

resistance." Moreover, it can help the historian understand the impact of imperialism, how imperial rule was maintained, how race and tribe became more important in the identification of groups, the interconnections of the periphery and the metropolis, and the way that language and ideas shaped British colonial policies. But Kennedy acknowledges that "there is a great deal wrong with post-colonial theory." The author really has two goals in writing this study, which should quickly find its way onto undergraduate reading lists in courses on colonialism, British and British Empire history, and as stated earlier it is perfect for courses on historiography or research methods. Firstly, he wants to show how the British Empire depended for its survival on flexibility and its ability to adapt, concede, and develop. Secondly, he wants to extract from the term British imperialism something that is not just pejorative, but rather reveal the Empire as a complex enterprise and process, where definitions have shifted over the years, and one single definition remains unattainable even today. In this judicious, useful, concise, and critical guide to British imperialism, these two goals have been realized.

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**Christine F. Collette and Keith Laybourn, eds. *Modern Britain Since 1979: A Reader*. London: I.B. Tauris & Co., Ltd., 2003. Pp. ix, 324. Paper, \$27.50; ISBN 1-86064-597-6.**

*Modern Britain since 1979* has many qualities that are desirable in a text, but it also has some limitations and problems. Students will find the text clear and the language accessible. The editors have done an excellent job of tying the information in the various chapters together, so students will come away from reading with an integrated picture of the political history of Britain in the last 25 years. There are chapters concerning feminism and race, but these topics are developed as issues that influenced political change, not as social or cultural phenomena. The excellent account of Margaret Thatcher's rise and impact on conservatism includes economic issues, of necessity, but again the focus is political. The question is how did the economics of individualism provide a foundation for Conservative political success, and not how the individual Briton was affected. The collapse of Labour and its eventual rebirth culminating in the spectacular success of Tony Blair is handled in the same fashion. The party's abandonment of its traditional leftist/socialist ideals and its new approach (the Third Way) to the welfare state is presented as political policy. The human issues involved are either ignored or considered in terms of political success or failure. A full chapter devoted to the decline and ultimate demise of the Communist Party of Great Britain, while necessary to a full picture of politics, seems overkill. The CPGB had

little impact or influence during the period under study. The chapter's presence makes clear the degree of emphasis on political history in the volume.

Each chapter contains a narrative account of its subject and a selection of documents that illustrate the subject. The narratives develop the account of British political history very well, but the basis for selecting the documents is sometimes not clear. Each chapter's documents are a mix of primary sources and secondary comment. Some of the primary sources are obvious selections from material and people mentioned in the narrative. Others, however, are not directly connected to the narrative and need introduction to be completely effective. No introduction is provided. The lack might reflect the assumption of British authors that their students will recognize the sources of the documents. That might be true, but American students, who often do not know prominent figures in their own government, are unlikely to have any idea who the people or what the documents are. At their best, the secondary documents provide alternative interpretations of the ideas expressed in the narratives, but too often they simply repeat the ideas of the editors. Referring readers to a paragraph from some history saying essentially the same thing they just read rather than just offering a citation is a waste of time. The failure to identify sources is also a problem with the secondary documents.

*Modern Britain Since 1979* will be a useful text or supplementary reading book for those who want classes to have a picture of British political history. Students are likely to need some help with the documents, but that should be easily manageable for any instructor teaching a course for which a text this narrowly focused is appropriate. It does not seem likely, however, that there will be large numbers of such courses.

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**Larry Schweikart and Michael Allen.** *A Patriot's History of the United States: From Columbus' Great Discovery to the War on Terror.* New York: Sentinel, 2004. Pp. xiv, 928. Cloth, \$29.95; ISBN 1-9523-001-7.

Many college history professors find choosing a survey text an annual exercise in frustration—too much of this or too little of that to suit personal taste. When a new book comes onto the market, there is automatic interest in it. This text will be no exception, but for a very different reason.

Touting itself as the first conservative survey, the authors claim a thirty-year liberal bias in college survey texts, which favored episodes of racism, sexism, and bigotry while neglecting the greatness of America, particularly from white men. *A Patriot's History* focuses on politics, economics, and religion wherever possible, with no real attempt to explore social and cultural issues. Major world events are, likewise, given brief treatment other than how they impacted the United States.