

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.

Fort Valley State College

Fred von Hartesveldt

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.

The text begins with the first voyage of Christopher Columbus, with virtually no attention paid of Western hemispheric civilizations prior to 1492. The entirety of colonial America (up to 1763) is covered in less than sixty pages. The constitutional convention and ratification struggle, on the other hand, take up over a dozen pages, true to the book's title.

It will come as no surprise to readers that the authors' perception of who is deemed patriotic is limited to conservatives and most modern-day Republicans, while patriotism is best manifested through the acquisition of wealth and a profession of Christianity. Men such as Ronald Reagan and Andrew Carnegie are idolized, while Franklin Delano Roosevelt and anyone named Kennedy or Clinton are vilified.

To illustrate the point, FDR is cast as something of a villain, particularly in regard to his New Deal policies and his lack of moral character, whose "luck" at having skilled military leaders and ambitious industrialists was all that saved America during World War II. All Kennedys are disparaged, but the authors blame John Kennedy more than any other president for the "quagmire in Vietnam." And JFK and Lyndon Johnson exceeded Richard Nixon "in their ability to deceive and lie to the American people." John Dean gets almost all the blame for Watergate. There is nothing good worth mentioning about Bill Clinton, whose budget surpluses were due to the economic policies of Reagan and the Republican-controlled Congress. Yet Hillary Clinton seems almost more of a target, with no opportunity missed to ridicule her, perhaps meant as an opening volley to the 2008 elections.

On the other hand, men such as John D. Rockefeller and J.P. Morgan are Captains (more like Generals) of Industry, not robber barons. Joseph McCarthy is "sloppily linked to hysteria," while Supreme Court justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas are labeled as "brilliant" and "outstanding" respectfully. Matt Drudge is hailed for his investigative skills, with no mention of Bob Woodward or Carl Bernstein.

Obviously, Democrats, liberals, and any number of other groups will find little use for this text. Women's groups will take particular aim at their alleged lack of contributions to America's greatness. Schweikart and Allen would prefer to remove the title of "noble savage" from any connection to Native Americans, finding nothing noble about them. I would even dare to say that Southerners will take exception to their beloved Robert E. Lee being called a "purported genius."

All that being said, the authors have provided a narrative that is easy to read and one that will be hailed by at least half of the country. And the price is right, only \$29.95 for a clothbound edition, which makes me wonder if the market for the text is really college freshmen. *A Patriot's History*, fair and balanced? You decide.