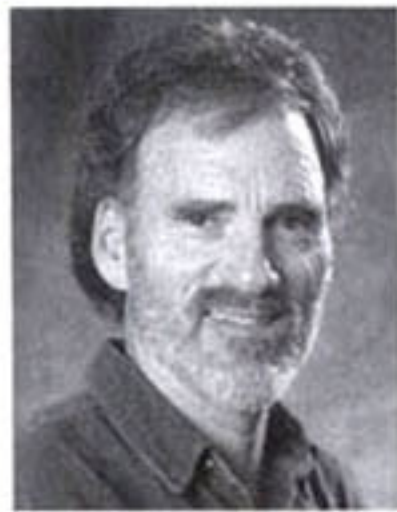


Q & A Michael Honey



The mid-1960s saw civil rights victories in Congress during LBJ's presidency. But as Michael Honey reminds us in *Going Down Jericho Road* (LJ 12/06), Martin Luther King Jr.'s final focus showed that the struggle for black and working class parity continued. The 1968 Memphis sanitation workers strike was a gritty struggle won in the streets by a host of local heroes inspired by King. Honey talks about his study of the strike that tragically set the stage for King's murder.

Please describe the terrible conditions

that led to the 65-day strike.

Forty percent of these men who worked full-time jobs made so little that their families qualified for welfare. They suffered broken backs and broken spirits, wasted lives and destroyed families; low wages, long hours, unsafe work conditions, and dehumanizing treatment by white supervisors, who treated them much like whites used to treat blacks on the plantations. The strike was a cry for human dignity and an end to labor exploitation and racism.

The book must have been a labor of love for you. What does it mean to you, and what do you wish it to mean to readers?

The 1955 Montgomery bus boycott is one bookend on Martin Luther King's life; the Memphis sanitation strike is the other. In 1968, the Civil Rights Movement had not yet changed the miserable conditions for black poor people and workers. It took 65 days of the strike, a boycott of white stores and media, mass rallies and marches, and King's death to finally get a union contract.

The intersection of the workers' movement and King's campaign in 1968 should be seen as the high point of the black freedom movements of the 1960s, yet until now, the story has been neglected. Most people know King died in Memphis, but they don't know why. *Going Down Jericho Road* connects King's struggle against racism, war, and militarism to the workers' struggle for economic and racial justice.

A number of recent books on the Civil Rights Movement downplay King's role and emphasize the work of lesser-known participants. You strike a balance in your book.

We often see King as "the leader" and organizer of the movement. In fact, he served as a moral leader and spokesperson who came in and out of local struggles as he tried to weave a broader national and international campaign for human rights. At the local level, workers, union organizers, students, the clergy, and poor people ignited the upheaval in Memphis; grass-roots movements and King intersected in marvelous ways. The Mem-

phis movement called in King because of his ability to reach people through the media and his phenomenal moral appeal. The workers and King both played their respective roles as agents for change brilliantly.

What is the "Jericho Road" metaphor, and how does it figure in the book?

On April 3, the night before his death, King recounted the parable told by Jesus of the Good Samaritan, a man of a despised race who stopped to help a wounded man by the side of the road going from Jerusalem to Jericho. The priests and well-off elites of their day passed him by. King said the moral was that every person, no matter how humble their station, could be great, because everyone could serve and save humanity.

King knowingly put himself on a very dangerous road when he spoke out against the Vietnam War and then planned a massive confrontation over world poverty with the federal government in the nation's capital. Supporting the Memphis strike made an even more dangerous stop on his Jericho Road. Said King, "The question is not: if I stop to help this man in need, what will happen to me? The question is: if I don't stop to help the sanitation workers, what will happen to them?"

How was King's legacy molded by his role in this strike?

