
NEW TITLES

History

**THE FOUNDER:
Cecil Rhodes
and the Enigma
of Power**

by Robert I. Rotberg
Oxford, 1988
752 pp. \$35



The sixth of nine children of the Anglican vicar of Bishop's Stortford, Cecil Rhodes sailed in 1870 from England to Durban, Natal (South Africa). The 17-year-old boy was, according to Rotberg, "clear-headed, bright-eyed, enthusiastic," and characteristically confident of "his own resources." Thirty-two years later, on March 26, 1902, Rhodes died of heart failure in Cape Town. "So little done, so much to do," he murmured shortly before the end.

For someone who lived only 49 years, he had not done badly: A dominant figure in the international diamond industry, premier of the Cape Colony, founder of Rhodesia (and, through his will, the Rhodes Scholarships), Rhodes had made himself a man to be reckoned with. His actions, for good or ill, were always on a grand scale.

A scale almost matched by this biography. Drawing from all relevant archives and his personal knowledge of southern Africa, Rotberg, academic vice president of Tufts University, portrays Rhodes' ceaseless energy, his driving vision, his ruthlessness and political skill, his homosexuality, and his territorial megalomania. Rhodes' legacy to southern Africa was, as Rotberg shows, complex and primarily negative. He undid the Cape Colony's color-blind franchise, nearly destroyed the independent Ndebele tribe in what is now Zimbabwe, and, through his policies, heightened tensions between Boers and Britons.

But Rhodes sometimes did more good than he intended. The fact that his prestigious scholarships now go to people Rhodes would have excluded, notably blacks and women, is, in Rotberg's words, "an ironic tribute to the final workings of his uncommon genius." Not a good man, the biographer concludes, but "great and far-seeing."

**IDEOLOGY AND U.S.
FOREIGN POLICY**

by Michael H. Hunt
Yale, 1987
237 pp. \$25

While 20th-century U.S. leaders have claimed to manage foreign affairs according to their understanding of complex global issues, Hunt, a historian at the University of North Carolina, argues that they have rarely seen past an inherited American ideology. Fully formed by 1900, but drawing on legacies as old as the views of the 18th-century Founding Fathers, that ideology embraces three "core ideas": expansionist visions of American