

the "gilded" reality that, through consumerism and mass production, American technology would produce goods affordable for all classes of people. Although Carlson recognizes that Bellamy's ideals remained flawed, Carlson recapitulates that "Americans during the Gilded Age used technology to dramatically change daily life and establish the basic contours of America as a consumer society."

Other notable essays address particular groups based on gender, race, and ethnicity. Stacy A. Cordery addresses gender in "Women in Industrializing America," while Leslie H. Fishel, Jr. examines the African American experience. Multiple essays reflect realities for different ethnic groups such as Native Americans, European immigrants in America, and Non-Western groups largely influenced by the intrusion of American imperialism. Regrettably, certain essays are inundated with statistics that leave readers with dry, impersonal representations of important trends. Finally, several essays remain dedicated to political life from both the top down and the bottom up. Two other essays trace the development of third party politics and conflicts within the prevailing two-party system. Worth Robert Miller does an exceptional job showing the influence of the Populist Party as well as the void left after "freeholders and independent workers were proletarianized," leaving no political voice after 1896 for the millions who felt disillusioned by American business and government.

Calhoun's synthesis remains a great tool for teaching. Not only does it allow a glimpse of specialized topics and groups within the Gilded Age, essays are also read with relative ease. Although certain essays pertaining to politics and immigration remain less engaging for class readings and discussion, teachers could easily use this text to divide among students, subsequently allowing students to present findings from each chapter. With Calhoun's second edition of *The Gilded Age*, educators and students alike can gain a better perspective on the origins of modern America.

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Gary Donaldson, ed. *Modern America: A Documentary History of the Nation Since 1945*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2007. Pp. 306. Paper, \$29.95; ISBN 978-0-7656-1538-1.

It seems as if there are dozens of documentary histories of post-World War II United States. Most cover the same ground—Cold War, life in the 1950s, civil rights, feminism, protests in the 1960s, and Vietnam. Gary Donaldson's *Modern America: A Documentary History of the Nation Since 1945* differs from the pack with unexpected depth and an unusual choice of documents that might very well prompt undergraduates to read the book.

Donaldson opens his book with a preface that discusses the difficulties of studying and understanding modern history when we are so close to it. In common with the rest of the book, it is a piece that is useful for prompting classroom discussion.

Donaldson then addresses the "Origins of the Cold War" with an introduction and documents that include Harry Truman's decision to drop the bomb, George Kennan's explanation of containment strategy, General Omar Bradley's warning about the risks of a global war, and love letters home from Korean War soldiers. Bradley's advice to the U.S. Senate came a month after General Douglas MacArthur's celebrated speech on the virtues of total war. It will help students understand why Truman did not want to invade China, as MacArthur demanded. The love letters, especially a last letter home to be delivered to a soldier's wife in the event of his death, might well mesmerize students. The chapter concludes with a biographical sketch of J. Robert Oppenheimer, study questions, and further readings.

Donaldson includes pieces that are fairly standard additions to document collections. His book contains an excerpt from Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, John F. Kennedy's inaugural address, Lyndon B. Johnson's explanation of why the U.S. was in Vietnam, the Weatherman Manifesto, passages from Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, and Ronald Reagan's "Evil Empire" and "Government Is Not the Solution" speeches. However, Donaldson also includes a number of unusual documents. In "Myths That Imperil Married Love" from 1958, Hugo Bourdeau argues that women do not need sex as much as they think they do. To explain the 1960s, Donaldson uses comic Vaughn Meader's 1962 routine on the "First Family." George Wallace argues in 1964 that the civil rights movement is a hoax, while Reagan recalls the 1969 Berkeley Riots. Residents within the radius of Three Mile Island send an open letter to the uncontaminated in 1979. T. Boone Pickens explains his support for Reagan in 1984, just before Reagan discusses "The New American Revolution." Kandy Stroud and Frank Zappa debate whether 1980s efforts to stop "pornographic rock" qualify as "cultural terrorism," while Dan Quayle attacks the television show *Murphy Brown*. The 1994 Republican Contract with America is reproduced alongside President Bill Clinton's Monicagate interview, his speech to the nation, and the articles of impeachment drawn up in 1998. Donaldson concludes with President George W. Bush's Axis of Evil speech and the 9/11 Commission Report.

Donaldson, a Xavier University historian, has clearly spent considerable time in the classroom trying to prompt students to discuss the day's material. His collection is carefully chosen to both educate and interest students. This book would be useful to any introductory college class on post-1945 history.