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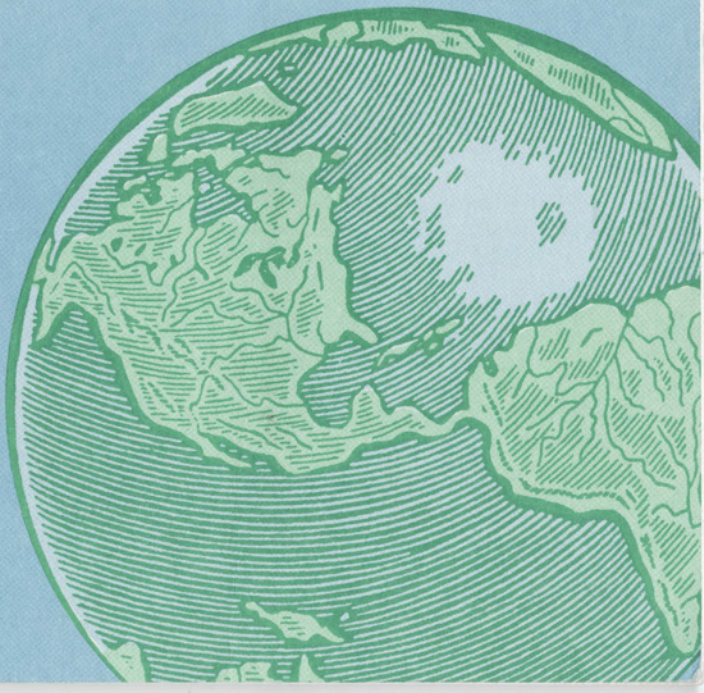
TEACHING HISTORY

A Journal of Methods



TEACHING HISTORY
A JOURNAL OF METHODS

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REVIEWS

RACIAL IDENTITIES AND CLASS DISCUSSION IN AN AMERICAN SLAVERY SEMINAR

Michael D. Pierson
Eastern Kentucky University

This essay started in the classroom discussions of an upper-level history course at Illinois State University in the Fall of 1994.[1] The seminar, entitled "Slavery and the Old South," enrolled 22 students, consisting of upperclass students and two graduate students. The racial composition of the class roughly paralleled that of Illinois State University as a whole, 82% white, 13.5% black and 4.5% Latino. Discussions in this seminar were strained, so much so that by the last weeks of the semester, I decided to hand out an eleven-question, anonymous survey that asked students to discuss their feelings about participating in class as well as other topics. Students were encouraged to identify themselves by class rank, race, and gender, and they were informed that their responses might be used for research purposes. While not a large enough sample from which to draw reliable statistical results, the questionnaire decidedly struck a nerve. The students' response was enthusiastic: Students as a rule wrote extensive remarks, far longer ones than are typical on standard class evaluation forms. Clearly, the topics discussed below were of considerable interest to the history and history education majors who constituted the majority of my "Slavery and the Old South" class. What I have found is that roughly half of the white students were afraid to participate in class discussions about slavery. They gave two main reasons for their fear. First, many white students, especially women, did not want to engage in confrontational debates. Second, many white male students perceived themselves to be under attack whenever criticisms were raised against white males in the Old South, and this over-identification with assailed nineteenth-century men made them angry and silent.

Let me preface my remarks by noting that the focus of this paper is on white behavior because I have been fortunate each time this course has been offered to have had articulate minority students who participated regularly in discussion. Quite simply, students of color as well as white critics of slavery have for the most part shown no particular tendency to silence, a classroom dynamic that especially marked my Fall 1994 class.[2] The second prefatory point concerns the frequency of remarks in the student responses about feminism and women's history. As in all of my classes, the "Slavery and the Old South" seminar

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[1]This essay has profited from exchanges with former colleagues at Illinois State University including Francesca Sawaya and Pamela Riney-Kehrberg. Timothy Houlihan and Laura Barefield made insightful comments on earlier drafts. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Mid-America Conference on History in Springfield, MO in Sept. 1995.

[2]I should also note that because this paper is about students and their attitudes, it will bypass the thoughtful work on the question of how successfully a white instructor can teach a class that is largely about African American history. See, for example, Vince Noble, et al., "White Professors, Black History: Forays into the Multicultural Classroom," *Perspectives*, 31 (September 1993), 1, 7-19.

features readings, lectures, student presentations, and discussions about both black and white women's history. Issues of gender are highlighted in matters ranging from the stability of the black family in slavery to the degree to which white women supported the Confederate States of America. As we will see, analytical investigations about the impact of patriarchy on southern women met with both favorable and hostile responses.

This essay is about the unease many white students felt during class discussions in my seminar, an unease that prompted many to silence. Of those who completed the anonymous survey, fully one half, or eight of sixteen, European-American students answered "yes" to the question "Were there times when you felt afraid to participate?" Another testified that she was not afraid, but that the instructor seemed to "tip-toe around subjects and overstated obvious things" (student #13). Only one of these eight students (student #2) attributed her occasional reticence to the fact that she thought she talked too much already. The remaining seven white students were almost equally divided between men and women--four were men, three women. This gender breakdown was the same that occurred in the group of whites who responded "no" when asked if they were afraid to participate. No minority students who completed the survey expressed a reluctance to voice their opinions in class. What then were some white students afraid of?

Happily, students did not seem to be afraid of incurring the wrath of the professor. This came out most strongly on the standard "History course evaluation sheet" they completed at the end of the semester. After a series of quantifiable questions, the form asks students for "Additional Comments." A junior presented a fairly representative assessment: "Dr. Pierson encourages questions and participation at all time, and accepts conflicting views. He is very un-biased in his presentation of material." The student evaluations cannot be arranged by the race of the writer, but the sentiment seemed to be that, in the words of a senior, the instructor "allowed everyone to voice their opinions on [the] subject matter." Survey results confirm this impression. When asked "Should the professor be more or less opinionated?" even students who felt uneasy thought the teacher "was fine the way he was because it got us to think about how we viewed the issues" (student #6) or "was very fair at letting us have our own opinion" (student #1). While not meeting with unanimous approval (some thought I should be more opinionated), no one indicated that they were silenced or intimated by me.[3] The reasons for silence lay elsewhere.

Students mentioned two apparently distinct reasons for not feeling comfortable about voicing their opinions. The first was a fear of confrontation with their fellow students. The desire to avoid disagreement could be a midwestern cultural pattern, or perhaps a more universal desire on the part of students to avoid standing out. Gender training also

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[3]Student 2 is the only exception to this dynamic. As one of the critics of slavery and patriarchy, she frequently contributed to class discussion and stated her opinions directly. On her anonymous survey, she wrote that "on occasion the professor wouldn't call on me because he wanted other people to talk (who very rarely did so), so he would pass over me. This made me feel very self-conscious and afraid to offer other suggestions at other class discussions."

might be a factor. Fear of confrontation was more powerful among women than it was among men in my class. While an equal number of male and female students listed fear of confrontation as a factor in promoting silence, women were more likely than men to list it as the sole reason and to feel, apparently, that no other explanation was necessary. Regardless of its origins, the self-styled timid students feared disagreement. A female senior wrote that "For one I don't talk much, but I also felt that what I said would be cut down by the ultra fammist-civil rights ~~girls~~ people in the class" (as written by student #6). Another white student wrote that she "was afraid to participate at times due to the fact [that] there was one girl who slammed everything I said and made me feel stupid" (student #1).

These students, however, did not fear "losing" debates in the traditional academic sense. Student #1, quoted above, claims that she was made to "feel stupid," a serious matter, but not a concession that she actually was uninformed. Rather, these students feared confrontation because they were afraid of what other students would think of them and call them. A white woman commented that she was afraid to talk solely "because my idea could have been wrong based on how I interpreted the situation" (student #17), a remark that leaves ambiguous whether "the situation" referred to is the historical situation under discussion or the classroom dynamics being played out in the present. The fact that she wrote "situation" not "material," however, suggests the latter interpretation. A senior wrote that he "was afraid to participate *only* when I wasn't 100% prepared," but then he gave more emphasis to a different concern. Mentioning his desire to "speak out" against a specific, vocal African American female student, he continued by writing that "I feared the confrontation that MIGHT have ended up with me being called RACIST" (student #15). This, of course, could happen whether or not he was completely prepared. Confrontation seemed to remain the primary worry for these students, not because they felt ignorant or ill-prepared to debate, but because of the extreme tension they felt during discussions of race.

A white male senior I will call George epitomizes this problem.[4] George, when asked on the survey how often he talked in class, responded that he "tried to participate a lot," an accurate self-analysis. His response to whether he was afraid to do so reveals the degree of concern that accompanied his efforts at speaking up. He replied to the question about whether he was ever afraid:

> Yes and no. It wasn't fear or embarrassment or lack of knowledge, but rather intimidation. I felt certain members dominated discussions with their opinions, and I felt that I couldn't express my own opinions. It was like walking on egg-shells, you have to be careful what you say so you don't offend them...

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[4]I have changed all of the names used in this paper. On occasion in this paper, I assume that I can, on the basis of class rank, race, and sex, as well as similarity of opinions expressed, match an anonymous survey with a particular student, in this case with one who spoke with me informally after the completion of the semester.

Asked in person about class discussions after the semester, George eagerly took up the topic, and referred to what he called "the race debate" as a potential "confrontation" and twice as a "powder-keg." Towards the end of the conversation he again said that he "didn't want a shouting match" and that he believed discussion was sometimes futile because people often "would not see one another's point" (my paraphrase). My students, or at least some of them, seemed to be practicing confrontation avoidance, perhaps because they have been socialized by parents or peers to value harmony and consensus to the point where it becomes conformity.

Given patterns of gender socialization in contemporary America, it is not surprising that this might affect more women than men. Many women, it seems, are still raised to be agreeable rather than to be forceful proponents of their views. This silenced them because two of their female colleagues, one white and one black, staked out rhetorical space early in the semester and maintained a firm and vocal commitment to feminist and antislavery interpretations. Because of their clearly delineated positions, remarks directed against those visions sometimes did provoke conflict. While these outspoken women never labeled any of their peers racist or sexist, as was evidently so feared by some white students, they did, in the best spirit of the participatory classroom, make their positions known. Perhaps most alarming to their peers who so valued consensus, these two women and their occasional supporters advanced an interpretation of history that emphasized racial and sexual conflict in the past, exactly what many white students seemed particularly eager to avoid in the present.

If a cultural dislike of conflict seems embedded in some white Illinois State University students, a second roadblock to free discussion was a preoccupation with some degree of race consciousness. Obviously, many of the white students quoted above are highly aware of racial tensions and their own racial identity, but just how far this racial awareness goes toward actual racism is hard to know. Most students are either not racist or are sophisticated enough not to make blatantly offensive remarks in a classroom. Student #6 knew enough about politically sensitive language, for example, to heavily cross out the word "girls" in one of her survey answers and write in "people" in its place. The frequent silence and linguistic sensitivity of the fearful students makes it hard to judge just what their privately held opinions about race and gender roles are. But not everyone attempted to avoid making such remarks. "Steve," a white junior, demonstrates the possible extent of racism in this seminar. Asked along with his colleagues to write an analysis of Barbara Fields's book *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground* near the end of the semester, Steve ended his essay with these thoughts:

> If this all seems vague, and I'm positive it does, it is because I found this book extremely tough to comprehend. Obviously it's been embraced by hundreds of historians, but I think my problem with it was that I knew ahead of time the author was black. To me, it seemed like another account of what I already knew crammed down my throat.

Having seen Ken Burns's film series, *The Civil War*, in which Barbara Fields appeared, this student blocked out Fields's arguments, apparently assuming that a black professor (even one accepted by "hundreds of historians") could have nothing new to say about slavery. Steve, in fact, assumed he knew as much as she did. The book was, simply, "what I already knew." Here again the problem is not one of white ignorance. I do not think it is over-reading this remark to suggest that Steve knew that Fields had collected specific evidence about Maryland in the 1850s and 1860s that he did not literally possess. Rather, I think Steve means to imply that whatever research Fields has done will be used to support an interpretation of slavery that Steve already finds too familiar. He implies, I think, that Fields could have only one interpretation, one purpose, for writing the book and that goal was predetermined by her race. With such ideas as this, a white student might well feel that discussions of racial matters would be confrontational and, ultimately, unenlightening to all parties. Blacks will, in this vision, unalterably advance the notion that whites were oppressive and that slavery was a miserable system, an interpretation that Steve apparently resents at some level and finds "extremely tough to comprehend." That Steve can simultaneously claim that Fields's book is both "what I already knew" and "extremely tough to comprehend" is probably less significant than the violent image he held of a black, female historian force-feeding him an interpretation that he did not want to swallow because he felt it was based entirely on the author's race. It is, however, very hard to tell how deeply and pervasively this kind of racism permeated my classroom, and it is probably significant that these most racist thoughts were written in a formal paper between a white student and a white professor, where there would be, in other words, no blacks present to witness and comment on the exchange. During the 75-minute class discussion of this book, Steve kept these opinions to himself.

