

## Reviews

*Sarah Osborn's World: The Rise of Evangelical Christianity in Early America*, by Catherine A. Brekus. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013. 448 pages. \$35.00, cloth.

It is rare to be handed a monograph so satisfying that one wants to proclaim its virtues from the first sentence of a review. This is one of those times. Catherine Brekus's biography/microhistory of Sarah Osborn, a mid-eighteenth-century Rhode Island evangelical who was previously little known except among narrow specialists, is a masterful piece of scholarship and writing. Stitching together the storyline of the subject's life, in itself, must have been a herculean task. Osborn's surviving diaries, letters, and conversion narrative are cryptic, under-punctuated, and assume frames of reference utterly alien to our own. Though Sarah—as the author usually calls her, since it was “the only name she kept from birth to death” (p. xiii)—left an unusually large volume of records for a colonial woman of modest means, the documents are nevertheless incomplete and required extensive supplementation from contemporary sources. Brekus gives us a lusciously rich, roughly chronological account of Sarah's journey through a troubled and rebellious transatlantic childhood, a brief first marriage, a torturous struggle with sin and redemption, a second marriage filled with grief and losses, the emergence of her informal ministry in her Newport parlor (ultimately culminating in a significant revival), and her painful decline from a chronic illness, likely rheumatoid arthritis. Brekus employs Sarah's story as a vehicle to teach us numerous lessons about her times—illuminating the economic, social, cultural, and especially the religious world of pre-revolutionary New England. This book is a must-read for American religious specialists and eighteenth-century scholars, is appropriate for advanced undergraduates in religion and colonial courses, and is accessible enough for an interested off-campus audience as well. And it is a reading pleasure.

Brekus addresses a huge array of topics in this volume, but she really breaks new ground in her discussion of the intellectual and religious crossroads at which Sarah stood as an evangelical Christian during the period once known as the Great Awakening. She shows us vividly how evangelicalism drew on Puritanism by privileging a belief in original sin, human depravity, and earthly hardships as the judgments of a just God. Like the Puritans, Sarah believed that God shaped the world and everything in it, and human freedom was a chimera. At the same time, evangelicalism offered Sarah something that the old way did not—by privileging the experience of a religious journey to conversion, adherents could take action, could know by experience, could rest “assured” in their salvation. That comfort was attractive, even “reviving.”

And here's where the book really gets interesting for specialists. While acknowledging received wisdom that evangelicalism and modernity have operated predominantly at odds with one another, Brekus argues that this new form of Protestantism was also deeply influenced by and engaged with the intellectual side of nascent modernity—Enlightenment thought. The causal chain here is fragile. In her words, “it is clear that the movement [evangelicalism] emerged in response to momentous changes in politics, economics, intellectual life, science, and technology that laid the foundations for our modern world” (p. 7). Treating the Enlightenment as diverse and multi-faceted, Brekus illustrates how evangelicals could be both inspired and repelled by its various elements, but in their understanding religious knowledge as derived from a sort of empiricist observation, in their belief that they could truly *know* through their experience (know, especially, about their salvation), their views converged with the modern in a significant way. Other convergences were also lurking. In Brekus's words, evangelicals “made the converted individual, not the community or the church, the main locus of authority;...they defined true religion as a matter of the heart or affections; they had a robust faith in progress; and they borrowed the techniques of the consumer revolution to spread the gospel” (p. 11).

To conclude, Brekus's work might remind readers of Laurel Thatcher Ulrich's *The Midwife's Tale* in its ability to open long-lost and hard-to-understand worlds to our view. Like Ulrich's Martha Ballard, Sarah left rich records behind, but it took a highly trained eye and enormous effort on the part of a historian who simply refused to quit in order to tease meaning from them. Brekus essentially translates Sarah's texts into a language that twenty-first-century people can understand. I would add that she does so in a fluid, engaging prose that gives this book the potential to reach wide audiences. If there is a downside to *Sarah Osborn's World*, it is only its length (over 300 pages), which might put some readers off of this historical treat.

University of Calgary

Jewel L. Spangler

*A Compact History of Humankind...: The History of the World in Big Eras*, by Edmund Burke III, David Christian, and Ross E. Dunn. Edited by Meredith Ryley. Los Angeles, CA: National Center for History in the Schools, UCLA, 2013. 170 pages. \$24.95, paper.

*A Compact History of Humankind* is a compendium of interpretative essays that provide middle and high school students with a comprehensive narrative of world history from the Big Bang to modern times. Whereas traditional textbooks in world history have focused on nation-states and civilizations as the unit of investigation for analyzing historical change, this series of essays embraces a holistic approach for interpreting the events and processes of world history in a way that is comparative, interregional, and world-scale.

Meredith Ryley, a high school history teacher for Los Angeles Unified School District, has adapted the original essays that were authored by Professors Edmund Burke III, David Christian, and Ross Dunn for the World History For Us All (WHFUA) curriculum. WHFUA, a free web-based model for world history curriculum, is created by and for secondary teachers and may be accessed at <<http://worldhistoryforall.sdsu.edu>>. The curriculum has adopted the premise that when teachers and students pose good historical questions, even very big questions, they can explore answers in ways that challenge them to connect facts to broader patterns and generalizations. By analyzing the world at different

scales, students will identify different types of historical questions than if they were studying world history using the traditional “civilization-by-civilization” approach.

Ryley’s rendition of the essays are much more accessible to middle and high school students than the original essays on the website. She suggests the intended audience as advanced middle school and early high school students. However, I would contend the compendium would also be useful to students in an introductory world history course at the college level. Middle school students who utilize this reader will need background knowledge of world history that is more detailed in its breadth of coverage before they can delve into this series of narrow and thematically focused interpretive essays.

The periodization of *A Compact History of Humankind* suggests nine “Big Eras” in world history. The first Big Era encompasses a very lengthy time span, whereas the last three Big Eras focus on the last 200 years of world history. For instance, Big Era One, spanning 13.7 billion-200,000 years ago, explores humans and the universe, while Big Era Nine (1945-present) explores the paradoxes of global acceleration. Each Big Era is written through the lens of a theme for that particular time period. Big Era Three, 10,000-1,000 B.C.E., examines the theme of the emergence of farming, complex societies, and population expansion during the Neolithic Period. In Big Era Four, 1,200 B.C.E.-500 C.E., the theme of expanding networks of exchange and encounter is explored through examples of how goods, technology, and ideas were exchanged between Afroeurasia, Mesoamerica, and South America.

