

Torchbearers of Democracy is intended to be a single volume covering territory that has required multiple volumes before now. Given its scope, the coverage is adequate, but nowhere at the level that more specialized studies provide. At no point does the author have the time or space to deal with the use of federal force to coerce blacks to register for the draft; that's better done by Theodore Kornweibel in *Investigate Everything*. Nowhere does he touch the level of discrimination in treatment of gold star mothers, in the relegation of black troops to the extremely nasty work of recovering bodies for graves registration that can be found in *Bodies of War: World War I and the Politics of Commemoration in America, 1919-1933* by Lisa M. Budreau, and the postwar hounding of returned black veterans receives more in-depth treatment in Kornweibel's *Seeing Red*.

But *Torchbearers of Democracy* is not intended to be a definitive work on these or other specific areas. Rather than attempting an encyclopedic depth in each aspect of the period, it seeks to bring together for the first time the entire experience, from the first hint of war to the postwar pride and persecution. In that, it succeeds admirably. And it goes a step farther in making the connections that make history worthwhile. Beyond what happened, this work attempts to explain why it mattered, and how it affected the future.

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Dropping the Torch: Jimmy Carter, the Olympic Boycott, and the Cold War, by Nicholas Evan Sarantakes. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2011. xvi, 331 pp. \$90.00 US (cloth), \$28.99 US (paper).

Sport is more than just a game; and Nicholas Sarantake's fine book proves it. At first glance, *Dropping the Torch: Jimmy Carter, the Olympic Boycott, and the Cold War* details the American boycott of the 1980 summer Olympics. In actuality, the book is so much more. Detailing high diplomacy, popular culture, and non-governmental organizations, *Dropping the Torch* is a veritable microcosm of how international politics actually works.

Touching upon Carter's foreign policy, Détente, soft power, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and the Olympic Movement, Sarantake effectively depicts the boycott's complexity. In what is otherwise a first-rate work, the author does, however, overstate his thesis. Claiming that Carter's boycott killed Détente, reignited the Cold War, and very nearly destroyed the Olympic movement, Sarantakes invests too much in one single event.

Whether consciously or not, the US Naval War College professor of history has heeded John Gaddis's call. In the aftermath of the Soviet Union's demise, the dean of Cold War historians called for more multilingual and multiarchival Cold War history. From Switzerland's Olympic Museum archives and foreign language

newspapers (Spanish, French & German) to Soviet and Hungarian documents, the author has mined archives across the globe.

Starting his work with an enthralling summation of the 1980 US Olympic hockey team's "Miracle on Ice," Sarantake's shows, rather than tells, the power of Olympic sports. From there, the author details the Olympic Movement, walks us through Carter-era US-Soviet relations, and reveals the mechanics of an Olympic boycott.

Sarantakes is at his best in recounting Carter's foreign policy foibles. Displaying an emergent post-revisionist consensus, the author depicts an administration divided against itself. Inept at both policy and execution, Carter overreacted to a Soviet action he simply misunderstood. In this regard, the author is spot-on. No matter how well-intentioned or successful in his post-presidency, Carter failed utterly as president. As Sarantakes reveals, his technocratic tendencies and poor strategic thinking led to an inconsistent and futile foreign policy.

In concise yet sparkling analysis, the author expertly depicts administration rifts, Cyrus Vance versus Zbigniew Brzezinski, mistakes, Muhammad Ali's diplomatic tour of Africa, and strategic errors, overreacting to the Soviet's move into Afghanistan. At that point, the author takes his argument one step too far: alleging the Olympic boycott destroyed Détente.

One of the Cold War's most elusive subjects, specialists heatedly contend over Détente's demise. Between the one school blaming the Soviet's revolutionary impulses and the other faulting Carter, Sarantake's opts for the latter. Oddly, the author understands the Soviet's dysfunctions, Leonid Brezhnev's profound health issues coupled with a weak and indecisive Politburo. Saddled with a leader who needed documents printed in extra-large type and had trouble concentrating and remembering information, the Soviets embarked upon a poorly planned invasion. So ill-conceived, the Soviet ambassador to the US heard about the action on the radio rather than from the Kremlin.

With this in mind, Sarantake's blaming Carter for Détente's demise is doubly boggling. Despite the administration's manic-depressive Soviet policy, scared old men ran the Kremlin. Assuming for the moment, he had jettisoned all revolutionary impulses, (hardly a sure thing) Brezhnev's questionable mental capabilities surely warrant placing some blame on the Soviets for Détente's demise.

Quibbling aside, the author has mined the archives to pen a forgotten narrative. Indeed, once Carter announced his desire for a boycott this policy outcome remained very much in doubt. Lacking the legal power to forbid Americans' participation proved only one small stumbling block. Indeed, the author's depiction of the administration's attempts to marshal domestic and international public opinion is the heart of the book. Here the narrative effectively buttresses one of the author's central contentions: Carter's ineptitude.

The narrative drags a bit once the author enters into the arcane world of IOC politicking and network television deal-making. A tedious yet necessary plunge into the history of non-governmental entities and their influence upon superpower foreign policy, the narrative is instructive. Indeed, not all Cold War policy roads led to official diplomatic actors. Leading by example, Sarantakes shows how the

soft power of sports, business, and entertainment intersected and influenced high diplomacy.

The author's explication of the Olympics leads into the overzealous claim that Carter could have "destroyed the Olympic" movement (p. 261). No matter how ill-conceived, boycotting Moscow's summer games hardly constitutes the destruction of the Olympics. Unfortunately, the author fails to support his inflated assertion.

Dropping the Torch is unconventional Cold War history at its best. Interweaving sports, business, entertainment, and high diplomacy, the author brings a crucial moment in history to life. Though he overstates that event's importance, slightly, it hardly diminishes an otherwise fine book.

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A Flock Divided: Race, Religion, and Politics in Mexico, 1749-1857, by Matthew D. O'Hara. Durham, North Carolina, Duke University Press, 2010. xi, 316 pp. \$84.95 US (cloth), \$23.95 US (paper).

Building on the work of scholars such as Peter Guardino and Florencia Mallon who have pointed to the importance of peasant politicization in nineteenth-century Mexico, Matthew O'Hara explores the origins of such agency in the late colonial and early republican periods. O'Hara draws on a wide variety of published and archival sources, from church records and sermons to documents from the Inquisition, to assess the relationship between religion and identity over the *longue durée*. Making contributions to urban history as well as to the study of culture and race, the book begins with a recreation of colonial Mexico City, complete with detailed maps and tables, that had been divided into ethnically exclusive enclaves. In the sixteenth century, parishes had been constructed separately for Indians, on the one hand, and for Spaniards and *castas* on the other. But with the Bourbon reforms and a secularization project begun in 1749, districts were reconceptualized and rigid social hierarchies blurred as parishes were "rationally" reorganized (p. 96). Mendicant orders were replaced and secular clerics brought in to oversee multi-ethnic parishes. In the subsequent conflicts that played out between Indian parishioners and the regular clergy who previously had been charged with overseeing the *doctrinas de indios* (Indian parishes), residents emphasized their Indian identities in litigation to claim rights over the churches themselves and the sacred objects they held.