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ORAL HISTORY AND THE FAMILY: A TOOL FOR THE DOCUMENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FAMILY HISTORY

Carl Ryant
University of Louisville

Family history has become a matter of concern for both academics and policy makers in recent years. During the same period oral history has emerged as a method used in many scholarly studies. For some it is a discipline in its own right, for some it is a technique to be used field by field, while for others it is viewed as a part of the popular culture. After the television adaptation of Alex Haley's somewhat controversial but highly influential book, *Roots*, use of genealogical materials at the Library of Congress increased markedly, giving a real boost to the popular pursuit of the past. This article will discuss the role of oral history in the documentation and interpretation of family history.[1]

Oral history, defined simply as a tape-recorded (video or audio) conversation between two people (usually), is clearly a useful tool for the augmentation of the written record and for the specific creation of evidence where no written documentation exists. Thus, it is particularly useful for the study of family history, since only the stories of the famous, and then often selected stories, normally exist.[2]

Such an approach may encompass specifics of interest to the individuals involved and generalities of experience--games, rearing customs, relationships--that in the aggregate are of concern to the scholar. Both the historian and the psychologist, as well as others, may bring questions to the interview and insights to the interpretation of these materials. An area of particular importance is the study of childhood, and this suggests the interviewing of children--as well as adults--about early experiences.

Much such work--directly or indirectly involving families--is being done. The increasing number of family history courses--of which oral history is often a logical component--in colleges and universities, together with the large number of other offerings, produces a vast store of evidence. Many, perhaps most, of the interviews, unfortunately, are done without proper supervision or resultant archival deposit. When one adds to the list high school, middle school, and elementary school projects, let alone individual ones, the number of tapes mushroom.[3]

Raising the minimal quality, technical and scholarly, of such efforts should not be too hard (in theory). A number of guides exist, both for oral history generally and for family oral history in particular. Going beyond that minimal level and achieving some kind of archival indexing, deposit, and accessibility is another matter

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[1] Alex Haley, *Roots: The Saga of an American Family* (Garden City, 1976); "People and Papers," *S[ociety of] A[merican] A[rchivists] Newsletter*, May 1979, 12.

[2] Louis M. Starr, "Oral History," in *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*, ed. Allen Kent, Harold Lancour, and Jay E. Daily (New York, 1977), 20, 440.

[3] See Ronald J. Grele, "On Using Oral History Collections: An Introduction," *Journal of American History*, 74 (September 1987), 570-78.

entirely. When researchers come to place greater value on these materials, then a demand may arise for their archival deposit and processing.[4]

Obviously family oral history can be viewed on more than one level. On the one hand, it can be the basic taping of an individual family's experiences, largely in terms of the major events that define its chronology: births, deaths, marriages, graduations, divorces, wars, travel, and the like. Beyond this, such interviews can attempt to delve into characteristics of structure and existence that permit multifamily comparison and thus some societal generalizations: games, education, discipline, foods, living arrangements, and generational relations, for example. Thus, while the details remain specific to the people being studied, the aggregation of those details provides data for those interested in collective biography as well as for individual biographies.[5]

Ideally, family oral history should be viewed as an ongoing process. Interviews would begin with young children, then follow them all the way to adulthood and throughout the life course. In addition, when interviewing older people, the emphasis needs to be not just on their past but also on their present. In this regard, some attention must be paid to the stereotyping that occurs for both the young and the elderly and how this will shape the interview process. Automatic assumptions about how age groups view themselves and what they are able to discuss or remember may result in unasked questions or predetermined answers.[6]

The tapes themselves need to be viewed in terms of more than the "pure" historical evidence, whether for a limited group or a broader society. They must also be looked at in terms of other forms of analysis, including content or fantasy analysis.[7]

One way to deal with oral history interviews, both for the purpose of determining question areas and studying existing materials, is through the concept of the life course. Glen H. Elder, Jr., has observed: "First, and most important, is the development of constructs and models that represent processes of family adaptation and change over time; the timing, arrangement, and duration of events in the life course; the ever-changing pattern of interdependence and synchronization among the life histories of family members; and the cycle of generational exchange and succession." He continues, "The life course refers to pathways through the age-differentiated life span; to social patterns in the timing, duration, spacing, and order of events." One needs to study cohorts, groups that share the same birth date even

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[4] William Fletcher, *Recording Your Family History* (New York, 1986); David E. Kyvig and Myron A. Marty, *Your Family History: A Handbook for Research and Writing* (Arlington Heights, IL, 1978); Allan J. Lichtman, *Your Family History* (New York, 1978). And see, Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (2d. ed., New York, 1988), 256-64 in particular.

[5] Ingrid Winther Scobie, "Family and Community History Through Oral History," *Public Historian*, 1 (Summer 1979), 37-38.

[6] Jay Mechling, "Oral Evidence and the History of American Children's Lives," *Journal of American History*, 74 (September 1987), 579-86; Nikolas Coupland, Justine Coupland, Howard Giles, and Karen Henwood, "Accommodating the Elderly: Invoking and Extending a Theory," *Language in Society*, 17 (March 1988), 1-41.

[7] Carl Ryant, "Oral History and Psychohistory," *Journal of Psychohistory*, 8 (Winter 1981), 307-18.

though they experience identical historical events at different stages of their own life course development.[8]

As Elder points out, marriage poses an interesting twist through the joining of two life courses. Oral history is well suited as one data base for individual life course studies because it can pose questions relating to the main events such as birth, education, marriage, divorce, children, grandchildren, and death and relate them to the historical context. It can also adapt to the joining of marriage through the dual interview. For example, Barbara Perry, as part of a student project at the University of Louisville, questioned her mother and father separately about their lives until the point of marriage, then conducted a joint interview.[9]

Oral history allows one to consider life course and the family, including such areas as those identified by Ingrid Winther Scobie: "The daily schedules of family members, the organization of the household, the position of furniture, the expenditure of money, seating at the dining room table, who was present at which meals, what type of food was served--all of these reveal significant information about the value of time, family communications, control of the family."[10]

Oral history can direct particular attention to the role of children and childhood in these contexts, not just by interviewing adults about their youth but by interviewing children as children. Even the issue of accuracy of early or other memories may be viewed in a different sense, for while one obviously at times wants "fact," what people misremember, the patterns and contexts, can also be revealing.[11]

The imagery of the interview itself can be of particular importance. Taking the Perry family tapes as an example, a "fantasy analysis" can be conducted. Lloyd deMause has termed this process to be the examination of a document in terms of "metaphors, similes, body terms, strong feeling words, repetitive phrases and symbolic terms." Then the materials are analyzed for themes. The process may be described:

1. Record all metaphors and similes. . . .
2. Record all body language, strong feeling tones, and strong emotional states. . . .
3. Record all repetitive, unusual or gratuitous word usages. . . .
4. Record any obviously symbolic terms. . . .
5. Eliminate all negatives. . . .
6. Eliminate all subjects and objects. . . .

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[8] Glen H. Elder, Jr., "Family History and the Life Course," in *Transitions: The Family and the Life Course in Historical Perspective*, ed. Tamara K. Hareven (New York, 1978), 17-18, 21.

[9] Carl Ryant, "Oral History & Family History," *Family Heritage*, 2 (April 1979), 50-53; Interview with Louis R. Perry by Barbara Perry, March 17, 1977, Oral History Collection, University of Louisville.

[10] Scobie, "Family and Community History," 38-39.

[11] See, for example, Alessandro Portelli, "'The Time of My Life:' Functions of Time in Oral History," *International Journal of Oral History*, 2 (November 1981), 162-80; Luisa Passerini, "Work Ideology and Working Class Attitudes to Fascism," in *Our Common History: The Transformation of Europe*, ed. Paul Thompson (Atlantic Highlands, NJ, 1982), 54-78.

7. Record all overt group responses. . . .
8. Note any long periods of no imagery. . . .[12]

In the case of the Perry family, Barbara Perry asked her father about how the Great Depression affected his childhood. This is a common subject in family oral history interviews. He responded, in part:

> . . about our many moves when the Depression hit. It again was a means of survival. It wasn't a means of being dishonest. It was just simply a means of survival of the fittest. If you ran up a bill at the local grocery store, you just simply did not have the money to pay for it. If you moved on, you just had to move. And Mother would always caution the children, "Now don't tell anyone where we're moving, because if bill collectors show up after we move, we just don't want them to know where we are. We want just simply to disappear." . . .
>
> The Depression made quite an impact on me, a very serious impact at that time. I was old enough to be completely aware of it, but, fortunately, I wasn't old enough to worry actively about it. I left that up to my parents. I knew what was going on. I knew that money was a scarce item. I knew that food was hard to come by, clothing, and so on. I knew that there were many things that I couldn't have that cost money, and money just wasn't available. However, as I say about Dayton, Ohio, there were so many people in the same position, out of work and so on, that there wasn't quite the contrast that you might have found in other cities--of people having goods that you couldn't have and, therefore, of being in an enviable position. . . .
>
> It was a rather abstract thing. Many, many people, and most people in Dayton, Ohio, were affected by it. It was the constant talk about a neighbor losing a job this particular day, or a friend going back to work, or finding jobs, or another friend going on relief, or a certain person having a mortgage foreclosed. That type of thing. And, of course, the newspapers were full of it constantly; the radio was full of chatter about the Depression in the way of news items, and so on. So there was no way of escaping the fact that we were in a depression. And because it was so close to home, and right in the home, there was just no doubt about the Depression being present. . . .
>
> The times themselves were very sad. The times were miserable. But as far as living, I was a youngster and my young days were happy. I came from a happy family. My family got along well together. We were very happy. We loved each other, and I can truthfully say that those days were happy as far as family grouping was concerned. But the times were hard.[13]

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[12] Lloyd deMause, "Historical Group-Fantasies," *Journal of Psychohistory*, 7 (Summer 1979), 1, 11.

[13] Perry Interview, 22-23.

The material gives historical insight into human experience in the depression, of course, but in fantasy analysis the following is accented:

> moves . . . depression hit . . . survival . . . dishonest . . . survival . . . moved . . . move . . . Mother . . . caution . . . moving . . . bill collectors . . . move . . . disappear . . . depression . . . serious . . . worry . . . parents . . . money . . . scarce . . . hard . . . money . . . money . . . people . . . work . . . people . . . abstract . . . people . . . people . . . working . . . working . . . losing . . . people . . . people . . . working . . . working . . . losing . . . friend . . . finding . . . friend . . . Depression . . . happy . . . sad . . . sad . . . miserable . . . loving . . . happy . . . happy . . . family . . . family . . . happy . . . loved . . . happy . . . family . . . hard.

There is an apparent counterplay of insecurity and fear. The ideas of moving, losing, not having are seen in the context of being happy and finding security in the family setting. Thus, oral history interviews provide a body of data that permits analysis of individual and collective materials for historical accuracy and in terms of shared conceptions, misconceptions, and omissions.[14]

Although there is an admitted subjectivity in this process, imposed both by the interviewer and the interviewee, this is in one sense a virtue as well since it provides a corrective to a totally empirical basis of analysis. And human experience is at its heart emotional. Still, there are means of tempering the danger of subjective bias. Jane Synge has written on the use of demographic analysis in both the structuring and interpreting of life history interviews. Emphasizing the importance of cohort analysis, she remarks that "because the last century has seen such dramatic shifts in the timing of life-cycle stages and in the extent to which people experienced marriage, childlessness, and early deaths of children, spouses, and parents, one must be careful to collect and interpret life-history data obtained from the aged in the context of the demographic features of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century." (And obviously one must remain cognizant of equivalent changes for other age groups.) But even with careful planning of interview schedules, she finds that life histories will provide better information on some aspects of the family than others, due to the relative importance that any particular issue held for the person being questioned at the time he or she experienced the event. At the same time, Synge concludes that "life histories may contribute insights to family systems and relationships that were not anticipated at the planning stage."[15]

Paul Thompson, perhaps the leading oral historian of the United Kingdom, has written on life histories in the analysis of social change. As he comments: "The evidence in each life story can only be fully understood as part of the whole life; but to make generalizations on any particular social issue, we must wrench the evidence on this question from a whole series of interviews, viewing it and reassembling it

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[14] See Ryant, "Oral History and Psychohistory," 313.

[15] Jane Synge, "Cohort Analysis in the Planning and Interpretation of Research Using Life Histories" in *Biography and Society: The Life History Approach in the Social Sciences*, ed. Daniel Berteaux (Beverly Hills, CA, 1981), 235, 245.

from a new angle, as if horizontally rather than vertically; and in so doing, placing a new meaning on it." To carry forward these new meanings, he continues:

> . . . It remains astonishingly rare to find any research examining the impact of the family on economic development, or the mutual interaction between the two.
>
> Yet it is clear that an interaction of this kind must be of fundamental importance to social change. For the family is the primary social institution within which human energy is produced and socialized. At the simplest level, it supplies the economy with its labor force. It therefore follows that unless demographic changes can be reduced to absolute dependency on the economy--and they certainly cannot--changes in family ideology and structure need to be analyzed as critical to overall economic and social development.

Thompson himself has studied such materials in terms of fishing communities in the United Kingdom.[16]

It is apparent that oral history is both a necessary and valuable tool in creating a data base for the study of family history. It is useful for its individual information on any one family and for its susceptibility to aggregate analysis for the study of social history. Use of cohort analysis, fantasy analysis, and statistical sampling techniques (for example, Paul Thompson's use of census data in constructing an interview sample for his study of Edwardian England) can add dimensions to the creation of new evidence and study of existing evidence, no matter how obtained. From classroom projects or personal efforts to large research projects, the possibilities are endless. What is required is a greater sensitivity to the importance of oral history and family history. This should result not only in more extensive scholarly analysis of existing data but also better quality data being generated for future analysis.[17]

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[16] Paul Thompson, "Life Histories and the Analysis of Social Change," in *Biography and Society*, 292, 300, 302-03. Paul Thompson (with Tony Wailey and Trevor Lummis), *Living the Fishing* (London, 1983).

[17] Paul Thompson, *The Edwardians: The Remaking of British Society* (London, 1975).

PRIMARY SOURCES IN THE TEACHING OF HISTORY: THE WESTERN CIVILIZATION PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

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University of Kansas

For over four decades large numbers of undergraduates at the University of Kansas have had to pass through the Western Civilization requirement on their way to the baccalaureate degree. For some it has been one of the most important and lasting educational experiences of their university years, for others a necessary but inscrutable evil to be endured and survived, and doubtless for most something in between.

Western Civilization is a general education requirement for students in all B.A. and B.G.S. and most B.S. degree programs in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (the program's academic "home"). It is also required of all students in the Schools of Journalism and Social Welfare. Unlike Western Civilization programs at many colleges and universities, which are often Western history survey courses, KU's program has always been an independent, interdisciplinary "great books and ideas" course sequence organized around direct student encounter with and discussion of some of the influential and representative writings of the Western intellectual tradition. The two-semester, six-hour course sequence begins with classic works from ancient Greece, Rome, and Israel and comes down to the present. For many years the "Western Civ" readings have provided a common core of primary texts shared by large numbers of KU students.

In a time of educational specialization and career preoccupation, Western Civilization ideally offers KU students an integrative dimension of their educational experience. They examine some of the chief questions and answers in the Western world regarding broad and basic human issues. Specifically, our program is organized around four themes: (1) the problem of human nature; (2) the question of individual liberty; (3) the connections between science and religion, or more generally between knowledge and values; and (4) the relationships among the individual, society, and the state. Our hope is that what students learn in "Western Civ" helps them to relate their varied fields of study to a common tradition, to see connections among ideas otherwise isolated from one another. At perhaps the deepest level we intend it to be, at least for our American students, a basic exercise in historical, cultural, and intellectual self-discovery, a "roots" exposure to the ideas and ideals that have shaped them and their world.

A committee of faculty from various departments and schools established KU's Western Civilization Program in 1945. That was an auspicious year, and the faculty founders explicitly designed the program to be an educational response to the repeated crises that had shaken the foundations of Western civilization in the twentieth century. In the words of the program's original charter, they believed that the university's special role was to bring "this situation and its problems more consciously to the minds of students today, that they may be ready to live constructively in a complex world tomorrow." To that end the goals of the program were the study of the origins and development of the ideas and values of Western civilization through examination of primary sources, in the hope that students would become better informed about the roots and development of both democracy and totalitarianism in the West and begin to develop a global outlook. These foundations

bequeathed to the Western Civilization Program a certain emphasis on writings on political topics, especially in the second semester's reading.

"Western Civ" at the University of Kansas was originally designed as an independent reading program, not a regular course sequence. Students were given the list of primary readings and a guide to the readings called the *Student's Manual*. The *Manual* of background essays is still used, having gone through many revisions and editions. Although students were supposed to meet regularly with a faculty member or with senior or graduate student "proctors" in a tutorial setting, they were essentially on their own. In the 1950s weekly small-group discussion sections were established to provide students with more assistance and the opportunity for peer exchange, and that remained the way in which most students enrolled in the program until the fall of 1987. Until 1978 the only way students could complete the Western Civilization requirement was to pass a comprehensive examination over the readings at some point before graduation.