Each chapter is organized in a way that teachers will find useful for engaging students in actively reading and eliciting meaningful classroom discussions. Every chapter begins with a timeline that gives an overview of the major achievements for each Big Era. The topics covered are organized using the three key themes in *World History for Us All*: “Humans and the Environment,” “Humans and Other Humans,” and “Humans and Ideas.” The numbering of individual paragraphs helps facilitate the historical thinking skill of referencing by making it easy for students to cite specific text evidence. Each chapter ends with a series of study questions written in the text dependent questions (TDQs) style, requiring students to complete a close reading of the chapter. The extension questions require students to draw inferences and make connections about the topics covered. Each chapter also includes key academic vocabulary in bolded print so that students may refer to the definition in the glossary.

The majority of middle school world history textbooks are still predominantly written using the “one-civilization-after-another” approach. The new Common Core Standards encourage teachers to use varied texts from multiple points of view. Thus, this compendium should find a place among the shelves of secondary teachers who wish to offer a counterpoint to the traditional scholarship of world history.

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Linda Cargile

*The Caribbean History Reader*, edited by Nicola Foote. New York: Routledge, 2013. 433 pages. \$59.95, paper.

The Caribbean is a small geographical region, but it has played a large role in the creation of the modern world. As the site of early encounters between the Old and New Worlds, the region became the nucleus of an Atlantic economy that was critical to the advance of Western European overseas empires and global capitalism. Between the sixteenth and

nineteenth centuries, the Caribbean was an area of strategic rivalry among various European powers, while the development of the region's sugar industry was a contributive factor in capitalist expansion. In the twentieth century, the Caribbean played a notable part in both World Wars before becoming a theater of conflict for the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

In *The Caribbean History Reader*, Nicola Foote offers a broad and cogent overview of Caribbean history within a multiplicity of perspectives. Presenting a wide array of memorable primary sources and effective secondary sources, Foote's edited volume of political, economic, social, and cultural history is a superb resource for introductory courses on the Caribbean. Foote begins with texts that analyze pre-Columbian societies and explain how the Caribbean experienced the ascent and descent of numerous cultural groups before the commencement of European colonialism following Christopher Columbus' landfall in the Bahamas in 1492. This first material provided by Foote depicts the earliest encounters between Europeans and indigenous peoples, allowing us to consider "the centrality of the Caribbean to Europe's rising ascendancy in the early modern world" while assessing the resultant crisis, resistance, and adaptation in Caribbean indigenous life (p. 19).

Throughout the sixteenth century, the Caribbean was a predominantly Spanish sphere of influence. Yet the increased maritime power of England, France, and the Netherlands defied Spain's domination of the Caribbean in the seventeenth century. After revealing the trade, piracy, and warfare that ensued as the English, French, and Dutch were drawn to the Caribbean, Foote focuses on "the development of exploitation colonies based on the intensive production of export commodities" (p. 32). Foote rightly gives ample attention to the financial, demographic, and environmental transformations in the Caribbean triggered by the introduction of large-scale sugar production mainly by enslaved Africans and their descendants. Slave society and the insurrections, marronage, and day-to-day resistance of the enslaved are aptly taken into account. An entire chapter is devoted to the remarkable story of the world's only successful slave uprising, the Haitian Revolution, often overshadowed by the American and French Revolutions that preceded it. In 1804, Haiti became history's first black republic and the second independent nation in the Western Hemisphere.

The elimination of legalized slavery in the Caribbean was a monumental accomplishment, finally realized with the general emancipation decree in Cuba in 1886. Foote's carefully selected sources allow us to gauge the moral convictions of philanthropic abolitionists and the economic aspects of abolitionist politics without neglecting to take into account the agency of slaves themselves in the process of their emancipation. We are given an appreciation of how the newly freed struggled for true autonomy in the decades following their emancipation, whilst the landowning elites sought to restrict the freedom of movement and political and economic rights of the individuals who were once their property. Fascinating accounts are delivered of the indentureship that began in the nineteenth century and endured well into the twentieth, when the desire for cheap labor spawned the introduction of hundreds of thousands of mostly Indian and Chinese contract workers into the Caribbean.

Foote gives appropriate weight to the rise of U.S. power in the Caribbean following the Spanish-American War of 1898, when Spain lost its last remaining colonies in the Western Hemisphere and the United States acquired its first overseas territories. Resistance to U.S. influence grew with the rise of racial consciousness among Afro-Caribbean people fed up with centuries-long stigmatizations of blackness and denigrations of African culture. Foote's sources reveal how "black political activism, literary and cultural production, religious thought, and even sporting prowess" have contributed to shifts in "cultural hierarchies and value systems" in the Caribbean (p. 229).

Foote conveys the importance of the democratic reforms that occurred in the Anglophone and Dutch Caribbean and Puerto Rico after the establishment of popular political parties and labor unions. Decolonization and the rise to political power by leaders of African descent in the Anglophone Caribbean and Suriname are surveyed, as are politics and society in the non-independent Caribbean. Problems of dictatorship and repression are examined through analysis of the regimes of Rafael Trujillo in the Dominican Republic (1930-1961) and François Duvalier and his son Jean-Claude in Haiti (1957-1986). The region's struggles to find "an alternative to the inequalities and indignities associated with regional political and economic development" are evaluated, particularly the Cuban Revolution of 1959 and the Grenadian Revolution of 1979 (p. 331).

Foote's concise and engaging chapter introductions enhance her well-chosen written and visual sources. Other important topics duly covered by Foote include gender dynamics, ethnic diversity, economic diversification, the promotion of tourism, international and intra-regional migration, and the experiences of the Caribbean diaspora. Encompassing the region's major actors, events, and issues, *The Caribbean History Reader* is a comprehensive and insightful volume for teaching the Caribbean from the pre-Columbian era to the present.

Marist College

David M. Carletta

*African Voices of the Global Past: 1500 to the Present*, edited by Trevor Getz. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2013. 240 pages. \$20.00, paper.

Professor of African and world history at San Francisco State University, Trevor Getz has developed a strong reputation for producing high-quality pedagogical works. *African Voices of the Global Past* is no different in this regard and adds to Getz's rightly earned reputation as a major figure in the pedagogy of African and world histories, and, in particular, the intersection of the two.

