

*Gr 7 Up*—A narrative nonfiction account of the cutthroat competition among Thomas Alva Edison, Nikola Tesla, George Westinghouse, and a host of stakeholders during the Gilded Age in the United States. This volume is plainly about the intersecting ventures of three white men and is void of discussion about race and gender dynamics in this history. That said, a sense of morbid fascination will grab readers as the author opens the book with a retelling of the first execution by electric chair. This chilling moment serves as an entrance to the crux of the narrative—the battle between alternating and direct current electricity. The informal tone makes the prose quite inviting and the text is rich with anecdotes, such as Tesla’s inventive inspiration via the family cat and Westinghouse’s revelation via a magazine subscription solicitation, which illustrates the debut author’s careful research and commitment to storytelling. Edison is characterized as viciously competitive, defending his direct current system. Meanwhile, Westinghouse is shown as a benevolent leader, and Tesla embodies enigma until his final days. Scientific explanations are incorporated, but this work focuses on the social aspects of this “war.” **VERDICT:** Purchase where narrative nonfiction flies off the shelves.

— *Angela Wiley, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh*