

Mary E. Williams, ed. *The Terrorist Attack on America*. San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2003. Pp. 192. Cloth, \$33.70; ISBN 0-7377-1324-0. Paper, \$22.45; ISBN 0-7377-1325-9.

The destruction of the World Trade Towers by terrorists on September 11, 2001, elevated the problem of Islamic terrorism to a central place in United States foreign affairs. It is therefore essential that any course in recent American history or current events cover this topic and the major issues that have grown out of it. This anthology of magazine articles and editorials written in the months immediately following 9/11 is an early effort at doing this in a classroom book. Part of Greenhaven's "Current Controversies" series, it is organized around four questions that in early 2002 seemed to be the leading issues of this subject. Chapter one asks, what caused the terrorist attack on America? Seven pieces offer a background on Islamic beliefs and extremism but also include such explanations as Marxist thought and public lassitude. Chapter two explores whether Muslim anger toward the United States is justified. The three yes and three no answers are most valuable for their review of American politics that were unpopular in the Middle East. Chapter three focuses on the curtailment of civil liberties, particularly the Patriot Act, and whether its controversial provisions were needed to fight terrorism. The final chapter deals with how America should respond to terrorism. It covers reactions through the early spring of 2002 and hints at future issues in entries that compare the war on terrorism with Vietnam and discuss bio-terrorism.

Any text covering current events runs the risk of obsolescence. There is only one article devoted to the possibility that the United States might extend its response to 9/11 from Osama bin Laden to Saddam Hussein. Weapons of mass destruction are a minor topic compared with Islamic culture and attitudes. None of the articles question whether the Bush administration should have been more prepared for 9/11, and obviously there is nothing on the Iraq invasion and its aftermath. Texts organized around controversy also run the risk of selecting articles that represent polar positions rather than more balanced analyses. The editor selected several entries from very conservative or liberal magazines that do not necessarily reflect the main points of discussion after 9/11. The emphasis on opposing viewpoints also minimized the events of 9/11 themselves. In early 2002, the shock of that day was still so strong that the editor might have presumed that no details of the destruction (including any mention of the other two hijacked planes) were needed. By 2004, readers might appreciate more reminders of why this was such a stunning tragedy and terrorism became such a major issue.

An anthology of primary documents also has strengths, especially for classroom use. Many of the leading figures are frequently quoted, so both the flavor and the validity (or lack thereof) of thinking after this event are presented. Some leftist entries remind readers that not everyone saw terrorists or Islamic extremism as the central issue and thus offer a counterweight to the political popularity of focusing on Middle Eastern leaders or an axis of evil. With the addition of materials carrying events and issues

forward from early 2002, this book can continue to provide a solid foundation for discussion of the still very significant issue of terrorism against America.

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**Edward J. Rielly, ed. *Baseball and American Culture: Across the Diamond*. New York: The Haworth Press, 2003. Pp. xxiii, 289. Cloth, \$59.95; ISBN 0-7890-1484-X. Paper, \$29.95; ISBN 0-7890-1485-8.**

Even the most casual fan of baseball will find essays in this volume to excite, bring back memories, and cause contemplation about the "national pastime." With topics ranging from American fans to baseball's inclusiveness (on the diamond if not in the ranks of management), to the economics of baseball, to management-labor disputes, or to baseball and the arts, the volume includes some twenty-three essays, each of which has accompanying notes. Some of the essays evoke a nostalgia for the game: Derek Catsom's piece, "On Fenway, Faith and Fandom: A Red Sox Fan Reflects," is noteworthy in that respect. Some are attempts at serious scholarship: David C. Ogden's "Baseball and Blacks: A Loss of Affinity, a Loss of Community" is most thoughtful. Some of the essays would have been better left unpublished: Loren Coleman, "Boys of Summer, Suicides of Winter: An Introduction to Baseball Suicides," puts a scientific gloss on the tragedies that have resulted from personal defeat. Some others are so narrowly focused that their contribution to the whole seems limited: Gary Land's "God and the Diamond: The 'Born-Again' Baseball Autobiography" is an example.

Through all of these essays, readers are reminded that baseball is American and democratic in that one doesn't have to be abnormally tall or large or fast to play the game; it is egalitarian in reaching out to all, although the requirements for a playing field, baseball, bats, and gloves have kept the game more middle class and suburban than lower class in its appeal. We are reminded, too, that baseball played an integral role in the desegregation of American life, a role that ironically led to a diminution of interest among African-Americans. Baseball has provided inspiration for poets and humorists (often self-deprecation by players themselves) and has a language of its own. We are reminded that the labor disputes of baseball have an intractability about them because of the complex interplay of business practice, talented athletes with short expectations for years of play, and fan fascination if not fanaticism about fielding the very best team possible each and every year. For all of these reasons, this is a useful collection of essays. For readers of this journal, the book would have only limited use as a text in history classes and would be more appropriately listed as bibliography for a class on popular culture or sports history.

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