*African Voices of the Global Past* is neither a textbook nor a primary document reader, but a combination of the two that features contextualized primary excerpts amid secondary material written by content authorities. The book contains six chronologically arranged chapters, each featuring a historical event from the post-Columbian era that is simultaneously a global and African historical issue: trans-Atlantic slavery (by Kwasi Konadu), industrial revolution (by Trevor Getz), colonialism (by Tim Carmichael), both world wars (by Saheed Aderinto), decolonization (by Peter Adebayo), and feminism (by Osire Glacier). The goal of the volume is to provide access to the ways in which Africans contributed to, experienced, and perceived global trends and episodes. Even in instances where Africans were seemingly not protagonists, the authors seek to demonstrate that Africa and Africans were not acted upon by the outside world, but had their own agency, initiatives, and opinions on world affairs (p. x). In sum, the authors seek to illustrate that Africans, at all points in time, had an active engagement in world affairs and were not mere pawns for the outside world to play with. The editor and authors are successful in achieving this goal. Through both secondary narrative and primary excerpts, each chapter provides rich detail of the everyday lived experiences, responses, motivations, and agendas of Africans who were part of these global processes.

The authors, not unexpectedly, made different conceptual and organizational choices when writing their chapters. Some authors opted for a stronger thematic emphasis with geography serving a complimentary role, while others reversed this emphasis. This may

affect which chapters will work best for particular courses. Chapters 1, 2, and 5 (on trans-Atlantic slavery, industrial revolution, and decolonization) provide synthetic overviews of these historical issues, supplemented with illustrative examples from throughout the continent, and primary excerpts from two or more locations. In way of a specific illustration, the decolonization chapter provides context on nationalist movements worldwide, the impact of the Cold War world, and metropolitan attitudes. It then discusses African experiences within three chronological phases (1900s-1920s, 1920s-1940s, 1940s-1970s), with examples drawn from throughout the continent (though, sadly, the author does not include North African ones in this section). It concludes with primary excerpts from Ghana, Algeria, and South Africa. I suspect that this chapter, with 1 and 2, will be of equal pedagogical utility for African history and world history courses alike because they can be read in a dual thematic/global and geographic/local manner. On the other hand, chapters 3, 4, and 6 (on colonialism, both world wars, and feminism) lean more toward case studies of Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Morocco, respectively, rather than overviews of those historical issues. Chapters 3 and 6 each provide roughly five pages, and chapter 4 just one page, to introducing the topic on a continental scale, before devoting the entirety of the rest of the chapter to a specific colony/country. I suspect these chapters may be of greater pedagogical value to African history courses than world history ones because of the greater level of attention to specific cases. Students will gain greater knowledge of the local and national than the continental or global.

All the chapters follow the same clear organization (overview, discussion of African experiences/social history, primary excerpts, questions, and further reading), are readably written, and are historiographically conversant. Though there are differences in the degrees to which the chapters are global or local, the strength of the chapters' content, the cogency of the collection, and the pedagogical merits of the overall orientation of the work mean that this book warrants careful consideration for anyone who teaches post-1500 C.E. African or world history.

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Joel E. Tishken

*Loyalty and Liberty: American Countersubversion from World War I to the McCarthy Era*, by Alex Goodall. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2013. 322 pages. \$55.00, cloth.

Alex Goodall's *Loyalty and Liberty* is an examination of the history of American countersubversion—the effort to defend the political system from covert threats—between World War I and the McCarthy era that “attempts to explain how a country with a long-standing hostility to the centralization of power and a strong disposition to associate activist government with tyranny gradually reconciled itself to a domestic security state that matched the national security state projecting American power overseas during the Cold War” (p. 9). Since countersubversion encompassed activities alien to the American traditions of decentralized governance, such as surveillance, censorship, propaganda, and even criminal actions, it generated strong resistance from many segments of American society. Thus, according to Goodall, its history was characterized by two competing impulses: loyalty (the need to ensure the people's commitment to the nation) versus liberty (the concern about preserving the freedoms that made the nation worth defending). His account focuses primarily on three elements of countersubversive politics: antiradicalism, antifascism, and anticommunism.

The book is divided chronologically into three sections. The first covers World War I and its aftermath when the Wilson administration's effort to ensure wartime loyalty combined expanding central government power with private sector voluntary activism, including vigilantism, to counter anti-war radicalism. Government actions, such as enforcement of the 1918 Sedition Act, blurred the distinction between dissent and sedition. Americans, who initially supported this loyalty campaign, eventually became polarized and wondered which was the greater threat—"the presence of 'subversives' on American soil or the campaign to eliminate them" (p. 29). The emergence of Bolshevism in Russia combined with the creation of Communist parties in America substantiated countersubversive claims that "foreign ethnicities, revolutionary ideologies, and foreign countries were indeed inextricably related" (p. 55). And the resulting Red Scare of 1919-1920 produced an interlocking set of countersubversive government policies that included non-recognition of the Soviet Union, prohibition of alcohol, and strict immigration quotas that would persist for a decade. Goodall asserts that, particularly in regard to immigration restrictions, the countersubversives were viewed as "100 percent American" patriots, that this "Black-and-white rhetoric tended to make people think there were only two sides of the political debate" (pp. 83-84). But subsequently, this countersubversive politics would begin to break down.

The book's second section chronicles countersubversion's slow collapse during the 1920s. Deep splits between reformers and conservatives in both major political parties "reduced the value of countersubversion as a political tool, moved the government away from activist positions, and sidelined countersubversive celebrities" (p. 88), leaving only groups like the Ku Klux Klan and the American Legion to build effective national countersubversive politics from below. This politics was dominated by a decentralized and unaccountable network of amateurs with little understanding of communism and little evidence of Soviet espionage to support their allegations. Industrialists, most notably Henry Ford, embraced countersubversion to combat radicalism, especially in the guise of organized labor. But Ford's reputation collapsed with the coming of the Depression. Furthermore, religious institutions—both Protestant and Catholic—that had previously played important roles in countersubversive politics were divided between conservatives and reformers.