In addition to students' awareness of race, gender consciousness became a factor because our seminar discussed patriarchy in the Old South in a unit that included readings by Bertram Wyatt-Brown, Brenda Stevenson, and Catherine Clinton as well as lectures and discussions.[5] Most of this material emphasized the advantages men enjoyed in the Old South, although the dangers and difficulties men faced were also brought out. Some white male respondents interpreted the attacks on white male figures in the past as assaults against them in the present, despite the fact that no such connections were expressed in class or in the readings. This sense that they were under assault stemmed from their self-identification as white men. An attack on any white man was an attack against them, because they identified themselves by their race and gender. Three white male students identified themselves in their written responses explicitly by their race and sex, and it is worth noting that this is almost all of the white men who felt afraid to participate, the only

[5]The readings were Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Honor and Violence in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Brenda Stevenson, "Distress and Discord in Virginia Slave Families, 1830-1860," in Carol Bleser, ed., *In Joy and In Sorrow: Women, Family, and Marriage in the Victorian South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 103-24; and Catherine Clinton, "'Southern Dishonor': Flesh, Blood, Race, and Bondage," in Bleser, ed., *In Joy and Sorrow*, 52-68.

exception being a student who did not elaborate at all on his fear. The others brought race and gender into their definitions of themselves. George, who, I noted earlier in this article, feared confrontation, ended his answer to the survey question about fear by observing that, while he had to watch his language, "they can lambast me (and my race and gender)." A male graduate student, Richard, expressed very similar thoughts; he claimed to be afraid "when the Extremists (i.e. Feminist and Racist) elements were on their soap box. Being a white male mid/early twenties and middle to upper class, I felt the brunt of anger and hostility and did not want to enter my opinions into discussions."[6] Student #15 complained that he "wanted to speak out when Tyniece got on her 'Everything the white man has done is bad' kicks," but that he was afraid to do so. Three white male students in this section obviously conflated criticism of historical figures who share their superficial gender and racial attributes with attacks on themselves and their roles in current society. That no female students made remarks like this indicates either that male students feel a more extreme discomfort during discussions of patriarchy than white students generally do about discussions of racial slavery, or that society empowers men to feel more entitled than women to complain when they feel disadvantaged or perceive an injustice against themselves.

It is important to note, however, that, at least in the case of George, he believes this sense of siege was not a logical reaction. He thinks that the misbehavior, as we see it, of white men in the Old South does not reflect poorly on him; as he said after the semester ended, slavery was all a "long time ago" and he had "not much to do with it." While many would agree that slavery has affected the material and psychological conditions of life in the present, George's comments are interesting because they highlight the paradoxical nature of how he relates himself to past white males. Here, the same person who earlier stated that "they can lambast me (and my race and gender)" suggests that he knows that he is not indicted in any direct way by attacks on slaveholders. The fact that this closely-felt siege mentality on the one hand and the perception of great distance from slavery on the other can co-exist in the same person suggests that George and possibly other white men are torn between two very different visions of their link to the white men of the past. One vision suggests that the link is an all-consuming part of their present identity, while the other disregards the connection as completely non-existent. Such paradoxical logic suggests how important both of these strategies are to some students.

Why, then, do white male students identify themselves with white men in the Old South even as they disavow any actual connection to past slaveholders? The urge to identify with past figures is, perhaps, natural, or at least common. Certainly there is a long historiographic tradition of using past lives as exemplars for current generations, especially in traditional education for boys. Indeed, the creation of role models and the

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[6]Richard's remarks are similar to those of a white male student in a recent *Chronicle of Higher Education* article who was quoted as saying, "I'm sick of being blamed for everyone else's problems. I just want to be left alone so I can finish school and get on with my life." Quoted in Billie Wright Dziech, "Coping with the Alienation of White Male Students," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, January 13, 1995.

imaginative placement of oneself back into the past are among the chief appeals of being a history major. Ironically, early practitioners of black and women's history were inspired in part by their realization of the importance of using history to create role models.[7] When white men, however, search the past looking for people to identify with, they sometimes link themselves with the Old South's white men because these students identify themselves in the present primarily by their race and gender, as we have seen above.

One possible solution to the role model dilemma could be to offer white students an alternative to the typically pro-slavery southerner by emphasizing those southern whites who, like James G. Birney or the Grimké sisters, acted against slavery at considerable personal expense. In the end, however, this solution runs the risk of overemphasizing what were, in the end, the voices of a small minority of southern whites, an option that for this instructor risks distorting the historical record for the sake of historical comfort. Nor is there any assurance that the students could or would envision themselves as social activists of the Birney-Grimke model, brashly challenging a social and economic system from the inside. They have already chosen not to identify themselves by an intellectual position in the present, for instance as opponents of racism and patriarchy in this seminar. To identify with more radical positions would usually call on them to transcend superficial identities, something that appears to be very difficult for them to do. Still, to deny antislavery role models to white students could lead to a considerable problem. If the black history and women's history elements of a course are taught to provide role models of leadership and resistance, are we to expect a different kind of imaginative engagement from white male students? To encourage role modeling for some students but not others might well inspire confusion and rightful resentment from whites; we will be best served by abandoning the concept of role models and identification for all students (even if it finds some African Americans complicit in the slave system) in favor of a more overt focus on historical methodology.

However understandable imaginative gender and racial identifications may be between present students and past white southern men, they do produce obvious unease for many students. While there might be times when historians should strive to produce feelings of unease, tension, or even guilt in their audiences, allowing white students to feel comfortable during discussions of race and gender will make it possible for classroom exchanges of ideas to occur. Only then will opinions be challenged and potentially changed. While scholars have suggested different means of overcoming the problem of resistance to a multicultural curriculum, historians themselves have a unique disciplinary

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[7]These fields are now well out of the hero/heroine finding stage. Leon Litwack recently wrote of his class on African American history that "it does not lend itself ... to eulogistic sketches of heroes and heroines. If they are expecting celebratory history, racial politics, and racial therapy, in whatever guise, they will be deeply disappointed." In Noble, et al., 14. Support for the idea of developing "empathic power" between students and subject matter can be found in Eve Kornfeld, "The Power of Empathy: A Feminist, Multicultural Approach to Historical Pedagogy," *The History Teacher,* 26 (November 1992), 28.

discourse that may be employed to counter the largely irrational, cross-generational identification by race and gender indulged in by some of our students.[8]

An overt and undisguised appeal to historical methodology may be especially effective in combating white male self-identification because some of these students already embrace the reasoned and rational investigation of the professional historian. The male graduate student, Richard, condemned what he saw as the "*angry* extreme views" he thought he heard during "the week long discussion on the Gender/Race Role whites played in slavery." He elaborated on his own model of scholarly, historical discourse:

> ... moderation of discussion is important. Those who are the most emotional are not always the most Rational....
>
> The attacks on my Race and Gender, and constant Reminder of the same, did at times keep me from voicing my opinions. Have we lost the ability to discuss issues in an academic manner, must every issue be emotionally charged[?] I feel in an effort to present the entire spectrum of ideas and views on slavery, many moderate and "middle-of-the-road" ideas were left unvoiced.
>
> All look at history through previous experiences and personal views. These experiences and views determine our interpretation of historical events. I would argue that these interpretations should be put forth in an academic manner.

Richard's complaint, namely that two students had abandoned objectivity in favor of "emotional" history, should be turned back on him. Obviously this should be done gently; no one likes to be told that their perceptions and reactions are driven by something other than reason. But Richard, by seeing closely reasoned historical investigations of gender roles in patriarchy and racial roles in slavery as "attacks on my Race and Gender" is reacting at least as emotionally as he thinks his supposed attackers are. Through his over-identification with certain historical figures, he has abandoned his own model of scholarly discourse. This must become apparent to the student before comfort can be restored to the classroom. Not until he feels and intuitively believes what George said about "not having much to do with it" can he properly distance himself from patriarchs when they are under assault. Abandoning the role model pursuit of historical similarities in favor of a scholarly interrogation of the difference that exists between historians and their subjects

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[8]Gerald Graff, *Beyond the Culture Wars: How Teaching the Conflicts Can Revitalize American Education* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992). Francesca Sawaya, "Silent and Sullen: Resistance to the Multicultural Classroom," in a paper delivered at the Midwest Modern Language Association Annual Meeting, in November 1994, argues that students should be taught and encouraged to participate in a wide-ranging and inclusive debate illustrating the connections and divisions between a wide spectrum of historical and literary positions. By allowing students to engage with controversial rhetoric written by non-academics in the past, Sawaya argues, they are able "to identify and hence *voice* their differing beliefs." My classes engaged in the more severely limited debate between differing groups of recent historians, none of whom explicitly advanced pro-patriarchal or pro-slavery positions.

in the past could help Richard and others achieve the scholarly model he so appreciates. An investigation of how the socially constructed meanings of terms such as "white" and "male" have changed over time could be a place to start. In fact, a student such as Richard would become a better historian in the process of realizing our alienation from the past. This approach, which calls for students to jettison the more romantic aspects of history, might make the study of the past less attractive to some, but it should appeal to students who already know the discourse of objectivity.

Some of the roadblocks to class discussion mentioned above will be hard to remove. Outright racism and cultural training to avoid confrontation, especially when such training reinforces a gendered upbringing that emphasizes polite agreement instead of individuality, are serious obstacles that are often beyond the ability of an instructor to end in one semester. But it might be possible to change the sense that about one half of white male students have that they are under assault, if only because some of them already possess a substitute model. Their identification with people of "my race and gender" reveals much of how they envision and define themselves, but they might also have within their knowledge base a rationalist discourse that can be used to counteract the irrationality of that self-identification. If white students can be convinced that their response to classroom discussion is as emotional as that of their supposed opponents, they might re-evaluate how they view themselves and their roles in discussion.

Students learn best when their ideas must be explained and are then challenged and debated by the group as a whole. Perspectives can only be changed when an ideologically diverse range of people make contributions, and this can happen only when most students feel comfortable. An atmosphere in which all students can speak about race and gender would also, significantly, help the two outspoken critics of slavery and patriarchy, one of whom complained that she "felt I *had* to say something to keep things interesting" (student #2). For all of these reasons, it seems important that we communicate to white students that they need not identify with Old South whites. If we are to foster a study of slavery in a mostly white educational setting such as Illinois State University, we should acknowledge the fears that many white students bring to discussions of slavery and address their emotional over-identification with slaveholders that partially creates this fear, anger, and silence.

ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY CHINA: TEACHING SPENCE'S *THE DEATH OF WOMAN WANG*

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Christopher Newport University

Students of Chinese history are always curious about China's culture and society as well as the lives of individuals during its different periods. For anyone aspiring to teach Chinese history, a major challenge is how to present this Oriental heritage in both its historical and cultural contexts. This essay offers an example of my classroom experience in attempting to meet such a challenge and to satisfy other requisite elements of scholarship.

In my introductory course on Modern China, I designed a class to examine various facets of women's lives in seventeenth-century China. Jonathan D. Spence's book *The Death of Woman Wang* provides an excellent biography of an ordinary village woman, Wang, as a tool for teaching this subject.[1] The real stories gleaned from Spence's book were organized in the class around three issues: first, Confucian views on sex and the husband-wife relationship; second, domestic violence against women in light of the social setting of the time; third, traditional customs and laws concerning marriage, adultery, and murder in seventeenth-century China.

My class on woman Wang followed successful experiments by Frederick Drake, Denee Corbin, and others who have used biography to dramatize their lectures in order to make history come alive.[2] The class was designed to be in the form of a trial by creating a student jury that would review this case of family homicide through the following steps:

1) Preparation: The teacher distributed to each student a two-page handout introducing China's legal procedure and containing a summary of its "Act of Adultery," which was required reading before the start of the class.

2) Lecture (40-45 minutes): The teacher offered historical background and presented woman Wang's story. The teacher's presentation also involved answering students' questions about the case, the law, and Chinese customs.

3) Discussion (20-25 minutes): The students discussed the case and brought in a verdict.

4) Conclusion (5-10 minutes): The teacher made comments on the students' verdict and then revealed to them the judgment made by a Chinese magistrate.

This class lasted one hour and fifteen minutes; but the lecture, discussion, and conclusion could be organized into a 50 to 55-minute class (for example, by giving

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[1]Jonathan D. Spence, *The Death of Woman Wang* (New York: Penguin Books, 1979).

[2]Frederick D. Drake and Denee Corbin, 'Making History Come Alive: Dramatization in the Classroom," *Teaching History*, 18 (Fall 1993), 59-67. Before them, Randolph B. Campbell and Pauline U. Dyson did similar experiments to make historical figures seem real and with relevance to their audience. See Campbell, "History Through Biography: A Review Essay," *Teaching History*, 4 (Spring 1979), 31-34, and Dyson, "Dramatizing History with a Victorian Tea," *Teaching History*, 11 (Fall 1986), 71-76.

students a summary of woman Wang's story before hand and cutting the teacher's presentation down to about 30 minutes).

My lecture started with a brief introduction to the Qing Dynasty, the period in which woman Wang lived. This last Chinese monarchy (1644-1911) was founded by the Manchus, a small ethnic group of people who originated in Manchuria. After the Manchus conquered China, they soon adapted to Chinese culture, establishing and developing a social order promulgated by their *Legal Code* (containing the major laws of the Qing Dynasty) based on Confucian teachings.[3]

Before presenting the story of woman Wang, it was also important to explain the Confucian view of womanly virtue, because the students would later see that it was this traditional moral code that woman Wang was accused of violating. Below are records of some "honorable and virtuous women" from the *Local History* of T'an-cheng, the small county where woman Wang lived.[4] By way of preparation, I first read brief descriptions of the suicides of these women in the *Local History*. In order to prevent my students from being confused by strange foreign names, I labeled these women A, B, C, D, E, and F.

Woman A: A carpenter's daughter. Her husband was a farm laborer. She killed herself after her husband died from an illness.

Woman B: Her husband was dying in jail. She asserted: "I wish to die as my husband is dying. How can I live on alone? I shall be the one to go first." She hanged herself on the veranda of the temple. The community praised her even though her husband was no longer in good standing.

Woman C: When her fiancé died before the wedding ceremonies were completed, her parents secretly arranged her betrothal to another man. She cut her hair and disfigured herself, vowing that she would always be loyal to the man who would have been her husband. Insisting on serving her in-laws, she lived out her life with them.

Woman D: She was engaged to Mr. X, who was slandered for allegedly having illicit relations with his widowed sister-in-law. In order to clear her good name and prove his own integrity, he castrated himself. Since Mr. X was "no longer a whole person," her family arranged for a new engagement. But as the new husband was being summoned, Woman D hanged herself.

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[3]Most materials concerning the Legal Code that I used for this class can be found in *The Death of Woman Wang*. A good number of reference books on the Qing Legal Code are available. The classical English translation of the Code was done by Sir George Thomas Staunton, *Ta Tsing Leu Lee, Being the Fundamental Laws, and a Selection from the Supplementary Statutes, of the Penal Code of China* (London, 1810, 1967). Also see Harvard Studies in East Asian Law, *Law in Imperial China, Emplified by 190 Ch'ing Dynasty Cases* (Philadelphia, 1973). In addition, to teach the legal status of Chinese Women in civil and criminal matters, teachers can consult Marinus Hohan Meijer, *Murder and Adultery in Late Imperial China: A Study of Law and Morality* (Leiden and New York, 1991).

[4]As with the Legal Code, the materials I needed on the Local History came from Spence. There is a Chinese version of the local history of T'an-cheng, the county where woman Wang lived, in some American research libraries, including Alderman Library at the University of Virginia.

Women E and F: They were married to two brothers and shared the same home. One of the women was twenty-four, the other twenty. In 1643, the Manchus sacked the city and killed the husbands. As the Manchu troops approached, the women hanged themselves from the same beam with their sashes to avoid being raped by the soldiers.[5]

Of the 56 women whose biographies were printed in the *Local History* in the 1670s, the fifteen who committed suicide had been motivated either by devotion to a deceased husband or to avoid rape. Such suicides were not restricted to members of elite families educated in the Confucian ideals of loyalty.[6]

It is the teacher's job to help students discover the intended purpose of these accounts. In the "biographies of honorable and virtuous women," there were obvious biases and attempts by the authors to impose Confucian views of correct female behavior.[7] The teacher should also explain the procedure of editing and publishing local histories in China: These projects were usually initiated by the local gentry and sponsored by county governments. These biographies in the *Local History* of T'an-cheng, therefore, reflected a state-sponsored "chastity cult," rewarding women who killed or mutilated themselves as an expression of loyalty to their husbands.[8]

In the Qing period, however, female suicide was by no means a common practice. On the contrary, women at all levels of Chinese society tried to develop various strategies for challenging subordinate status, from seizing court power to escaping from an unhappy marriage.[9] Woman Wang was one of the latter, a runaway housewife.

Suicides by "honorable and virtuous women" provoked student questions about the male perspective on "chastity" and "loyalty." *Death of Woman Wang* describes a date between a man and a woman that addresses this question:

> As the man moved to embrace her, the woman said, "Take your hands off me for a moment. There are two ways now before us, and I ask you to choose one of them." He asked her what she meant, and she replied, "If we had a

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[5]Spence, 99-102.

[6]Spence, 100.

[7]Spence, 99.

[8]For detailed discussion, I suggested that students read Richard J. Smith, *China's Cultural Heritage: The Qing Dynasty, 1644-1912* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1994), 245-246, and T'ien Ju-k'ang, *Male Anxiety and Female Chastity: A Comparative Study of Chinese Ethical Values in Ming-Qing Times* (Leiden, 1988).

[9]For detail, see Susan Mann, "Widows in the Kinship, Class and Community Structures of Qing Dynasty China," *Journal of Asian Studies*, 46 (February 1987), 37-56; Janice Stockard, *Daughters of the Canton Delta, Marriage Patterns and Economic Strategies in South China, 1860-1930* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989); Hellen Siu, "Where Were the Women? Rethinking Marriage Resistance and Regional Culture in South China," *Late Imperial China*, 11 (December 1990), 32-36.

> friendship in which we play Wei-Chi and drink together, then we will be able to spend thirty years in each other's company; but if we indulge in the pleasures of the bedchamber, we can be together only six years. Which do you choose?" And the man replied, "Let's talk it over again in six years' time."[10]

The striking contrast between the ethical standards of men and women in Qing China aroused the students' curiosity. They wondered what would happen to woman Wang as a runaway wife. I presented woman Wang's story slowly, encouraging the students to take notes, ask questions, and to be familiar with this case and the legalities concerned.

Woman Wang, an orphan with no living relatives in T'an-cheng, got married in the late 1660s. Her husband was a poor peasant named Jen. In his book, Spence assumes that woman Wang had been brought into Jen's home as a little girl to help with the household chores, then married Jen when she was older, as was often the case with poor girls in the country.[11] This practice was called *Tongyangxi* (child daughter-in-law) in Qing China. It took me a while to explain to the students that the lot of these child daughters-in-law was even harder than that of most toiling women.

In 1671, woman Wang ran away with another man. No record indicates the reasons, but one could imagine that her marriage must have been very unhappy. Woman Wang and her partner desperately needed to find somewhere to hide, but woman Wang could move only very slowly, because, like all Chinese women in the seventeenth century, her feet were bound.

By running off, woman Wang had become a criminal in the eyes of the law. Only if a wife had been severely hurt or mutilated by her husband, or if she had been forced by him to commit sexual acts with others, would she be free to leave him. The "Act of Adultery," furthermore, made both woman Wang and her lover liable for serious punishment.

After reminding my students to have the summary of the Qing *Legal Code* in hand, I continued woman Wang's story. Her lover abandoned her a short time later, leaving her alone on the road. With nowhere to go, she had to return to her original village. But as she approached, she became too frightened to confront her husband, Jen. Near her village stood a temple in which woman Wang was given shelter by the Taoist priest.

After he learned that woman Wang was hiding there, Jen entered the temple, where he ran into his neighbor, Kao. Suspecting Kao of meeting with his wife, Jen swore at Kao and accused him of hiding woman Wang in the temple. At this insult, Kao hit Jen twice in the face. Kao's action was also a legal offense, for the *Legal Code* stipulated that "any

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[10]Spence, 106.

[11]Spence, 117.

person striking another with hand or foot was to be punished with twenty blows if he caused no wound, with thirty blows if he caused a wound."[12]

A student asked how serious such a punishment was. *The Death of Woman Wang* contains an explanation of this practice. It warned that thirty blows would risk a man's life, and nobody could survive a hundred blows.[13]

Another student's question concerned Jen's treatment of his wife after her return. "Jen would decide to divorce," the student suggested. His comment actually raised another question: Under what conditions could a man divorce and under what conditions could he not?

The *Legal Code* was complicated on this point. A husband could divorce a wife on one of seven grounds: 1) Inability to bear sons; 2) lascivious behavior; 3) failure to serve her in-laws properly; 4) talking too much; 5) having a thievish nature; 6) being overzealous; 7) suffering from a serious illness. In addition, without these grounds, divorce by mutual consent was also permitted under the law. However, a husband was not allowed to divorce his wife if one of three factors applied: 1) The wife had mourned her in-laws for three years; 2) the husband has risen from poverty to riches during the time of their marriage; or 3) the wife had no family of her own to receive her.[14]

Technically, it appears that Jen could have been punished for taking back his unfaithful wife. But since so far nobody knew of her infidelity they were able to reunite. What happened next, however, was rather horrible.

On a cold and snowy evening toward the end of January 1672, Jen had asked woman Wang to mend his jacket, which she was darning by the light of a lamp. The neighbors could see the light shining from the couple's house, and later they heard the two of them quarreling, though they could not make out the words. Then the lamp went out. It was still snowing and the village was silent.

Jen waited until woman Wang fell asleep. Then he killed her and moved her body to his neighbor Kao's house, leaving it in the gateway. Jen planned to go to the county registrar the next day and sue Kao, asserting that his wife had been having an adulterous affair with Kao, who had killed her. Early in the morning, Jen went to the county court in T'an-cheng and filed a normal complaint against Kao.[15]

My class now moved to the magistrate's court to examine the procedure and method of that trial. All students, with the *Legal Code* in hand, now "presented themselves" in the courtroom as the jury, watching the magistrate review of the case. The magistrate read the charge and ordered Kao and his wife be arrested. At the trial, Kao stuck to his story:

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[12]Spence, 125.

[13]Spence, 125.

[14]Spence, 126.

[15]Spence, 128-192.

He had met Wang once in the temple two months before and had struck Jen in the face during their argument, but he denied any adultery with woman Wang or that he had killed her. At another trial, Kao's wife corroborated her husband's story. Later, other evidence arose to suggest that the Kaos were innocent. However, Jen insisted on the truth of his complaint.

The magistrate decided to use a technique that he had found successful before, using fear of the "City God" to elicit the truth from frightened witnesses. He put Jen and his father into the City God's temple and told them: "Last night the City God told me of your crime. Now I am putting you here to give you a chance to confess." He told one of his clerks to hide underneath the table and take note of anything that Jen and his father might say during the night.

This method did indeed work. The record of the conversation between Jen and his father convinced the magistrate that Kao and woman Wang were innocent. Then Jen confessed.

The case was clear. I instructed the students to read the handouts I gave them before the class on the "Act of Adultery" in the Qing *Legal Code* from which we would make a judgment:

> 1) Those having illegal intercourse by mutual consent were to be punished by eighty blows; if the woman was married, with ninety blows.
>
> 2) If they intrigued to meet away from the woman's house, with one hundred blows.
>
> 3) If the woman gave birth to a child after the illegal intercourse, the natural father met the expenses of raising it.
>
> 4) The husband could sell off his adulterous wife or keep her as he chose; but if he sold her in marriage to the adulterer, then both the husband and the adulterer were punished with eighty blows, the woman had to be divorced and returned to her family, and the price originally paid for her was forfeited to the government.
>
> 5) The husband was considered justified in killing either his wife or the adulterer or both if he caught them in the act. (In 1646, there was an amendment: The husband was not justified in killing either of the adulterers if they were merely dallying before committing the sexual act, or if they had committed adultery but surrendered to him on their own, or if he caught them in a place other than that where the adultery was committed.)[16]

When explaining these laws, the teacher should also make a brief introduction to the Qing legal system. Because of the criticism of China's current human rights record, students might have difficulties in understanding that, as early as the seventeenth century,

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[16]Spence, 120-121.

the Qing rulers of China built up a criminal justice system encompassing a broad range of sophisticated procedures designed to convict the guilty and acquit the innocent.[17] It was also made clear that their judgments should be made in two phases: First, the students should arrive at a verdict based on the seventeenth-century "Act of Adultery;" and after that they should be encouraged to think about the case and take their positions from an American perspective.

Before the students pass judgment, however, another practice should be also introduced: the flexibility of decision-making by magistrates. In woman Wang's case, the magistrate might change the punishment after he considered the following facts: First, Jen's father had known nothing about the crime; second, he was over seventy and Jen was his only son; third, Jen had no children, so the family line would certainly die out if he were executed; fourth, woman Wang had not followed the moral code of a wife and, having betrayed her husband, deserved to die; fifth, Jen had indeed been provoked in the temple by Kao, who should never have hit him.

I gave students twenty to twenty-five minutes for discussion, during which time an attractive variety of comments came out. Some students reviewed the *Legal Code* handout to look for grounds, while others made statements in accordance with their "feelings" or with American social values. Many students argued powerful points indicative of their careful examination of Qing China's attitudes toward women as well as its legal system and social values.

In the last five minutes or so of class, I summarized their argument and pointed out that certain of their reflections were especially intriguing and valuable. First, the students noticed that according to the Qing legal code, woman Wang would have been guilty of running away from her husband. They argued that woman Wang had obviously been suffering from her husband's cruelties for some time, as she chose the desperate path of leaving him, knowing well the moral and social consequences of such a decision. They also indicated that woman Wang continued to be a dutiful wife on the night of her death, sewing her husband's jacket late into the night. This is, I told my students, a strong American defense of woman Wang that nevertheless has some grounds in Chinese law and social customs.

Second, the students stressed that according to the amendment of 1646, woman Wang's husband Jen was not justified in killing his wife, since he did not catch her in the act of adultery; Jen had killed his wife when she was in a deep sleep and moved her corpse to Kao's gateway. This was not a case of passion, but rather a cold, calculated murder. In modern times, Jen would have been convicted of first-degree murder, which would have earned him either a long prison sentence, life in prison without parole, or the death penalty. These judgments sounded logical from the Qing legal perspective.

Third, the students assumed that the magistrate would have considered the possible termination of Jen's family line as a mitigating factor in his punishment. The magistrate

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[17]I suggested that students read William P. Alford, "Of Arsenic and Old Laws: Looking Anew at Criminal Justice in Late Imperial China," *California Law Review*, 72 (1984), 1180-1256.

might have probably lessened the charges by putting Jen in jail or by punishing him with several "blows." This point reflected students' understanding of family as an extremely important aspect of Chinese culture.

In discussion, however, almost all students ignored the following facts and their legal consequences:

1) Jen lodged a false accusation against Kao. According to the *Legal Code*, both Jen and his father should have received the death penalty for falsely accusing an innocent person of a capital crime.[18] This law was designed to prevent innocents from being incriminated and to avoid a plethora of legal disputes provoked by shysters. In fact, the magistrate considered giving Jen the death penalty not because Jen murdered his wife, but principally because he framed a false case against Kao.

2) Kao struck Jen in the face during their quarrel. In Qing China, if a person struck another with his hand or foot, he broke the law. Thus, in accordance with the law, Kao was subject to "blows" or other punishments.

In closing, I opened Spence's book to read the magistrate's decision:

> 1) Jen was sentenced to be beaten with the heavy bamboo (thirty blows) and to wear the cangue around his neck for a lengthy period of time.[19] If Jen survived the beating and could live with the shame, he would be free to follow the dictates of filial piety and look after his aged father, and Jen could marry again if he could find a bride.
>
> Woman Wang was killed and would become a homeless ghost roaming the village for generations. Therefore, she should be buried in a good coffin, in a plot of land near her home so that her lonely spirit would be pacified. But the government did not want to spend a penny, and the Jen family could not afford to pay. So Kao and his wife would be released but they should bury woman Wang on their land and pay all the funeral expenses: that would both take care of woman Wang and teach Kao not to hit people in the face when he lost his temper.[20]

The last point of the magistrate's judgment struck my students as funny; since everybody, whether he or she agreed or not, broke into laughter, I was sure that the students had put themselves in woman Wang's shoes.

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[18]Spence, 133-137.

[19]I showed students a picture of a Chinese criminal with cangue. The picture is easy to locate, e.g. Richard L. Greaves, *Civilization of the World* Vol. II (New York: Harper and Row, 1990), 521, or Rhoads Murphy, *A History of Asia* (New York: Harper Collins, 1996), 208.

[20]Spence, 139.

My class on woman Wang has proven that the teaching method of "dramatization in the classroom" used by Drake and Corbin in their American history courses is applicable to the teaching of Chinese history as well. The real story of woman Wang raised some thought-provoking issues, captured students' imaginations and interest, and helped them to learn about a foreign culture. The students took sides and invested their feelings in woman Wang's case, thereby grasping the historical concept of marriage, family, neighborhood, morality, law, and social setting in the context of seventeenth-century China.

In addition, my class has been an attempt to bridge the gap between the "New History" and traditional history approaches. The "New History" focuses more on women, labor, minorities, and society rather than on traditional politics, law, and diplomatic or military affairs. As Linda Gordon points out, "In no other field of history has there been so much productivity, innovation, and interest since the 1970s as in U.S. women's history."[21] With a strong interest in contemporary American controversies such as courtship, sex, abortion, female-headed households, and women's employment, college students would like to understand the historical differences and similarities between American women and their counterparts in China. In my experimental class, the students and I discussed both the Qing legal system and women's problems. This experience has convinced me of the possibility of exploring new topics in teaching, while exposing undergraduates to such up-to-date scholarship as Spence's solid research on woman Wang.

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[21]Linda Gordon, *U.S. Women's History*, AHA series, Eric Foner, ed. (Washington, D.C.: American Historical Association, 1990), 1.

QUALITY CONTROL IN DISTANCE LEARNING: PRODUCING AND TEACHING A U.S. HISTORY TELECOURSE

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Even though some professors in the social sciences may wish it otherwise, technology has become increasingly significant in our professional as well as our personal lives. We know that colleges are using technology to broaden and enhance their educational offerings to "distant learners." Students who may be far removed from a traditional classroom setting can now use an array of video and/or computer connections to complete most if not all of their credits toward a college degree. As educators, we are concerned about the quality of all course work, and courses offered in an "unusual" way draw special scrutiny. As two professors who have been intimately involved in producing and teaching a telecourse, we believe that we can attest to the quality of this type of distance learning.

Television has become a major and respected source of history for masses of Americans. Well-crafted documentaries such as *Lincoln* and *The Civil War* have shown millions of viewers the real-life drama, glory, and heartbreak of history. A&E's Biography series and The History Channel are welcome additions to the cable line-up. Moreover, most of our students have grown up in the television age and feel more comfortable in front of a TV set than with a book in their hands. We may deplore this fact, but because of it, it is incumbent upon us to see that our students, if they are going to get some of their history from television, view materials that are accurate and well-produced.

Telecourses (regular college courses using television as a major disseminator of information) have come a long way from the "talking heads" of years ago. Film, interviews with respected authorities, and first-rate graphics are now characteristic of the best telecourses in such diverse areas as history, government, sociology, psychology, anthropology, business, health, English, writing, and earth science.

Educational institutions themselves have become producers of quality telecourses, among them the Coast Community College District in California and the Dallas County Community College District (DCCCD) in Dallas, Texas. This essay is based on our experience in producing and teaching the second-semester U.S. history survey telecourse, "America in Perspective: United States History Since 1877," produced by the Center for Telecommunications of the Dallas County Community College District.

To have credibility with faculty, it is imperative to involve them at every step in the production. The content specialist for the course was a full-time history faculty member from the District, on loan to the center for two years. The research associate, also a history faculty member, worked on the project the first year. The faculty advisory committee was made up of one historian from each of the District's seven campuses, plus history faculty from seven other two- and four-year colleges in Texas, Oklahoma, Florida, Illinois, and

Wisconsin. Appointment to this committee was not just an empty honor or an adornment to one's resumé. The committee met frequently to plan the broad outline of the course, provide historical expertise, and, most important, review scripts for historical accuracy. Some faculty will denigrate telecourses as somehow lacking in quality; an actively involved advisory committee can do much to defuse such criticism.

We included in the course interviews with over 40 historians (and a few political scientists and economists), among them David Kennedy, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Darlene Clark Hine, and George Herring. (For a complete list of professors interviewed, see the Appendix.) We believe that historians of this caliber added credibility to the course. Interviews with such first-rate authorities as these are something no traditional course can deliver, except through limited readings and occasional videos. Among the other interviewees were people who had lived through the Great Depression, Pearl Harbor survivors and other World War II veterans, a Japanese-American couple who had been interned during the war, and activists from the Civil Rights movement, including Julian Bond. We made a special effort to include racial minorities among the veterans interviewed, as a reminder to students that World War II was not just a "white man's war."

"America in Perspective" consists of 26 half-hour video programs, each of which is an integral part of a lesson in the course. We used professional writers to help draft the scripts, based on materials supplied by the content specialist and the research associate. It is important to use professional writers at this stage. They have the ability to make material understandable and interesting to the television viewer, which we historians sometimes have trouble doing. But the content specialist and advisory committee must have the final say over the content of each lesson.

Dallas's LeCroy Center for Telecommunications employs a number of people who have worked in instructional design and television production. Their skills are essential in the editing and final production stages of the lessons.

The research associate provided historical materials to the script writers and researched film and photo stills. For the latter we used the National Archives, the Library of Congress, photos in the public domain, a few state historical societies, film and stills from libraries in Dallas, and the generosity of some of those interviewed.

Besides watching the videos critically, students must read assignments in a textbook and a book of essays. The text for the course is Gary B. Nash et al., *The American People*, Vol. II--Since 1865 (4th edition, Addison Wesley Longman, 1998). The essay reader is Kenneth G. Alfers, C. Larry Pool, William F. Mugleston, eds., *Perspectives on America: Readings in U.S. History Since 1877* (American Heritage Custom Publishing, 1997). Text, reader, and videos are all correlated by a carefully drafted Study Guide, which is essential to student success (Kenneth G. Alfers, *Study Guide for America in Perspective: U.S. History Since 1877* [3rd edition, Addison Wesley Longman, 1998]). Each chapter in the Study Guide (corresponding to the 26 video programs) contains an overview and themes of the lesson, the reading assignments in the text and reader, focus questions for the text and video, other suggested readings, additional enrichment projects for extra

credit, and practice test questions. Successful students report that they work through these study aids in the Study Guide. Inasmuch as the amount of reading required is easily equal to that of a traditional classroom course, plus the fact that videos must be watched, skeptical faculty may be certain that the course does not "water down" the amount of study required of students.

Indeed, a well-produced telecourse might well be of higher quality than what instructors do in class each day. We all think we're pretty good in the classroom, but even the best teacher has an occasional "off day." Of more importance, an incompetent or lazy instructor, once he or she closes the classroom door, is largely a free agent, and it may take some time (if ever) to flush this person out; meanwhile, the real victims are the students. "America in Perspective" had sixteen professional historians involved. Scripts were rigorously critiqued. It would have been impossible, we believe, for major factual errors to have gotten by. That the course has received national recognition further attests to its quality (Blue Ribbon Finalist, Seventh Annual Video Competition, Community College Association for Instructional Television).

Who should take a telecourse? They are not for everyone, and this must be strongly emphasized at the initial course orientation. The DCCCD's Center for Telecommunications suggests this profile of successful telecourse students. They "are goal-oriented and self-directed, know how to learn independently, have prerequisite skills such as a college reading level, attend orientation, begin course activities immediately, set aside specific time on a routine basis for study, and contact the instructor promptly when they have questions about any aspect of the course." Students who do best are highly disciplined, motivated people capable of sticking to a schedule, meeting deadlines, and working on their own with a minimum of supervision. Students straight out of high school who lack self-discipline should be cautioned about taking telecourses. We Americans tend to view television as light entertainment, not requiring much concentration or thought. Thus some students will take a TV course thinking it is somehow "easier" than an in-class course. It is not. We always tell our telecourse students that the course will require just as much reading and work as a "regular" class, and quite likely more. From our experience, prime candidates are mature and motivated working adults whose schedules might preclude them from attending class regularly; those who live a long distance from a campus; parents with small children or elderly relatives to care for; and those in prison or otherwise confined. (The course is currently being used on U.S. submarines, for example.) Others who are hesitant or fearful about attending college may start out with a telecourse, find they like it, and go on to enroll in traditional classes.

If you offer a telecourse, the instructor must be a faculty member knowledgeable about it and committed to this type of learning. "Instructor" is a misnomer here, because you're not one in the traditional sense. What you do is provide the orientation at the beginning of the course, hold periodic group meetings with the students, administer and grade the exams, and, most important, be available regularly in your office, over the phone, and increasingly via e-mail for student questions and concerns. And you will get

questions. It should be emphasized that faculty (like students) who think a telecourse is less work than a traditional class might also be in for a surprise.

It is customary to give three or four exams during the semester. They can be multiple-choice, essay, or a mixture, depending on the wishes of the telecourse faculty, the enrollment, and your institution's emphasis on developing writing skills. The Center for Telecommunications provides a standard set of exams to users of the course, and these are a mixture of multiple-choice and essay. These can be used, or users can devise their own exams. Some colleges also assign a term paper. It is helpful to have a campus testing center where students can go on their own to take the exams, and to allow a window of 7-10 days per test, giving students maximum flexibility of testing times. However, in lieu of a testing center, the instructor can administer the exams at regularly scheduled times. But due to the varied schedules of working adults, you will find yourself giving the exam to one student at a time for as much as half the class, at all hours of the day and evening. Again, a telecourse is not a "free ride" for faculty!

The biggest downside to a telecourse is that students miss the classroom interaction of discussion with the instructor and other students. This is a big minus, and perceptive students pick up on it right away. However, a well-done telecourse can be of as high a quality as a course delivered the traditional way by a skilled instructor. Student surveys, studies of final grades, and comparisons with traditional courses reveal that students who complete telecourses experience about the same satisfaction and learning as with in-class courses.

One question we have asked on surveys administered to course completers is about the "amount of work involved." Typical responses are:

--- "A lot more!"
--- "more than traditional class"
--- "More than usual. You need to pay strict attention to the reading material. In a class you can reinforce the reading material by the instructor's lecture."
--- "more than expected"
--- "Considerably more involvement with lessons. Spent ... 4 to 5 hours on each lesson"

To our question of "Amount learned":

--- "Much more"
--- "I learned much; it seems I have studied some material before, now it's sinking in"
--- "about the same"
--- "more because I had to make myself learn it"
--- "probably more because you are forced to read instead of relying on lecture only"
--- "tons"

Other student comments from evaluations include:

--- "Read entire textbook, which is not always necessary in a regular course"
--- "I learned a lot more than I usually learn in a class"
--- "[This course] gives the student more responsibility. As long as we do our work we will be fine"
--- "You need to be disciplined in order to do well"

In some ways, telecourses may become "traditional" compared to the courses being offered on the cutting edge of today's technology. Whatever form these courses take, we should insist that they include quality control measures similar to those used in telecourses. Only then can we be assured that our students will truly benefit from the advantages of modern technology and distance learning.

Appendix

Professors Interviewed and Topics

Stephen Ambrose, University of New Orleans - World War II; The Nixon Presidency
Gary Anderson, University of Oklahoma - The American Frontier
Charles Banner-Haley, Colgate University - The Civil Rights Movement
Robert Beisner, The American University - The Spanish-American War and Imperialism
Tim Blessing, Pennsylvania State University-Berks Campus - The 1980s
Julian Bond, The American University - The Civil Rights Movement
Albert Camarillo, Stanford University - The Civil Rights Movement; The 1980s
Calvin Christman, Cedar Valley College and University of North Texas - World War II
Paul Conkin, Vanderbilt University - The Great Depression and the New Deal
Roger Daniels, University of Cincinnati - World War II
Allen F. Davis, Temple University - Progressivism
Leonard Dinnerstein, University of Arizona - Immigration and Ethnicity
Robert Divine, University of Texas-Austin - World War II; The Cold War; The Vietnam War
Melvyn Dubofsky, State University of New York-Binghamton - The Labor Movement
Peter Frederick, Wabash College - Populism
Richard Fried, University of Illinois-Chicago - The Cold War
Willard Gatewood, University of Arkansas-Fayetteville - Progressivism; The 1920s
Lawrence Goodwyn, Duke University - Populism
Lewis Gould, University of Texas-Austin - The Spanish-American War and Imperialism
Hugh Davis Graham, Vanderbilt University - The Civil Rights Movement

Otis Graham, University of California-Santa Barbara - World War I
Kenneth Hamilton, Southern Methodist University - The 1950s
Robert Heilbroner, New School for Social Research - The Great Depression; The 1980s
George Herring, University of Kentucky - The Vietnam War
Darlene Clark Hine, Michigan State University - African-American History and the Civil Rights Movement
Joan Hoff, Indiana University - The Great Depression; The Nixon Presidency
Julie Roy Jeffrey, Goucher College - The American Frontier
David Kennedy, Stanford University - World War I
Alice Kessler-Harris, Rutgers University - The Labor Movement; The Civil Rights Movement
Jack Temple Kirby, Miami University (Ohio) - Progressivism
Lester Langley, University of Georgia - The Spanish-American War and Imperialism
Zane Miller, University of Cincinnati - Growth of Urban America
Roderick Nash, University of California-Santa Barbara - The 1920s
Joseph Nye, Jr., Harvard University - Recent American Foreign Policy
William O'Neill, Rutgers University - The 1950s; The 1980s
Ricardo Romo, University of Texas-Austin - The Civil Rights Movement
Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Writer and Historian - The New Deal; The Nixon Presidency
John Stoessinger, Trinity University - Recent American Foreign Policy
Studs Terkel, Author and Oral Historian - The Great Depression
R. Hal Williams, Southern Methodist University - The Rise of Big Business
Allan Winkler, Miami University (Ohio) - World War II; The 1980s

REVIEWS

Gerda Lerner. *Why History Matters: Life and Thought.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. Pp. xvii, 249. Cloth, $30.00; ISBN 0-19-504644-7. Paper, $13.95; ISBN 0-19-512289-5.

Those of you who have been around two or three decades might skip this paragraph and go to the second paragraph below. Those new to the study of history should read my remarks about how stodgy and male-dominated the historical profession used to be. During the decade of the sixties historians were much slower than their counterparts in sociology, anthropology, political science, and literature in believing that women's studies were relevant to their discipline. History faculties were more heavily dominated by males than were other disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. Many college students who were part of the civil rights and antiwar movements thought of history as unimportant. History, they believed, dealt with a dead and meaningless past--they were more concerned with changing the present. As a young history professor in 1975 I organized a summer workshop on methods, materials, and themes for teaching women's history in the secondary classrooms of Kansas. I wrote both the AHA and the OAH and asked for any materials or suggestions they might have--they were sympathetic but had nothing available; I relied on other disciplines and various activist organizations for materials and resource people.

There has been a great deal of change in the historical profession since then. Gerda Lerner, the late Joan Kelly, and an increasing number of other feminist historians have brought women's studies into the mainstream of historical scholarship and teaching. Lerner has steadily insisted on high standards of scholarship and the development of a different perspective in looking at the past of those previously marginalized--not only women, but other groups oppressed because of race, religion, sexual orientation, or other reasons.

In *Why History Matters* she provides a good introduction to her philosophy of history and how her early life shaped that philosophy. Her earlier volume of essays, *The Majority Finds Its Past: Placing Women in History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), contained her views on history and feminism from 1969 to 1979. She focuses in the present work on her ideas since 1980, but begins with her early years in Austria during the Holocaust and as a wartime refugee.

In the first of three parts, one entitled "History as Memory," she writes of her own early life--how her personal history has influenced her ideas and her scholarship. "I have sometimes been asked, 'How has your being Jewish influenced your work in Women's History?' The simplest way I can answer this question is, I am a historian because of my Jewish experience." After having been jailed, she and her mother and sister were able to join her father in Liechtenstein shortly before *Kristallnacht*. After making their way to the United States, she and others like her registered as "enemy aliens" during World War II. She provides a moving account of adjusting to a new language and culture.

Lerner concludes the first part by describing a recent visit to France, Germany, and Austria. She walks in southern France among the ruins of those medieval victims of

persecution, the Cathars. She ends this section with her speech in Austria in which she accepts a state prize for women historians fifty years after she had fled "as an outsider, branded subhuman and deviant." She concludes: "I accept this prize with gratitude and a deep sense of obligation toward those who were forgotten, those who were exiled and hunted, and those who, in the darkest times, acted as human beings."

The second part, entitled "History: Theory and Practice," opens with an account of early non-violent resistance among Quakers and abolitionists in America, including a number of women leaders, and how this idea, next expressed in the writings of Thoreau, spread to Tolstoy in Russia, Gandhi in India, and then back to America during the civil rights movement.

American values and the conflicts between community and individualism are explored in a chapter that discusses the persecution of various religious groups, including Jews, Catholics, and Mormons at different times, and the persecution of ethnic minorities, including Blacks, Chinese, Irish, Native Americans, and others. Lerner also writes about the pressures for political conformity against trade unionists in the Progressive era, the deportation of alleged anarchists during the twenties, the McCarthyism of the fifties, and the attack on wartime opponents during the Vietnam War. These present many contradictions in our values and beliefs, she notes, but there are many other contradictions, such as the "wasteful and insensitive" destruction of the landscape, along with wilderness preservation, resource conservation, and movements for pure air and water. The exclusion of women from public offices and corporate power, and "church and academic leadership" until recently, along with continued under-representation, presents another such contradiction. "In order to draw on the largest possible pool of talent to solve the problems of the 21st century, open access to education and opportunity not only for women but for minorities and the economically disadvantaged is a national necessity."

The second part concludes with her presidential address in 1982 to the Organization of American Historians on the necessity of history: "For women, all history up to the twentieth century has truly been prehistory." It is presently history, "the known and ordered past," which enables those today to develop goals and visions for the future.

The third part of the work, entitled "Re-Visioning History," expresses most fully Lerner's philosophy of history and the need for change.

> Gender, race, ethnicity, and class are processes *through which hierarchical relations are created and maintained in such a way as to give some men power and privilege over other men and over women by their control of material resources, sexual and reproductive services, education and knowledge*. (Italics original)

It is the historical experience of women, she holds, in her final chapter, rather than the biological differences, that has conditioned women to their unequal roles. In prehistoric societies men and women pursued different roles based on their biological differences.

Women and men were involved in different economic activities but were not necessarily unequal. Women become more subordinate as the "cultural elaboration of difference" develops into an institutionalized hierarchy that is patriarchal. Women's history, Lerner asserts, connects women to their past and is essential in creating a feminist consciousness and in developing a vision for the future. The stories of the past become part of our present and future, she concludes, and "shapes the way next generations experience their lives. That is why history matters."

This work would obviously be of interest in classes on women's history, but I plan to use it also in my historiography class. Some of Lerner's ideas relating to patriarchy are discussed in greater detail in her other works, but here she provides topics for discussion on a wide variety of subjects relating to Carl Becker and relativism, minorities and the oppressed, and many other areas in modern historiography.

Emporia State University Sam Dicks

C.J. Bartlett. *Peace, War and the European Powers, 1814-1914.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996. Pp. x, 202. Cloth, $45.00; ISBN 0-312-16137-9. Paper, $18.95; ISBN 0-312-16138-7.

Peace, War and the European Powers, 1814-1914 is the first title published in a new British series, *European History in Perspective*, edited by Jeremy Black. The author, C.J. Bartlett, Professor of International History at the University of Dundee, has written extensively on European diplomacy in the nineteenth century, including *Great Britain and Sea Power, 1815-1853* (1963), *Castlereagh* (1966), and *Defense of Diplomacy* (1993). The book's brief 180 pages devote equal time to European diplomacy from the Congress of Vienna to the Franco-Prussian war and from the Bismarckian System to World War I.

In this "extended essay," Bartlett tests the views of those historians who attribute the relative peacefulness of the nineteenth century to the role of diplomacy based on what Paul Schoeder has called "consensual politics," the willingness of European diplomats to work within an international system rather than single-mindedly pursuing national self-interest. While the author does see some evidence of "consensual politics" in the nineeenth century, especially in the era immediately following the Napoleonic wars, he points out how frequently the European powers used the international system to promote their own interests.

Bartlett argues that, rather than a balance of power system or an equilibrium maintaining peace in the nineteenth century, it was a power imbalance against France before 1854 and a power imbalance in favor of Germany in the latter part of the century that helped to prevent major wars from occuring. The danger of war was increased when there was a movement away from imbalance, as happened in the post-Crimean war period

and the 1909 to 1914 period when Germany became increasingly fearful of being encircled.

This book is not a narrative account of nineteenth-century diplomacy--its brevity does not permit this--but rather the thoughtful judgments of a leading historian of international relations on recent scholarly literature dealing with nineteenth-century diplomacy. Pauls Choeder's *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763-1848*, James Joll's *The Origins of the First World War*, and R. Langhorne's *The Collapse of the Concert of Europe* are only a few of the recent and significant works discussed in this book. An annotated bibliography at the end of the book walks you through nineteenth-century diplomatic history.

Peace, War and the European Powers would be an excellent book to use in an upper-division or graduate class in nineteenth-century Europe where students can be expected to have some knowledge of the broad outlines of nineteenth-century European history and some familiarity with the literature of the field. It is written in a clear and even lively style, but does presume more background knowledge than most lower-division students can be expected to have. This is a very useful book for the instructor teaching nineteenth-century Europe without specialization in diplomatic history; it provides many thoughtful judgments on key events in diplomatic history.

Texas A&M University-Commerce Harry Wade

Geoffrey Ellis. *Napoleon*. London & New York: Longman, 1997. Pp. viii, 290. Paper $13.95; ISBN 0-582-02547-8.
Peter Jones, ed. *The French Revolution in Social and Political Perspective*. New York: Arnold, 1996. Pp. xv, 495. Cloth, $59.95; ISBN 0-340-65291-8. Paper, $18.95; ISBN 0-340-65290-X.

In the current historiography of the French Revolution, the king is dead, but the succession is being hotly disputed--or, to borrow from Aristophanes, perhaps whirl is now king. The classic interpretation of the Revolution, inspired by Marxism and definitively articulated by Georges Lefebvre, was of the struggle between the decaying, feudal aristocracy and the ascending, capitalist bourgeoisie. For the last thirty years or so revisionists have chipped away at this view, noting the social mix among the revolutionaries and the complexities of their aspirations. Critics decry revisionism as the "new orthodoxy" or conservatism triumphant, but the revisionists, who take their various starting points from sources as diverse as Alexis de Tocqueville and Jürgen Habermas, offer no monolithic system, as Peter Jones's reader, *The French Revolution in Social and Political Perspective*, demonstrates.

Jones, Professor of French History at the University of Birmingham, has collected two dozen examples of recent scholarship to inform students, albeit advanced ones, of the

new debates, methodologies, themes, and even efforts to reformulate the social approach now engaging historians of the Revolution. His introduction provides a useful overview of the controversies, and he opens every section of his book with incisive commentary about each selection, its context, and its problematic qualities.

The volume is divided into five sections, the first devoted to familiarizing readers with the emerging contours of the arguments. One key excerpt here is from François Furet's 1977 seminal attack on Marxist perceptions and his call for renewed emphasis on revolutionary politics and ideology. Students should also be interested in Colin Jones's sarcastic response to the revisionist challenge and the editor's article on how, ironically, Lefebvre's own research into the French peasantry helped to generate revisionism.

The next two sections deal with intellectual and women's history. Although Jones sees little future in intellectual history, its practitioners have been revitalizing the field with insights borrowed from linguistic analysis, social history, and even popular culture. Examples in this collection include a discussion by Keith Baker, a leading authority on the eighteenth century, of the changing signification of "public opinion;" Roger Chartier's intriguing argument that the style of reading Enlightenment literature more than its content stimulated revolutionary attitudes; and a selection from one of Margaret Jacob's penetrating works on the masonic lodges. Jones questions less the value of a "gender-differentiated" approach to the Revolution, which examines the role of women within it and the extent to which it translated liberty into patriarchal dominion. Students will doubtless be fascinated by Lynn Hunt's account of how Marie Antoinette became the victim of pornographic rumors. However, they should not miss Jane Abray's pioneering article that chronicles the demise of feminism in the radical phases of the Revolution or Barrie Rose's curious endeavor to defend the Revolution's achievements in the area of women's social rights, even though continuing inequalities in the political, economic, and educational spheres matter most to Abray.

The final two sections contain reassessments of traditional topics. One section is a disparate array of themes, for example, the inadequacy of either Marxism or revisionism to account for the organized efforts by noblemen in the National Assembly to defend their privileges; the genesis of the "Federalist revolts" in local, republican politics rather than in counterrevolutionary opposition to national polices; and the radical credentials of the Thermidorians who overthrew Robespierre. The all-too-brief concluding section focuses on the Reign of Terror and includes Colin Lucas's article stressing continuity between Old Regime and revolutionary crowd mentalities as well as Furet's speculations on the Terror as an inevitable outcome of revolutionary rhetoric.

Jones's anthology offers valuable insights into present controversies about the Revolution; it is a welcome guide through the perplexities of a mercurial field. Still, Jones might have served his intended audience even more had he included biographies of the contributors and translations of the French terms and passages quoted in their articles. Today's students appreciate such aids.

Napoleon by Geoffrey Ellis, Lecturer in Modern European History at Oxford, likewise gives a concise survey of new directions taken by scholarship, in this case an

emphasis on the era of Napoleon rather than the man and on continuity between that era and previous developments. Ellis has produced a study of Napoleon's concept of power reflecting both of these trends. He assumes a prior knowledge of key events in the Emperor's biography and regime. Even the section on army affairs chiefly examines matters of oragnization, recruitment, and supply, with only passing reference to Napoleon's battlefield prowess. Ellis's Napoleon had no ideological bedrock beyond ambition and manifested no preconceived plans for unifying Europe; he improvised, building on past achievements whenever military victories, patronage, or fortune presented opportunities.

Ellis has an excellent chapter on Napoleon's manipulation of the arts, struggle with prominent writers, and use of propaganda. Ellis judges the period as one of great aesthetic activity and sees Napoleon, however much he was interested solely in advancing his own cult of personality, as a "cultural catalyst." Also noteworthy is Ellis's review of recent work on the backbone of Napoleonic administration, the notables, nonaristocratic landowners who gained status from the Revolution and benefited from the looting of the Continent. Finally, Ellis marks the limits of Napoleon's power in astute examinations of the failure of the Continental System and of the repeated attempts to dominate Pope Pius VII, who emerged victorious despite repeated humiliations.

Almost 20 percent of *Napoleon* is occupied with bibliographical essays. One particularly rich chapter is a supplement to Pieter Geyl's legendary *Napoleon For and Against* (1949). To Geyl's roster of French commentators and historians, Ellis adds a tentative list of British, German, and Italian authors. Here is a topic deserving of more extensive treatment.

Ultimately, Ellis deems Napoleon's greatest impact to have been on French institutions, not on the rest of Europe. The Napoleonic legacy is one that Ellis assesses with clarity and authority. Students who already have some familiarity with the topic will welcome this skillful summation of where Napoleonic scholarship presently stands.

It is too early to predict the resolution of these intellectual skirmishes or to estimate which of the outlooks recounted in these two books will become part of some future, standard interpretation of the Revolution. In the meantime, the spirited conflict among historians does seem appropriate for the subject matter in question.

Fort Hays State University Robert B. Luehrs

Robert Gildea. *France: 1870-1914.* London & New York: Longman, 1996. Second edition. Pp. viii, 128. Paper, $12.37; ISBN 0-582-29221-2.
Robert Aldrich. *Greater France: A History of French Overseas Expansion.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996. Pp. x, 369. Cloth, $45.00; ISBN 0-312-15999-4. Paper, $19.95; ISBN 0-312-16000-3.

Despite the outpouring of scholarly publications, it's not so easy to find books that can serve as analytically sophisticated and interesting short texts. Students and teachers of modern French history should find both in these two books, a new study of French colonialism and a second edition of the formative years of the Third Republic.

The complex history of the Third Republic, from its declaration in the wake of the humiliation of Sedan to the onset of the "Great War," is the subject of Robert Gildea's book in the Longman *Seminar Studies in History*. Incorporating current historiography into his study, Gildea follows a format that is common in writing about and teaching survey courses for this epoch. The 1870s witnessed the consolidation of the Republic in the face of various monarchical restoration schemes. During the 1880s social and economic questions arising from the experiences of "modernization" were largely side-stepped as the Republic punished its enemies--especially the Catholic Church by laicization of education--and then survived the decade in the face of scandal and renewed challenges from anti-republican forces.

Despite predictions, even from sympathetic observers, that the nineteenth-century French were incapable of maintaining a regime more than two decades, the Republic persisted into the 1890s, only to find constitutional and ideological issues blazing forth with new intensity at the end of the century, during the lengthy, turbulent national debate surrounding the Dreyfus Affair. Having once again survived, the Republic lurched into the twentieth century determined once more to punish its enemies on the right.

But threats from the left challenged *bourgeois* dominance of political and economic institutions. With the specter of socialism, anarchism, and syndicalism threatening the established order, midway through the first decade the political establishment turned away from constitutional issues in order to thwart economic and political challenges to the status quo. Reinforced by the rising nationalist fervor during the years immediately preceding the outbreak of war in 1914, the efforts to resist significant changes in the order of things were generally successful.

Essentially a political history of 1870-1914, Gildea emphasizes that a republican form of government for a country the size of France seemed a bold experiment indeed; in a monarchical European world France was an oddity, and a not very promising one considering the record of the First and Second republics. But, despite an often turbulent political history--and the occasional truly popular crisis, such as Dreyfus--the Republic survived, supported, Gildea argues, by an essentially stable society, one whose "very stability ... permitted the luxury of sharp political divisions."

In developing his analysis in a mere 85 pages, Gildea achieves a fine balance between his generalizations and summaries on the one hand, while, on the other, he provides sufficient detail to illustrate his analyses. He puts some flesh on the bare bones, raising this brief tome from the handbook category to a text that is interesting, clearly written, and thoughtful. While the short chapters on "Social Structure," "Socialism," and "The Dreyfus Affair" are satisfactory analytical reviews, his chapter on "Radicalism" stands out as an unusually comprehensible analysis of this difficult-to-explain--and understand--phenomenon within French thought and politics.

Faculty and motivated students will appreciate the up-to-date twelve-page bibliography, which is referenced from within the text, efficiently guiding the reader to additional reading. Two dozen pages of documentary excerpts, similarly keyed to the narrative, provide a flavor of contemporary primary sources; their pedagogical utility seems fairly marginal. Experienced history teachers will find Gildea's work a manageable and reliable source for preparing up-to-date lectures and discussions in survey courses. Students in upper-division courses should be able to develop an understanding of the Third Republic to 1914 through a careful study of this excellent synthesis--and still have sufficient time for collateral reading.

Synthesis is also the hallmark of Robert Aldrich's *Greater France*. After languishing during the 1960s and 1970s, renewed scholarly interest in French colonialism has fostered an outpouring of monographic literature. Aldrich brings the reader historiographically up-to-date in a relatively compact survey that begins with the French acquisition of its modern empire in the nineteenth century and concludes with its disintegration during the 1950s and 1960s.

Commencing with two chapters sketching the process of acquisition, the third one analyzes the variety of factors behind that development. Although the multiplicity of interacting factors is not a new idea--set out especially well in 1960 by Henri Brunschwig, *Mythes et réalités de l'mpérialisme colonial français, 1871-1914*--Aldrich uses the scholarship of the last twenty years to continue the analysis, and to reaffirm that there was no comprehensive plan for imperial expansion. Indeed only very late in the nineteenth century could one speak of the development of governmental imperialist policy, skillfully propagated by a variety of colonial interest groups, and linked to European power politics.

Representative of Aldrich's weaving of summary and example, chapter 4, "The French Overseas," examines categories of French people on location: missionaries, soldiers and sailors, administrators, settlers, as well as a few specific individuals who were conspicuously important in the development of the French empire, such as Hubert Lyautey. Aldrich also examines more modest individual experiences as representative of the French overseas.

Chapter 5, "The Uses of Empire," analyzes the French insistence that colonies serve France, in terms of prestige, of economic, political, or strategic advantage. Chapter 6, "The French and the 'Natives,'" lays out the coercion that undergirded the whole colonial system. In Aldrich's straightforward prose the reader encounters the ugliness of that coercion. But in France most eyes were resolutely blind. Preferred were the ideological myths and the veneer of colonial culture that adorned their own, superior, French civilization. Aldrich argues in chapter 7 that colonialism did leave marked cultural legacies, especially in literature, art, and scientific research, culminating in the Colonial Exhibition of 1931. Yet, the "great" French empire was ephemeral. Aldrich's survey of French imperial experiences concludes with the rise of colonial nationalism and the dissolution of the French empire. At the end of the book is a fine bibliographic essay, reviewing many of the more recent monographs and scholarly articles.

Robert Aldrich admirably succeeds in presenting the reader with a manageable survey, albeit largely from the French perspective, of an enormous topic and literature. Although his efforts to include all the empire may make sections of the book seem a bit encyclopedic in tone, *Greater France* is a competent synthesis, a fine introduction.

The University of Puget Sound Walter Lowrie

Bruce F. Pauley. *Hitler, Stalin, and Mussolini: Totalitarianism in the Twentieth Century.* Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1997. Pp. xvi, 290. Paper, $14.95; ISBN 0-88295-935-2.

Much of the history of Europe in the twentieth century can be viewed from the perspective of the actions taken by or in opposition to the ideas, ambitions, and policies of Josef Stalin, Adolf Hitler, and, to a much lesser extent, Benito Mussolini. Bruce Pauley's *Hitler, Stalin, and Mussolini* is accordingly a salutary reminder of how a few determined individuals, when given almost unlimited power to impose their ideologies on others, have altered the fates of millions of ordinary individuals, not to mention the very nations they led. Stalin's economic policies between 1930 and 1937 caused the deaths of fourteen million Russians, forced the relocation of tens of millions more, and produced a chronically underproductive Soviet agricultural sector, no doubt a factor contributing to the collapse of the USSR. The war unleashed on 1 September 1939 by Adolf Hitler resulted, according to Gerhard Weinberg, in a world-wide death toll of approximately sixty million, of whom far more were civilian than military, and in the Holocaust, in which some six million Jews perished, and it left Germany and much of Europe in ruins.

Pauley, a much-published specialist in Austrian history, begins this comparative history with the Russian Revolution of 1917 and concludes with the collapse of communism in 1989. Each chapter within this chronological framework has a topical focus, and topics include: the ideological foundations of totalitarianism; the seizure of power by each dictator; the dictators' personalities and policies; totalitarian economics; propaganda, culture, and education; family values and health; totalitarian terror; pre-war diplomacy and the beginning of World War II; total war, 1941-1945; and the collapse of Soviet totalitarianism. Reflections on the totalitarian legacy conclude the book. Typical chapters offer a brief introduction, individual accounts of the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, and Fascist Italy, and a brief--often too brief--comparative analysis. Pauley opens with an analysis of totalitarian ideology, rightly stressing its overriding importance for Stalin, Hitler, and Mussolini. He also identifies one of the many inherent contradictions of twentieth-century totalitarianism by arguing that Stalin, Hitler, and Mussolini "enjoyed their greatest successes when they were not driven by ideological considerations and met their greatest catastrophies precisely at those times when they sought to put their most extreme ideological concepts into practice."

Hitler, Stalin, and Mussolini blends a brisk narrative of twentieth-century totalitarianism with an insightful comparative analysis of the Soviet, Nazi, and Fascist regimes. Pauley also summarizes key historical controversies, ranging from the debate over the connection between German anti-Semitism and Hitler's ascent to power and subsequent persecution of the Jews to the matter of Soviet or American responsibility for the origins of the Cold War. In each instance, he is judicious and sets out the parameters of the debate without undue entanglement in scholarly minutiae. However, since he neither identifies the historians involved nor cites the relevant literature, he leaves students wishing to know more about such controversies in need of additional guidance. On a more positive note, students seeking information about specific topics or wishing to undertake further reading will find assistance from an excellent index and an up-to-date bibliographical essay of works in English. Overall, there is much to commend in this history of twentieth-century totalitarianism, and it is suited especially for upper-division classes, since it assumes a basic factual familiarity with recent history.

University of North Carolina-Pembroke Robert W. Brown

Gerhard Weinberg. *Germany, Hitler and World War Two: Essays in Modern German and World History.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. Pp. 347. Cloth, $24.95; paper, $14.95.

Probably the most prominent academic historian who has written extensively on the Second World War is Gerhard Weinberg of the University of North Carolina. His *A World in Arms: A Global History of World War Two* has distinguished itself from many other "one volume" histories of the Second World War by its high level of scholarship and use of archival materials. Similarly, although primarily known as a leading diplomatic historian, Weinberg's work is unique in the way it skillfully combines military, diplomatic, and social history.

Weinberg's ability is reflected in his recently published collection of essays, *Germany, Hitler and the Second World War.* The essays cover a wide range of subjects, following a rough chronology from the end of the First World War to the rise of the Nazi party and continuing through 1945. The main focus of Weinberg's work is the role of Germany in the Second World War, and the essays provide many intriguing and thought provoking conclusions concerning the role played by the Germans in that conflict. Given Weinberg's interest in the "global" dimensions of the Second World War, however, there is also significant attention given to the other major powers, especially in their relations to Nazi Germany.

Weinberg's essays would be of significant use in an educational environment. Although he writes on a high level, if used properly the essays can be very helpful and interesting to students. The essays are so skillfully argued and written they would serve

as an excellent tool to illustrate to students how the historical discipline works. For example, the first essay, "The Defeat of Germany in 1918 and the European Balance of Power" presents a very different interpretation of the Versailles conference. Most texts accept it as fact that Germany's treatment at the Versailles conference had a major impact in causing the Second World War. Weinberg, however, argues that the opposite is true and that the Germans got off rather easily at the Conference and escaped severe punishment. Arguments such as this help show students the value of interpretation in history and the nature of historical writing.

Another pedagogical use of the book is the manner in which Weinberg blends military history into wider historical trends. Sometimes regarded as a less important field than other areas of history, Weinberg integrates military history into a broad perspective. For example, in the essay "Hitler and England, 1933-1945," Weinberg uses the fact that increased production of German JU-88 bombers is illustrative of Germany's worsening diplomatic relations with England. Similarly, Weinberg demonstrates the connection between naval construction and foreign policy in several essays. Given that many students are interested in military history, Weinberg's essays offer a way to integrate this discipline into a wider curriculum.