Apart from the half-time faculty director, the budgeted Western Civilization teaching staff was until 1987 made up entirely of able graduate teaching assistants from a wide variety of departments and schools. Over the years faculty were involved on a voluntary basis, usually teaching an honors discussion section as a course overload. This has been a distinctive "Western Civ" tradition at KU. Even chancellors and other central administrators and deans regularly used to teach a section, and there are KU faculty who have done so for ten and even twenty years. Besides faculty, academically qualified persons in the community with close ties to KU have also taught in the program over the years, including in earlier years a local physician and until recently one of our state legislators.

The Western Civilization Advisory Committee spent three years (1984-87) designing and implementing changes intended to strengthen the program. In 1985 we received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities' Division of Education that made it possible. We undertook the changes in concert with reforms of the general education requirements in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, which went into effect in the fall of 1987.

The changes we designed for "Western Civ" were a response to two widespread and long-standing concerns: (1) the lack of regularized, compensated faculty involvement in the program, and (2) what appeared to be a decline in student historical knowledge and reading ability in more recent years. Enrollment is no longer open to freshmen except members of the honors program. Given the demanding nature of the Western Civilization readings, we believe that most students are better equipped to understand them with at least a year of college behind them. All students taking Western Civilization are now required to attend two background lectures each week in addition to their small-group discussion sections. The background lectures are designed to provide both historical context and specific guidance to the readings.

Central to our new structure are six KU faculty from various departments and schools appointed to teach half-time in Western Civilization for a renewal period of two years. In two teams of three each, they teach two large honors lecture sections twice a week, and each also leads two small honors discussion sections. Non-honors students are in medium-size (35 students) lecture-discussion sections mostly taught by experienced GTAs lecturing twice a week and dividing the class into small groups for discussion the third period.

Other changes we have undertaken, partly with grant assistance, include a substantial review of the program readings, a textbook to replace the *Student's Manual*, working closely with the university's Writing Center to develop pedagogically useful writing assignments, the cataloging and acquisition of good audio-visual resources for the lecture periods, a program informational brochure, identification of courses in other departments that might be especially useful as background to or in conjunction with Western Civilization, a program lecture series and annual distinguished lectureship, a newsletter, and seminars for high school teachers in Kansas to encourage emphasis on the reading and conceptual analysis of primary texts and the study of world and European history.

Easily the most difficult and controversial aspect of KU's Western Civilization Program is the list of primary source readings. Constructing a list of "great writings" of the Western world from ancient times to the present for twenty-six weeks of readings is excruciatingly difficult, and trying to take seriously a wide range of opinions and suggestions, as I believe we have really tried to do over the years, is bewildering. The most common complaint is that there is too much political theory; others think there is too much religion, particularly in the first semester; still others lament that there is not enough on science; another familiar criticism is that there are not enough great works of literature and nothing from the arts. We have a long tradition of maximal staff participation in the readings evaluation and revision process, in which our large GTA staff, the advisory committee, and now the regular faculty are all involved. The variety and opposition of opinions among us is a microcosm of the general diversity of opinions around the university. Developing and revising a reading list for a program like ours involves the most fundamental questions about the nature of the program: What counts as "Western"? On what basis do we decide who and what are most "important" and "influential" among the large number of authors and texts from which we might choose? Since a one-year program must be highly selective, how broad can it try to be without becoming fragmentary and incoherent? If instead it has a focus, what should it be--political, philosophical, literary, or something else? What should the "Western Civ" readings do that nothing else in the students' curriculum does, and what will be of the most long-term value to them? Since the aim is to read classic works, how can we justify including twentieth-century authors whose writings have not stood the test of time?

At the conclusion of its year-long review of the Western Civilization Program during academic year 1984-85, the program advisory committee drew up a "Statement of Principles" to serve as guidelines to the changes upon which we were embarking. With regard to the primary source readings, the committee stated: "Efforts should be made to read more classics in their entirety, even if some previously included works are omitted; and to avoid or limit the use of excerpts of larger works which do violence to the intention of the authors. The general guideline for selection of primary sources should be one author and one complete work or sufficiently representative portion thereof per week. This guideline should be interpreted flexibly, since sometimes adequate length and focus will be served by a 'natural' pairing of more than one author or more than one work."

Behind this statement lay a desire to streamline a reading list that especially in recent years had become increasingly complicated by adding extra authors and brief selections to a number of weeks' readings. I have long argued to my staff that if we really want to cram in as many authors and selections as possible then let us

make things easy for ourselves by simply adopting a good standard anthology such as Beatty and Johnson's *Heritage of Western Civilization*. But this was clearly not the direction the advisory committee wanted to go in its Statement of Principles, and our view here coincided with the Western Civilization recommendations of the Dean's Task Force that developed the reforms of the College's general education requirements.

Limiting the number of authors and trying as much as possible to read single whole works or representative portions of works continues to be an ideal that some of our teaching staff--particularly our teaching assistants--are not yet prepared to take seriously. Our annual discussions of the reading list always manifest a basic tension between two understandings of our task: what I would call the "intellectual history" versus the "great texts" approaches. Those who take the "intellectual history" approach believe that if we read Luther we must also include something from the Counter-Reformation; if we read Descartes the rationalist we must include Locke or Hume the empiricist; if we read Locke on political theory we must include Hobbes and Rousseau; if we read Marx and Engels we must include Bernstein, Kautsky, and Lenin. Those of us who are committed to the advisory committee's principle believe, by contrast, in a "great texts" approach in which we frankly recognize that we cannot expose the students to everything it might be desirable to expose them to in terms of great movements in Western intellectual history. We think it is more valuable for students to come to grips with a smaller number of authors and works in a more focused and less confusing way. We have some confidence that in the background material we provide in the lectures and the *Student's Manual* (and soon in the even more comprehensive textbook) we can help our students to fill in at least some of the blanks.

It turns out that neither side in this debate is entirely consistent. The "intellectual history" advocates are greatly exercised over the need for "balance" on a number of topics from the seventeenth century on, but are strangely silent about the fact that we allow Thomas Aquinas to speak for the whole Middle Ages and (currently) Seneca to speak for the Roman world. The "great texts" partisans, for our part, compromise all over the place. Some multiple-author weeks are old institutions in the program: the selections from the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, always an extremely painful decision; pairing Pico with Machiavelli; Galileo with Newton; Descartes with either Locke or Hume; Burke with Paine; papers from *The Federalist* with Tocqueville; and Darwin with Wallace and T.H. Huxley.

There is further the problem that many terribly important classic texts are simply too long to read in their entirety as a one-week assignment in an introductory-level course. When we choose readings from such works we now try to select an entire section or set of chapters rather than selecting "snippets," anthology-style; but this can be very tricky with authors such as Aristotle, Aquinas, Locke and Hobbes and Rousseau, Burke, Tocqueville, and Darwin. For several years our reading from Thomas Aquinas was a small paperback entitled *Treatise on Law*. Now the Angelic Doctor never wrote a little book called the *Treatise on Law*. The volume simply "packages" Questions 90-97 of the huge *Summa Theologica*. Currently we are using selections from a new Norton anthology entitled *St. Thomas Aquinas on Politics and Ethics*.

At the same time, there remain a number of important works of the Western tradition that are just the right length read in their entirety: from our current reading list, Sophocles' *Antigone*, Plato's *Apology*, Machiavelli's *The Prince*, Luther's *Christian Liberty*, Descartes's *Discourse on Method*, Frederick Douglass's autobiography, Mill's *On Liberty*, Marx and Engel's *Communist Manifesto*, Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground*, Nietzsche's *The Anti-Christ*, Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents*, and Wiesel's *Night*.

Another issue with which we perpetually struggle and which we are very far from working out to our satisfaction is historical balance. The first semester we span close to 3000 years of history; the second semester covers the last two hundred years. We give ancient Greece three weeks and ancient Rome only one. A thousand years of Western history--the Middle Ages--get one week and Thomas Aquinas as their representative, by contrast with the four weeks we give to the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Scientific Revolution--a period of about 300 years. We have experimented, at the drawing-board stage, with dividing the two semesters at a different point, with giving Rome and the Middle Ages two weeks each, and we always end up stalemated over readings selections or over the tough choice of what to sacrifice somewhere else.

Last year we decided to include the readings from Locke's *Second Treatise* in the second semester, because we had to free up a week in the first semester and thematically Locke seemed appropriate to head a six-week period in which we deal with issues surrounding the liberal democratic tradition. We also returned to an old "Western Civ" tradition of beginning the whole program with Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*--a novel that students almost invariably find absorbing and that poses just about all the themes of the program in the context of a modern dystopia. Inspired by that decision, we also decided to focus the second-semester readings on the nineteenth century, but to "frame" the semester with contemporary works. So we began with Elie Wiesel's gripping account of his experiences in Nazi concentration camps and raised the question, "How did we get from the optimism of the Enlightenment to the horrors of the Holocaust?" As a final reading we assigned Part II of Jonathan Schell's much-discussed book *The Fate of the Earth*. This is by no means a "classic," of course, even in comparison with recent writers such as Beauvoir and Wiesel, but in it Schell contemplates the perils of the nuclear age in the light of central themes and values in the Western tradition. We also decided to add to our Mary Wollstonecraft reading a short contemporary essay by Simone de Beauvoir, and to Frederick Douglass's autobiography Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham Jail."

When I earlier mentioned some basic questions that have to be raised in developing and revising a Western Civilization reading list, I asked, "Since the aim is to read classic works, how can we justify including twentieth-century authors whose writings have not stood the test of time?" This question is one important ingredient in making decisions regarding the second semester's readings especially difficult, and our discussions of them the most heated. The question also opens out onto what is perhaps the most controversial aspect of KU's Western Civilization Program: what I would call our attempt to incorporate elements of both permanence and change in the Western heritage. When we speak of the Western "tradition," we realize that tradition is a living process that each new generation both appropriates and reinterprets. In the modern period the Western dynamic of change

has accelerated with bewildering rapidity, which is what makes the second semester's readings so difficult to choose. We have also become acutely aware of the intellectual, cultural, and ethnic pluralism of the Western tradition as never before, and of the global and inter-cultural context in which Western culture plays such a large and fateful role in our world. The fact is that the Western world itself has of course changed dramatically since KU's Western Civilization Program began in 1945. How are we best to reflect those changes and their significance for our students, while at the same time placing them within the larger context of the history of Western ideas and values?

A chief focus of debate over the Western Civilization Program's attempt to balance permanence and change has been our commitment to incorporating readings, mainly from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, on sexism, racism, and antisemitism in the Western world. Selections from Hitler's *Mein Kampf* have been included, in alternation with other writings on fascism, since 1958. Readings on racism were introduced in 1971 and on sexism in 1972. In 1985, as part of its general review of the program, the advisory committee formalized the importance of these inclusions and broadened their scope by adopting the principle that within the context of the program's four traditional themes, "attention to the issues of racial and sexual discrimination and antisemitism should be integrated fully into the curriculum." Adoption of this principle is a recognition of the local, national, and global significance of these issues and of the need for today's students to be confronted with the roots and development of these forms of discrimination in the ideas and values of Western culture.

It should be noted that the advisory committee's statement goes farther than the inclusion of primary sources on these topics. It implies the integration of materials on racism, sexism, and antisemitism into the course as a whole, in our lectures and in the background readings. In "mainstreaming" these issues into a Western Civilization curriculum, incorporating (for example) women's studies scholarship on Western history generally and intellectual history in particular is as important as including primary texts by women. It is important for us and our students to read old texts with fresh eyes, asking new and hard questions of them regarding their assumptions about gender, social superiority and inferiority, the normative human group and the "others," and the like. For example: What sort of approach should we take to Aristotle's observations on women and slaves in the *Politics*? Is antisemitism rooted in the New Testament itself? What about the agonies of some of the U.S.'s Founding Fathers over the paradox of slavery in a democratic republic? How did Darwinism become the basis for very influential racist, antisemitic, and sexist theories?

Among the criteria for our contributors to the new textbook is incorporating attention to these issues in their chapters. Although it is still the case that far too few scholars have background in women's and minority studies scholarship, on the whole our contributors are doing a conscientious job, and those who are specifically trained are providing excellent perspectives. The new textbook also includes specific chapters on the three issues. A difficult task in connection with the program's commitment is the training and sensitizing of our teaching staff. This is an area in which I would say we have made only a beginning.

Readings explicitly on antisemitism and the Holocaust, on modern racism and colonialism, and on historic and continuing injustices against women still comprise

only a small portion of the total readings, and we continue to struggle with the question of the best ways to incorporate these issues. There are complex and inevitably controversial problems surrounding selection of primary texts in these areas that I haven't time to get into here. We remain firmly committed to the "great tradition" of texts by such enduring molders of the Western intellectual heritage as Plato, Aristotle, the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, Augustine, Luther, Galileo, Newton, Darwin, Marx, and Freud. At the same time, in keeping with the living character of tradition, we are trying fully to recognize that the Holocaust and contemporary struggles by women and minorities for greater liberty and justice--together with dramatic scientific and technological developments and the perils and promises of the nuclear age--demand that we bring to the "great tradition" new questions and appropriate it in fresh ways. If that tradition is largely an elitist, white, male, Christian one, then it is important that students come to grips with that fact and its implications as well as with the enduring and universal ideas and values of the tradition. We are clearly trying to steer a different course on these crucial questions from the one Stanford University has followed: one in which we are trying as fully as possible to integrate urgent contemporary struggles for wider justice and equality, together with other important contemporary issues such as the impact of science and technology, into a traditional Western Civilization Program.

And what of our students? The University of Kansas is an open-admissions institution. We must admit all Kansas high school graduates who apply. While there is some self-selection because of KU's reputation as the premier liberal arts institution among the Regents universities, open admissions means that we get a very wide cross-section in a general education program like Western Civilization. To require as many students as we do to pass a demanding course in "great texts" that can be very difficult to understand for sophomores and juniors is a challenge, and among general requirements I think we are considered one of the most daunting (along with foreign languages and mathematics). In selecting primary texts we always try to keep this in mind. The challenge is to select works that stretch our students' minds and horizons without being completely incomprehensible; to choose texts that are readable and if possible interesting without simply pandering to students' usual reading tastes.

I have on my desk an unsolicited letter from a student praising his instructor, one of our best GTA staff members. The student describes the Western Civilization readings as "extremely dry," and completely lacking in interest for anyone other than the teaching staff and a few especially serious students. Very revealingly, he faults the readings for not being "entertaining," an adjective on which one might be tempted to expound at length in reflecting on the influence of television on recent student generations. From *my* vantage point, of course, the fact that anyone could include Sophocles's *Antigone*, Plato's *Apology*, Voltaire's *Candide*, Douglass's *Narrative*, or Wiesel's *Night* in the category of "extremely dry" is depressing. Some other standard texts we use are perceived as "extremely dry" by large numbers of students, and I can be a bit more sympathetic there: notably Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, Burke, and Tocqueville. At the same time, none of us believe that the answer is not to have students read these important writers. Rather we think it is especially important to provide our students with clear guidance in how to read them. One the positive side, every semester I hear from students--and by no means only honors students--whose experience with Western Civilization has been an

enriching and eye-opening one. But the student who wrote the letter I have mentioned--and it was a well-written letter, by the way--represents another ongoing challenge as we continue to try to expose a large range of students to significant texts of the Western heritage in the last years of the twentieth and into the twenty-first centuries.

Reading Assignments, First Semester

1. Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World* (Harper & Row).

2. Sophocles, *Antigone*, in *Three Theban Plays* (Penguin), 57-128.

3. Plato, *Apology*, *Meno*, and selections from *Phaedo*, in *Plato: Five Dialogues* (Hackett), 23-56, 89-110, 152-155.

4. Aristotle, selections from *Ethics* and *Politics*, in *The Pocket Aristotle* (Washington Square), 162-171, 261-274, 276-334.

5. Seneca, selected letters from *Letters from a Stoic* (Penguin), Letters XVI-XCI, 63-183.

6. *The Hebrew Bible*: Genesis 1-4, Exodus 19-20, Amos in *Collected Readings*. *The New Testament*: Gospel of Mark, Paul's Letter to the Galatians, in *C.R.*

7. Augustine, *Confessions* (Penguin), Bks. 5-9.

8. Thomas Aquinas, selections from *St. Thomas Aquinas on Politics and Ethics* (Norton), 14-80.

9. Pico della Mirandola, selections from *On the Dignity of Man* in *C.R.*; Machiavelli, *The Prince* and selections from *Discourses on the First Ten books of Titus Livius*, in *The Prince* (Norton), 3-75, 93-122.

10. Luther, *Christian Liberty* (Fortress); selections from *An Open Letter to the German Nobility* and *Bondage of the Human Will*, in *C.R.*; Johann Tetzel's Indulgence, in *C.R.*

11. Galileo, *The Starry Messenger*, and *Letter to the Grand Duchess Christina*, in *Discoveries and Opinions of Galileo* (Doubleday Anchor), 21-58, 173-216.

12. Descartes, *Discourse on Method* (Hackett).

13. Voltaire, *Candide* (Penguin).

Reading Assignments, Second Semester

14. Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (Crofts), chs. 1-11, 18-19.

15. Burke, selections from *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, in *C.R.*; Paine, *Rights of Man* (Penguin), 33-115; *Declaration of Independence*, in *C.R.*

16. Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (Penguin), chs. 1-4; Beauvoir, Introduction to *The Second Sex*.