The last section analyzes how the Depression challenged the antiradicalism of the past. The election of 1932 was a rejection of this traditional antiradicalism. Franklin Roosevelt's administration dismantled large parts of past countersubversive accomplishments—repealing the Eighteenth Amendment, recognizing the Soviet Union, and pushing for union rights. At the same time, the Communist Party's reputation revived. Now antifascists who decried the totalitarian politics of both American capitalism and Nazi Germany adopted the tactics of countersubversives. Both sides portrayed themselves as defenders of liberty and their opponents as extremists threatening it: "Reformers attacked conservatives for fascism; conservatives responded by accusing the New Deal as being infiltrated by Communists" (p. 224). Anticommunist conservatives co-opted the fear of fascism by depicting both Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union as totalitarian states, thus undermining the left's class-state stance and focusing on the tyranny of state power, which they equated with the New Deal. At the same time, ironically, Roosevelt restored the FBI's power to investigate political radicalism. By the end of World War II, all the elements were in place for the emergence of Joseph McCarthy's exploitation of subversive fears.

*Loyalty and Liberty* is an impressive piece of scholarship that would be a valuable resource for anyone teaching this period in American history. However, it requires readers to have some familiarity with the events and personalities of the period, thus making it most appropriate for use in advanced undergraduate or graduate courses.

*July 1914: Countdown to War*, by Sean McMeekin. New York: Basic Books, 2013. 433 pages. \$29.99, cloth.

Those of us who teach the second half of the Western Civilization survey course can recite the diplomatic errors leading up to the First World War by rote: “Blank check,” *Schlieffen* plan,” “Irish home rule.” And there’s likely to be nothing much exciting in our rendition of these miscues over the course of many semesters. Enter Sean McMeekin’s *July 1914: Countdown to War*, one of many scholarly and popular new releases on the eve of the centennial of the Great War. McMeekin’s book makes diplomacy come alive and it leaves the reader with a thorough understanding of the internal problems affecting diplomacy in each of the major countries, the strategic issues of alliance and geopolitics, and the how the personalities of rulers and diplomats influenced diplomatic communication and decision-making.

The book moves from country to country, almost like scenes from a play. McMeekin begins with Archduke Franz Ferdinand’s visit to Sarajevo in late June 1914. His description of the visit and the personalities involved are colorful, explaining the political context of Bosnia and the problems of diplomacy and protocol created by the archduke’s morganatic marriage. At the outset, McMeekin also addresses nationalist and terrorist organizations at work in Serbia and Bosnia, and the structure of the assassination plot that sprang up in reaction to the archduke’s visit.

The work then moves chronologically from country to country—Austria-Hungary, Germany, Russia, France, and Great Britain—with minor stops in Serbia, examining initial reactions to the assassination and the diplomatic machinations that resulted. McMeekin’s main thrust is to show how a minor event turned into a European-wide conflagration because of communication failures and misinterpreted goals. He looks first at Vienna’s reaction, key to the subsequent events, and then turns to the Russian response. Initially, Austria-Hungary was focused on punishing Serbia for its apparent complicity in the assassination. Yet McMeekin ably details the history of the earlier Balkan Wars to show how such a reaction was unlikely to be contained between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, given Russia’s need to support her allies. He also chronicles the waning strength of Austria-Hungarian Empire, which required that state to confer with Germany before setting any firm diplomatic course, and the centrifugal forces wielded by the numerous ethnic groups with the Empire, which heightened the need to lessen Serbia’s power.

He makes much of the visit of the French prime minister and premier to Russia near the end of July, and focuses on their development of a common approach to potential German mobilization. And yet, during this visit, from 20-23 July, there was as still no sense of urgency, since Vienna had yet to issue its ultimatum to Serbia. In the aftermath of the issuance and subsequent rejection of the ultimatum, diplomacy—and secret military preparations—moved into overdrive and Europe was driven to the point of no return. The pace in the second half of the book becomes nearly frantic as McMeekin details the final week of preparation and diplomatic interchange before war. Even as the pace increases, the author remains firmly in control of the narrative, fleshing out both the larger strategic issues—Winston Churchill deploying Britain’s fleet on his own recognizance—and the smaller details of personalities—Bethman Hollweg’s resignation being firmly denied by William II.

In short, McMeekin has written a compelling narrative examining diplomatic failure in the summer of 1914. Importantly, this work does not focus narrowly on foreign policy. McMeekin carefully examines the internal problems of each major player, showing how these issues limited foreign policy options. And he gives robust portraits of diplomatic officials and political leaders, showing how their own strengths and weaknesses shaped diplomatic

responses during this crucial month. One minor quibble—early on, McMeekin makes much of the minister-president of Hungary and details how his objections to war nearly derailed the Austrian response. A paragraph or two on the political structure of the Austro-Hungarian Empire would have been useful for greater understanding of the power of that office. But this is a minor fault in a highly useful book. The work is not well suited for a survey course because of its narrow focus and lengthiness, although it makes an excellent resource for instructors of such courses, enhancing their knowledge of the diplomatic and strategic context of the war's onset. It is eminently appropriate for diplomatic history courses, particularly ones featuring case studies, since problems here are well laid out and ripe for discussion. And, it would be an excellent choice for an upper-level course on the war itself.

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Martha (Murph) E. Kinney

*Civil Disobedience: An American Tradition*, by Lewis Perry. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013. 407 pages. \$35.00, cloth.

Billy Joel's 1989 number one hit "We Didn't Start the Fire" reminds listeners that each generation is connected by a common history and tradition to the generations that came before. Lewis Perry, Professor Emeritus of History at Saint Louis University, makes a parallel claim in his sweeping and thorough examination of the "practice, justification, and criticism of civil disobedience in the United States from its pre-revolutionary background to the present" (p. 1). In an attempt to uncover "missing history," Perry undertakes the grand task of methodically reviewing the ways in which the intellectual traditions of Henry David Thoreau and Mahatma Gandhi were interpreted by the many Americans who challenged unjust laws by breaking them with civility (p. ix). Perry assesses nearly 250 years of American history from primarily an intellectual history approach as he seeks to place the myriad of different types of "permissible disobedience" and specific historical events within the unique tradition of American civil disobedience (p. 247).

Drawing out similarities and anomalies within the civil disobedience tradition from the Boston Tea Party of 1773 through the Occupy Movement pepper-spray incident at University of California, Davis in 2011 is one of the more notable achievements of this meticulously researched scholarship. By evaluating the nation's political and legal foundations through a detailed examination of republicanism, citizenship, evangelicalism, and the rule of law through documents like the Constitution, the author makes a convincing argument for the heritage of a "distinctive" form of civil disobedience in America that is based on "signifying respect" for law while breaking it (p. 23). Perry continuously reminds readers that the "abundant contest and variation" found in the disobedient acts of Americans throughout various generations demonstrates that "a uniform code of behavior" does not, and perhaps should not, exist (p. 24). Thus, a notable achievement of *Civil Disobedience* is the careful way various protestors of different causes from nearly three centuries of American history are brought together in a diverse, yet connected, heritage of civil disobedience.

