

# The Good Book Guide

**LIBERALISM AND CONSERVATISM, 1846-1905** by David Paterson. Heinemann Advanced History series, 2001. iv + 268 pp. Index. £9.99 pbk.

This book, ostensibly about the two dominant political philosophies in late nineteenth-century Britain, amounts in fact almost to an outline history of that period. Moreover, its structuring around the different AS and A2 exam formats makes it a thoroughly worthwhile investment for cash-strapped Heads of History.

Section 1, 'Narrative and Explanation', is for the AS year, the slightly shorter 'Analysis and Interpretation' is intended for A2. Such a structure might lead to repetition, but the author avoids this pitfall. Chapters in the AS section mix narrative with intelligent comment. Each ends with a summary and questions requiring essay-style answers. In the A2 section, many secondary sources are cited and readers encouraged to consider different interpretations of the events described. In both parts of the book, marginal notes called Key Terms, Persons, Speeches, Places, Events and Concepts highlight specifics bearing on the chapter's main contents. Each section ends with questions in the style of the main English exam boards, and advice on tackling them.

The writer has read widely and knows what modern Sixth Form historians need. He is particularly good on the period between the fall of Peel and the emergence of more organised parties in the 1870s. Towards the end of the book there is some evidence of hurry. The run-up to the 1906 election does not receive the analysis it clearly deserves. Also, the author infuriatingly uses the term 'Unionist' to describe both the Liberal Unionists after 1886 and the Conservative-dominated alliance of post-1895 and the book's illustrations are run-of-the-mill. But these are minor blemishes. This is an excellent study which will quickly become an invaluable companion for those students fortunate enough to be issued with it.

John Garland

**EMMELINE PANKHURST** by Paula Bartley. Routledge - Historical Biographies series 2002. xii + 284 pp. Index £9.99 pbk.

This biography examines the political rather than the personal motivations behind one of the most famous women in British history. It is high in analysis as well as narrative and therefore is a valuable volume for study of the extension of the franchise.

Pankhurst's pre-suffrage, suffrage

and post-suffrage experiences are detailed, yet unsurprisingly it is the middle of these three areas that receives the most coverage. The main focus centres on the role of Emmeline Pankhurst in the peaceful and militant campaigns, 1903-14. However, her views on politics and social reform are also detailed as the author is keen to point out Pankhurst was more than the sum of suffrage and this she does well. The book is easily accessible with clear subheadings to guide the reader and conclusions at the end of each chapter to draw together the arguments in a student-friendly way. A more than adequate bibliography will help future investigation.

The author is pro-Pankhurst in almost every respect - indeed, in Bartley's eyes, Pankhurst did no wrong and readers should be wary of exaggeration and hyperbole. Only towards the end of the book do we have the rightful acknowledgement that Pankhurst was really only a very small cog in a large machine pushing for female suffrage. Read this book with a critical as well as an appreciative eye! I would recommend this little volume as a solid starting point from which to progress.

Eddie Falshaw

**WEIMAR AND NAZI GERMANY** by John Hite and Chris Hinton. Hodder Murray (Schools History Project), 2000. vi + 450 pp. Index. £15.99 pbk.

This book is well structured and provides a good link from GCSE-style textbooks without excessive simplification. Key issues are highlighted and then broken down into component parts, making a multi-causal explanation the natural conclusion, reinforced by key point summaries at the end of each chapter. Conceptual points are well handled by informative 'learning trouble spots', interspersed in a text that is lavishly illustrated by a series of relevant graphs and tables. There is a comprehensive glossary and competing historiographical accounts are well explained and developed by appropriate selection of extracts by the leading protagonists. In many ways this is an impressive, detailed, and thorough treatment of a complicated and troubled era of German history.

Its main fault is that it tries to do too much, as the authors valiantly try and achieve the publisher's dubious aim of providing, 'everything you need for examination success and more'. The reader is battered by a welter of sources and by a determination to cram as much as possible into a given page. There are some good exercises but there are too many of them. The book needs stronger

editing. This would enable the student reader to be able to distinguish more readily between the demands of AS and A2. Some worked documentary exercises, with authors' comments, would be a great help even if the total number of documents was reduced.

A-Level students are able to describe different historical interpretations but find it more difficult to make judgements between them. It would have helped the student if Hite and Hinton had been more opinionated in their conclusions. They have tended to adopt a 'forward defensive' approach. Although there is a good, and accessible, reading list it might have been better placed at the end of each relevant chapter, with some references to articles, as well as books, for students.

In spite of some reservations, however, this is a good, rigorous textbook which is one of the best on the market. If only the authors and publishers had not tried too hard.

Andrew Bamford

**CIVIL RIGHTS IN AMERICA 1865-1980** by Ron Field. Cambridge - Perspectives in History series, 2002. vi + 139 pp. Index. £7.25 pbk.

This volume in the Perspectives in History series carefully covers the period from before the Civil War to the Nixon Presidency. There is also a chapter on other minority rights during the period - everything you need to meet all the specifications covering Civil Rights in America. There is, also, a detailed chronology to put it in context, a glossary of all the various organisations and the initials by which they are known and a good selection of further reading - chapter by chapter. As is common with this series, each chapter concludes with a document case study. Great care has been taken in the choice of documents, and the questions really help students develop the skill of interrogating sources.

The core of this text is a good, straightforward narrative of events accompanied by a careful analysis of the issues, suitably 'chunked' to make note-taking easy. Key Federal Government Acts and events are also carefully detailed, aiding comprehension of what could be a complicated topic. Language is appropriate for AS, but not too simple for A2. The approach is balanced, yet areas of disagreement among historians are highlighted and explored. The author has achieved a fine blend of serious writing in an easy to read style. An excellent textbook if you are studying this topic either at AS or A2. Highly recommended.

Alf Wilkinson