17. Hamilton and Madison, *The Federalist Papers* #6, 10, 51, in *C.R.*; Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (Mentor), Part One.

18. Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (Doubleday Anchor); Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from Birmingham Jail," in *C.R.*

19. Mill, *On Liberty* (Hackett).

20. Darwin, selections from *The Origin of the Species* and *The Descent of Man*, in *C.R.*; Spencer, "The Survival of the Fittest," in *C.R.*; Huxley, "The Struggle for Existence in Human Society" and "Evolution and Ethics," in *Selections from the Essays of T. H. Huxley* (Crofts), 59-69, 105-111.

21. Selections from *The Sadler Report*, in *C.R.*; Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (Progress); Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* (Progress).

22. Dostoevsky, *Notes from Underground* (Penguin), and "The Legend of the Grand Inquisitor" from *The Brothers Karamazov*, in *C.R.*

23. Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ* (Penguin); original last page of *The Anti-Christ* in *C.R.*

24. Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (Norton).

25. Wiesel, *Night* (Bantam); Sartre, selections from *Anti-Semite and Jew*, in *C.R.*

26. Jonathan Schell, *The Fate of the Earth* (Avon), Part II: "The Second Death."

HISTORY AND LITERATURE: A TRIAL SEPARATION

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One of the persistent problems for those who think broadly about history has been that of drawing a line of demarcation describing its common boundary with literature. At first glance, the distinction between literature and history may seem so clear-cut as to be beyond debate. Substitution of the related terms fiction and non-fiction only further bolsters our confidence that we are dealing with an objective and indisputable dichotomy. Philosophers of history know better. However plain the differences discerned between these two modes of writing, one keeps coming back to an inescapable uniformity: Both provide the reader with a rich variety of experience extending beyond the possibilities of any single human life. And if this liberation from self to the potentiality of the species is indeed the spirit that informs literature of all kinds, the philosopher must sooner or later ask himself and others what difference it makes that some of this vicarious existence has actually been lived, and some has not. Or, to put it more succinctly if too simplistically, what does it matter that history is, in some sense, "true"?

A number of developments presently conspire to effect a closer merger of history and literature than ever before. One is the increasing popularity of that hybrid called historical fiction, which has frightened certain purists who worry that Gore Vidal's Abraham Lincoln may replace in the public imagination the more conventionally researched Lincoln of Benjamin Thomas or Stephen Oates. Of more practical and compelling concern are instances where the blurring of distinctions between fiction and non-fiction can create dangerous misperceptions. A controversial case in point is William Styron's *Confessions of Nat Turner*, in which the novelist imagines lust for a white woman in his main character, whose real historic existence lends credence to a fiction that may fuel ongoing racial prejudice.[1] In addition, even highly respected scholars have recently indulged in what is called counterfactual history, pondering such questions as whether the Great Awakening would have occurred in the absence of Jonathan Edwards.[2] In one respect, of course, this represents nothing more than a new path toward understanding Edwards's role in the movement; viewed in another way, however, such an approach betrays an attraction to the seductive domain of fiction. Historical and non-historical literature have tended to overlap too as a consequence of history's steady movement away from its earlier preoccupation with politics and war toward greater concern for social and family life, women's studies, and especially the history of the nameless and inarticulate--once the nearly exclusive province of the novelist. Nor have invasions across the disciplinary border come only from history's side. Fascination with literary biography, and the obsession of literary critics to discover the personal reality behind a piece of fiction, amount to an implicit confession of the inadequacy of imagination not demonstrably grounded in fact. Completing their

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[1] See John Henrik Clarke, ed., *William Styron's Nat Turner* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), 57, 71, 74.

[2] John M. Murrin, "No Awakening, No Revolution? More Counterfactual Speculations," *Reviews in American History* 11 (1983), 161-171.

mutual attraction, the novelist thus finds a counterpart to historical fiction in the *roman à clef*.

At a time when novels are routinely assigned in history courses, not infrequently in the openly expressed belief that students can get a better "feel" for a certain era from fiction than from a standard history, it is necessary to sort out the claims of the two disciplines and to set history once more on a course that establishes its distinctive mission. To accomplish this it may be well to consider in turn a series of plausible hypotheses about the relationship of history and fiction, analyzing each as we go, retaining or discarding elements when appropriate, aiming at a formulation that captures the essential contribution of history to our understanding of human affairs.

1) History is true; fiction is not. As long as we temporarily suspend a critical exploration of meanings and definitions, this assertion can at least be comprehended as a rudimentary description of commonly shared certainties. Events described in Frederick Lewis Allen's *Only Yesterday* in all likelihood did happen; events in *The Great Gatsby* in all likelihood did not happen. If we take even one step beyond this cautious position, however, our easy assumptions are threatened. Is the whole truth embodied in Allen's book? Is there no truth in *Gatsby*? *Only Yesterday* makes no mention of Marcus Garvey, one of the most charismatic personalities of the twenties and arguably the best representative of several leading themes of the decade, including black culture, immigration, urbanization, and the popularity of fads. By contrast, *Gatsby* evokes images of wealth and waste, hope and nostalgia, romanticism and despair, all of which recognizably constitute the mood of the times. How, then, are we to locate truth? To fall back on some notion of relative truth has frequently recommended itself as a compromise. History can no more be said to possess absolute truth than fiction can be relegated to a realm of absolute falsehood. One is reminded of the reaction of Richard Wright's grandmother in *Black Boy* to the discovery that Richard has just published his first piece of fiction. To the young man's protest that "It's just a story I made up," the grandmother responds, "Then it's a lie."[3] Both fiction and non-fiction are interpreters of the past; both seek truths in that process of interpretation, and both are doomed to failure in the search for an ultimate truth that exactly transcribes objective reality. Moreover, historians never have before them the entire record they would wish to analyze. Given these limitations, the difference between history and literature may be less one of category than of degree: Perhaps history is simply the most realistic form of fiction.

This discussion, though, has so far neglected the most damaging case to be made against history as truth: the phenomenon of historiography. For present purposes this term may be taken to refer specifically to the constantly varying interpretations of the past resulting primarily from the changing times in which historians themselves are living and writing. Accordingly, in explaining the American Revolution, a historian surrounded by the expansive democracy and nationalism of the Age of Jackson found the colonials united against oppressive British rule by an ideological consensus sustained by a common desire to advance liberty, while a historian affected by the often disruptive and divisive reform pressures of the Progressive Era wrote of colonists in conflict with one another over who should rule

[3] Richard Wright, *Black Boy*, Perennial Classics (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), 185.

at home.[4] Each generation in this way uses the same materials to construct a new reality. Working historians, of course, see nothing wrong with such transforming views of the past, and would be likely to maintain that the writing of history moves closer to the "truth" with each successive reinterpretation. That even such a faith in linear progress may be excessive is suggested by occasional pendulum swings back to older views: In the ideological rigidity of the Cold War, in fact, historians once again returned to a position emphasizing consensus in the American Revolution. Nevertheless, the assurance of academic historians in the superiority of the most recent scholarly research on the topic remains unshakable, as is evident to anyone who reads book reviews in professional journals, where colleagues regularly praise one another for "adding to our knowledge" or "correcting earlier views" of familiar subjects. Not surprisingly, this obligatory gesture of deference to the steadily advancing cause of truth has no equivalent in reviews of literature. Even the most enthusiastic of J.D. Salinger's critics would never claim that *Catcher in the Rye* provided a much-needed adolescent view of twentieth-century America. Yet it is entirely possible that historians will one day cite the book for precisely that perspective. (Precedents for such judgments are not lacking. To mention only one, some historians have come to believe that Flaubert's Emma Bovary offers greater insight into the bourgeois mentality of nineteenth-century France than any single history or biography.) Thus does the messenger of truth fly freely between history and literature, occasionally lighting on one or the other, but effectively denying us the option of using the standard of truth to the comparative advantage of the historian's craft.

2) Fiction creates, history recreates. If both fiction and non-fiction are inventive, then, are they at least inventive in different ways? Does not the novelist employ his imagination without limits on creativity, while the historian's task is rather an imaginative recreation of the past as faithful as possible to the way it was? If an analogy to visual art be allowed, perhaps the novelist is the painter and the historian the restorer of paintings. Put in this way, however, the historical role seems far too limited, for while history is certainly a reconstruction, it is not restricted to mere copies of earlier visions. Historians must not only bring the past back to life, but explain it as well; otherwise *All Quiet on the Western Front* would suffice as our memory of World War I, with no need for historical accounts. With allowances for the shortcomings of analogy, we may yet find a more suitable historical equivalent to painting in the art of photography. If both painter and photographer are free to create, the photographer is clearly more constrained by the world as it is; if both are interpreters of life, the photographer's interpretation flows less from his manipulation of materials than from his identification of certain elements as more important than others; if both have an eye for possibilities, the photographer relies less on his mind's eye than on those images that are actually recorded on retina and film. To be sure, this is a humbling comparison--it is certainly easier to be a photographer than a painter. (Confirming this, John Lukacs has asserted that it is

[4] Jack P. Greene, ed., *The Reinterpretation of the American Revolution* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 3-17.

much harder to be a great historian than a great novelist, while much easier to write a mediocre history than a mediocre novel.[5])

But, of course, the historian is not really a photographer either, because he has never actually viewed the past he is describing, even through a lens, and at best is dependent on "photographs" taken by others. What real creativity, then, is history permitted? Certainly not that of "inventing imaginary characters," Lukacs insists, nor of investing real figures with motives that cannot be documented by actions.[6] Few would quibble with this injunction as stated, but it may well be wondered whether it places any substantial obstacle in the way of the historian. The vulnerable word here is "imaginary," for from where is a historic character ultimately to be summoned except from the historian's imagination? It is hardly necessary to create deliberately fraudulent personalities when so much latitude is available for those who are real. Who is the true John Brown, the madman or the dedicated crusader? Which Lincoln is invention and which not, the Great Emancipator or the racist, Honest Abe or the consummate politician? It is not that we have to choose between these, because we do not. The point is that each Lincoln can be supported by evidence believed to show the real essence of the man. We may not like to call these varying interpretations creative, or the person they describe imaginary, but like it or not we have made little progress along this line toward establishing the uniqueness of history.

3) <u>History is Apollonian, fiction is Dionysian</u>. This distinction aims at a further refinement of the previous dichotomy, specifying contrasting modes of creativity practiced by the two disciplines. The Apollonian world, dominated by reason, is orderly and controlled, oriented to the intellectual; the Dionysian world, one of license, is orgiastic and unrestrained, oriented to the emotions. To classify fiction in the latter category appears to endorse its stronger claim to creativity, but it can be argued that the impulse to create is also present in the Apollonian. The historian, after all, creates order and harmony where none previously existed; the novelist, governed by no such restraints, is free to create chaos. The difference has less to do with originality or lack of it than with its focus. The novelist's creativity is measured by his ability to express the inner experience of characters or life in a meaningful way. The historian's creativity is judged by his success in ordering the external behavior of human beings into a meaningful pattern. Once again, here, the historian plays the photographer's role: Unable to see inside his subjects, he must analyze them from outside, making sense of what they say and do. The risk in this contrast, however, is that of underestimating the restraints applied as well to the Dionysian artist. Fiction too takes as its subject matter the commonly experienced world of human existence, and must be plausible in its expressions of that world. A Victorian novelist, for instance, might challenge but could not simply ignore social mores of the day. The shared search for meaning, the inhibitions of language, the need to be understood--all these may be unifying factors too easily distorted by recourse to Apollonian-Dionysian polarities.

4) <u>Fiction is a partial view; history sees the world whole</u>. Even if its Apollonian tendencies are insufficient grounds for acquittal on charges of creative

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[5] John Lukacs, *Historical Consciousness* (New York: Schocken Books, 1985), 127.

[6] Ibid.

truth-making, history may yet lay claim to rendering a more complete canvas than fictional literature either attempts or succeeds in constructing. When it is said that Dickens conveys England's Industrial Revolution with more poignancy than a historian can, it is easy to overlook the fact that Dickens does not have to give both sides of the story, while the historian does. (The latter must, in other words, take an interest in how well workhouse orphans other than Oliver Twist were eating.) One scholar has suggested with a measure of irony that the novelist may unwittingly be a better historian than the real thing precisely because fiction is free of limitation by sources that may be inadequate or at least incomplete.[7] But the wholeness of history can also be liberating. In the aftermath of the civil rights and black history movements, for example, questions have been raised in some quarters about the social impact of the celebrated opera *Porgy and Bess*. Overriding the unquestioned artistic qualities of this work for certain dissenters is its portrayal of racial degradation and poverty, which is felt to be an inappropriate representation of black life. What the objections amount to, in short, is a concern with art as a partial, incomplete, and sometimes misleading vision of social reality. In adopting this position, the critics of *Porgy* have, in effect, been seeking to enlist the aid of history for their cause. History's appeal in this case is generated by its tendency to pressure individual insights into a consensus that represents fairly, if not equally, all the elements constituting the whole. The historian is indeed interested in the particular, but implicitly it is the particular as evidence for the totality. This perspective allows us to restructure our debate along more profitable lines: It is not so much that history is "true" (vis-à-vis fiction) as that it is whole.

5) <u>Fiction is private</u>, <u>history is public</u>. Closely allied but not identical to the previous discussion is the special interest of the historian in a public sphere of action, which is essentially irrelevant to the novelist even though he may shed some incidental light on this dimension. If history comprehends a totality of experience separating it from the partial insights of literature, as asserted above, it is the public realm of human activity of which much of this larger perspective consists. It must be made clear, however, that this is no throwback to that older political obsession of a discipline not yet enlightened by the social sciences. "Public" here refers rather to a process by which the lives of individual people are endowed with a larger significance by virtue of their inclusion in a social context. Presumably this is the force at work when novels are integrated into history courses, thereby taking their place in a more comprehensive structure of meaning. This point may be illustrated with reference to one of the most colorful of historic characters, Gregory Rasputin. Let us imagine for the moment that Rasputin never actually lived but that a character with the identical traits and experiences had been invented by Dostoyevsky. No doubt the fictional Rasputin would be engaging and fascinating too--a mad monk with mystical powers who transcends his peasant upbringing to become adviser to the emperor, only to die a bizarre death at the hands of those who would save the country. This is the stuff of fiction, replete with opportunities for psychological insights not excluding those that might open windows on Russian peculiarities. Nevertheless, this fictional Rasputin would still exist in a vacuum,

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[7] Gabor S. Boritt, "The Sandburg For Our Time: Gore Vidal's Lincoln." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association, New York, 30 December 1986.

conveying little beyond the particulars of his own actions within the novel, and nothing of the larger public experience of the Russian people as a whole. To see the historical power of Rasputin, by comparison, is to feel the powerlessness of ordinary Russians, the incredible vulnerability of the empire, the revolutionary potential released by his death. We are lifted out of the private world of fiction to a public consciousness that only historians can supply.

6)Fiction has no linkage to the present; history does. Identification of the larger context and public sphere provided by history still leaves undisclosed the source from which these supplementary dimensions are derived. In theory, at least, both could be added by novelists themselves, some of whom have taken significant steps in that direction. (One thinks first of *War and Peace*.) The essential ingredient in the historian's more comprehensive view, though, which no novelist can adequately provide, is simply the vantage point of another age. The historical novelist (as opposed to the one who is contemporary to the events he describes) may seem to enjoy this advantage too, but it must be remembered that his concern is to make the past interesting to the present, rather than in any conscious way instructive, as Styron's Nat Turner clearly demonstrates. History is, after all, a way of thinking about the present, using the past as a tool for that end. The reader of fiction, on the other hand, is learning more about an imagined past than about his own time, in this way losing the connection that gives history its functional value. History, to be history, cannot be mere antiquarianism, but must be made to exist for a living generation. It is no accident that we frequently refer to fiction as an "escape," perhaps unconsciously acknowledging its irrelevance to present concerns. The historian can never be irrelevant in this way, as Abraham Lincoln understood in proclaiming, "We cannot escape history."

Here, finally, rests the vindication of history from that false dichotomy of truth versus untruth. The truth of history lies in its capacity to make our own times comprehensible in light of the past. This is a formula that gives respectability to all those changing interpretations, now no longer seen as inconsistencies but as potential linkages of past and present. The inspirational Lincoln may provide essential meaning for one generation, while the racist Lincoln offers definition to the problems of another. This is no contradiction. We have, rather, located a truth that serves our vital interests, and one for which historians need not apologize.

USING JOSIAH WEDGWOOD TO TEACH THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Phyllis A. Hall
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and
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College of William and Mary

Freshman European history surveys can be deadly. Instructors must cover hundreds of years in one term. This time restriction requires a general treatment of significant periods, events, people, and trends. Continual doses of general information can kill student interest. Therefore, I try various means to put life into the broad treatment of material. I assign readings to give in-depth analysis of selected topics; I supplement my classes with slides, films, and videos providing visual expressions of the material; and I discuss my own research when it is relevant to the class. Sometimes I use the biography of a special person whose life illustrates a general period or theme of history. Such a person is Josiah Wedgwood (1730-1795), an innovative potter and an enterprising businessman, whose life touched on the main features of the industrial revolution in England.