Perry asserts that the definition and practice of civil disobedience has changed over time, and thus political protests of the past that have been regarded as acts of civil disobedience may simply be other types of political protest. Through a detailed examination of both primary and secondary source evidence, however, Perry ascertains that "civil disobedience is an odd and elusive concept" (p. 11). Perry argues that the ideas put forth by Thoreau and Gandhi, such as nonviolence and accepting the legal consequences, should be upheld as a benchmark for defining the requirements of civil disobedience. The author demonstrates

a long-standing practice of protestors claiming solidarity with prior generations' civilly disobedient acts and principles, which was seen in 1992 when anti-abortion advocates "placed 'pro-life' demonstrations in the context of a long history reaching back to the Boston Tea Party" (p. 295). While *Civil Disobedience* details the nuances of each referenced historical event and raises interesting questions regarding its classification as an act of civil disobedience, readers may be left to their own analytical interpretations regarding the event's inclusion in the tradition since the author's analysis is not always provided.

Perry successfully demonstrates that a diverse group of American individuals with various political causes over nearly a 250-year period of national history shared a vision of creating a more equitable society according to their own definitions and understandings of civil rights. Yet Perry's chronologically organized monograph focuses primarily on the major and well-known examples of civil disobedience, which marginalizes the significant contributions of some groups seemingly outside mainstream historical inquiry. A surprisingly unmentioned event was the Mattachine Society's 1966 "sip-in" to challenge a New York regulation against serving gays alcohol, which was an act of civil disobedience modeled after the successful early 1960s "sit-ins" of the African American civil rights movement.

*Civil Disobedience* is a foundational work that contributes both new and deeper understandings to the intellectual, legal, and political history of the United States. This careful scholarly inquest makes an important contribution to the study of American history as a whole since it successfully identifies a common theme amongst civil disobedients: "governments cannot demand unreserved obedience" (p. 11). Perry's research convincingly links seemingly separate and sometimes paradoxical acts over time into a more understandable national narrative. This scholarship is an irreplaceable source for both academics and students alike who are interested in joining the debate regarding the "hard questions about law breaking, civil liberties, and legal penalties" (p. 312) in the continuously unfolding history of civil disobedience in America.

California State University, Long Beach

Michelle Stonis

*Defiant Brides: The Untold Story of Two Revolutionary-Era Women and the Radical Men They Married*, by Nancy Rubin Stuart. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2013. 248 pages. \$26.95, cloth.

Author Nancy Rubin Stuart contends that the lives of two Revolutionary-era women, Peggy Shippen Arnold and Lucy Flucker Knox, are more complex than the labels of "traitor" and "patriot" assigned to them. Both women married men prominent in the Revolution and both displayed strong-willed personalities and commitment to the men they loved. Their families disapproved of their marital suitors; privileged teenagers at the time, both women defied their parents and married anyway. Peggy Shippen chose the handsome, but controversial, military hero Benedict Arnold, and Lucy Flucker chose the talented and hard-working, but poor, bookseller Henry Knox. Neither woman's family supported the American Revolution, although the Shippen family classified as neutral during the War, rather than Loyalist.

The Revolution tested each woman's commitment to her husband and to the cause their husbands supported. The Flucker family abandoned Lucy Knox after the Revolution began, fleeing the country along with other Loyalists. In the absence of her extended family, Lucy Knox depended almost entirely on her husband for emotional support. Henry Knox rose through the ranks of the Continental Army to become a Brigadier General and trusted aide

to George Washington, but his wartime responsibilities required frequent absences that exacerbated Lucy's loneliness. It is through the couple's correspondence during these absences that Stuart explains their emotional reliance upon one another, and Lucy's persistent frustrations with their separation. Lucy Knox insisted that her husband write frequently and that she visit him in military camps, some of which offered minimal accommodations.

Peggy Shippen Arnold relished her husband's fame as military hero for the Patriot cause when they married, and then later supported his betrayal of it. She aided him in his work as a spy for the British, and then perpetuated the deception that she was not involved. Like Lucy Knox, the Revolution forced her to leave friends and family behind when she joined her husband in exile in New York and later in England and Canada.

Although both Lucy Knox and Peggy Arnold appeared self-involved and privileged at times in their lives, Stuart argues that they matured during their marriages. Lucy Knox bore thirteen children and endured the tragic deaths of all but three of them. She won the respect of her contemporaries as a patriotic helpmate whose intelligence and social skills lifted the spirits of the military camps when she visited her husband. For her part, Peggy Arnold's beauty and social skills assisted her husband in his transition to exile and she strived to repay his debts and redeem his good name. Arnold displayed remarkable forbearance, according to the author, especially given her husband's continued business failures.

*Defiant Brides* is a lively read. Stuart's research into the complete correspondence of these two couples is impressive. She provides readers a window through which they may glimpse the private side of the American Revolution. The author is right that the lives of Lucy Knox and Peggy Arnold complicate the labels of patriot and traitor often assigned them. But, it is not because a comparison of their lives exposes the personality weaknesses of one and the strengths of the other, as the author suggests in the preface (p. xvi). Rather, it is because their lives illustrate the complex ways gender and marriage intersected with the American Revolution. Marriage and children defined and preoccupied most eighteenth-century women's lives. By law and custom, husbands possessed domestic authority and wives subordinate status. Many, if not most, wives followed their husbands' allegiances in the Revolution. It is not clear that Knox and Arnold, at least initially, chose a side in the American Revolution; what they chose was a husband. In that case, the label they deserve is "wife."

Historians have explored the intersection between the personal and political in early American women's lives. Social skills, such as those practiced by Knox in a military camp or by Arnold in exile at the royal court in London, are reminiscent of the "parlor politics" attributed to Dolley Madison by historian Catherine Allgor in her 2000 book, *Parlor Politics*. Still, unlike Dolley Madison, it is not clear that Lucy Knox thought in political terms. The same can be said of Peggy Arnold, at least until her treason. Knox and Arnold appear first and foremost as wives and mothers in Stuart's rendering. For this reason, teachers who choose to use this book in the classroom should supplement this reading with a larger discussion about eighteenth-century marriage and gender roles.

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*Europe: The Struggle for Supremacy, from 1453 to Present*, by Brendan Simms. New York: Basic Books, 2013. 720 pages. \$35.00, cloth.

