

■★**The Cola Conquest: A Trilogy.** Instructional Video, 1998; rel. 1999: 3 videos (each 51min.). Each, \$60 (home use).

Ages 16--adult. Inspired by "For God, Country and Coca-Cola" by Mark Pendergrast, director Irene Angelico's epic account of the world's most popular soft drink is nothing less than a heady distillation of good ol' American entrepreneurship and capitalism. Invented in 1885 by a morphine-addicted Civil War veteran, Coca-Cola was first classified as a patent medicine--a "brain tonic" recommended for headaches and other mild maladies. In a pioneering advertising effort, the red-and-white logo soon became ubiquitous, helping the "golden elixir" to achieve a mass market based more on its iconic image than its sugar water substance. Shot in more than a half-dozen countries, with astute narration and revealing commentary from ad execs, historians, business analysts, and political scientists, *Conquest* culminates in Coca-Cola's "manifest destiny": global soft-drink domination. Coke's long "war" with upstart Pepsi (and, later, private-label colas), the surprising role of blind taste tests, the disastrous introduction of "New Coke," and much more is covered within the context of world-wide social, cultural, and political change. This amazingly sweeping and incisive documentary is, well, the real thing! —*Jeff Dick*