Gary Donaldson, ed.: Modern America: A Documentary History of the Nation Since 1945

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Main content

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It seems as if there are dozens of documentary histories of post-World War II United States. Most cover the same ground--Cold War, life in the 1950s, civil rights, feminism, protests in the 1960s, and Vietnam. Gary Donaldson's Modern America: A Documentary History of the Nation Since 1945 differs from the pack with unexpected depth and an unusual choice of documents that might very well prompt undergraduates to read the book.

Donaldson opens his book with a preface that discusses the difficulties of studying and understanding modern history when we are so close to it. In common with the rest of the book, it is a piece that is useful for prompting classroom discussion.

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