My class session on Wedgwood gives specific examples that illustrate the more general material on the industrial revolution. He has served my students well. His experiences bring to life exciting changes in industry and technology in eighteenth-century England, and as a bonus, students learn about Wedgwood pottery. Just as pottery in ancient Greece tells the historian much about the ancient world, Wedgwood's pottery tells us much about things like the improving standard of living and methods of marketing in the eighteenth century.

Student feedback from my Wedgwood class has been positive. And I was convinced anew of the validity of using Wedgwood's life for explaining the industrial revolution when another professor, John H. Sprinkle, Jr., independently came up with a similar class on Wedgwood. A description of our use of Wedgwood in the classroom presents a more interesting and relevant way of teaching the industrial revolution and suggests ways in which other specific material--not always in the textbook--can be used to enhance learning. A discussion of our two class plans follows as plan #1: Hall and plan #2: Sprinkle. We have included information on where to obtain pottery samples and some suggested readings.

Class Plan #1: Hall

My class session is titled: *Industrialism in England: Josiah Wedgwood*. I begin with a consideration of why the industrial revolution began in England. I outline on the board nine major factors that fostered the development of English industrialization: 1) a tradition of skill; 2) the presence of fuel and raw materials; 3) a consumer market; 4) new technology; 5) mercantilism; 6) transportation; 7) an intellectual community; 8) a social structure supporting innovation and allowing for social mobility; and 9) a government that could be influenced to promote industry. I briefly discuss each of these factors, taking about ten minutes of class time. Then I introduce Josiah Wedgwood.

The balance of my class is a biography of Wedgwood. As I describe various aspects of Wedgwood's life, I refer back to the list of factors that fostered

industrialization in England. For example, in discussing Wedgwood's family background I point out that he was the son, grandson, and great grandson of potters, and I relate this to the tradition of skill that existed in England in the early years of the eighteenth century. I make the point and refer students back to the list on the blackboard. In like manner, I stress that the second factor, fuel and raw materials, was present in Wedgwood's Staffordshire. Coal seams lay side by side with clay needed for pottery manufacture. And again, I refer students to the original list of factors favoring industrialization in England. The next point on the list is market. When Wedgwood was born in 1730, pottery making was a peasant industry. Yet, such things as the increasing prosperity of the middle-class, the improvement of manners, and the new popularity of hot tea and coffee created a market for more stylish and higher quality ceramic ware. And Wedgwood exploited this new consumerism. By the time I am through with my biographical sketch, each factor that was important for the development of industrialism in England has its specific illustration from Wedgwood's life.

In several instances Wedgwood's activities provide more than one illustration of the factors that promoted industrialism in Great Britain. For example, Wedgwood was active in trying to get the government to advance and protect the pottery industry. He led a campaign to break a monopoly on china clay from Cornwall; he lobbied for a commercial treaty between the United States and Great Britain in 1783; he worked for free trade in pottery with France. Certainly, these are wonderful examples of how one entrepreneur influenced government on behalf of his own industry. Such specific examples illustrate how during the industrial revolution the English government could be enlisted in the service of industry.

By the end of class, my specific examples have illustrated the general points I asserted at the beginning. We have progressed from the general to the specific and returned to the general.

Then I go one step further. I suggest Wedgwood was a man of his times who could not have made so extensive a contribution a century earlier. And I point out that each of us, whether we realize it or not, are also influenced by things like population patterns, new technology, and factors important in our time, just as Wedgwood was influenced by the factors creating the industrial revolution.

In a memorable moment last term, a student asked, "Are you trying to say that the times make the man rather than the man makes the times?"

"That is an important question," I replied, "something that the study of history helps us think about." I paused a few seconds. "Class dismissed." Case closed for devoting a class to Wedgwood and the industrial revolution.

Class Plan #2: Sprinkle

I chose to discuss Josiah Wedgwood in my survey of Western European history because his story illustrates the central themes of the industrial revolution. My approach to the industrial revolution evolved from my interest in archaeology and material culture. I wanted stimulating and different lectures to explain and enliven my survey course. In textbooks, Wedgwood is not commonly given as an example of individuals who are representative of the industrial revolution such as James Watt or James Hargeaves. At the same time, he is familiar because more people have experience with ceramics than with steam engines or spinning jennys.

And from my archaeological work, I had access to samples of British pottery that I could bring into class for a "hands on" teaching aid.

My class on the industrial revolution begins with a review of the material presented in the textbook. I discuss Britain's unique role and leadership in industrialization, the role of inventions, the changing nature of production, the ideas of consumption as an impetus to industrial growth, the role of private enterprise, and the importance of the individual. I propose to the class that Josiah Wedgwood is a prime example of the importance of individual inventors and entrepreneurs.

Before getting into a detailed discussion of Wedgwood, I describe various types of pottery and their chronology. I have brought in samples of some of these ceramics so students can handle them.

Once students have seen the quality of pottery before Wedgwood's time, I show them a sample of his innovative cream ware. I explain that when Wedgwood perfected the formula for cream ware in 1760, he was attempting to produce a relatively cheap ceramic product that approached the whiteness of fine Chinese porcelains. Such porcelains were highly desired in England, in English colonies, and across Europe.

Students can see the difference between earlier ceramic ware and Wedgwood's cream ware. I have little need to explain why cream ware rapidly became popular; the cream ware is obviously superior. But I do need to explain to the students how I got my pottery samples. They did not come from England. They came from archaeological digs in the area of Williamsburg, Virginia. I then explore with students how Wedgwood's cream ware laid the foundation for English domination of the American ceramics market until the mid-nineteenth century.

Once we have looked at the pottery samples, I return again to the general themes I discussed earlier in class. I point out the technological creativity of Wedgwood and the role of the individual in technological innovation. I stress the importance of the world wide market and special advantages British entrepreneurs enjoyed. The British government favored the growth of industry, banking, and shipping. I explain how the technology of production and decoration transformed potters from skilled craftsmen to semi-skilled task-masters. This trend in the pottery industry exemplifies overall patterns characteristic of the industrial revolution.

Another trend was the growing importance of consumerism. Wedgwood showed special savvy in reading the consumer market at home and abroad. He realized that the growth of population and prosperity created a new market for better ceramic ware. In 1765 Wedgwood received an order for a new tea set from Queen Charlotte. Subsequently, Wedgwood became "Her Majesty's Potter." Thereafter, capitalizing on his royal order, he marketed cream ware as Queen's Ware. Later, when Catherine the Great of Russia ordered a 952-piece set of Queen's Ware, Wedgwood displayed it for two months in his London showrooms before sending it to Catherine. He utilized the techniques of Madison Avenue advertising while most of his competitors were trying just to imitate his new processes.

Wedgwood's advertising methods for his quality product were extremely effective. After its introduction as a fine, stylish ceramic, cream ware quickly became the cheapest type of earthenware. All but the poorest classes could now afford cream ware; and cream ware continues to be produced in great quantities even to

the present day. Again, this new affordability characterized not only ceramics but other good produced during the industrial revolution.

By the end of class students have gained some appreciation of the complex nature of the industrial revolution; and they have seen how historians can use material culture--in this case ceramics--to better understand the past. Wedgwood and his cream ware have helped my students see more clearly the transformation of society in eighteenth-century England.

How to Obtain Pottery Samples:

Seek out archaeologists in your area and inquire about obtaining some cream ware samples. Many archaeologists will be so excited by your interest they will lend you--or help you obtain--artifacts for display in your class.

If eighteenth-century pottery samples are unavailable, modern Wedgwood pottery can be found in many stores. Many modern pieces come complete with an information pamphlet detailing the growth of the pottery industry in the eighteenth century.

Some museums such as the Dewitt-Wallace Decorative Arts Museum, Williamsburg, VA 23185, will produce photographs of pottery samples at a minimal cost. Local and college libraries are also a good source for photographs and illustrations.

SUGGESTED READINGS

A useful introduction to the life and accomplishments of Wedgwood is found in an essay "Wedgwood" by Ronald Politt and Herbert F. Curry in *Portraits in British History* (Homewood, IL: Dorsey, 1975), 203-222. For a detailed study of Wedgwood's life see Eliza Meteyard, *The Life of Josiah Wedgwood* (2 vols.: London: Hurst and Blackett, 1865-66). For primary sources see Anne Finer and George Savage, eds., *The Selected Letters of Josiah Wedgwood* (London: Cory, Adams, & McKay, 1965).

REVIEWS

***Let the Record Show: Practical Uses for Historical Documents*. Slide/audio cassette or videotape (VHS or U-Matic). 16 minutes. Free for one week. (Order from Terri Sewell, New York State Archives & Records Administration, Cultural Education Center, room 10A46, Albany, NY 12230.)**

How could historical records help the Dance Theatre of Harlem, a fourth grade class, a botanist, and homeowners lobbying for a new bridge? This fast moving videotape shows us that "these people needed information from the past" and concludes, "It may be hard to foresee now, but at some time historical records are sure to be useful to you too."

The videotape uses interviews, narration, and good organization to make its point. It begins with its interviewees explaining what they need to know about the past, then pauses to discuss historical records, how they are produced, where they are located, and the role of archivists in their preservation and use. Then we hear the success stories. The dance group, for example, saves time and money because its own archives can show how it has staged past productions or if it can expect problems on the road. The fourth grade teacher wanted to bring history to life and helped her students use a nineteenth-century child's letters, old photographs, and historic buildings to enact a Victorian Day. The botanist used botanical journals and specimens in the Buffalo Museum of Science to demonstrate the impact of a century of tourism on a site's flora. A proud member of a homeowners association tells how his work in historic blueprints and correspondence in the Erie Canal Museum helped produce a well-documented case that convinced the highway department to build a new bridge.

The tape is well executed. Visually, it consists entirely of still images, mostly photographs of the interview subjects and their projects mixed with a few historic views. Scenes from the Victorian Day are delightful, but the first section on the Dance Theatre of Harlem needed more pictures. The sound uses people telling their own stories, music, and brief continuity and analysis provided by the narrator, Diane Ward.

Who could use this tape? In the classroom it could challenge college and advanced high school students to think about the basic questions of history: What can we learn from the past and how do we do it? The tape could also inspire teachers to design innovative class projects, and the successful Victorian Day project demonstrates that elementary students can put historic records to good use. Finally, much of the tape seems aimed at convincing a general adult audience of the value of historic research and work of archivists. If it can find that audience, its argument should prove persuasive.

Eastern Oregon State College Charles Coate

Robin Blackburn. *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848*. New York: Verso, 1988. Pp. 560. Cloth, $47.50.

Robin Blackburn's work is an extraordinary study of anti-slavery throughout the Western hemisphere. It offers a sweeping investigation of the complex origins of anti-slavery, giving attention not only to abolitionists but also to political crises in imperialist powers, to slave resistance and rebellion, and to social and political pressures that impelled "metropolitan decision makers" to accept anti-slavery.

Beginning with the medieval origins of anti-slavery, the volume treats emancipation acts in the United States, the violent overthrow of slavery in Haiti, independence and emancipation in Spanish America, Cuba, and Brazil, and British and French abolitionism. The author pursues such a wide ranging study because, for him, slave systems were "integrated," each affecting the other in various political, economic, and social ways. Understandably, the book focuses on Great Britain because that nation, more than any other, reversed its own policies regarding slavery and the slave trade.

Teachers and students of anti-slavery will want to give this book much attention not only because of its geographical breadth of coverage but also because of its argument. Blackburn points out an important contradiction in previous historical assessments regarding anti-slavery: "If slavery developed in the wake of capitalism," how can historians also argue that the "capitalist advance also prompted anti-slavery impulses?" For Blackburn, economic explanations for the demise of anti-slavery are insufficient, because they do not take into account the boost that capitalism gave to various forms of industrial slavery. Blackburn also rejects traditional explanations that emphasize the

role of religion, because "manifestly slavery often received strong sponsorship from religious enthusiasts," including Quakers and Methodists. In fact, for Blackburn abolitionism had no "one-to-one correspondence" with the emancipation of slaves. Blackburn qualifies his argument, observing "not that anti-slavery was purely secular in inspiration, but that its achievements required a secular setting."

To construct his own "Marxist narrative" concerning "the essential working of capitalism, racialism, colonialism, and slavery," Blackburn draws upon David Brion Davis's *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1776-1823*, and Eugene Genovese's *From Rebellion to Revolution*. Although slavery may have arisen for economic reasons, it was overthrown not simply because it was economically unprofitable but because of a broad spectrum of largely political reasons. He finds, for example, that North American and British patriots "did incline" to anti-slavery because of the "discourse of freedom" that emerged so prominently in the eighteenth century. Yet, anti-slavery often amounted to little more than "mild benevolence or mere political rhetoric" because it "often crumbled at the first contact with an opposing material or 'patriotic' interest." Other opponents of slavery, particularly lower classes, fought slavery because they themselves had often endured some form of bondage or servitude. Opposition to the metropolis came not only from within but also from without. The rise of slavery created and empowered "a class of planters and colonial merchants that was unlikely to remain for ever content with metropolitan tutelage." In sum, slavery perished only when "there was a protracted accumulation of problems for the slave order and a concentration of diverse forces opposed to it."

Although a sequel with much more attention to the United States is promised, this particular volume is superficial in its treatment of the U.S. In fact, Blackburn's chronological focus on the U.S. in the early nineteenth century permits him to overlook the role of bourgeois reformers and the role of religion. One interesting point, briefly treated, is that the United States recognized that Haiti's independence of European powers in 1804 was a "signal demonstration" that North America could be economically independent as well.

Students would profit from this book's careful and balanced account. The difficulty is that this text requires sophisticated reading skills and knowledge. The enormous complexity of the argument, the amount and density of the information, the treatment of many countries and provinces, often shifting from colonial to imperial politics, will likely daunt, if not confuse, all but the best undergraduates.

Earlham College — Randall Shrock

Alan Sked. *Britain's Decline: Problems and Perspectives*. New York: Basil Blackwell, Inc., 1987. Pp. 90. Paper, $7.95.

Perhaps it is inevitable that the nation that gave us Edward Gibbon should have a preoccupation with "decline." In this slender pamphlet, Alan Sked summarizes what three dozen social scientists have said about contemporary Britain's economic and moral decline. Sponsored by the Historical Association, the pamphlet is designed to inform the average citizen and lift the level of public debate on such issues as the power of trade unions, the Welfare State, crime, drugs, sexual behavior, the Church of England, and low economic productivity. Sked tries to be even-handed in his evaluations, neither attacking nor endorsing the controversial policies of Mrs. Thatcher.

Both Tory and Labourite can find useful information in this inexpensive and readable pamphlet. Can the same be said for American students? The answer is probably not. The American undergraduate should not attempt Sked until he or she has read at least the last couple of chapters in a good survey textbook such as Roberts and Roberts. If the student has a strong interest in history he or she would likely derive more benefit from studies by Arthur Marwick and Anthony Sampson. Sked's pamphlet would be useful in a social science methods course or in a comparative government class. To the general American reader, it is nearly useless.

Britain's decline is relative, as is that of the United States, and it may prove temporary. In recent years, British industrial productivity has shown improvement, and British scientists have won 35 Nobel prizes since the end of World War II. The problems of stagflation, persistent poverty, and racial tensions are universal, not exclusively British.

Somerset Community College — Roger Tate

Seamus Deane. *The French Revolution and Enlightenment in England, 1789-1832.* Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1988. Pp. 212. Cloth, $25.00.
Patrice Higonnet. *Sister Republics: The Origins of French and American Republicanism.* Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1988. Pp. 317. Cloth, $25.00.

The bicentennial of the French Revolution has prompted an outpouring of new books, scholarly and popular, but these two from Harvard clearly aim at an academic audience. Each may prove useful in certain courses, but teachers should be aware of their disadvantages.

Deane's title will mislead any history teachers and students who expect the book to discuss the politics of Fox and Pitt or the strategies of Nelson and Wellington. "The central emphasis here is on literary figures," Deane writes, because "the reception of the French Enlightenment and Revolution in England is essentially a literary and cultural story." Deane--poet, critic, and professor of literature at University College, Dublin describes his book as "the impact of the Revolution and the French Enlightenment on English thought and letters during that first hectic period of reaction and response."

For those interested in that topic, this volume does have much to offer. It aims to demonstrate how "the French Revolution profoundly affected the reception and interpretation of the French Enlightenment in England" by developing two main narratives. The first examines intellectual relationships between English and French writers, such as Godwin's debts to Holbach and Helvétius, Shelly's to La Mettrie and Cabanis, and Coleridge's to Rousseau. The second narrative explores the reactions of English intellectuals, especially Burke and Hazlitt, to events in France. Admittedly selective, the author omits Blake, Byron, and Bentham. Deane bases his study on the published formal writings of English authors but also refers to their letters, some unpublished manuscripts, and secondary works. Sermons, pamphlets, and novels receive brief attention.

Deane convincingly concludes that the French Enlightenment and Revolution were widely understood in England as the first two parts of a historical crisis that might engulf England next. In self-defense, English thinkers, rejecting the universal claims made by the French, attacked those movements as specifically French and thus alien and invalid in England. In the process, they began to define English national consciousness in terms of opposition to all things French, whether fascination with abstract thought, relaxed sexual morality, lack of respect for the established church, egoism, or a tendency to despotism.

