

BOOK REVIEW

Line, Anna Harris. *Yesterday and Today in the U. S. A.*
Prentice-Hall, 1977

267pp. paperback
\$6.50

If you're looking for an intermediate to advanced level ESL reader that can "enhance the English proficiency of non-native speakers, while at the same time introducing them to some distinctive aspects of the American background," then this book is a good choice. The quoted phrase above is from the author's own preface and states very precisely the twin accomplishments of the book.

There are 48 different readings, covering a wide range of "American" topics, from "The First Americans" to the "National Parks." In between, distinctive American holidays, religions, historical events, political processes, characters, and inventions are all featured, along with many others.

The book is very flexible, owing to several features. First the readings increase in difficulty through the text, relating to a wide range of student abilities. Second, after each reading there is a series of exer-

cises giving the student directed practice on such skills as pronunciation, word formation, structure, spelling, idioms, etc. Following these exercises are questions on the reading and a list of further readings on the subject, with easy readings designated.

I have used this book with many non-native speakers of English, and found them uniformly enthusiastic about the readings because they felt they were learning English as they learned about America. I have found it especially effective to assign a series of related readings from the book, such as a reading on Martin Luther King and one on the Civil Rights Movement, or a reading on Susan B. Anthony and one on Women's Liberation. Many such significant juxtapositions are possible from the readings. I strongly recommend the book and plan to continue to use it in ESL classes.

Greg Larkin