While Brendan Simms employs a panoramic lens with which to survey five hundred years of Europe's geopolitical history, as he forewarns his readers, "this book, in short, is about

the immediacy of the past” (p. xviii). Though no harangue, Simms’ history reads as a lengthy caution, a warning that Simms has elsewhere made more explicitly—namely, that Europeans must adopt a “new constitutional settlement” on the lines of Anglo-American models of fiscal and military unions and cease to regard the European Union as a “modern-day Holy Roman Empire,” which permits Europe’s diverse populations to coexist peacefully while nonetheless remaining “incapable of effective collective action” (p. 532). This history of Europe’s struggle for supremacy, then, is meant as a lengthy object lesson for the continent’s contemporary leaders. To sustain this contention, Simms argues that a certain continuity, indeed changelessness, has characterized the strategic considerations underpinning geopolitical competition across Europe’s modern centuries.

In successive chapters of this single but weighty volume, Simms marches through the long history of European geo-strategic competition, examining the principal challenges to peace and European unity over the course of the last five hundred years. He begins by exploring the consequences for European strategic equilibrium of the Ottoman defeat of Byzantium and the French check of England’s continental aspirations in 1453. He then outlines the contours of the dynastic competition that followed the Peace of Westphalia before situating the Atlantic Revolutions in their strategic context and examining their geopolitical impact. Simms’ long nineteenth century, from Vienna to the Russian Revolution, details the twin unfolding of liberal and national sentiments, exemplified in the unification struggles of Germany and the United States, and their establishment as great powers. Simms divides the twentieth century between the confrontation of three utopian visions—democratic, communist, and National Socialist—and the unfolding of the “European project,” which in 2011, at the conclusion of Simms’ study, stood at a critical juncture, faced with existential threats from without and uncertain leadership within. What Simms uncovers in this study is a remarkable constancy to the strategic issues facing Europeans today and in the past.

Most immediately, and undoubtedly with the Eurozone debt crisis squarely in mind, the central continuity to which Simms returns readers again and again is the centrality of Germany—variously characterized as “the cockpit of the European ideological struggle” since 2001; the “real prize” of the Cold War; the “principal preoccupation” of the new revolutionary geopolitics of the 1790s; and, as the Holy Roman Empire, the lynchpin of the European state system before 1789. In his insistent focus on Germany as the vital center of European geopolitical calculations, Simms recalls Sir Halford Mackinder’s axiom of the strategic primacy of Europe’s “heartland.” Simms hardly fails to observe, even when the action is taking place elsewhere, that the real prize, or the real strategic threat, remained Germany. Moreover, as Simms makes clear in his concluding chapters, the “German problem” has not been resolved, and Germany—now as in the past, with its strategic position, population base, industrial might, and military potential—again represents either the anchor on which hopes of further European integration depend, or the shoals on which such aspirations will once again founder.

Interestingly, while Simms argues that “some things never change, or change very little or very slowly,” at least in the realm of the “principal security issues faced by Europeans” (p. xxvii), it is geopolitical and strategic competition which serves for Simms as the primary agent of historical change. For example, Simms sees the development of a public sphere, both in America and in Great Britain in the 1750s, as largely attendant on the debate over British policy in the lead up to and during the Seven Years’ War. Likewise, Simms argues that the American Revolution resulted largely from differences between the colonists and the direction of British foreign policy in Europe, while the shots at Lexington were “‘heard around the world’ not so much because they heralded the dawn of ‘liberty’, but because of their implications for the international state system” (p. 127). Similarly, Simms attributes revolutionary change in France in late 1789 and 1790 principally to a “determination to

make French society better able to support the re-establishment of national greatness on the European scene” (p. 143). It is thus geo-strategic competition, and not ideology, that has contributed most significantly to the development of the democratic institutions and liberal constitutions that compose modern European polities. For Simms, then, if Europeans hope to sustain or encourage the spread of their democratic traditions, they must first pay close heed to the geo-strategic lessons learned over the past five hundred years.

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Dean Ferguson

*Freedom's Frontier: California and the Struggle Over Unfree Labor, Emancipation, and Reconstruction*, by Stacey L. Smith. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2013. 324 pages. \$39.95, cloth.

In *Freedom's Frontier*, Stacey L. Smith deftly integrates the histories of the American West and American slavery, pointing out that in the past thirty years, these two fields of study have become more intertwined and found common ground by examining systems of free and unfree labor in areas west of the Mississippi. Building on the histories that laid this groundwork not only of the unfree West, *Freedom's Frontier* also expands “on the findings of scholars who have worked to construct a truly national narrative of the sectional crisis, the Civil War, and the Reconstruction that encompasses North, South, and West” (p. 6). Smith begins with a thesis that argues “California’s struggle over slavery did not end with its entrance into the Union as a free state as part of the Compromise of 1850” (p. 2). Instead, the history of California during the 1850s was marked by the “development of African American slavery, diverse forms of American Indian servitude, sexual trafficking in bound women, and contract labor arrangements involving Latin Americans, Asians, and Pacific Islanders [that] all kept the slavery question alive in California during the 1850s” (p. 3). Utilizing labor as the central point that connects all these disparate groups, Smith lucidly discusses how California reflected and participated in the greater national dramas over slavery and Reconstruction. Even though she covers familiar territory—the Gold Rush, Chinese and Latin American immigration to the gold mines, and the Act for the Government and Protection of Indians that allowed whites to coerce Indian labor—in Smith’s captivating narrative, these familiar themes are made fresh and engaging.

Pointing to the persistence of the thousands of Southern slave owners who brought their slaves with them, Smith recounts the various means by which slave owners continued to control their human property after forcing them to sign labor contracts. Democratic politicians and judges sympathetic to slavery continued to “reveal that California’s free soil was shaky and that its domestic battle over African American slavery extended long past 1850” (p. 48). Taking a similar tack with all her other subjects, Smith’s new research steadily builds on her thesis that unfree labor systems entangled a range of people, thus impacting the politics of the Civil War and Reconstruction. For example, other Native American historians have written how freedoms and protections granted to African Americans after the Civil War were never extended to Native Americans, but Smith’s account of how Native American children were exploited is especially noteworthy. The chronic shortage of female adult domestic servants in the 1850s resulted in Native American children making up the majority of bound servants in Californio and emigrant homes after the passage of the Act for the Government and Protections of 1850, but it was the amendment to this bill in 1860 that deepened the legal definitions and practice of bonding Native American children—a situation that would last beyond the era of Reconstruction.