This is not a book for beginners. It assumes readers with a sophisticated vocabulary and literary background, and its exposition is sometimes tedious and confusing. Deane's lengthy discussions of "sympathetic imagination" and "secret crime" are soporific. Moreover, lists of writers and undefined concepts sometimes clog his prose. This book is more likely to be used in literature than history courses, but it could prove useful for advanced undergraduates or graduate students in interdisciplinary courses touching on reactions to the French Revolution in English literature. Otherwise, I can only recommend it as an outside assignment for a capable student with substantial interest and background in the subject.

History teachers and students will find Higonnet's book far more interesting and useful, it not always easier to read. Inspired by the work of Bernard Bailyn and François Furet, Higonnet, who is Goelet Professor of French History at Harvard, believes that both the American and French revolutions were ideological at root and not economically determined. In this interpretive essay he seeks to show why they developed so differently. Analyzing the secondary literature of the last twenty years, he rejects the neo-Marxist portion for its inability to explain the ideological differences between the revolutions, such as the sharp contrast in the number of executions. Both revolutions, he concludes, were "the birth throes of new political systems designed to express the importance of individualism in social life," which Higonnet terms "republicanism." And their "varying political developments were in no small part implied by the antecedent social histories of the two nations."

In alternating chapters on France and America, though with striking comparisons throughout, Higonnet examines the influences of political theory and events, religion, family, economic developments, and corporate structures like guilds and village communes on the shifting balance between individualism and its opposite, communitarianism. In America he finds that some of the early communitarianism transcended the general triumph of individualism. Lacking a tradition of popular or corporate action and having internalized the preconditions of capitalism, the Americans avoided the emergence of class as a determining factor in politics. Their inherited Radical Whig ideology led them to revolution, and then they successfully built "a new political consciousness that resolved the tensions of their historical experience and resolved their inherited ideological, religious, or communitarian nostalgias with the practical realities of American social life." But in France the

traditional political and social hierarchies declined while a negativist, nationalist, and possessive individualism rose. The contradiction between these two currents caused the revolution, which occurred when a united front of bourgeois and nobles abandoned the monarchy. Then Jacobin leaders from 1791 to 1799 all faced the same basic question: "How far should the propertied revolutionaries, incited by universalist rhetoric . . . and in desperate need of allies, agree to travel in tandem with the people" who had never forgotten their own communitarian traditions? Thus the American and French Revolutions developed differently because of the different qualities of individualism in the two countries.

Higonnet's analysis, which glows with erudition in both fields, is penetrating, subtle, convincing, and humane. One only wishes that it were written more clearly. Like Deane, Higonnet reduces complex concepts to single words, rarely defined straightforwardly, and then packs them into sentences that are so heavily freighted that his train of thought derails. Sometimes his style is eloquent: "In the administrative and social void caused by the collapse of the ancien régime, the Feuillants mistook the echo of their own words for the voice of the assembled nation." But more common are passages like these: "maieutic nationalism furthered yet another new politics, pluralistic but still messianic and exemplary;" or "many of the problems that brought down the elitist, individualist-universalist program of enlightened reform were not of the meritocrats' own making." If the author had taken the time and trouble to explain his ideas more thoroughly and express them more clearly, this book would be longer but much more useful in the classroom and even attract readers outside academe.

Nevertheless, *Sister Republics* is now the best comparative study of these two revolutions. With careful interpretation by an instructor (or better, two instructors, one for each revolution), this book could become the heart of an excellent course comparing these revolutions. Its arguments are bold enough for all students to see, and it navigates through the crowded waters of contemporary revolutionary studies in a way that will raise their historiographical awareness. Add a couple of volumes of primary sources and good films like *The Adams Chronicles*, *La Nuit de Varennes*, and *Danton*, and you have the makings of a fine course.

College of the Ozarks Michael W. Howell

Maurice Larkin. *France Since the Popular Front: Government and People, 1936-1986*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1988. Pp. xxix, 435. Cloth, $64.00; paper $19.95.

This is a competent, informed book about recent French history, but it is a book that serves no clear function. As a work of scholarship, it has no glaring faults; its interpretations are balanced and judicious. The problem is that there are already enough general texts that deal with this period. To be sure, most deal with either the pre or post-war, but that's not a sufficient justification for a new book.

This is all the more true because the author does not follow up his suggestion in the preface that there is a logic in examining a period in French history bounded by two major experiences of socialist government, that of the Popular Front and Mitterrand. Had he organized the book in a more thematic or interpretative way, the result might have been more original.

Larkin's book is not well suited for students. It is more erudite than structured, more apt to allude than to explain. Because it assumes a high level of prior knowledge, the reader who can fully understand the author's ironies and nuances really doesn't need this kind of book at all, whereas the student will most likely be confused. In particular, the author's frequent use of French expressions and arcane allusions may amuse the specialist but not the undergraduate.

This is essentially old fashioned political history with some additional materials on economics and some passing comments about society. There is a three-page appendix on the arts, but that only calls attention to the book's narrow scope. The Mitterrand regime receives 25 pages and deserves more. The book contains no conclusion. Despite its author's command of the material, this work will not serve to introduce students to the complex realities of modern France.

University of New Mexico Steven Philip Kramer

Diether Raff. *A History of Germany from the Medieval Empire to the Present*. Oxford, Hamburg, and New York: Berg, 1988. Pp. ix, 507. Cloth, $51.00; paper, $16.95.

To be effective a textbook must exhibit readability, coherent structure, conciseness without superficiality, and consistency of viewpoint; it should also provide adequate discussion of the evolution and significance of events so that students acquire insight without being overwhelmed by the complexities of each topic. Raff's German history, in uncluttered translation by Bruce Little, for the most part has these attributes.

Despite its title, this book deals with German history prior to the French Revolution in one scant chapter, but here a basic theme of the volume is introduced: the thwarting of periodic aspirations for national unity and power by political, cultural, social, and religious particularism. Raff's narrative proceeds by emphasizing the dualisms that have plagued German life, including the rivalry between Prussia and Austria and the clash between liberal constitutionalism and an authoritarian tradition. A growing industrialism must contend with a social order rooted in the agrarian past. The social question, one of Raff's major interests, pits workers against the bourgeoisie and is ultimately swallowed by nationalism, itself rent by *kleindeutsch* and *grossdeutsch* tendencies. Even the genius of Bismarck can achieve at best uneasy compromises among these forces.

Raff blames the failure of the Weimar Republic not only on the intransigence of the West but also on internal dichotomies: the nostalgia for order versus the burden of freedom and the narrowness of political parties versus the needs of a democratic state. He carefully distinguishes between the policies of Nazi leaders and the aspirations of most Germans, whose desire for prosperity, dynamic government, and national vigor did not include plans for war or complicity in genocide. The Germans, Raff asserts, were also victims, and he chides the Allies for the Hitlerite assumption that all Germans shared the same spirit. The book concludes with an adept treatment of postwar, divided Germany, a product of another dualism, that between East and West.

The story of Germany is given immediacy by the inclusion of commentaries by contemporaries of the events recounted. The character sketches of Bismarck, William II, and Hitler given in the body of work are splendid. The most unusual feature of this national history is the addition of material on other countries to give perspective to German affairs. Thus the chapter on German industrialization begins with a survey of the British industrial revolution. The chapter on totalitarianism may not really distinguish it from other forms of autocracy, but the reader is made aware that what happened in Germany had parallels elsewhere. Curiously, Raff does not discuss Fascist Italy in this chapter.

There are a few other slips when Raff moves beyond the confines of Germany. Louis Napoleon was not elected to a ten-year term as France's president in 1848 but to a four-year term. Raff's account makes it seem that the intrusion of France's revolutionary armies into Nice, Savoy, the Rhineland, and the Netherlands in 1792 somehow preceded the Brunswick Manifesto and the overthrow of Louis XVI and that the Jacobin dictatorship was the immediate product of the fall of the monarchy.

Although Raff's discussions of Enlightenment political theory, economic liberalism, and Marx's ideas are exemplary, his sections on intellectual and cultural topics generally are weak, a flaw this textbook shares with many others. To say that Herder "pointed out the role of history in human development" or that Art Nouveau "furthered the trend toward aestheticism and symbolism" is, of course, correct but does not provide the nonspecialist with enough information. Weimar culture is ignored except for a list of artists, authors, and composers proscribed by the Nazis, but the reader really cannot tell why these individuals were condemned.

Finally, the maps are impossible. They are so small and so murky as to be without value.

Yet these drawbacks are more than compensated for by the lucidity and intelligence of Raff's analysis of political, economic, and social themes. Whoever judges Donald Detwiler's Germany history too truncated and Koppel Pinson's fine, old classic too difficult for students should find Raff's *A History of Germany* a welcome alternative to both.

Fort Hays State University Robert B. Luehrs

Richard Bessel, ed. *Life in the Third Reich.* Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1987. Pp. xix, 124. Cloth, $24.95; paper, $7.95.

In *Life in the Third Reich*, Richard Bessel edits and contributes to a collection of essays on the Nazi experience. The contributors, eight of them, have written brief, undocumented essays on subjects to do with Hitler's Germany. In the majority of cases those authors have written on the same or allied subjects at greater length elsewhere, and thus the lack of footnotes and bibliography (except for a brief "Suggestions for Further Reading") is not disabling.

The essays cover such varied subjects as political violence, village life, youth, Hitler's public image, the nature of the Nazi state, the treatment of Jews, and the treatment of other social outcasts (*gemeinschaftsfremd*). The final one examines how ordinary people remember the Third Reich. The essays, as a group, therefore, do not attempt to present the Third Reich in any sort of full view, but only to illuminate some of its corners.

All the authors agree that one of the characteristics of the Nazi state was its lack of coherent organization or policy. When they look at the Nazi bureaucracy, several of the authors use, correctly, the analogy of feudal barons struggling for dominance. In fact, some go so far in this view that it is hard to imagine how the Germans did as well as they did in World War II.

Bessel's writers are uniformly interesting, particularly when they discuss matters that are seldom looked at in more general writings on the Third Reich. For example, Detlew Peukert describes rebellious youth, the "Edelweiss Pirates" and the "Swing Youth," who flouted their distaste for authority even in the early war years. Gerhard Wilke looks at life in a small village in northern Hesse and the effect that Nazism had on life there. The least satisfactory of the essays is that by Ian Kershaw, who attempts to explain the creation of Hitler's image, the Fuehrer cult; the deficiencies in his essay stem more from the inability of research tools to explain political leadership than from any shortcoming on Kershaw's part.

The book requires a substantial amount of background information to read and some degree of sophistication to interpret. Thus, it would serve very well as a subject for discussion in a seminar setting or in a course that focused strongly or exclusively on the Third Reich, but it would be less satisfactory as collateral reading in a more general course.

University of North Texas — Bullitt Lowry

Barbara Marshall. *The Origins of Post-War German Politics.* London, New York, and Sydney: Croom Helm, 1988. Pp. 221. Cloth, $57.50.

In this monograph, Barbara Marshall, a Senior Lecturer in European History at the Polytechnic of North London, examines how the post-World War II political, social, and economic order developed within the Germany occupied by the western Allies. Expectations raised by its title notwithstanding, *The Origins of Post-War German Politics* focuses on British occupation policies in Hanover between the city's capture in April 1945 and the economic merger of the British and American zones in January 1947. Divided into two sections, it treats respectively the interregnum between April and August and the post-Potsdam period. After an opening chapter, which summarizes British preparations for the occupation and the establishment of the Military Government in Hanover, the next two describe local life and political developments before Potsdam. The three following chapters analyze British policies and practices regarding the democratization of local government, Works Councils and Trade Unions, and the revival of political parties, especially the Social Democratic Party (SDP).

Defeat of Hitler's Third Reich gave the Allies unprecedented opportunities to create new institutions in Germany, especially during a brief period immediately subsequent to the end of hostilities. A radically democratic and egalitarian order, however, did not emerge, and Marshall investigates, using Hanover as a case study, not only the role of the British and the Germans in this putative failure but also the question of whether the Allies actually prevented its creation, imposing instead a bourgeois and capitalistic democracy. Marshall finds that British occupation policy, especially prior to Potsdam, lacked clearly articulated goals, other than security for the occupying forces, the restoration of law and order, the provision of food and other basic services, denazification, and the democratization of German institutions. Confronted with the staggering problems of a Hanover in ruins, the understaffed Military Government adopted a pragmatic approach, postponing questions of long-term reform. British delegation of administrative responsibilities to Germans also

compromised denazification by employing from necessity not preference officials with controversial Nazi pasts.

British policies, Marshall concludes, constrained further by financial and military weaknesses at the war's end, by pressing world-wide commitments, and by American disapproval of radical innovations, neither actively promoted nor hindered the emergence of a new order. Explicit here is the book's underlying theme, a regret that both the British and the Germans let slip an opportunity to insure that post-war institutions would be fundamentally unlike those of either the Weimar Republic or the Nazi period.

Historians dealing with controversial recent events, especially those in periods like post-war Germany that still provoke emotional responses from participants as well as scholars, confront unresolvable problems of source material. Although the notes and bibliography indicate that Marshall has consulted an abundance of primary and secondary sources, printed as well as oral, British as well as German, she concedes the limitations of the materials used and specifies the documents closed to her, such as the Lower Saxony denazification proceedings. While the writing, albeit occasionally labored and awkward, is generally clear as is the organization, there are persistent and annoying errors (e.g. Trueman for Truman, p. 11).

Scholars and graduate students who specialize in recent German history will appreciate the factual details assembled for this case study of British occupation policies. Undergraduates will find the book less useful, largely because this narrowly conceived study is not set within the larger context of allied occupation policies and practices in Germany as a whole.

Pembroke State University — Robert W. Brown

Robert D. Marcus & David Burner, eds. *America Firsthand*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989. Volume I: *From Settlement to Reconstruction*. Pp. xii, 311. Paper, $16.00. Volume II: *From Reconstruction to the Present*. Pp. xiv, 366. Paper, $16.00.

The editors of *America Firsthand* believe that the "past is the present writ small." In this two-volume set designed as supplementary reading for the survey course, Robert Marcus and David Burner have dug deeply into the historical past to find diary entries, letters, speeches, government documents, and specialized excerpts from vintage literature and monographs to illustrate that life today bears some marked similarities to the generations of yesteryear.

Volume One, sub-titled *From Settlement to Reconstruction*, is composed of four parts: "Discovery and Early Settlement;" "From Colonies to Republic;" "The Growth of a New Nation;" and "Reform, Slavery, Civil War, and Reconstruction." While the sections (and corresponding time periods) are fairly standard, many of the readings, especially those that are more social than economic and political, are new and refreshing fare. Contrary to earlier textbooks, this anthology contains information on women (Mary Jemison, Harriet Robinson, Jane Lewis, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth); on Indians (Father Paul Le Jeune, King Philip, Black Hawk); on Blacks (Nat Turner, Frederick Douglass, Felix Haywood); on church and school (Caleb Bingham and Peter Cartwright); and, of course, traditional fare, such as great men (Christopher Columbus, John Smith, William Bradford, Cotton Mather, Tom Paine, George Washington).

Volume Two, entitled *From Reconstruction to the Present*, contains four sections: "Reconstruction and the Western Frontier;" "An Age of Economic Expansion;" "Roots of the Modern Era;" and "America Since 1945." With richer material to draw upon, the second half of *America Firsthand* is substantially longer than the first. In addition to items on women and minorities, this book contains documents on immigration (O.E. Rolvaag, Upton Sinclair), reform movements (Mother Jones, Jacob Riis, Lincoln Steffens, John F. Kennedy, Tom Hayden), and the downtrodden (the Grimes family, Otis G. Lynch, Jessie de la Cruz). The selections are generally edited for interest as well as length.

In conclusion, *America Firsthand* is an excellent addition to burgeoning lists of textual curricula for the freshman survey course. Both volumes give almost equal weight to the four divisions therein and a concerted effort has been made to illustrate history "from the bottom up" as opposed to "from the top down." Then, too, a serious attempt has been made to retain the context of those selections that have been shortened. The editors have also expended some time in creating discussion questions for each of the subdivisions, eliminating the need for an instructor's manual. Finally, the publishers selected community college, college, and university instructors, both men and women, from California to Texas and from Ohio to Arizona, to review the manuscript as a whole. This process, undoubtedly, identified some errors and fostered some public relations activity for future adoptions.

In the end, however, the major question concerning these volumes cannot be answered here. That question is, "Will the published reflections of many minds and personalities that made up the American character motivate modern students to view history as a discipline that offers viable insight and perspective into his or her world?"

Northern Arizona University Philip Reed Rulon

Lawrence W. Levine. *Highbrow, Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988. Pp. xii, 306. Cloth, $25.00.

To this reviewer, Lawrence W. Levine's latest study represents cultural, intellectual, and social history at its best. In the introduction Levine recounts his growing awareness of the fact that the present hierarchical distinction between "highbrow" or "elite" culture and "lowbrow" or "popular" culture is of relatively recent origin, dating only from the turn of the last century. For instance, during most of the nineteenth century Shakespeare was "part and parcel" of a "rich shared public culture." In theaters the Bard was presented, suitably altered to suit local dramatic and moral tastes, to a socially heterogeneous audience who freely expressed their views, verbally and in more physical ways. Various versions of Shakespeare were presented in large cities, small towns, river boats, and barrooms. Then a strange thing happened. Shakespeare was "purified"--"sacralized" is Levine's preferred term--and elevated above the masses. The "legitimatized" Bard became part of "high culture" and a "cultural deity" rather than a cultural experience. He became, and remains, "theatrical spinach" to be taken because he is good for one's cultural development.