King should be seen not in the narrow sense as a civil rights leader but as a human rights leader who reached out to all sectors of society. In Memphis, he became a labor leader as well. He was under tremendous attack from the American right wing, from the FBI and every other "intelligence" agency, and from the White House and the media. Why? He demanded a radical reversal of priorities and values—away from racism, war, and profits for the few to a society that adhered to the teachings of Jesus and Gandhi. In the context of the Memphis strike, his opposition to the Vietnam War, and support for the Poor People's Campaign, we should understand King as a prophet whose demands still ring out.—Karl Helicher

ident Richard Nixon exclaimed in a toast to his hosts that his visit, the first such trip by an American President, was "the week that changed the world." However, Nixon, who considered the opening of China his greatest achievement, didn't bask in his glory for long because Watergate would soon put him on the defensive for the remainder of his presidency. MacMillan (history, Univ. of Toronto; *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World*) presents a lively narrative of the people, diplomacy, and pomp of this memorable visit, which was orchestrated as much by National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger and Premier Zhou En-Lai as it was by Nixon and Mao. Although the visit did not resolve the major issue for the People's Republic (reunification of Taiwan with mainland China) and for the United States (terminating the Vietnam War), Nixon's visit ended decades of Chinese diplomatic isolation from most of the world and began an important Cold War-era dialog between the two nations. The author is especially good at providing historical background on China and showing how the trip's aftermath reverberated among such American allies as Britain, Taiwan, Australia, and Japan and within its Cold War nemesis, the Soviet Union. Recommended for all public and academic collections.—Karl Helicher, Upper Merion Twp. Lib., King of Prussia, PA

★Oren, Michael B. *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East: 1776 to the Present*. Norton. Jan. 2007. c.736p. illus. maps. bibliog. index. ISBN 0-393-05826-3 [ISBN 978-0-393-05826-0]. \$29.95. HIST

For more than 230 years, the United States has intertwined itself with the Middle East. Starting in 1776 with the attacks by Barbary pirates on American ships and ending with a discussion of America's current involvement in the region, especially Iraq, Oren (senior fellow, Shalem Ctr.; *Six Days of War*) does a fine job of showing the circumstances that link our two cultures. As a comprehensive examination of the United States' association with the Middle East, his much-needed book fills a gap in the literature. Oren makes history come alive in the personal stories of famous and not-so-famous Americans and their connection with the Middle East through piracy, slavery, exploration, colonialism, missionary work, diplomacy, political and military issues, culture, tourism, economics, and the extension of such values as democracy and women's rights. This is a wonderfully rich and thought-provoking history, with an extensive bibliography, notes, a chronology, illustrations, and four original maps. Highly recommended for all public and academic libraries. [See Prepub

Alert, *LJ* 10/1/06.]—Melissa Aho, Metropolitan State Univ. Lib., St. Paul, MN

Secret Intelligence and the Holocaust: Collected Essays. Enigma. Jan. 2007. 410p. ed. by David Bankier. index. ISBN 1-929631-60-X [ISBN 978-1-929631-60-5]. pap. \$23. HIST

In his preface to this interesting collection of essays, which grew out of a colloquium at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, editor Bankier (International Inst. for Holocaust Research, Yad Vashem) asserts that while Allied intelligence officials knew details about the Holocaust as early as 1941, it does not necessarily follow that they understood the significance of the information. Wartime intelligence sought information about military and diplomatic activities as factors that could help win the war; evidence about war crimes was not part of their mission briefs. For example, a senior British official stopped including details about the mass killings in his reports to Prime Minister Churchill not because he was trying to suppress knowledge of the Holocaust but because from an intelligence perspective once the extent of the atrocities had been confirmed, restating the fact was no longer necessary. One of the key themes behind these essays is how the historical study of intelligence sources can illuminate controversial issues such as rescue. The essay by Richard Breitman (history, American Univ.) also demonstrates how intelligence records provide documentary evidence of war crimes when such information, e.g., the role of the Order Police in the Holocaust, no longer exists in German archives. Recommended for specialized collections.—Frederic Krome, Jacob Rader Marcus Ctr. of the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati

The Seventy Great Journeys in History. Thames & Hudson, dist. by Norton. 2006. c.304p. ed. by Robin Hanbury-Tenison. illus. maps. index. ISBN 0-500-25129-0 [ISBN 978-0-500-25129-4]. \$40. HIST