Finally, teachers interested in presenting a balanced view of the Second World War would find Weinberg's book extremely useful. He presents the war from the point of view of the Germans and his accounts of German war plans, strategy, commanders, and the role of Hitler are all fascinating. The essay "German Plans for Victory, 1944-1945," for example, is an excellent account of how even when the outcome of the war appeared to be a foregone conclusion, the Germans still anticipated and had several plans to achieve victory. For students familiar with learning about the war from the Allied point of view, reading Weinberg's essays would be both interesting and beneficial.

Weinberg is a scholar of high order and his essays reflect this. While it would probably prove difficult for students to read the entire book, individual essays would be of great use to them. Simiarly, for teachers interested in examining new perspectives on old material, Weinberg's book is an invaluable resource.

St. John's University Michael Marino

Anne Orde. ***The Eclipse of Great Britain: The United States and British Imperial Decline, 1895-1956.*** **New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996. Pp. viii, 262. Cloth, $49.95; ISBN 0-312-16140-9. Paper, $18.95; ISBN 0-312-16141-7.**
Bernard Porter. ***The Lion's Share: A Short History of British Imperialism 1850-1995.*** **London & New York: Longman, 1996. Third edition. Pp. xviii, 413. Paper, $21.40; ISBN 0-582-08943-3.**

British scholars of the empire seem much more obsessed with the decline of British imperial glory than their more dispassionate American colleagues. Indeed, some such as

John Charmley in a revisionist mode stridently point out the guilty parties--Churchill and the United States. Anne Orde, formerly of the University of Durham, offers a straightforward analysis of the displacement of Britain by the United States in the twentieth century. Because of the impact of the two world wars on Britain, Orde sees an inevitability about the eclipse of the British empire. By the end of the Second World War American military and economic power was at its peak. While the economic and military value of empire remained debatable, the prestige and influence of the British empire still generated an aura of greatness. Orde examines the American record as regards imperial power. To the American mind, expansion on the North American continent was "Nation-building," not empire building, and despite the annexation of Hawaii, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico, Orde maintains that, "The American ethos remained anti-imperialist, the British Empire its chief bugbear."

While Orde sees the United States as essentially displacing British power around the world, contrary to the writings of the American diplomatic historian William Appleman Williams, she sees no developed theory of imperialism or empire. She carries the story down to the final Suez humiliation in 1956, when Eisenhower simply told the British and the French what they had to do: Get out and hand over everything to U.N. troops. Anthony Eden protested and tried to hang on, even sending in additional reinforcements, but the American president was adamant. Eden caved in. Nothing had been achieved. Everything was lost. The author concludes that, "after 1956 the British knew that they could not act outside the Commonwealth without American consent, and that consent could not be counted upon." Despite such toady behavior, much has been made of the so-called "special relationship" between Britain and the United States. Indeed, it was trotted out again when President Bill Clinton met the new Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair. At best this is a very nebulous term; and at worst it was downright detrimental for Britain during much of the Cold War, for it created the delusion that Britain remained a major player on the world stage, keeping too many Britons thinking about a *Pax Americana*, rather than European union. John Foster Dulles speaking about the Middle East said, "We must fill the vacuum of power which the British filled for a century--not merely to act in an emergency but day in day out presence there." Beware lest such self-righteousness leads to imperial overreach.

It has been twenty years since the first edition of Bernard Porter's *The Lion's Share: A Short History of Imperialism* appeared, and the third edition makes a good text even better. Porter has taken the opportunity of a complete typographical reset to revise and update the text for the first time. It still focuses primarily on the political, military, and economic aspects of imperial power told in a lively narrative style. But since the 1970s the entire field of imperial studies has deepened to include such subjects as the empire and women, preparatory schools, hunting, conservation, technology, medicine, games and sports, policing, the arts, freemasonry, and sex. While his coverage of some of these topics remains scant, it is important that they at least get a mention in a text designed for undergraduates. But Porter can only go so far in these new directions. There is no mention in the index of "orientalism," Edward Said, or post-colonial theory. On the

economic side of imperialism, Porter incorporates the work of P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins whose theory of "gentlemanly" capitalist imperialism has "given a stimulating start to the first really post-imperial age of British imperial history." As the narrative unfolds, Porter views Britain as being as much a captive as a master of the ideal of imperialism, British freedom of action tempered by the need to hold onto the empire, which in the end they failed to accomplish. This reviewer found the new concluding chapter on the legacy of empire to be the most intriguing and clever, and wrapped in some faint whiffs of nostalgia for the empire. Porter quotes an article written by Lord Curzon in 1908 in which he predicts what will happen to Britain without the empire. According to Porter, Curzon had it right: "There we have it almost all: the economic decline, the narrowing of horizons, the loss of national identity, the tourists, consumerism, Americanism, Australian republicanism. It must have appeared a bleak prospect in 1908. But one can get used to such things." Porter argues that whatever happened to the formal structure of the empire "imperialism ... never did sink beneath history's waves." If somehow the empire supplied Britons with a belief that they belonged to something important, bigger than themselves, then that same spirit can be applied to a new Britain in the new European Union. Decline may no longer be the theme of British history.

Instructors should find both works useful for course adoptions. In particular it is important that the new research in imperial studies starts to reach textbooks. Hopefully, the new edition of *The Lion's Share* will be a harbinger of many more new studies.

Cameron University Richard A. Voeltz

Philip Jenkins. *A History of the United States*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997. Pp. xx, 317. Cloth, $49.95; ISBN 0-312-16361-4. Paper, $18.95; ISBN 0-312-16362-2.

This is a difficult book to review, because I am uncertain for whom it is intended. In 297 pages Philip Jenkins, Professor of History and Religious Studies at Pennsylvania State University, deftly and succinctly surveys the major bases of U.S. history--political, economic, social, and cultural developments. It is a small masterpiece of compression, and this, unfortunately, might be its weakness as far as high school and college classroom use is concerned. For students largely unfamiliar with this nation's history, the sweeping generalities encountered here will come across as just that, generalizations with no human flesh and blood attached. Jenkins can turn a good phrase, as when he puts the Scopes trial in "a realm somewhere between high drama and low farce," but most topics are covered so briefly, even less than in standard textbooks, that readers will witness a passing blur of names and events.

Moreover, in other respects this work could not do as a textbook for a survey class, unless extensive additional reading were assigned. The Declaration of Independence is included as an Appendix, but, inexplicably, not the Constitution. There is not a single

photograph. The author has been so ill-served by his editors in the tables and maps as to merit comment. One table lists total colonial population in 1770 as 1,046,000. Six pages later we learn that there were approximately 2.5 million Christians and Jews in the colonies in 1780, a remarkable 139 percent increase in ten years. Both a chart and a map of slave states omit Delaware, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. Another map, titled "Historical Areas of the United States," merely shows the states and some major cities (Boston is "Bolton," Tampa is "Tempa," and Cleveland appears twice). A Civil War map has more misspellings, misplaces Bowling Green, mislabels Missouri as Montana, and has Norfolk on the Del-Mar-Va peninsula and Fort Sumter far up the coast from Charleston.

Where Jenkins does make an unusual departure is in his emphasis, well articulated throughout, on political and religious dissenters and what he sees as their significant role in American history--be they dissident Puritans, Mormons in the mid-nineteenth century, utopians, urban workingmen protesters both before and after the Civil War, radicals in the World War I era, unemployed protesters during the Great Depression, and others. He draws an excellent comparison between the political and social extremism of the 1840s and the 1960s. And he closes by placing the recent events in Waco and Oklahoma City in the context of earlier American traditions of radical individualism and resistance to organized government. While this intriguing theme fails to make up for the other weaknesses of this book, it might prove profitable for the "general reader" of whom we so often speak.

Floyd College William F. Mugleston

William Sterne Randall and Nancy Nahra. *American Lives*. New York: Longman, 1997. Vol. I: To 1876. Pp. ix, 244. ISBN 0-673-46986-7. Vol. II: Since 1877. Pp. ix, 261. ISBN 0-673-46987-5. Each paper, $23.06.

Randall and Nahra collaborate productively on two volumes of short biographies composed of diverse historical figures covering the span of North American history. Although the sketches vary as much as the importance of the individuals considered, each offers a window on an important dimension of the American experience. An established biographer, Randall has been recognized for his work on Benjamin and William Franklin, Benedict Arnold, and Thomas Jefferson, all of which find their way, Arnold indirectly, into the first volume. While not sharing authorship, dedications and acknowledgments in Randall's previous works strongly suggest that Nahra actively participated in the preparation.

From Christopher Columbus to Charlotte Forten of the Reconstruction era, the first volume presents significantly different case studies. Each short biography consists of an introductory statement, a portrait, a sketch of about ten pages, a set of four helpful questions, and a bibliography of key secondary works. Randall and Nahra explore

fifteenth-century Europe and its extension into the New World through the life of Christopher Columbus. They likewise use other lives as manifestations of particular periods. Anne Hutchinson's struggles offer special insights into seventeenth-century New England. The lives of Teedyuscung and Tom Quick, Indian leader and Indian hater, direct attention to the Pennsylvania frontier in the 1700s. The authors develop various fascinating insights into late eighteenth-century America and its revolutionary struggle through those who experienced victory, such as Benjamin Franklin, Tadusz Kosciuszko, Abigail Adams, George Washington, and Thomas Jefferson, as well as those who knew only crushing defeat such as William Franklin and Margaret Shippen Arnold (Mrs. Benedict Arnold).

Moving chronologically, the authors take up the nineteenth-century frontier via the lives of Tecumseh and Sam Houston, while considering Charles Finney in conjunction with religion and the Second Great Awakening. The Forten family, specifically James and his granddaughter Charlotte, reflect the African-American experience, while Harriet Beecher Stowe's life gives focus to mid-century abolitionism. Randall and Nahra consider America's traumatic mid-nineteenth-century clash from three perspectives--those of Abraham Lincoln, Robert E. Lee, and the remarkable administrator, Annie Turner Wittenmeyer.

Numerous themes, movements, and ideologies are considered by way of certain special individuals who took part in them. For example, Randall and Nahra use Hutchinson, Abigail Adams, Charlotte Forten, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Annie Wittenmeyer to present different female roles. The sketches of Teedyuscung, Tom Quick, and Tecumseh reconstruct the terrible difficulty and the tragic dilemma of Indian leadership. Religion is considered through Hutchinson and Charles Finney, while science and learning are presented in the lives of Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson. The authors use the lives of Washington, Kosciuszko, Lincoln, and Lee to develop the topics of political leadership and war.

Sandwiched in the second volume between sketches of such literary figures as Mark Twain and Toni Morrison are twenty-two biographies of equally differing historical figures. Randall and Nahra use Twain, Sitting Bull, and Myra Colby Bradwell, along with Andrew Carnegie, Thomas A. Edison, W.E.B. DuBois, and Eugene V. Debs, to consider the late nineteenth century, even though the latter four were certainly prominent twentieth-century figures as well. Starting with Woodrow Wilson, the authors move through the century with Presidents Harry Truman and Richard Nixon, concluding with such contemporary figures as Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara; the first female Supreme Court justice, Sandra Day O'Connor; and Nobel prize winning author, Toni Morrison.

Probably more thematic than the first volume, in the second volume Randall and Nahra develop a pluralistic America. They consider the trials and tribulations of Native Americans through the dramatically different yet equally depressing experiences of Sitting Bull and Louis Sockalexis, an Abenaki Indian from Maine and first Native American professional athlete (baseball). They take up the nation's industrial and technological transformation with Carnegie and Edison and the subsequent labor strife through the

courageous struggle of Debs. The lives of Dubois, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Morrison provide a rather comprehensive consideration of the African-American experience, while Randall and Nahra explore issues of ethnicity through case studies of Iva Toguri (one of the Tokyo Roses) and César Chávez. Along with consideration of Myra Bradwell, the first woman licensed to practice law, the authors illustrate the varied and changing roles of women through the lives of Theda Bara, silent film star; Margaret Sanger, birth-control crusader; Eleanor Roosevelt; Rachel Carson, author of *Silent Spring*; O'Connor; and Morrison. Cultural change fueled through the medium of Bara's motion pictures is also explored via the life of Jack Kerouac, the guru of the Beat Generation. Contrary to many who in constructing collections of short biographies place heavy emphasis on politicians and generals, Randall and Nahra consider only George Patton and Huey Long in addition to the three presidents.

Through a look at these 44 personalities of note, the authors move American history from abstract generalities to tangible specifics--from movements and ideologies to moments of personal glory and individual despair. The specific case studies infuse typical textbook narratives with meaningful individual experiences to which readers can relate. Relying on careful research largely in secondary works, Randall and Nahra skillfully move the narratives along through lively description frequently emphasizing personal relationships. The authors do occasionally offer some interpretive judgment and regularly establish a strong behavioristic relationship between those character-shaping experiences of youth and the direction of adult lives.

Although there are a few factual errors--the 54th Massachusetts Infantry under Colonel Robert Shaw did not take Fort Wagner as is strongly suggested and Wilberforce University is not in northern Ohio--the sketches provide both a significant amount of interesting personal information and a challenge to myths such as those relating to Lincoln's early poverty and Jefferson's "fascination" with Sally Hemings. Thus, students, especially high school juniors and seniors as well as college freshmen and sophomores, should find these portraits fascinating and a link to the big historical picture. Instructors, even the old hands, those around from Morrison and Commager days, should discover a few new anecdotes as well, to liven up their lectures.