The same thing happened to opera, symphonic music, and the arts. It is difficult now to imagine the ubiquity of opera in the nineteenth century, but in those days street boys whistled operatic airs and soldiers marched to "La Traviata Quickstep." Travelling singers and instrumentalists like Jenny Lind and Ole Bull casually mixed American folk pieces with the most respected European compositions. Orchestras included the Katy-did Polka and a Beethoven symphony on the same program. Then, like drama, music became sacralized and elevated above the masses. "Serious" music, usually by European composers, required a carefully controlled setting, similar to a temple or church, and an appropriately reverent audience. At the same time museums moved from the "general and eclectic to the exclusive and specific." All this cultural elevation and segregation was accompanied by "sacred language and religious analogies." According to the new dispensation nothing fine could be popular and nothing popular could be fine. It was not so much that rigid barriers were erected between the two cultures: "The meaning of culture itself was being defined . . . . The primary debate was less over who should enter the precincts of the art museum, the symphony hall, the opera house as what they should experience once they did enter, what the essential purpose of these temples of culture was in the first place." The purpose of sacralized art and music was, first, to purify and elevate culture itself, and, second, to improve the taste, cultivate virtue, and promote the spiritual growth of the masses, while in the process making them worthy citizens of the American republic. Levine shows how "arbiters of culture" like Henry Adams, Henry James, and Frederick Law Olmsted sought to promote social order in rapidly changing times, and to "civilize" the masses. He also notes a less than admirable desire for cultural exclusivity and more impersonal cultural trends.

This book could well serve as a textbook in nineteenth-century American cultural, social, and intellectual history. It fits in well with studies in American gentility (e.g. Stow Persons) and American republicanism (e.g. Gordon Wood). It reflects the rediscovery of popular culture, and provides insights into the current controversy over the "canon" of a liberal education. There is no doubt that Levine's sympathies lie with those who wish to modify the accent on a narrow range of elite "classics" by Western white males. Levine is not as much concerned with "high" standards as he is with shared cultural experiences. Although his book does little to resolve the problem of cultural standards in a mass society, it does provide a new perspective by showing that the elitist pedigree dates only from the turn of the last century.

Winston-Salem State University Howard A. Barnes

Anne M. Boylan. *Sunday School: The Formation of an American Institution, 1790-1880*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988. Pp. xii, 225. Cloth, $26.50.

Teaching ancient history to high school freshmen over twenty years ago was one of my first teaching assignments and one I began with some uncertainty. Making the subject interesting and "relevant"--a popular pedagogical term of the 1960s--challenged my beginning teaching skills, but I was pleasantly surprised to find some knowledgeable students who were also advocates for the study of ancient history. Where had they learned the names of ancient cities? Where had they become familiar with the rivers and geography of Biblical times? Sunday School.

Sunday School: The Formation of an American Institution, 1790-1880 is neither a history of the Sunday School movement nor a detailed study of any one denomination's school. It is a social study of an important American institution that taught more than hymns, prayers, and piety to nineteenth-century youth. In the words of the author, her study is about a "neglected piece of American history." It details "another example of how nineteenth-century Americans devised institutional solutions to the complex task of socializing the young."

The author chronicles the development of American Sunday Schools during one hundred years from 1790 when they first appeared as inspirations from the work of Robert Raikes and other British evangelicals. Each chapter is thoroughly documented with numerous references to correspondence and diaries of the period and to relatively rare secondary sources such as the minute books and papers of the American School Union that are deposited in Philadelphia. Included in the work are reproductions of advertising cards, admission certificates, teaching guides, student workbooks, and catalogs--all of which add to the reader's understanding of the popularity and success of Sunday School. Such references to colorful contemporary material should make this book enjoyable reading for anyone interested in education past and present. Consider the following example.

An ad from a Sunday School in Saint Louis suggests why parents can't afford to have their children out of Sabbath School. From a list of ten items, the following four illustrate the variety of attractions for parents and their children: religious study, moral instruction, creating incentives to study, and social activities. Referring to the Sunday School the ad states:

> "It gives fifty lessons a year in that best of books--the Bible."
>
> "It trains the children in the practice of benevolence, love, obedience to parents, truthfulness, kindness to one another, and purity of language."
>
> "It offers prizes in the shape of Bibles, Testaments, books, medals, or picture cards for Scripture recitations, attendance and good conduct."
>
> "It gives, once a year, a delightful picnic excursion or celebration to the Sunday School scholars."

An admission certificate from Philadelphia reminds us of the proselytizing mission of the Sunday School. Included in the list of duties of a Sabbath Scholar: "I must try and persuade my parents and friends to accompany me to Church and to the Sabbath Evening Meetings."

A section on Sunday School teachers analyzes briefly how a "nineteenth-century gender ideology" encouraged women to enter the field. Readers in the history of curriculum development will appreciate the discussion of how Sunday-school curriculum shifted as a result of changing school goals and the influence of contemporary educational reforms from preparing students for conversion to the study of Scriptures. We learn that Sunday School teachers were not isolated and alone but that they were influenced by the common-school movement and its interest in various educational reformers of the time, especially Pestalozzi.

There is much to recommend this book to educators who want to understand the influence of religion in the lives of children today. The Sunday School experience is still a powerful force even though it is far less influential than it was one hundred years ago. The book can also help explain the renewed interest on the part of social studies teachers for teaching about religion in history.

It must be noted that in the copy this reviewer received there were eighteen missing pages of text, blank pages. One would hope that this is an isolated case from the Yale University Press.

Junior Achievement, Inc. Peter J. Harder
Farmington, CT

Robert V. Remini. *The Jacksonian Era*. Arlington Heights: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1989. Pp. x, 139. Paper, $8.95.

This book is a fine summary of Remini's extensive work on the Jacksonian period. Well-written and easily read, it may serve as either an introduction or quick review of the era. It is a volume in the American History Series, which editor John Hope Franklin describes as works where major historians write "not only where the subject stands in today's historiography but also about where they stand on their subject." Remini succeeds in doing both.

Remini deals with the basic political events of the era: the Bank War, presidential elections, Indian removal, and nullification. Beginning with Andrew Jackson as an American symbol, and taking us through his 1828 election to the presidency, the work introduces the student to the era's leading figures: Henry Clay, John C. Calhoun, John Quincy Adams, and Jackson's successor, Martin Van Buren. Remini presents Jackson as a product of the frontier, a man of the people, and a true democrat battling scandal, corruption, and privilege. This is a view that has fallen from favor in recent years, but as Remini's many works support such a thesis, this work is a fine summary of that view.

Three key events of the Jacksonian era are examined in detail: the Bank War, the Nullification Crisis, and Indian Removal. Remini presents a good summary of each, with enough detail for teachers putting together lectures on these topics. Material on the Bank War is particularly crisp, capturing the emotional as well as the ideological issues involved.

Although primarily a political approach, Remini provides a chapter on "The Reach for Perfection," describing the many religious, social, and reform movements that characterized this same era. This is the weakest chapter, where Remini rushes from one movement to another. The final chapter, "The End of an Age," places the Jacksonian period in the broader developments of westward expansion and sectional conflict. Jackson's expansionist ideas are developed and linked to the Mexican War that set a more direct course for American foreign policy and national development. Remini brings the Jacksonian era to a close by showing how slavery and sectionalism replaced banks, tariffs, and internal improvements as the national political agenda. With the Wilmot Proviso in 1846 and the death of Old Hickory, Remini draws the era to a close.

Although historiography is not directly addressed, Remini often refers to recent corrective works and provides a detailed bibliographic essay. Within this essay, major monographs are cited for teachers preparing more detailed lessons or student research projects. Many recent titles are mentioned, providing a quick supplement to the Goldentree Bibliography Series volume Remini edited in 1979.

This work would be useful in undergraduate survey courses as supplemental reading. Its brief chapters on specific problems of the period are ideal material for essay examination questions or classroom discussions. Advanced high school students might also find much of this material of interest, given the right preparation. It also presents a working outline of the era for teachers in need of a way to organize the period for classroom use. Overall, this work is extremely useful as a teaching aid and a basic text.

SUNY at Buffalo George D. Torok

Richard E. Beringer, Herman Hattaway, Archer Jones, and William N. Still, Jr. *The Elements of Confederate Defeat: Nationalism, War Aims, and Religion*. Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1988. Pp. xi, 244. Cloth, $30.00; paper, $15.00.

The central theme of this book is that the generally accepted military interpretation of Confederate defeat is inadequate to understand the collapse of the Confederacy. The authors assert that the real cause of the defeat was a lack of nationalist feeling, unclear and changing war aims, and a gradual and demoralizing realization that God was not on the side of the South.

The authors conclude that the original war aim, preservation of slavery, was weakened during the war by the South's proposal to draft black troops and end slavery. The Southern commitment to states rights was weakened by the South's turn to a centralist government. They believe, also, that slavery was the only real difference between North and South. In all other loyalties and aspirations Southerners were bound to American history, the Union, and the Constitution. With the realization that the goals of the war were unreachable by continued military resistance, especially when confronted by Lincoln's lenient policy of reconstruction, the South decided to stop the conflict. Each

military defeat sapped the South's confidence that God favored their cause and further demoralized the Southerners. This demoralization contributed to a fifty-three per cent desertion rate by mid-1864. The authors effectively challenge previous interpretations of Confederate defeat such as the idea that internal dissension over states rights issues defeated the South by pointing out that independent policies of states like North Carolina did not effectively hinder the war effort.

For the student of military history, the book argues that the adherence of both sides to the nineteenth-century concept of huge turning movements advocated by Clausewitz and Jomini were used most effectively by the South. Such movements allowed Southerners to fight defensively and tended to equalize the armies and in fact put the South at an advantage. The Union blockade of the South is seen as ineffective and the general equality of the two armies' fighting capacity meant that a decisive blow to the South was never feasible. Up to the last Southern Armies were well supplied and generally equal to the North, especially when one considers the North's commitment of one-third of its forces to simply protect its supply lines in Southern territory. This did away with the numerical superiority of the North as a decisive factor. Grant's policy of warfare that amounted to large scale raids on the Southern interior were demoralizing; however, they left most of the South still in Southern control. The Southern decision not to engage in guerrilla warfare at the end indicates demoralization more than defeat.

Confederate commitment to the war was never that strong. Some three to five per cent of the Southern population fought the war as opposed to ten per cent in modern wars and much higher percentages in special cases. The authors point out that little Paraguay committed some fifty per cent of its people to a war.

The authors contend that in reality the South won the Civil War. After the war both Northern and Southern states became followers of states rights. Southern historians ignored slavery as a cause of the war and emphasized states rights as the more glorious cause. Slavery itself was merely replaced by the doctrine of white supremacy.

All teachers of history would be wise to incorporate most of these ideas into their explanations of the South's defeat. The much overrated military accounts of the war ignore other crucial factors in the defeat of the Confederacy. The South was a far more complex society than the usual explanations allow for. For the typical student the book demands a certain degree of prior knowledge, both of Civil War events and historiography. It would be helpful to use this book in conjunction with other accounts of the war. The book itself is a synthesis of earlier works on this subject like the authors' work *Why the South Lost the Civil War* and Henry Hattaway and Archer Jones's *How the North Won: A Military History of the Civil War*. The book is an excellent response to other historiographical classics on the Civil War.

Mountain View College — Richard L. Means

***The Civil War: Two Views*. 75 minutes. One videocassette, teacher's notes, pre- and post-tests, simulation, chronology, activities. Available in Beta (7VB 0036) or VHS (7VH 0036). Order from Audio Visual, Inc., 17 Marble Ave., Pleasantville, NY 10570. $189.00.**

This videocassette is intended for use by students in grades seven through twelve. Besides the seventy-five minute tape, the purchase package contains numerous teacher assistance materials such as a text transcription, sample test questions, bibliographical guides, and a creative simulation exercise section.

"The Civil War: Two Views" is a somewhat deceptive title with regard to this offering. Instead, three major subjects are addressed in the same film. Although the topics are certainly interrelated, time constraints and a less than skillful job of editing combine to produce an unbalanced product in both quality and quantity.

The video features four parts: the North before the war; the South before the war; the war itself; and the war's aftermath (Reconstruction). By far, the first two segments are the best. The script is fairly even and nicely paced while the economic, political, and social forces and factors that created a hostile atmosphere between the two diverse sections of the nation are adequately explored. The primary flaw here, however, is that some issues and events are not properly introduced, while others are presented out of chronological sequence or incorrectly.

Part Three, the war years, is also satisfactorily managed. Numerous camp and battle scenes combine with statistical data to make telling points and deliver perspective about this bloody American tragedy. But one wonders why greater use was not made of the wide range of photographic

collections readily available from those years.

The final segment, that dealing with Reconstruction, is certainly the least successful installment. It is entirely too simple, incomplete, and disjointed to be otherwise. The issues of the hour remain fragmented and cloudy. And one finds it ironic that while excessive emphasis is accorded blacks during this era, the 13th Amendment to the Constitution is not even mentioned.

In printed and visual particulars, "The Civil War: Two Views" could have been improved had more attention been given to proofing (the war did not begin in 1860, for example) and less to background music that is frequently annoying and counterproductive. Perhaps some of the defects of this work are the result of transferring an earlier filmstrip to a "new" medium. A competent instructor who recognizes the deficiencies of this endeavor, however, will go some distance in the direction of making it worthwhile in the classroom.

Bainbridge College Robert W. Dubay

Ross Gregory. *America 1941: A Nation at the Crossroads*. New York: The Free Press, 1989. Pp. x, 339. Cloth, $22.95.

Americans have a continuing fascination with World War II. This interest is reflected in a recent avalanche of books, films, and television miniseries about the "Good War." Among the best of these is Ross Gregory's engaging portrait of America on the verge of war. In impressive detail, he captures a nation lurching toward an uncertain future.

Gregory opens with a cogent description of Franklin Roosevelt's December 29, 1940, "fireside chat," a radio address that outlined the perilous new year for his listeners. Americans in 1941 were constantly bombarded with news of Asian and European wars, yet many of them were reluctant to prepare for or think seriously about an American role in another world war.

Gregory's entire work revolves around this contradictory sense of reluctance and uncertainty coupled with a feeling that climactic changes were imminent. Holding up a mirror to American society, he describes in succeeding chapters the creation of the first peacetime conscripted army and an economy recovering from depression and coping with labor disputes, government planning, and consumer demands. Many of Gregory's Americans are also on the move to new homes, coping with rural poverty, and losing interest in mainstream religion. These themes, along with chapters on Americans' penchants for entertainment and a detailed appraisal of blacks' status as the war began, are skillfully woven together to create a picture of political, economic, and social life before Pearl Harbor. The concluding chapter ends the uncertainty and ushers the nation into war.

Several aspects of Gregory's book make it especially valuable as a classroom resource for courses on World War II, American social history, and twentieth-century America. No one can accuse Gregory of muddling prose; his writing style is lucid, terse, and easily approachable. This is professional historical writing at its best--engaging, challenging, and readable.

The text is complemented by the judicious use of references and photographs. Gregory lets the voices of Americans in 1941 speak by relying heavily on contemporary newspaper and periodical accounts as well as memoirs, novels, and historical accounts from the postwar period. Photographs, many of them from National Archives and Library of Congress collections, focus on personalities from the era and aspects of rapidly changing daily life.

Teachers will find the book's organization particularly conducive to classroom use. Gregory builds each chapter around a particular theme. In "Things of the Flesh," changes in Americans' behavior are illustrated by examining smoking and drinking practices, marijuana use, dancing, sexual conduct, divorce, and the status of women in 1941. Personal accounts, statistical reports, and references are carefully interspersed with the author's observations, interpretations, and conclusions. While each chapter can easily stand on its own as an introduction to a topic, this thematic approach does not detract from the book's tightly constructed unity.

Ross Gregory has crafted an impressive chronicle of tradition and change, of a simpler era before television, computers, and the Bomb. Superb writing, accessible organization, and detailed references combine with a fascinating subject to make Ross Gregory's *America 1941* a valuable contribution to bookshelf and classroom.

Lincoln, Nebraska Steve Potts

Stephen J. Whitfield. *A Death in the Delta: The Story of Emmett Till*. New York: The Free Press, 1988. Pp. xiv, 193. Cloth, $19.95.

The story of the death of Emmett Till and its immediate and long-range impact on Southern race relations is told in a historical and literary context that presaged the social revolution and civil rights movement of the post-1955 era.

Stephen Whitfield makes no claim that the death of fourteen year-old Till "accomplished the revolution in civil rights in the South," but he does argue convincingly that "his murder deserves recognition as an overlooked and obscured factor in catalyzing [black] resistance" to a Southern social system that relegated African-Americans to a status of inferiority, subjugation, and abject fear. He also contends that the Till Case "helped to expose the tangled relationship between sex and race in America."