In dealing with prostitution, Smith ingeniously compares and contrasts Native American women and Chinese women's experiences and how this traffic in women "not only raised vexing questions about the marketability of women; they also became vehicles through which white middle-class Californians expressed new racialized understanding of gender, household, and family relations" (p. 143). Because Smith steadily builds her arguments, when she concludes her work by examining how ideas of labor influenced immigration policy, particularly the Chinese Exclusion legislation during the 1870s, the reader clearly understands why and how "California politicians' careful re-racialization of slavery to encompass Chinese immigrants thus helped give rise to the United States' most virulent, enduring, and racially discriminatory immigration laws" (p. 229).

The strengths of *Freedom's Frontier* are manifold, based on impressive and thorough research. But the greatest value of this work lies in how Smith layers and organizes her ideas and arguments, steadily weaving them from one chapter to the next and thus fulfilling exactly what she promises to do in the introduction. The final result is a work that provides historians a new way to teach unfree labor, Reconstruction, and the limitation of emancipation and equality after the Civil War in the West. By including such a wide range of groups, this is an ideal work to assign undergraduate and graduate students in an American history, ethnic studies, or California history course. In all, Smith has provided educators and historians with a well-written, provocative work, to which I give the highest recommendation.

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Maria Raquel Casas

*Lost Enlightenment, Central Asia's Golden Age from the Arab Conquest to Tamerlane*, by S. Frederick Starr. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013. 634 pages. \$39.50, cloth.

Employing a common theatre phrase, S. Frederick Starr concludes his extensive book on Central Asia's Golden Age with "it had a long run." His book *Lost Enlightenment*, at times, reads like a play with engaging characters and exciting events. As a professor of Central Eurasian History, I am grateful to have a book to assign that privileges the stories of individuals such as Ibn Sina (ca. 980-1037) and Biruni (973-1048) among other influential Central Eurasian thinkers. As a teacher, I am also thankful to have a secondary source to assign along with Scott C. Levi and Ron Sela's *Islamic Central Asia*, a collection of primary sources. The book would be ideal for both upper-division undergraduate and graduate courses. It offers well-selected maps and illustrations, which would be useful for any reader.

Starr's book is a sweeping account of Central Asia's intellectual past within its political history. It is a commendable undertaking to bring the readers' attention to the diversity of ideas that emerged out of curious and creative minds of thinkers and intellectuals mistakenly known as "Arab scholars" in Western literature. This book emphasizes the breadth of knowledge these Turkic, Persian, and various other ethnic groups who often communicated in Arabic generated. It points out how this diverse group of individuals with a vast knowledge of their environments not only transmitted the lost enlightenment of the ancient thinkers, but also invented new and influential ideas.

The thorough research and attention to detail makes this book a model teaching tool. Both undergraduate and graduate students will learn about the nuanced history and mixed results of conversions to Islam in Central Asia, for example. The book provides clear

evidence and human stories that will educate while entertaining readers. Individuals such as “wandering scholars” and spaces such as Baghdad, Bukhara, Gurganj, and most intriguingly Merv make this book come alive, even if some of the details may be lengthy for non-historians. As the “Dramatic Personae” and the “Chronology” (pp. xxi-xxxvii) signal at the beginning of the book, the emphasis of the study rests on the shoulders of the remarkable people such as Ibn Sina and Biruni, whose correspondence during 998 and 999 seems to signal the emergence of Central Asian enlightenment.

The description of the vague geographical and cultural boundaries that define Central Asia reflects the multi-ethnic, multi-confessional, and multi-linguistic character of the intellectuals. The book shows that the modern boundaries of the Soviet era poorly demonstrate the vast stretch of Central Asian society and culture. It succeeds in dispelling the imposition of modern boundaries onto Central Asia that included large portions of present-day Iran, Pakistan, China, and Russia. The book does this by carefully tracking the chronology and trajectories of the Arab conquests, Turkic ascendancy, and Mongol domination intertwined with specific individuals’ stories.

In the book, most of the Central Asian thinkers come across as innovators and challengers of the status quo until Ghazali’s (1058-1111) “devastating” attacks on reason and, more specifically, on Ibn Sina (p. 301). Starr discusses the literature on the decline of the Age of Enlightenment, including the placing of the blame on “the dark genius” Ghazali, (p. 532) and the limited emphasis and endurance of the scientific achievements among the Mughals of India, the Safavids of Iran, and the Seljuks and the Ottomans of Turkey, all of whom influenced the Central Asian intellectual trends. In the end, the aesthetic legacies of these four empires outweighed the scientific achievements. Nevertheless, Starr refuses to focus on the waning of this remarkable age and instead highlights the Central Asian scientific innovations, philosophical contributions, and religious openness, reflected for example in Sufism. The penultimate chapter insightfully points out that the Central Asian thinkers validated that the pursuit of truth and beauty could be achieved without compromising either. However, the final chapter, shrewdly titled “Retrospective: The Sand and the Oyster,” concludes the book with a paradigm of decline. I highly recommend *Lost Enlightenment* with the hope that readers will remember Central Asian culture during the eighth through the twelfth centuries to be as receptive to new ideas as an oyster to grains of sand, in order to produce a remarkable culture of pearls.

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Ali İğmen

*Working Hard for the American Dream: Workers and their Unions, World War I to the Present*, by Randi Storch. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013. 291 pages. \$27.95, paper.

It takes a brave person to write a labor history survey when “the audience is in decline and the labor movement is in turmoil” (p. 224), but Randi Storch is clearly up to the task of trying to cover an exciting and complicated period of an often neglected social movement. She provides a thorough institutional history of unionism in a wide range of occupations—manufacturing, service, health care, public sector and agriculture—but includes, as “new” labor historians do, a social history that covers workers in general; social inequality and social mobility; the impact of new technology and immigration; and race and gender equality as they developed, or were opposed, in various unions. The book is timely, including both the attacks by Wisconsin governor Scott Walker and the exhilaration

of the Occupy Movement, with an extensive bibliography of readily available secondary sources that students can easily absorb.

Storch adds a political dimension by charting the important effects of the federal government upon the growth and character of unionism: strongly supportive during World War I, hostile during the 1920s, supportive during the New Deal, and hostile or indifferent ever since. She also directly covers one topic that scares some labor historians: the involvement of communists in building unionism in the United States, describing how “the reds” contributed to the expansion of unionism in the 1930s and 1940s, and how the Red Scare, and the expulsion of unions for being “Communist-Dominated” in the late 1940s, “was a major blow moving forward against racism and sexism within the labor movement” (p. 118).

