and put into a broader context. All in all, these two volumes represent welcome additions to the available options for instructors teaching various survey-level courses in twentieth-century history.

Concordia University

Thomas Saylor

Christopher Clark, Nancy A. Heweitt, Roy Rosenzweig, Stephen Brier, Joshua Brown, and Eric Foner, eds. *Who Built America? Working People and the Nation's Economy, Politics, Culture, and Society*. New York: Worth, 2000. Vol. I: From Conquest and Colonization through 1877. Pp. vii, 721. Paper, \$43.90; ISBN 1-57259-302-4.

Nelson Lichtenstein, Susan Strasser, Roy Rosenzweig, Stephen Brier, and Joshua Brown, eds. *Who Built America? Working People and the Nation's Economy, Politics, Culture, and Society*. New York: Worth, 2000. Vol. II: Since 1877. Pp. vii, 786. Paper, \$43.90; ISBN 1-57259-303-2.

Although not technically second editions, the volumes under review are based on the original *Who Built America* series sponsored by the American Social History Project and authored by Bruce Levine, Stephen Brier, David Brundage, Edward Countryman, Dorothy Fennell, and Marcus Rediker (volume one) and by Joshua Freeman, Nelson Lichtenstein, Stephen Brier, David Bensman, Susan Porter Benson, David Brundage, Bret Eynon, Bruce Levine, and Bryan Palmer (volume two), published in 1989. I have used volumes one and two of the most recent editions to teach both halves of the American history survey course offered at a small liberal arts college in the Midwestern United States. I offer here both my own and my students' experience with and reactions to the texts so that readers might decide whether to adopt them for either American history survey courses or perhaps for a working-class or labor history class.

Both volumes one and two are extremely accessible. It is for this reason alone that I will continue to use both volumes in coming semesters. Students have consistently commented on how easy and "fun" the texts are to read. One student not majoring in history informed me that she, to her surprise, read the book because she enjoyed it. Another told me that she enjoyed it so much she read passages of it to her roommate. Another volunteered to tutor for the course because partial payment for tutoring was a free copy of the text. Yet another student enrolled in an upper-level history course continually referred back to *Who Built America* in her efforts to make sense of the post-World War II United States. Another student has used the texts as the basis for lesson plans for high school-level classes she is preparing to teach. Thus, the most consistent comment I receive both unsolicited and in course evaluations is, keep using these texts.

The second most consistent response I receive from students is some version of an exclamation of "I never knew that." Both volumes of *Who Built America* differ from other textbooks because the series consciously writes American history from what the authors call "the bottom up." As a result, many students are surprised by what they find in these pages. The authors and editors of the texts, as explained in the preface, study workers, women, consumers, farmers, African Americans, and immigrants, and their fields of study influence the way they interpret American history. While textbooks I have used in the past certainly include the same groups of people in their renditions of American history, the authors of *Who Built America* structure the narrative so that these "groups" of people are the driving force behind the major developments traditionally discussed in American history. I welcome such an approach, for it fits with my own understanding of American history. In taking this approach, the series does not avoid or even downplay the more traditional narratives of American history that focus on domestic politics, military engagements, and foreign policy initiatives. Rather, the book makes clear, in a way in which other texts do not, the role of "ordinary" people in influencing the events we deem central in American

history, while at the same time restructuring the narrative of American history to include events we might not have previously but should consider central.

For example, the authors of volume one tell the story of the American Revolution by, as do most texts, invoking the importance of the French and Indian War. The authors explain that Britain's victory helped the colonies expand and also set the stage for Britain's insistence that the colonies help pay for the expenses Britain incurred during the war, resulting in the famed Stamp Act, the Townsend Duties, and the Navigation Acts, which eventually forced the colonies to come together to oppose "taxation without representation." *Who Built America* goes beyond most texts' treatment of the coming of the Revolution to explain that, while politicians debated the merits of the new taxes, a revolution never would have succeeded without the support of ordinary colonists in the countryside who were engaged in their own process of rejecting established authority. A section of the text is devoted to "Land Rioters and Demands for Freehold Rights" in which the authors describe how tenant farmers in the colonies of New Jersey and New York asserted their right to ownership of the small tracts of land they had cleared and improved. Tenant farmers' claims to ownership put them in direct conflict with landlords whose claims to ownership were supported by the Crown and by English law. The authors place equal weight on what they call "Elite" and "Popular" protest in fomenting revolutionary spirit in the years before the Declaration of Independence was signed.