New Mexico Military Institute William E. Gibbs

Clyde A. Milner II, ed. *A New Significance: Re-Envisioning the History of the American West.* New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996. Pp. xiii, 318. Cloth, $49.95; ISBN 0-19-510047-6. Paper, $19.95; ISBN 0-19-510048-4.

For the past two decades, historians have produced a voluminous "new" Western history. This anthology of essays covers some important topics of that history, while also considering the need for newer perspectives on the historical significance of the West. Although these essays came from a conference on the centennial of Frederick Jackson

Turner's frontier thesis, only the first two spend much time reviewing that idea. Each of the book's seven "correlation papers" charts an important topic or perspective for the future of Western history. Accompanied by two commentaries each and introductory and summarizing essays, these articles offer insight into the thinking of a newer, younger group of Western historians and how their themes are reshaping that region from the predominantly white, masculine mosaic of frontiers that Turner and his followers portrayed.

Most of the major essays are thought-provoking and challenge some of the most established ideas about the West. William Deverell rejects any interpretation of the West as a physically, socially, or perceptually homogenous area and offers a broad vision of power as a fundamental theme. Four other authors review the revisionist image of the West as a multicultural region historically, with essays on Mexican-American roles. Susan R. Neel's essay on nature echoes Deverell's rejection of a single physical image of the West and sees the extreme variations of its topography as its unique feature. The most theoretically different essays were Anne F. Hyde's review of Western history as perceptions and Susan Johnson's analysis of the significance of gender in Western history.

As with many revisionist works, this one is open to the criticism that writers focus on previously overlooked or misinterpreted aspects of Western history. In the process, many topics, events, and persons formerly considered essential are omitted. John C. Fremont is mentioned only for reports that misled Americans about how similar Western and Eastern environments were. General George Custer is noted for his cinnamon-scented hair, which calls into question images of gender. In focusing on items such as these, several authors fail to address Allan Bogue's observation that whatever his flaws, Turner gave Western history national significance. Only Deverell suggests the most widely cited alternative interpretation of "new" Western historians: that corporate power and government programs shaped the distribution of power and wealth in the West.

Despite these limitations, *A New Significance* has much to offer teachers. Some essays, especially those on racial groups, are detailed narratives of their histories and offer a treasury of specific information as well as a broader sense of how those groups influenced the West. The more theoretical essays might be difficult to apply directly to courses, but they will stir thinking and could influence emphases or curricular arrangements. Especially useful will be the extensive notes. These include much of the recent literature in fields covered, often with helpful comments on individual works. Also to be commended is a combined index of all articles, which enables the reader to find specific topics easily. Teachers might not conclude that they need to completely revamp their treatments of Western history, but it will be difficult to leave this book without reconsidering some specific viewpoints.

California State University, Fullerton Lawrence B. de Graaf

Roger Schlesinger. *In the Wake of Columbus: The Impact of the New World on Europe, 1492-1650.* Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1996. Pp. xx, 128. Paper, $11.95; ISBN 0-88295-917-4.

As a social studies educator and trainer of teachers, I am always looking for materials that enhance classroom instruction and further professional development. When asked to review a book from the European History Series, endorsed by the American Historical Association, I looked forward with anticipation to see if I could find another resource that would improve what I can offer to others. Because of the movement towards national history standards and political correctness, European history has taken a beating over the last few years, so I wanted to see if any "new" interpretations were now being offered. What I found was a resource I grew to like better as I read it.

In the foreword, series editor Keith Eubanks, profoundly offers that "now more than ever there is a need for books dealing with significant themes in European history, books offering fresh interpretations of events which continue to affect Europe and the world." The European History Series is designed to introduce "readers to the excitement of European history through concise books about the great events, issues, and personalities of Europe's past" by examining "an issue, event, or era which posed a problem of interpretation for historians." Series authors are supposed to use primary and secondary sources in their writing in an attempt to "bring alive ... great moments in European history rather than simply cram factual material into the pages of their books."

Schlesinger's book contains four short, easy-to-read chapters. Each chapter begins with a quote from a primary source that usually sets the theme for what the author intends to discuss. Occasionally, several other primary sources are either cited or quoted throughout the chapters. For example, Schlesinger quotes from Karl Marx's *The Communist Manifesto* in his first chapter titled "European Economics and America," a chapter devoted to the discussion of the "The Price Revolution" and mercantilism. The author then weaves the story of European rivalries and political change in Chapter Two, "European Politics and America." Leading political figures, explorers, and religious influences are discussed here. "European Conceptions of Native Americas" is rich in stories and descriptions and includes lesser known figures that usually do not appear in standardized textbooks. Unfortunately, no maps, graphs, charts, paintings, or other graphics are utilized in this quick read format, and this chapter, in particular, could have been enhanced by the inclusion of some illustrations. Schlesinger's concluding chapter, "Europeans' Daily Life and America," explores the "seeds of change" study and details the "Columbian exchange" of food, plants, animals, and diseases.

The bibliographic essay references mostly books and some journals on various themes presented in the work. I would have preferred more journal entries because I believe bibliographies are useful guides for students into professional journals and organizations. There are no footnotes to clutter up the pages; however, with as much content information as was being presented, footnotes might have proven beneficial. The index proved useful.

Despite some flaws, Schlesinger's brief monograph has much to offer both the practitioners and students of Clio. Teachers, especially pre-collegiate educators, will find Schlesinger's work a quick way to catch-up in the field. Graduate and undergraduate students will probably find *In the Wake of Columbus* helpful in preparing for exams. As the author points out, "this brief study examines many of the most important, intriguing, and sometimes startling ways in which Europe's relationship with America changed European life in the century or so after Columbus's expeditions."

Maryland Center for the Study of History & Civic Education James F. Adomanis

Charles Royster. *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775-1783.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996 (hardcover 1980). Pp. xi, 452. Paper, $17.95; ISBN 0-8078-4606-6.

This is a curiously belated, unrevised paperback edition of a highly acclaimed, award-winning work of synthesis on the nature of the American revolutionary character and the revolutionaries' ambivalence toward the army created to protect that culture. Now an established historian with several well-received books to his credit, Charles Royster years ago demonstrated his considerable scholarship in this carefully reworked version of his doctoral dissertation.

As Royster notes in his preface, this book does not lend itself to easy summarization. Throughout his presentation, Royster deftly addresses questions concerning the uneasy relationship between American ideals and actions in the Revolution, particularly in the development of the army. The organization of the book is primarily chronological, beginning with the beliefs that led to revolutionary action against Great Britain and tracing developments through the long years of warfare to final victory and beyond.

Early chapters deal with the popular *rage militaire* (passion for arms) of 1775, the concept of "citizen soldier," and the contrast between the ideals of 1775 and the realities of war. Royster demonstrates how the revolutionaries were able "to rely on the army more than they liked and to support it less than required." In a chapter entitled "Valley Forge," he discusses not only the hardships endured in that encampment but also the nature of the substantial training accomplished during the time there. He shows that Baron von Steuben recognized that Americans' love of liberty and vision of communal happiness were the impetus for war but could not guide conduct within the army. Steuben helped the army become "an internally disciplined group apart, more self-consciously virtuous than the society at large." He based his approach to discipline not on the Prussian model of fear of officers but rather on the American soldier's "dignity as a citizen and a volunteer" and his "willing attachment to both the cause and his superiors." This discussion is vital to the full understanding of the final third of the book that deals with treason and lesser forms of betrayal, final victory in the war, and problems regarding demobilization.

The book is based on exhaustive research in printed primary and secondary sources. The endnotes serve only to identify the sources of quotations. Royster refers readers interested in a bibliography or in tracing his research to his dissertation. An appendix contains an interesting discussion on historians' interpretations of revolutionary soldiers' motivation.

Although the book is basically well-written, it is not easy reading due to the complexity of the material and argument. The early chapters are particularly difficult because of the introduction of some themes that are not fully discussed until later. The careful reader is, however, well-rewarded, for Royster synthesizes information never brought together as an understandable whole.

It is likely that most professors who would use this work as core reading in a course are already familiar with it. This paperback edition will make it more available for classroom use, but it is appropriate primarily for advanced courses on the American Revolution, American military history, or American civic culture.

University of Wisconsin, Whitewater-Emerita Mary E. Quinlivan

Lynn A. Bonfield and Mary C. Morrison. *Roxana's Children: The Biography of a Nineteenth Century Vermont Family*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995. Pp. xviii, 267. Cloth, $50.00; ISBN 0-87023-972-4. Paper, $19.95; ISBN 0-87023-981-3.

Social histories are now commonplace in the discipline, but a new direction has emerged--family history. *Roxana's Children* tells the story of Roxana Brown Walbridge Watts, who lived during the early to mid-nineteenth century on a Vermont farm and who raised eleven children and one grandchild, half of whom stayed at home, while the others moved as far west as California. Even for traditional historians, *Roxana's Children* should be appealing since they, her offspring, toiled in the textile mills at Lowell, Massachusetts, took part in the great westward push across the continent, fought in the Civil War, and even panned for gold in California. Their vocations were also as varied: farmer, soldier, lawyer, minister, teacher, carriage maker, artist, and, perhaps most importantly, husband or wife.

Roxana's children, by all accounts, were common, even ordinary folk living in extraordinary times. The nearly 300 letters and 30 journals and diaries that have survived are replete with both local as well as sectional and national concerns. They provide glimpses of life in Peacham, a typical New England town, examine gender roles and responsibilities, wrestle with the pull of family versus the lure of a "manifest destiny," suffer through the horrors of an uncivil war, and describe the discomforts but opportunities of western life. There are, of course, gaps of information in the surviving letters; some of the children have only a scant handful of memoirs. But the authors, Lynn Bonfield, an archivist, and Mary Morrison, the great-granddaughter of Roxana, skillfully weave

available statistics such as tax lists, birth and death records into a social fabric that is rich and enjoyable to read.

Several of Roxana's children certainly led interesting lives. Clarissa (Clara) Walbridge Rogers, for example, was a school teacher in Peacham, but went west, unmarried, lived in San Francisco, and survived the famed 1906 earthquake. Julian Walbridge Rix, the artist, is recognized today as one of the finest late nineteenth-century landscape artists. For Civil War buffs, Dustan Walbridge, the carriage maker turned soldier, recounts life as an enlisted man until he was mortally wounded at Cold Harbor in 1864. And last, but certainly not least, Lyman Watts, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Middlebury and Congregational minister, struggled with the increasing worldliness of his flock in the midst of spiritual depravity.

Roxana's Children is truly a multi-disciplinary work. It would be extremely useful for a variety of classroom topics such as life in America's early factories, particularly from a woman's point of view, the influence, or lack thereof, of religion in nineteenth-century America, the growth of the nation through the eyes of an artist, and the living and dying inevitable in war. It would be appropriate as a supplemental text in a number of college courses, but I can also envision it being assigned reading for those high school teachers who demand and expect the best from their students who are studying nineteenth-century America. Sadly, Peacham today is more of a tourists' curiosity off the beaten path, with a Bed and Breakfast. What may be even more sad is that no descendants of Roxana Watts live there. Yet her family does indeed live on in this splendid work.

College of the Ozarks C. David Dalton

Ronald G. Walters. *American Reformers, 1815-1860.* New York: Hill and Wang, 1997. Revised edition. Pp. xix, 249. Paper, $12.00; ISBN 0-8090-1588-9.

After an absence of nearly two decades, *American Reformers* has reappeared in a gently upgraded and refined format. Although the book purports to cover the time span 1815 to 1860, its major emphasis is roughly 1820 to 1850. Fortunately, the temptation of undertaking sociological and biographical analysis of key individuals who figured in the numerous reform movements is largely avoided. Instead, the primary focus is on the ideas, concepts, and practices embodied within the vast array of episodes and activities that were directed toward change in antebellum America.

Professor Walters draws sharp distinctions when labeling leaders or organizations as either radical or reformist. A radical, he contends, was one who wished "to change the structure of society," while a reformer was a person who desired to "improve" or refine the existing system or scheme of things. With uneven degrees of success, a wide vista of subjects is addressed, from significant forces (antislavery, religious crusades, and prohibition) to a host of lesser fads, causes, and pursuits. To say the least, many of the latter are often fascinating and unique oddities that include developments such as

spiritualism, phrenology, feminism, education reform, physical and mental health, pacifism, and the mistreatment of the poor and working classes. Although one perhaps can debate the influence and impact that these efforts had during their heyday, and thereby quibble over the space allotted to each topic, the book is a nicely done overview that corresponds to its major mission.

There are deficiencies in these pages, however. For one, there is a certain amount of redundancy, and chapter five is a tad awkward in that it starts out dealing with female issues and then gradually drifts into antiwar themes. Further, the material is not documented, and a bibliographical essay does not compensate fully for this omission.

Two services are, nevertheless, performed by this volume. First, the European connections with the activities transpiring in the United States are frequently brought to light, thus tending to illustrate how unoriginal Americans sometimes were. Second, the reformers and their respective enterprises are placed within the context of their times and shown as "responding to change in a manner their society and culture allowed." For there were monumental transformations in American life during the antebellum years--urbanization and a host of technological, economic, political, and demographic changes that needed to be adjusted.

Portions of *American Reformers* could serve well to enhance stimulation in survey courses, which unfortunately yet understandably, tend to be suffocatingly dominated by military and political affairs. Such a tactic might provide some refreshing relief for the student.

Bainbridge College Robert W. Dubay