The chapter “Working More For Less and Other Troubles for Workers in the Late Twentieth Century” describes the economic implications and the impact upon U.S. workers (as well as the declining number of unionized labor) as the U.S. shifted from a national manufacturing economy into the global model. It is certainly symbolic—or ironic?—that this book on U.S. unionism was printed in Malaysia.

Storch cleverly uses historical moments to explain, in a most positive way, what unionism is, framing it as “all American.” Describing the Flint sit-down strike of 1936-1937, for example, she states that “GM management (and others like them) fundamentally opposed the principle and exercise of collective bargaining. GM’s workers agreed that they should collectively have a say in how they should be paid . . . As US citizens, they expected to be able to vote for candidates, push for legislation, and freely speak and gather. Why should they have to forfeit these rights when they punched in each day? Didn’t their labor earn them the right to expect dignity at work and security during hard times or when they became too old to work the line?” (pp. 53-54).

As teachers, it is essential to speak to your students, to understand their assumptions, and to involve them personally in historical discussions. It could be assumed a generation ago that a large number of students came from union families, and understood—in general terms—collective bargaining and the social contract from conversations around the dinner table. Today, not so much. To deal with the challenge presented by this general unfamiliarity of students with the labor movement, Storch follows a suggestion by historian Elizabeth Faue that “scholars should ask new questions about class to better uncover the personal drama and uncertainty of people’s lives” (p. 225).

Storch weaves in personal history, moments of memoir, showing how the individual experiences of her own family reflect historical movements, describing how her father started as a union electrician in 1960 and “made a good living for eighteen years as a Jew in an overwhelmingly non-Jewish trade.” In 1978, “this way of life was about to come to a crashing end” as “between 1973 and 2000, by almost every measure, working people throughout all sectors of society lost economic ground and power at work and in society” (pp. 174-175). Storch’s father finds social “mobility” as the owner of a pizza shop, but is “70 years old and works like a dog.” Her sister expected to “find security in the New Jersey public school system and its teacher union” after four years of college and “steep student loans.” Instead, Storch continues, “there are thousands of other people like my sister who are finding themselves under intense public assault” by politicians like Governor Chris Christie, who are “pitting teachers like my sister against the students they work with each day” (p. 242).

Speaking from her own experience, Storch relates growing up in “service work,” with “years spent eating, working and waiting for my parents’ shift to end at their pizzeria” (p. 227). She describes the decline of the town of Cortland, New York, where she is a Professor of History at the State University, and where manufacturing plants have closed,

hindering the population's ability to work for wages with dignity (p. 225). Storch laments that the growth of "contingent faculty" at colleges has "exposed the vulnerability of full-time professional employment in higher education" (p. 188). The American Dream is, indeed, "illusive" for working Americans (p. 225).

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Bill Barry

*Understanding and Teaching the Vietnam War*, edited by John Day Tully, Matthew Masur, and Brad Austen. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013. 352 pages. \$29.95, paper.

Anyone who has ever taught the Vietnam War knows the extreme difficulties involved in explaining to students, many of whom are increasingly separated from the war, the nature of the conflict, and the reasons behind it. Motivations, participants, even timing are complex and hard to fit in a college course, let alone a lecture or two in a survey or high school class. Additionally, there is an immense amount of material available regarding the war and increasing amounts of it are digitized. *Understanding and Teaching the Vietnam War* attempts to use the expertise of a variety of professors to cull through this vast literature and provide advice as to what is useful and how one might best use it.

The work itself is divided into three parts. Part one consists of essays from Marilyn Young and George Herring, well-established professors and authors on Vietnam who began their careers during the war and are either still teaching or only recently retired. Their essays are reflections on the changing nature of understanding and teaching the war and, perhaps most importantly, the changing nature of the audience one is addressing. While these essays are not designed as practical how-to templates, they do help teachers think about the relationship between the Vietnam War and more recent wars, and the way they are taught to—and also understood by—students.

The second and third parts are directed at structuring an actual class. The second part addresses various types of methods and sources one can use to teach the war, including music, White House tapes, movies, books, the Internet, and oral history. Although each article is written by a different author, they all do a good job of exploring and explaining strategies and potential hurdles teachers may encounter when dealing with the Vietnam War. It should be noted that while most articles provide a wealth of specific information within the body of the article, this is an instance in which it is especially important to read the endnotes, as often websites or additional resources are located there.

The third section deals with issues of understanding and teaching specific content. One article seeks to provide a nuanced approach to the war rather than teach the common dichotomy of either a nationalist crusade or an American endeavor to stem communist expansion. Another article stresses the need to ground the American presence in Vietnam in the long history of Vietnamese struggle against invaders, particularly the French. A third article offers classroom strategies to overcome ingrained myths about the anti-war movement and help students see its complexity. There is also advice about ways to integrate Vietnamese perspectives into class; this includes advice about specific readings that might provide students insight into the "other" sides of the war. Perhaps the most interesting article in this section is one that focuses on the Hmong experience. Written by an ethnic Hmong professor, it provides insight into an area of the war that is often little taught or understood. It is a great quick overview of the role of the Hmong and of Laos in the conflict and will provide invaluable insight for teachers themselves, including ways

teachers can approach the subject in a classroom. There is also an article that looks at the Southern Vietnamese who relocated to the United States, and the struggle they have had to be understood as more than just “refugees.” Tet, the major 1968 offensive that was a military defeat but a political victory for the NLF and North Vietnamese, is also a teachable moment that serves to illustrate the fact that the war was not black and white. Thus, an article provides a background on the Tet Offensive and then suggests ways to approach the event in the classroom, including an in-depth study of the famous photograph of General Nguyen Ngoc Loan shooting an NLF prisoner in the head. Finally, the book ends with articles on teaching the memories and lessons of the war and teaching the war in the secondary classroom specifically.

One would be hard pressed to read this text and not walk away with several new readings or ideas about how to approach the topic. The willingness of the authors to discuss specifics of their assignments and their methods makes it easy to see how to take these ideas and fit them into one’s own teaching. Overall, the text is a much-needed guide to help teachers at all levels navigate the complexities of the Vietnam War and the ever-increasing material available about it.

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Anne Paulet