Copiously illustrated and lavishly crafted, this book, edited by explorer and conservationist Hanbury-Tenison (*Oxford Book of Exploration*), is a fine companion volume to the other "Seventy Great" titles (e.g., *Mysteries of Ancient Egypt*, *Battles of All Time*). Journeys deemed to have had an "epic quality," determined leadership, and a lasting impact on the world were selected for inclusion. Mongol conqueror Genghis Khan, American aviator Amelia Earhart, the Trail of Tears (the forced relocation of the Cherokee Native Americans to the western United States), and the Apollo space missions are some of the figures and journeys detailed. Divided into six sections—"Ancient World," "Me-

dieval World," "Renaissance," "17th & 18th Centuries," "19th Century," and "Modern Times"—and 70 chapters, the book offers condensed narratives containing facts about the expeditions, information about the explorers and their motivations, specially commissioned maps, and 420 well-captioned photographs and illustrations, 331 of them in color. Resources for further reading appear before the index. More than 50 authors contributed to the volume, and brief biographies of each are included. Given this work's breadth, scope, and quality, public libraries will want to consider purchase.—Margaret Atwater-Singer, Univ. of Evansville Libs., IN

Stuart, Tristram. The Bloodless Revolution: A Cultural History of Vegetarianism from 1600 to Modern Times. Norton. Jan. 2007. c.416p. illus. bibliog. index. ISBN 0-393-05220-6 [ISBN 978-0-393-05220-6]. \$26.95. HIST


In his first book, historian and freelance writer Stuart explores the advocacy of vegetarianism by numerous individuals and groups in the West from 1600 to the present. Examining various vegetarian practices, he identifies common trends and beliefs while doing important work in highlighting connections between vegetarian advocates and political and social trends. Stuart also profiles influential individuals in the movement, providing historical context; for example, he thoroughly examines the beliefs and impact of 18th-century British vegetarian George Cheyne. Overall, this work is extensively researched and includes detailed descriptions of ideological arguments advocating vegetarianism. Though Stuart himself does not aim to promote vegetarianism, a pro-vegetarian viewpoint is evident throughout. With 24 pages of color illustrations; suitable for undergraduate and graduate readers.—Kristin Whitehair, Kansas State Univ. Libs., Manhattan

Tombs, Robert & Isabelle Tombs. That Sweet Enemy: The French and the British from the Sun King to the Present. Knopf. Jan. 2007. c.816p. illus. maps. bibliog. index. ISBN 1-4000-4024-8 [ISBN 978-1-4000-4024-7]. \$40. HIST

British historian Robert Tombs (French history, Cambridge Univ.) and the French-born Isabelle Tombs (French, Foreign & Commonwealth Office), whose doctorate is in modern British history, have attempted a vast and ambitious project—to weave together the complex tale of British-French interaction, rivalry, and cultural exchange across the last three centuries. Although utilizing a standard chronology and the usual political high-water marks like war and revolution, this is not a standard political history but

a fascinating collection of reflections upon the changing nature of the British-French relationship. Maps, charts, cartoons, graphs, advertisements, and images of various kinds enrich the presentation, freshening familiar tales like Anglo-French rivalry in the New World. Fashion, art, and literature provide further examples of cultural exchange, e.g., the authors show how the work of Shakespeare has served as a "weathervane" for French attitudes toward English culture. The themes of rivalry and respect, as well as alliance and collision, are carried to the present, with discussions of how both the European Union and the Iraq War have provided opportunities for interaction and separation. Both British and French national identity, the authors conclude, have been created and shaped by this rivalry and connection. An impressive book that will delight scholars and informed lay readers alike; recommended for academic collections and large public libraries.—Marie Marmo Mullaney, Caldwell Coll., NJ

Trachtenberg, Alan. Lincoln's Smile and Other Enigmas. Hill & Wang: Farrar. Feb. 2007. c.416p. photogs. index. ISBN 0-8090-4297-5 [ISBN 978-0-8090-4297-5]. \$27. HIST
Trachtenberg (English & American studies, Yale Univ.; *Shades of Hiawatha*), the author



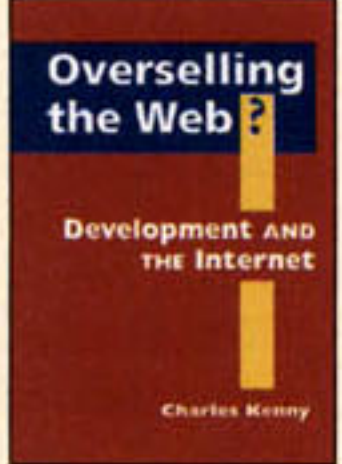
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