Similarly, the authors of volume two place a significant amount of weight, more so than other texts I have used, on the growth of labor unions and other expressions of working-class protest in not only the late nineteenth century but throughout the twentieth century as vehicles through which ordinary people shaped the United States's economic, social, and political policy. A quick review of the topics covered in another textbook for the period 1877 to 1920 demonstrates this point. The other textbook organizes the time period around Reconstruction, the frontier, the rise of industrial America, and the transformation of urban America. The authors of *Who Built America* cover the same time period by looking at the ways in which both progress and poverty and community and conflict shaped it. They devote a chapter to examining the ways in which working people responded to industrial capitalism and another to an exploration of "the producing classes and the money power." Likewise, while most texts discuss the 1930s and the Great Depression in terms of President Franklin Roosevelt's ability to expand the role of the federal government and usher in New Deal legislation in response to the general misery experienced by so many Americans, *Who Built America* spends a great deal of time explaining the ways in which poor people's movements and strike waves helped shape FDR's response to the crises of the 1930s.

Students who read volume two observed (more often than those assigned volume one) a "bias" in the textbook toward labor unions and class-related analysis. While that might have been a result of what I chose to emphasize in lecture and class discussion, the comment most often appeared in the section of the course evaluations devoted to

the textbook. After thinking about the many reasons why the word "bias" came up in a rather negative way in some of the evaluations, I concluded that I would use the comments to incorporate more fully discussions of "bias" and historical interpretation the next time I teach American History II. Students pick up "bias" when they are exposed to material with which they are unfamiliar. Because the comments came up in relationship to class, I am more adamant in my recommendation of this series because the analysis of class is so often overlooked in American history. I see these comments regarding the text's "bias" as indicative of the authors' success in their intention to write American history from the "bottom up" and challenge the dominant narrative in doing so.

Finally, I would recommend that this series be adopted for introductory-level American and United States history courses. Volume two would also work well as a text for a working-class or labor history course. Both volumes are extremely readable. The authors have taken great pains to incorporate documentary evidence, images, and maps into the text in key places and I use them routinely as a basis for class discussion. For example, I found the reprints of anti-Japanese and anti-German propaganda posters issued by the War Department during World War II quite helpful in explaining the reasons why the U.S. chose to intern Japanese-Americans but not German-Americans. I find the overwhelmingly positive response by students to be the most compelling reason to adopt the texts. Once students are engaged in the reading, the text provides a great deal of material to analyze and offers students and teachers alike the opportunity to get beyond the events and details and really consider the ways in which history is a process over which everyone has an influence.

Edgewood College

Lisa W. Phillips

Jack N. Rakove. *Declaring Rights: A Brief History with Documents.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997. Pp. 217. Cloth, \$35.00; ISBN 0-312-17768-2. Paper, \$12.45; ISBN 0-312-13734-6.

Garry Wills. *A Necessary Evil: A History of American Distrust of Government.* New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999. Pp. 365. Cloth, \$25.00; ISBN 0-684-84489-3.

In contemporary America, ongoing controversies about rights, as Jack Rakove points out in *Declaring Rights*, have spurred an interest "in the historical origins of the Bill of Rights." It is hard enough defining or talking about rights, but when we engage in discussions about how rights were conceived of in the eighteenth century, the difficulty is only magnified. The author writes that

how we think about rights is a function of our education and upbringing, our history and our experience. Just as our ideas of rights are not universally held, so we know, too, that these ideas have not existed since