The author persuasively demonstrates that Till was murdered primarily because he, unwittingly perhaps, broke a long-standing Southern code of conduct by which black males were constrained from eyeballing or making insulting and/or sexual overtures toward white women. Till, the Chicago teenager on a visit with relatives in Money, Mississippi, committed a cardinal sin when he allegedly "wolf whistled" and made sexual advances toward a white clerk in the local grocery store. For this act of teenage prankishness, Till was abducted from his sharecropper great-uncle's home, mutilated, murdered, lynched, and his body dumped into the Tallahatchie River.

Although two white men were tried for this child-murder, they were acquitted. According to the author, this Southern mockery of justice, ironically, was the result of the nationally-led NAACP publicity campaign that sensationalized the murder-lynching in black and white media, North and South. The coverage of the lynching and trial created a xenophobic backlash that caused the all-white jury and white Mississippians in general to damn what they considered outside media hype and rally behind the accused murderers.

Contrary to those who viewed Till's murder and trial as another grotesque example of the travesty of the Southern way of life for African-Americans. Whitfield claims the accused murderers were reinforcing traditional sexual and race relations and believed that they were avenging transgressions against Southern womanhood. Yet, a few "good people of Mississippi" privately abhorred the child-murder-lynching. The reaction was so strong in Money, Mississippi, that the accused murderers were ostracized and eventually forced out of the state.

Whitfield believes that the broader significance of the Till Case lies in the fact that a black sharecropper had testified in open court against white men. Moses Wright's testimony "signified that the intimidation of Delta blacks was no longer as effective as in the past." The testimony also suggests that oppressed Southern blacks were becoming emboldened to take a stand against the repressive white South. In the process, they initiated a redefinition of what became a social and sexual revolution in Southern race relations.

The strength of Whitfield's study is his pre-eminent ability to blend autobiography, biography, politics, historical, and popular literature. Thus, the story of Emmett Till's death has a gut-wrenching immediacy enabling the reader to experience what blacks and some whites felt at the news of this atrocity and to understand why this incident pushed forward the struggle for civil rights. Whitfield undergirds his narrative further by bringing together a cornucopia of Northern and Southern black and white literature and social ideology. In so doing, he admirably illustrates the indelible impact that the Till case had on its black and white contemporaries and on post-1955 civil rights activists, politicians, and intellectuals.

Whitfield's book is an excellent humanities and social studies teaching tool in the study of Southern race relations. It should appeal to high school as well as college students. The book will no doubt create pain for some and controversy for others. But *A Death in the Delta* is a valuable contribution to the literature of American civil rights.

Fayetteville State University — Phillip McGuire

Robert Weisbrot. *Freedom Bound: A History of America's Civil Rights Movement*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1990. Pp. xv, 350. Cloth, $21.95.
Henry Hampton and Steve Fayer. *Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s through the 1980s*. New York and Toronto: Bantam, 1990. Pp. xxviii, 692. Cloth, $25.95.

Recently, in my African American history course, as we began to study the civil rights movement, I was puzzled and disturbed to find that the students, black and white, knew very little. I had expected them to know something about the horrible cruelties of the jim crow caste system, the March on Washington, and the Selma March of 1965, as well as some of the prominent individuals involved. To be sure, the students knew Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., as well as Malcolm X. But they were completely unaware of SNCC, Fannie Lou Hamer, and Goodman, Chaney, and Schwerner. They knew nothing of the "long hot summers," the Black Panther Party, or any of the cultural productions that came out of this era. The last was truly surprising given that the radio airwaves and television are filled with the music of Motown, the Beatles, and the Rolling Stones. Nevertheless, I set about the task of providing them with as much information and knowledge as I could about the period and its significance for their lives.

It so happened that over a weekend I was helping my brother-in-law in his vineyard when we paused to admire the durability of the concrete posts at the end of the rows. When he pointed out to me that the posts were put in eight years before, I commented about how time flies. He then mentioned a trip that we had made to the Adirondack Mountains of Northern New York. I remembered the trip well but was astounded when he reminded me that it had occurred ten years ago. Upon further reflection as we worked in the vineyard, I realized that most of my students were born in the late sixties and the seventies. The only president they knew well was Ronald Reagan (and most certainly then not even his political background). They, of course, could not have had any idea of the intensity and importance of what went on in the sixties. My puzzlement was resolved but not my disturbance for I was once again confronted with America's propensity for social amnesia. If there is a distinctive American trait in our collective identity, it is the ability to forget momentous parts of our history in a short span of time. Worse, what we do remember or recall is highly selective.

My disturbance went deeper as I finished the two books under review here. Robert Weisbrot's *Freedom Bound* is a very competent history. In many ways it resembles Harvard Sitkoff's *The Struggle for Black Equality: 1954-1980* (1982). It is sympathetically written, very accessible to students and scholars as well as the general populace. Indeed it is an excellent volume if one wanted to have a thorough overview of the period up to 1987. But aside from all that, one puts it down vaguely dissatisfied. It is as if one has read this story before, only now there is an added update.

Given the fact that we now have a well done visual recollection of the period, Henry Hampton's *Eyes on the Prize I and II*, it is incumbent upon historians to find fresh perspectives or approaches to telling the history of the civil rights movement. Weisbrot hints at the possibility of one such approach when he mentions, accurately, how the early phase of the civil rights movement was dominated by young middle class blacks and whites.

An interesting and more insightful history would be one that tells the story from within, that is, from within the worldview of Afro-America and the black middle class. After all, the early phase of the movement was dominated by middle class blacks and whites from the South and North. While there were certainly similarities between the two classes that allowed for the building of an interracial "beloved community," what happened to the movement afterwards (from, say, 1963's March on Washington) from the perspective of Afro-Americans becomes very important. For the black middle class did not disappear; it became enlarged, radicalized politically, and fragmented by region and philosophy. But Weisbrot did not set out to write that book. Such a narrative can be gleaned from the excellent oral history put together by Henry Hampton and Steve Fayer, *Voices of Freedom*.

Hampton and Fayer have produced what is hailed as a companion to the fourteen-episode *Eyes on the Prize*, PBS television series. Within this particular volume students and general readers will find those who participated in large and small ways. In a large sense this book as well as the series will keep much of the memory of that period alive. And yet even *Voices of Freedom* contains glaring omissions. H. Rap Brown, now an imam in the Islam faith in Atlanta, was not interviewed; Julius Lester, who was a SNCC field secretary and speechwriter for Stokely Carmichael, is missing (although he is mentioned in connection with the Ocean Hill-Brownsville school dispute of 1967-8). Both of these men, especially Lester, have much to say about the activities of the most vibrant group of the movement, SNCC. Then again nothing is mentioned of the more radical community-based organizations. These omissions, along with the paths that Hampton and Fayer and Weisbrot have

chosen to take, say much about the kind of history that they seek to put forward. Each in his own but different way presents a history that is meant not only to be a remembrance but also attempts to be integrative in all the senses that word means. But in the end this type of history trips them up. Two examples from Weisbrot and an overall observation regarding Hampton and Fayer should demonstrate my point.

Weisbrot's history of the civil rights movement, which can be safely called a standard treatment, shows a decided fondness for the early phase of the movement. Much of the book is devoted to that period while only three chapters (including the epilogue) are given over to the aftermath up to the present. Indeed the same comment goes for *Eyes on the Prize*. As beautifully done as that program was, one comes away with the feeling that the first six episodes showed a clear confidence and forthrightness in its presentation. The standard cliché has been that this period is easy to deal with; the segregationist bad guys are beaten by the integrationist good guys. Hence the ease with which the story can be mainstreamed into a progressive view of history. But once the story has to deal with the rise of black nationalism and the shift of the movement to the North, and thus is turned into a story of alternative visions of what America was to become, Weisbrot, like most historians of this period, falls apart and all kinds of strange things get written or, in the case of *Eyes on the Prize*, many things get omitted or jumbled.

In many ways the problem has to do with the collapse of the Rooseveltian New Deal coalition and the failed struggle to erect a new coalition that features blacks as equal partners. This collapse and the collapse of liberalism in general has spawned all sorts of histories that not only attempt to explain what, how, and why it all happened but also to prescribe (if not breathe new life) into a neo-liberal agenda. To be sure these histories feature black people prominently and African-Americans are given credit, but there is an attempt at "balance" that obscures if not distorts history. Weisbrot, for example, in writing about Malcolm X, his break with the Black Muslims, and his discovery of true Islam, states, "Not even Malcom's *ingrained racism* could withstand the volcanic flow of experience and ideas following his break with the Black Muslims" (my italics). Malcolm X can certainly be criticized for many things that he said while a spokesperson for the Nation of Islam under the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, but he was not a racist. Not in the sense of the term as meaning that one has the power to enforce an ideology of thought, attitude, and values that says that blacks are superior innately to whites. Not even the major advocates of Black Power in all its various meanings pronounced that whites were inferior or wanted to subjugate whites to the humiliation that black people had endured. At their very angriest they wished to be totally separate from whites. That notion, of course, has a long tradition in Afro-American history.

On a more detailed matter Weisbrot notes incorrectly that the black students who enclosed themselves at Willard Strait Hall at Cornell University had arms because they feared that they would be attacked by a white mob. No, the students originally protested without arms because a black woman had been attacked. When it became apparent that there was going to be no protection afforded, they had arms smuggled into them (by white students, incidentally).

Weisbrot ends his study by noting the changes that have occurred as a result of the civil rights movement. Here again an attempt is made to balance the ledger. Only at this point it is clear that Weisbrot recognizes that the positive aspects of the movement have been drastically overshadowed by the reality of an ever expanding underclass, cities that are racially polarized, and a black middle class that holds dearly to the few gains that were won from the civil rights movement. Nonetheless he strives to end on a positive note. Hampton and Fayer also end somewhat positively by reminding us that "If it is true, as the song says, 'freedom is a constant struggle' then there can be no true ending to this chronicle."

Scholars and participants are debating the effects of the civil rights movement in all its phases. There seem to be emerging two schools of thought. One attempts to present a total picture from all sides and the two books here fall squarely in that camp. The second school, still aborning, seeks to explain the movement not only from the vantage point of who participated in it but to also explain why the movement was not as successful as it could have been. Some may wonder why the second school needs to rehash such a notion, but it can only be suggested that at this juncture in our nation's history it is imperative we understand critically what went wrong and why. Part of the importance of this school's endeavor has much to do with the racial tensions that continue to polarize our society today and are especially pervasive on our campuses. A short story should indicate what I am driving at.

At the conclusion of three weeks of study on the civil rights movement, I asked my forty students--a class pretty evenly split racially--whether they thought that the movement was a success or a failure. All of the white students said yes, some saying that among other things the movement

had given America a new national hero, Martin Luther King, Jr. The African American students who were from urban areas said no; those African American students who were from decidedly middle class backgrounds echoed their brothers and sisters but qualified their statement by saying that there had been changes (voting and the opportunity to get an education) but overall racism from whites had not changed and in many ways had gotten worse. The urban students were far more pessimistic, believing that things would never change. They saw no hope.

My class, I am certain, is really no different from many others that are taught throughout the country. These classes represent a microcosm of the nation at large. Given that and the American propensity for social amnesia, we are going to need tougher and more critical studies of the civil rights movement, not only to remind those who never knew but also to figure out why we are continuing to live with a debilitating racial dilemma.

Colgate University — Charles Pete Banner-Haley

Kenneth O'Reilly. *"Racial Matters": The FBI's Secret File on Black America, 1960-1972*. New York: The Free Press, 1989. Pp. viii, 456. Cloth, $24.95.

O'Reilly legitimates the dream of Martin Luther King, Jr., for America. "No better gauge of the moral state of the United States' domestic policy exists than the history of the federal government's relationship with its most disadvantaged citizens." O'Reilly has no use for the dilemma imposed by the FBI. "Black America's FBI story is also America's story, but it evokes a sense of shame, not celebration." Therein lies a problem.

At no matter what level this work is used, considerable commentary is required for balance. For example, O'Reilly makes at least thirteen references in the language of police brutality and not one in the language law enforcement officers prefer, "excessive use of force." The felicity with which the book is written makes it all the more important to find balance.

At the undergraduate level, students must be alerted and sensitized to the option of taking a more pragmatic and less morally righteous tone than that of O'Reilly. O'Reilly does furnish enough facts and interpretations to develop other less strident moral scenarios. At the graduate level, students must be alerted to the fact that, at a very fundamental level, its own records are being used to discredit the government.

Some of this material has previously appeared in the *Journal of American History* 75 (June 1988), 91-114, the *Journal of Southern History*, 54 (May 1988), 201-32, and *Phylon*, 48 (March 1987), 12-25. Graduate students might find it useful to compare passages and documentation. The author of this review has put together a comparison of the documentation between the book and *The American Historical Review* article which he is willing to share, but which seems too extensive to be included here.

Fifty-five pages of footnotes and twenty-three pages of bibliography can leave a misimpression. African Americans are quoted but generally from FBI or secondary sources, rather than from African American sources. For example, two of the three indexed references to *Ebony* magazine are documented from FBI files, rather than from the magazine itself.

O'Reilly offers shock that the FBI and J. Edgar Hoover should regard blacks as problems for white America, rather than the other way around. O'Reilly portrays FBI insouciance at legislation designed to empower black America with citizenship rights, whole and entire, everywhere and immediately, with stupefaction. His portrayal of the politicians in charge of the FBI is far more understanding of the realities at hand. Because of its easy style, this book could catch on and exert great influence in many sectors of society.

The binding of the book sent to me for review broke simply with the use required for this review.

Thomas Nelson Community College — Raymond J. Jirran

Michael Haren. *Medieval Thought: The Western Intellectual Tradition from Antiquity to the 13th Century.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985. Pp. x, 269. Cloth, $27.50.
Julius Kirshner and Karl F. Morrison, eds., *Medieval Europe*. Volume 4 in University of Chicago Readings in Western Civilization Series. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1986. Pp. x, 476. Cloth, $30.00; paper, $11.95.

Since it does not deal primarily or directly with theology, literature, law, and other intellectual endeavors, Michael Haren's book might more precisely have been titled, "Medieval Speculative Thought." Yet whatever the inadequacy of the title's main clause, its subordinate clause is right on target: the book is indeed an examination of "the western intellectual tradition from antiquity to the 13th century," and therein lie both its strength and weakness.

Its opening chapter, on Plato, Aristotle, and the Neoplatonists, sounds the author's intent to concentrate upon the classical legacy, specifically the impact of these Greek systems upon the Christian thinkers in the west. The review of their ideas is a useful prelude to the constant appeal to be made to them in discussing the Middle Ages. Thus the dominating theme of the second chapter is the transmission of Platonic ideas to the medieval west via the works of Augustine of Hippo, Boethius, and John Scotus Eriugena, while the third chapter explores the working out of Aristotelian ideas in the central Middle Ages, with emphasis upon the conceptualization of the boundaries of logic and theology. Chapter Four takes up the mediating role of Arabic thought, translations of Arabic treatises, and the emerging universities.

Over one quarter of the book is devoted to the thirteenth century, Chapter Five concentrating on the reception of Aristotle's philosophy in the west during the first half of that century, Chapter Six dealing with the contributions of Bonaventure, Albert the Great, and Thomas Aquinas. While this organization seems chronological it is in fact heavily thematic, leading to some overlapping between chapters.

Haren notes that his "is a book for historians seeking an introduction to a subject whose technical aspects can be initially forbidding." This is certainly the case. A philosopher might well find frustrating the preoccupation with context, the emphasis upon the evolution of systems of thought relying upon movements and institutions, and the corresponding failure to summarize the essence of medieval speculative thought, not to mention the conscious refusal to evaluate ideas using modern standards. Yet historians will find the exercise admirable and useful precisely in establishing patterns of transmission and influence. Graduate students needing an entry point into medieval speculative thought will find the treatment clear and studded with telling detail and will be able to use the accompanying bibliographies (one of works in English, the other of works in other languages) to supply both orientation and further reading. But if it is useful for beginners, those who tread the territory frequently will also find much to admire and appreciate in the first as well as later readings.

Medieval Europe is the fourth in a series of nine volumes of readings in western civilization developed by University of Chicago faculty on the basis of forty years of teaching a course that originated as a counterpoint to the antihistorical, positivistic social science emphasis at Hutchins College and is now part of the intercivilizational requirement for sophomores and juniors. The faculty who have had a hand in this course include such luminaries as William H. McNeill, Eric Cochrane, and Hannah H. Gray. Neither a Great Books course nor a survey, it acquaints students with the contextual dimensions of human ideas and behaviors.

Selection of items for the volumes of readings cannot have been a simple task. The authors have been concerned to reflect the state of the historical discipline at the moment (in this case, 1982-85), to develop thematic cohesiveness and comprehensiveness, and to reflect the scholar's apprehension of the pedagogical effectiveness of the various selections.

