

governorship from a hotel suite in Albany. He tells us twice that young FDR had been to Europe eight times before he was 15 years old. When the CIO contributed \$800,000 to Roosevelt's campaign in 1936, what did that mean in the context of 1936? (It does not sound like much today!) There is no reference to Roosevelt's failing health in the discussion of the choice of his running mate in 1944, even though FDR's health is the next topic discussed.

More seriously, Maney's evident desire to furnish plausible, middle-of-the-road descriptions and explanations of topics, though very useful for steering students through the shoals of old and ultimately unresolvable arguments, sometimes makes what he has to say a bit bland. The alternative views are there, however, for students who care to pursue them. (A good example is whether or not Roosevelt was an ideologue.) Maney does not always hue to the exact middle of the road, though, and neither is he fully consistent. He states in one instance that Roosevelt had a "coherent philosophy" but in other settings dismisses the same possibility. I found Maney's repeated assertions that Roosevelt was personally religious and interested in providing religious leadership unconvincing, based on my own reading of Roosevelt, but Maney's point of view did make me think about this topic in ways I had not before.

Nor can Maney's book, within its limitations, give the details of legislation or political maneuvering. What *The Roosevelt Presence* does well is present a unified and comprehensive picture of FDR and the New Deal within a manageable framework. Only rarely does Maney make the mistake of referring to details that he was not able to provide. I was very impressed by his grasp of a wide range of subjects, most of which have had a great deal written about them, and by his ability to put into succinct paragraphs the salient points that capture the essence of Roosevelt and the New Deal.

A handsome book with virtually no factual or typographical errors, *The Roosevelt Presence* is recommended wholeheartedly as a text or supplement in survey and more advanced courses in twentieth-century America, the New Deal and World War II, and the presidency.

National Archives & Records Administration

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**Waldo E. Martin, Jr.** *Brown v. Board of Education: A Brief History with Documents*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998. Pp. xv, 253. Cloth, \$35.00; ISBN 0-312-12811-8. Paper, \$10.95; ISBN 0-312-11152-5.

This is a valuable companion to longer works on the history of the African American experience, especially the less commonly taught but extremely important history of the movement for civil rights in the United States—the struggle for equal access to educational opportunities. The "brief history" is brief enough (40 pages) and the array of documents reproduced here is wide enough to make this reviewer conclude

that Martin has provided a text that students and teachers will consult, and that the general reader will like to keep.

The "brief history" of the *Brown* decision is presented as the "Introduction" to the book. This traces the history from the emergence of Jim Crow in the immediate post-emancipation era to the NAACP's successful legal battles against inequality and discrimination culminating in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (1954). Martin presents the history as a "legal struggle." It was a struggle that seemed to touch on all aspects of American life, including the legal profession itself. Among the decisions that "nibbled away at *Plessy*" (*Plessy v. Ferguson* [1896]) were *Gaines v. Canada* (1938) and *Sipuel v. Oklahoma State Regents* (1948). According to Martin, these decisions "turned on the issue of the inequality between the reputable all-white state-supported law schools of Missouri and Oklahoma and the makeshift all-black arrangements those states scrambled to provide to avoid admitting blacks to their all-white law schools." These decisions and others like them not only provided the steam for the NAACP legal team to press on, but also prepared the ground for the eventual overturning of *Plessy*. While the *Brown* decision was not inevitable, nor welcome in some quarters, Martin's historical treatment helps to establish the significance of the landmark judgment of 1954.

Martin's treatment of the *Brown* case is very informative. No decision has elicited so much reaction and generated so much debate as *Brown*. Martin cites from the actual decision, comments of contemporaries, and reflections of scholars and observers. He presents these viewpoints, evaluates them, and makes clear what interpretation he favors. He concludes that, on the whole, "*Brown* deserves to be recognized for its enormously liberating impact on America and the world. Post-*Brown* American society was forced to look deep within itself and confront the fundamental problem of white racism and its impact on whites and blacks alike."

Readers will find it interesting that the Black struggle for equal access to education in America is very old indeed. The first document is a 1787 petition for inclusion of Blacks in Boston schools. The petition makes a strong case in the following language: "... we are of the humble opinion that we have the right to enjoy the privileges of free men ... that is of the education of our children ...."

Among the many documents are those associated with the various cases from *Plessy* to *Brown* itself. Readers will find useful the decision of the lower court in *Briggs v. Elliott* (1951), one of the five cases combined and argued in the Supreme Court as *Brown*. It is interesting to read Judge J. Waites Waring's argument that "If segregation is wrong then the place to stop it is in the first grade and not in graduate colleges." Today's undergraduates, especially those born after the 1970s, will find enlightening the appellants' arguments and the Supreme Court's decisions.

Apart from the documents, the book reproduces several photos and political cartoons, and includes a three-page time line, a short bibliography, and a comprehensive index. As a documentary source-book, this is a very successful effort.

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**William Dudley, ed. *The Vietnam War: Opposing Viewpoints*. San Diego, CA: Greenhaven Press, Inc., 1998. Pp. 284. Paper, \$12.96; ISBN 1-56510-700-4.**

Books of "readings" invariably reflect the attitudes of the editors who select and shape the materials to be included in the book. That in itself is a reason to be cautious in using such books as texts, particularly in a course dealing with the complex historical events that make up the American-Vietnamese war of the 1960s and 1970s. William Dudley and his colleagues on the staff of Greenhaven Press have chosen thirty-two selections of varying length, organized them in for-or-against pairings in six chapters, and introduced each chapter with a short preface. Dudley is not a professional historian, but the book, one in a series in the "opposing viewpoints" format, is competently manufactured with an excellent glossary, chronology, and bibliography, the latter including many of the most important books dealing with the Vietnam War.

My problem with this book is its brevity. By comparison, the standard book in this field, edited by Robert J. McMahon, runs 647 pages and includes 105 documents and 36 essays arranged in fifteen chapters. Both Dudley and McMahon have presented their selections accurately, but Dudley excluded material about the way the war was actually fought on both sides. Rather than the chapter on "Protesters and Soldiers," two chapters--one on dissent and its impact and the other on the troops on both sides--would have given a more balanced picture of the conduct of the war. This is particularly relevant because the book is intended for a "young adult audience," one inherently unfamiliar with the issues and the complexities of the Vietnam war.

Because of the format, the brief selections cannot provide sufficient explanations of complicated events. For example, the maneuvering in Geneva that accompanied America's commitment first to France, then to South Vietnam, is touched on in several chapter prefaces and can be found with the help of the index in several viewpoints, but without a substantial knowledge of the period the student will not be able to make the connection or assess importance. Likewise, the important issues of the 1968 Tet offensive and comparative data on the opposing military forces get little attention. Added to this problem is the absence of traditional notes to reveal sources of statistics or information in the chapter and viewpoint prefaces that are presented as facts. Happily, the writing is clear and historically correct in most instances.