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Book Reviews of 'John F. Kennedy and Europe,' edited by Douglas Brinkley and Richard T. Griffiths

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JFK Worldwide

John F. Kennedy and Europe.

Louisiana State Univ. Sept. 1999. c.304p. permanent paper. ed. by Douglas Brinkley & Richard T. Griffiths. index. LC 98-56145. ISBN 0-8071-2332-3. \$39.95. POLITICS

Bringing together a cast of respected international scholars, renowned writers Brinkley and Griffiths have edited a book that reevaluates the Kennedy administration's European policies. This collection of papers was originally presented at the 1992 Kennedy symposium at the European University Institute in Florence, Italy. Taking advantage of recently opened Kennedy-era archival material, the writers tackle a variety of themes: Kennedy and key European leaders, NATO and the Grand Design, trade and finance, and the European Community. What emerges is a portrait of a president whose priority was establishing closer ties with Europe—not for sentimental or historical reasons but for strategic and security ones. (He saw Europe as the key, contributors argue, to long-term U.S. security and stability.) A valuable contribution to our understanding of Kennedy's foreign policy and to Cold War U.S.-European relations; recommended for public and academic libraries.—*Michael A. Genovese, Loyola Marymount Univ., Los Angeles*

sic American ideals. The authors' rigorous, exhortatory exposition promises to unsettle some readers, but, in the end, it stands with important works such as Jennifer L. Hochschild's *Facing Up to the American Dream: Race, Class, and the Soul of the Nation* (Princeton Univ., 1995). It calls on Americans to confront the persistent black-white divide and the disparity between democratic promise and practice. Recommended for the U.S. politics, history, or race relations sections of public and academic collections.—*Thomas J. Davis, Arizona State Univ., Tempe*

Mitgang, Herbert. *Once Upon a Time in New York: Jimmy Walker, Franklin Roosevelt and the Last Great Battle of the Jazz Age.*

Free Pr. Jan. 2000. c.272p. index. ISBN 0-684-85579-8. \$25. HIST

Veteran journalist Mitgang has written a flavorful account of New York City politics during the 1920s Jazz Age centering around the intersecting careers of the city's popular mayor, Jimmy Walker, and the state's patrician governor, Franklin D. Roosevelt. Walker, the creature of Tammany Hall, the city's controlling political

The Kennedys and Cuba:

The Declassified Documentary History.

Ivan R. Dee. Nov. 1999. c.384p. ed. by Mark J. White. index. ISBN 1-56663-265-X. \$28.95. HIST

In his introduction, White (American history, Univ. of London; *The Cuban Missile Crisis*) describes the changing historical interpretation of the Bay of Pigs invasion and the Cuban Missile Crisis. Early Camelot historians wrote as if JFK could do no wrong; more recent studies describe him as an immature, myopic Cold Warrior. In contrast, White asks you, the reader, to become a historian and derive your own interpretation from the raw data: he has gathered primary-source documents from the JFK library, the Department of State, and Russian archives and arranged them in chronological order to give us a living history of Cuban-American relations during the Kennedy presidency. Readers can see, firsthand, the powerful effect that Robert had on his brother and view some juicy Russian archival documents as well. The story is still unfinished, however; classified information on government-Mafia assassination attempts and military plans for world war will not be released to the public in the foreseeable future. A well-organized collection; recommended for academic libraries and, if not essential for public libraries, very interesting nonetheless.—*Richard S. Nowicki, Emerson Vocational H.S., Buffalo, NY*

machine, had captured the affection and support of the voters. Damaging revelations of widespread corruption in the city as shown by the investigations of a special prosecutor, Judge Samuel Seabury, however, darkened Walker's political horizon. A reluctant Governor Roosevelt was forced to show decisiveness by holding hearings to remove Walker from office, even at the risk of antagonizing Tammany Hall at the 1932 Democratic Convention, where Roosevelt hoped to capture the Presidential nomination. As flashy as ever, Walker resolved the problem with a dramatic, abrupt resignation. Recommended for larger public libraries and New York area collections.—*Harry Frummerman, formerly with Hunter Coll., New York*

★Morris, Benny. *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-1999.*

Knopf. Sept. 1999. c.720p. maps. bibliog. index. LC 98-42774. ISBN 0-679-42120-3. \$40. HIST

This ambitious book seeks to cover more than a century of Zionist-Arab conflict in a single volume. Morris (history, Ben-Gurion Univ.), the author of several books on

the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, relies on a vast array of sources in Hebrew, Arabic, and English to write a meticulously researched, admirably balanced, and highly readable tome. All major events in the tortuous history of the Arab-Israeli conflict are covered. The author displays a remarkable grasp of the history of the Zionist-Arab conflict and an analytical style that is devoid of the polemics that have characterized so many books on this subject. Essential reading for anyone interested in the Arab-Israeli conflict and in the future of the peace process in the region.—*Nader Entessar, Spring Hill Coll., Mobile, AL*

Thomas, Baylis. *How Israel Was Won: A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict.*

Lexington: Free Pr. Oct. 1999. c.352p. bibliog. index. ISBN 0-7391-0064-5. HIST
pap. \$19.95.

Psychologist Thomas has adopted the Israeli revisionist interpretation of the Arab-Israeli conflict currently in vogue and fashioned an interesting "history" of events, from early Zionism through the current peace process. He argues that because of what he calls "the Holocaust syndrome"—that is, sympathy for the plight of European Jewry—Israeli policy has been given too favorable a spin. Thomas claims to pierce the veil of myth surrounding the traditionally popular pro-Israeli stance on the Arab-Israeli conflict, but he draws primarily on secondary sources and frequently makes unsupported assertions. While offering an interesting perspective for both the casual reader and the specialist, this account should be read against Elfrim Karsh's *Fabricating Israeli History: The "New Historians"* (Intl. Specialized Bk. Svcs., 1997).—*Sanford R. Silverburg, Catawba Coll., Salisbury, NC*

Wells, Peter S. *The Barbarians Speak: How the Conquered Peoples Shaped Roman Europe.*

Princeton Univ. Oct. 1999. c.329p. permanent paper. bibliog. index. ISBN 0-691-05871-7. \$29.95. HIST

Traditionally, the indigenous peoples of temperate Europe with whom the Romans came in contact—that is, the Celts and the Germans—have been considered barbarians. Classical accounts of these peoples by Julius Caesar, Tacitus, and other Greek and Roman writers presented these nonliterate peoples as inhabitants of a primitive environment lacking the complexities of the Mediterranean world. Wells (anthropology, Univ. of Minnesota; *Rural Economy in the Early Iron Age*) draws upon current research to challenge this view. For the general reader, he presents research that has been until now largely the preserve of specialists, revealing that the Celts and the Germans had a more complex material and social culture than previously believed.