The present volume is guided by some assumptions about the nature of that difficult and slippery beat, "The Middle Ages," i.e. that the age is defined by a pattern of disintegration and reconstitution lasting from after the collapse of Roman political authority in the West to the Black Death and peasant revolts of the fourteenth century; that the inner stresses leading to the disorganization of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were present almost from the outset of the period and more continuous than any points of consensus; and that intense Christian militance was at the root of many of these stresses. Thematic development of these assumptions begins with the foundations of medieval society, religion and empire, rural society and towns, with court and legal documents the primary resource. It then proceeds to cover the Investiture Conflict and the Twelfth-Century Renaissance via letters and individual statements. A chapter on authority, conflict and repression begins with a treatment of the rise of the mendicants and their attacks upon heresy and continues by considering the question of usury, the control of learning, and the debate on papal

monarchy. The second and fourth chapters thus constitute a chronicle of medieval dissent. The final chapter coves the decline of papal credibility in the Babylonian Captivity and the Great Schism, and the dislocation of society due to the Black Death and peasant revolts. Despite any claims that this represents the state of the historical art, it must be noted that the preponderance of the selections reflect a preoccupation with the elite culture of the High and Later Middle Ages. Indeed, the entire conceptualization of the period's distinctiveness and the mode of organization demand such a preoccupation. Those primarily or even significantly interested in exploring the social history of the period or the impact of intercultural contacts will be disappointed that so distinguished an effort by so distinguished a group is so conceptually narrow.

Suffolk University — Joseph M. McCarthy

C. A. Bayly. *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780-1830*. London and New York: Longman, 1989. Pp. xv, 295. Cloth, $37.95; paper, $19.50.

Here is a book that had the potential of being a welcome addition to the literature on imperial history. That potential is negated by a major flaw: the author's writing style.

Imperial Meridian is a volume in the *Studies in Modern History* series, which is designed to provide students with an introduction to important historical periods in works that are "stimulating and scholarly." The author, C. A. Bayly, is reader in Modern Indian History and a fellow of St. Catherine's College at the University of Cambridge. He is also joint editor of the *New Cambridge History of India*.

An increase of approximately 150 million people in the population of the British Empire is certainly a topic that can be studied with benefit. Bayly begins this study by looking at changes and problems in the Muslim World and conditions in Great Britain and its empire to 1790. He then examines the events world wide that led to the "Second British Empire," and finally discusses how that empire functioned. There may be questions about a few interpretations, but the author certainly has a thorough knowledge of the subject.

Two practical aspects of the book are particularly impressive and should serve as models for other historical works: a glossary of terms is provided at the beginning and a series of maps at the end. They are excellent guides to the material being discussed.

There is no doubt that a general survey of this type is needed. The book covers an often overlooked period in the growth of the British Empire and places that growth in the context of imperial, British, and world history.

Regretfully *Imperial Meridian* does not fulfill the primary goals of the *Studies in Modern History* series because it is extremely difficult to read. The author's writing style is unnecessarily complex and frequently requires the reader to go over a sentence several times to make sure its meaning is clear; sometimes even that is not sufficient. The following is a personal prejudice, but use of the parenthetical reference method makes comprehension more difficult; periodic parentheses that contain seemingly unrelated names and numbers interrupt the flow of words. This style becomes even more confusing when parenthetical explanations are used as well.

Graduate students and people particularly interested in this important period in British imperial development can use *Imperial Meridian* with benefit, although they too will find the work difficult. the book is not recommended for high school or undergraduate college students.

Kennesaw State College — K. Gird Romer

Thomas E. Skidmore and Peter H. Smith. *Modern Latin America*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989. Second edition. Pp. xii, 436. Cloth $39.95; paper, $14.95.

A course in Latin American history, unfortunately, often becomes simply a class in the individual histories of various Latin American countries. This absence of any common bonds tends to have a "centrifugal" effect upon understanding, with students holding dearly to a number of disparate facts and questioning whether it was Esteben or Luis Echeverría who was president of Mexico. Through their synthesis of both the modernization and dependency theories, Thomas Skidmore and Peter Smith pull together into a "composite portrait" a history which they state

provides a comparative basis for understanding the context in which individual Latin American countries developed.

Following an excellent prologue, "Why Latin America?", Skidmore and Smith devote a chapter to the colonial and national periods and one to developing their modernization/dependency theme. They then analyze comparatively the historical development from 1880 to the present of six specific countries: Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Peru, Mexico and Cuba. Special chapters treating the Caribbean, Central America and the international relationship of Latin America to the United States and the world precede the epilogue, "What Future For Latin America?" In this last chapter, Skidmore and Smith again look at the dimensions of economic, social and political change, concluding, "In the future, as in past centuries, the fate of Latin America will depend largely on its relationship to the centers of international power."

Although many now seriously question the viability of the dependency theory, it, in conjunction with this sequential pattern of economic, social and political change, functions nicely as a structural framework for historical and comparative analysis. Students of recent Latin American history must question, however, the decision to leave out consideration of Venezuela/Colombia. The second edition does bring the specific histories up to date and adds the chapter on the Caribbean. yet this glaring omission would require that this text be supplemented.

The work, nonetheless, operates splendidly for several reasons. It is easily read, includes a number of political cartoons as well as pictures, and is a reasonably balanced and objective piece. Instructors, if they so choose, would have ample opportunity to impose an interpretation. They could even use the text's thematic approach to challenge the dependency theory. Maps, graphs, a number of interesting illustrations of political and social coalitions, and some valuable statistical appendices complement a nicely written narrative. A rather extensive list of all the various heads of state is nice but of questionable value. The bibliographical statements for each chapter should be especially helpful. The text, as well, offers special insight into the present Latin American situation. The organizational themes introduced in the second chapter provide a framework for understanding contemporary affairs and for putting people like Daniel Ortega and Manuel Noriega into historical context. This would allow instructors to divert student interest in current affairs to inquiries about how things got to be the way they are. Finally, its thematic approach works in a centripetal sense, pulling student minds toward those patterns and processes of change common to the Latin American historical experience.

This book might be appropriate for a specialized offering on the high school level. It, however, is ideally suited for the college undergraduate, for, in spite of its omissions, its use of a modified dependency approach provides an outstanding vehicle to deliver a coherent picture of Latin American history.

New Mexico Military Institute Bill Gibbs

David H. Bennett. *The Party of Fear: From Nativist Movements to the New Right in American History*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1988. Pp. X, 509. Cloth, $29.95.

Professor Bennett has written an overview of American nativism that will rival John Higham's classic *Strangers in the Land*. It is characterized by erudition and breadth. The book's arresting cover depicts its major thesis. It shows the Statue of Liberty holding the torch of freedom high while peering out from behind a Ku Klux Klan hood. As Bennett sees it, right wing political activists, from the Know Nothings of the pre-Civil War period to the "hard" rightists of the 1970s and 80s have seen themselves as sentinels defending America and her precious dream from dangerous enemies. Throughout his study, Bennett analyzes the nativist impulse in American history with an eye to its own assumptions and dynamics. Further, he provides convincing historical context for each nativist movement and its followers.

Bennett argues that the nativist movements of the 19th century, the Know Nothings and the American Protective Association in particular, were each driven by fear of massive number of immigrants and the alien Catholic (and to a lesser extent Jewish) religious institutions that accompanied them. Their fears may have been misplaced and their solutions irrelevant to the problems they only vaguely understood, but the nativists saw themselves as the nation's protectors against alien invaders who would destroy the promise of American life. The Red Scare of 1919, by contrast, represented the confluence of two virulent forms of nativism: one directed against alien people, the other against alien ideas. As the former disintegrated in the aftermath of immigration

restriction, depression, and war, the latter reemerged with a vengeance after World War II. But McCarthyism barely outlived its namesake, according to Bennett, and the "New Right," "Hard Right," and Moral Majority movements of the 1970s and 1980s proposed an entirely different focus than their nativist predecessors. The nativist impulse is dead, argues Bennett, and in its place the right wing has discovered new enemies, home grown rather than imported, from which the nation must be delivered.

As a tool to teach American history, particularly nativism, *The Party of Fear* is likely to be unexcelled for some time. Know Nothingism, the American Protective Association, populism, the Red Scare, the Ku Klux Klan, the New Deal and its detractors, Fascist and neo-Fascist movements, McCarthyism, the John Birch Society, the religious right and televangelists, the "Hard Right" of zealots such as Richard Viguerie, even the debate over the Simpson-Mazzoli bill in the 1980s--all of these topics receive impressive attention and careful analysis. Thus, the book provides a panoramic coverage of nativism and its successors.

Yet, there will be plenty of room for debate and disagreement. Bennett's thesis that Father Coughlin's followers represented "inverted nativism" wherein erstwhile outsiders wreaked their vengeance upon new enemies is unsatisfying. His assessment of the conflicting interpretations of McCarthyism will be difficult to follow except for the expert. His omission of the progressive reformers, Americanizers and restrictionists alike, is curious. Almost nothing appears describing the heated debate over immigration restriction from the 1880s to its triumph in the 1920s. But these are minor problems which are more than overcome by the author's balanced and convincing analysis of so many episodes in the history of American nativism. With conviction and grace, Bennett provides a superb overview of a bewildering complex topic.

Bennett's *Party of Fear* will be exciting to teach in intellectual history, immigration history, or the era of Joseph McCarthy. Its central use will be in immigration courses where it offers more sweeping and updated analysis of nativism than John Higham's *Strangers in the Land*. However, it would be interesting to begin a seminar on McCarthyism with *Party of Fear* to demonstrate the deep historic roots of the fear of alien influence, both cultural and ideological. Obviously, a study of 500 pages is appropriate primarily in upper level courses or seminars and the classroom will have to await an affordable paperback edition.

Ithaca College Paul W. McBride

Lloyd C. Gardner. *Safe for Democracy: The Anglo-American Response to Revolution, 1913-1923.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1987. Pp. xii, 383. Paper, $9.95.

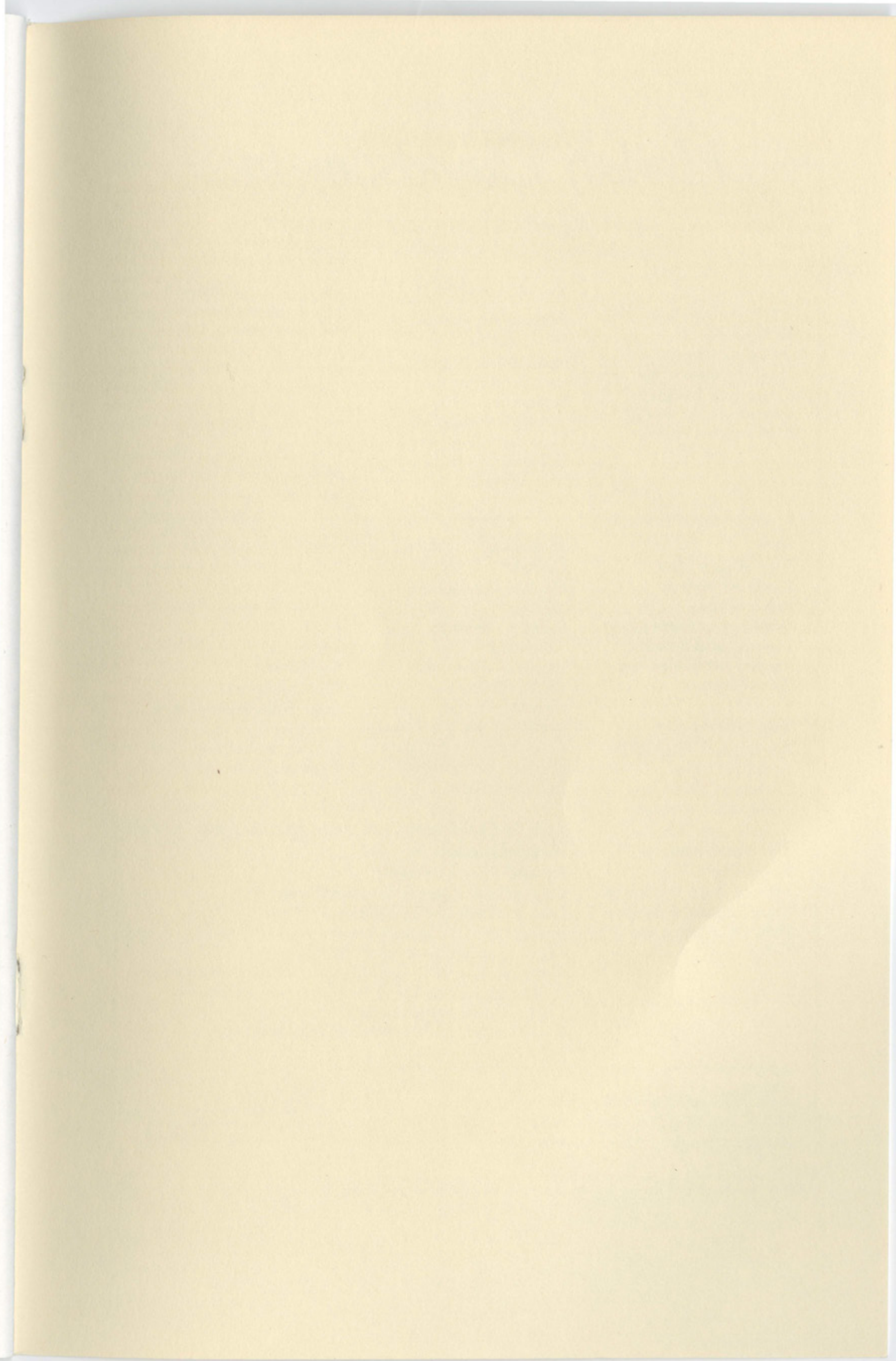
In my reading of the history of American diplomacy by such authors as John H. Latane, Samuel Flagg Bemis, Robert H. Ferrell, and others, I have observed that there has been a reluctance on the part of American Chief Executives to dramatically alter the foreign policy of their predecessors. Perhaps this is what has given American foreign policy the appearance of continuity. President Woodrow Wilson is an exception to this. Due to dramatic changes in international relations when he was in office (1913-1921) and shifting global circumstances, he was forced to abandon a policy of non-intervention which had been the foreign policy of the country since the days of the Washington administration and pursue a policy of intervention, which for better or worse has been the policy of the country ever since, despite timid attempts to his immediate successors to change course. President Wilson at the time declared that the forces of history had made non-intervention odious anyway.

Professor Lloyd C. Gardner's revisionist study, *Safe for Democracy: The Anglo-American Response to Revolution, 1913-1923* was first published in 1984, and concerns itself with this dramatic alteration in American foreign policy that occurred during the Wilson years and Wilson's agonizing over it. Gardner devotes most of the book to Wilson's posture towards the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the tumultuous events that followed in its wake, and less with the Mexican Revolution brewing in this hemisphere and the Chinese Revolution of 1911-1912 in the Far East, both of which he inherited form his predecessor Taft. This ground has been gone over before the great Wilson scholar of our time, Arthur S. Link, and by Arno J. Mayer and others, so there is not anything new in the recounting of these events. What is germane in Gardner's commentary is in terms of exposing the inherent contradictions in Wilson's interventionist policies, not so much as regards the Mexican REvolution, with which he reached an accommodation, nor with the Chinese Revolution in which the objective was to maintain the "Open Door," but with the way he handled the Russian Revolution and

the ideological implications of it for the world of that time. The events of World War I precipitated the Russian Revolution of 1917, and had the revolution not been betrayed by Lenin and the Bolsheviki, President Wilson and the other leaders of the Western democracies might have been able to reach an accommodation with Russia as had been the case in China where the ideological implications were less stressful. The problem was how to keep the contagion of revolution in check. Wilson's lofty liberal idealism dictated that this could be done through a form of international organization which eventually materialized in the League of Nations in the early 1920s. Under the guiding principle of "self-determination of peoples" which he enunciated in the "Fourteen Points" as a rebuttal to Lenin's "April theses", legitimate nationalistic aspirations within the dismembered colonial empires at the end of World War I could be vented. This he and his "National Security Advisor", Colonel Edward House, mistakenly thought would lessen the appeal of Bolshevism in these areas. But did it? As the events in Russia between 1919-1923 show, Wilson's ideological war-making did not square with his policy of military intervention. How could the world be made "safe for democracy" with American troops on Russian soil fighting to bring the Bolsheviks down from power in the Russian Civil War? This is the essence of the contradiction.

This book, as with all of Gardner's books that I have read, is pretty deep-wading, even for those versed in the history of American diplomacy. I found the going quite difficult in places and feel therefore that only students in upper level courses and graduate courses would be able to comprehend the sweep of this highly acclaimed study. It would be useful in my estimation in a course in Twentieth Century American history or perhaps in an advanced course in the history of American diplomacy. The book is beautifully suited for a course in international relations in the Twentieth Century, but there are few colleges and universities that offer such a course, that I know of. Students should follow up *Safe for Democracy* with Gardner's highly acclaimed, *A Covenant with Power: American and World Order from Wilson to Reagan* (1984) for an answer to wilson's probing statement that he made towards the end of his fateful presidency. "The world has been made safe for democracy . . . . But democracy has not yet made the world safe against irrational revolution. That supreme task, which is nothing less than the salvation of civilization, now faces democracy, insistent, imperative. There is no escaping it, unless everything we have built up is presently to fall in ruin about us; and the United States, as the greatest of democracies, must undertake it." It would appear, given the recent changes in the Soviet Union and the East bloc, that the revolutionaries themselves, seventy or so years after the Bolshevik takeover in Russia, are becoming parties to making the world safe for democracy. President Wilson's vision has been redeemed.

Quincy Community College Lawrence S. Rines



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