



One World Divisible: A Global History Since 1945 (The Global Century Series)

By David Reynolds Ph.D.

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"A magisterial account of our time by a distinguished historian."?Walter LaFeber, prize-winning author of *The Clash*

Global change has accelerated at an unprecedented pace in the last half-century. The trajectory of change points in different directions, with the world growing at once more interconnected and more fragmented. Commerce and migrations, television and the World Wide Web suggest a story of growing interconnection, while at the same time the proliferation of nation-states and the divisions rooted in religion, race, and material inequality tell of separation and conflict. David Reynolds's brilliant history captures both themes and grounds them vividly in the people and events of the last fifty years. Reynolds captures the great political events: the Cold War, the Chinese revolution, independence movements, Vietnam, and the fall of the Soviet Union, and broader developments: economic and population growth, the spread of cities, vast technological change, genetic manipulation, and the creation of a digital world. Carefully avoiding an encyclopedic approach, Reynolds integrates these themes into a narrative with authority, vision, and style. A volume in the Global Century series, books by outstanding scholars on the history of the world in the twentieth century?general editor, Paul Kennedy. Illustrated, maps

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

"Writing a global history of the second half of this century is, of course, an impossible task."

You've got to give Cambridge fellow David Reynolds credit for such frankness, but it certainly didn't stop him from setting out to accomplish the impossible. Thankfully, Reynolds succeeds brilliantly, as becomes quickly clear from this marvelous, unbelievably readable 860-page survey, roughly bookended by the Berlin blockade and the fall of the Berlin Wall. The project is impossible, "of course," thanks to the subject's staggering size and complexity, but Reynolds takes this in stride, admits his limitations, and digs into a robust, good-spirited, and even-handed analysis, intimidating as a whole but approachable and engaging in its parts.

One World Divisible does tackle it all--the political, social, and cultural changes of an era that witnessed ever-increasing unity, interconnectedness, and globalization. All the usual suspects--the cold war, the decolonization of Africa and Asia, the rebirth of post-war Germany and Japan--get predictably thorough treatment, but Reynolds also takes on the "feminist earthquake" of women's lib and the pill, examines how advances in electronics and genetics far outweighed the impact of exploiting the atom, and even tracks the global spread of "Coca-colonization" and rock & roll. Through it all, Reynolds's readable voice and thoughtful organization keep you reading; discrete, intuitive chapters such as "Israel, Oil, and Islam," "Color, Creed, and Coups," and "Chips and Genes" give you just enough to chew on along the way. A fine beginning to W.W. Norton's ambitious Global Century series. --*Paul Hughes*

From Publishers Weekly

Reynolds (Rich Relations: The American Occupation of Britain, 1942-1943), a historian of WWII and international relations, plays up several key themes from the post-WWII period, including the march of capitalism and the erosion of the state. In an increasingly globalized economy, he suggests, multinational corporations have taken over jobs that used to belong to the state. Politics drives Reynolds's narrative, but he has made a valiant effort to integrate social history and women's history. Four chapters in particular turn the reader's eye from Khrushchev, Begin, Thatcher and Reagan to "social and cultural change": American suburbanization and consumer culture, art and music, computers and DNA ("Chips and Genes"). In his final chapter on values at the end of the century, the historian reflects on a potpourri of disparate phenomena: fundamentalism, postmodernism, in vitro fertilization, the greenhouse effect, tobacco and human rights. Sadly, however, Reynolds's social history is not as global as his political history--his discussions of culture, families and "isms" pay too much attention to Europe and America. Many will laud this book as definitive, but in the end, though it is massive in scope and will be a handy reference for readers wanting an introduction to the postwar world, the book is no replacement, as either analysis or synthesis, for Eric Hobsbawm's masterful study, *The Age of Extremes*. Maps. (Jan.)

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From Library Journal

This volume of "The Global Century" series is one of 11 to be published over the next year. Reynolds (fellow, Cambridge; *The Creation of the Anglo-American Alliances* and *Rich Relations: The American Occupation of Britain*) writes a cursory history, hitting the global highlights. Though there is an immense amount of information, it would take a work many times this length to adequately cover world history since 1945. Reynolds's style is a bit more readable than a textbook. At times he sides with unsubstantiated

accounts of events, e.g., in his description of the Kennedy assassination: "Perhaps Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone; perhaps Jack Ruby shot Oswald in a fit of anger. But there are many candidates as possible accomplices." Reynolds gives excellent definitions and examples of contemporary issues and includes chapters on "culture and family" and "goods and values." The weakness of this book may also be its strength: the whirlwind tour of history comes in the sound bites that Americans seem to devour. Recommended for public libraries.

-*Harry V. Willems, Southeast Kansas Lib. System, Iola*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jack Cluck:

This book untitled *One World Divisible: A Global History Since 1945* (The Global Century Series) to be one of several books which best seller in this year, that is because when you read this reserve you can get a lot of benefit on it. You will easily to buy that book in the book shop or you can order it by using online. The publisher in this book sells the e-book too. It makes you easier to read this book, since you can read this book in your Smartphone. So there is no reason to you to past this publication from your list.

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Luann Bowen:

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