Reviews

Censors at Work: How States Shaped Literature, by Robert Darnton. New York: Norton, 2014. 304 pages. $27.95, cloth.

In *Censors at Work*, Robert Darnton makes a fairly straightforward and compelling argument: censors should not be understood purely as authoritarian figures suppressing the liberty and freedom of authors, but as individuals working within the literary marketplace, negotiating the various forces that shape literature.

After an introduction in which Darnton lays out the conflicting views of censorship in clear, concise prose that will be particularly useful to students, the argument is fleshed out in three case studies. First, on his home turf, Darnton examines censorship in Enlightenment France. This censorship was not a plain acceptance or rejection of proposed works, but had various levels: everything from official endorsements to various types of permissions (e.g., semi-official or tacit) to outright prohibitions. In addition, seriously dangerous works (in terms of politics, religion, or obscenity) were never even submitted to the censor, but rather printed in Geneva, Amsterdam, or London. But most importantly, Darnton details that there never really was a strict binary between censors and authors: authors often *became* censors, and censors often worked *with* authors not just to make their works acceptable to publish, but also to improve their arguments and writing. In other words, censors and authors were often collaborators rather than adversaries, writing what could be compared to today's readers' reports. Thus, while Darnton is certainly not denying the state's monopoly on censorship (and in fact describes harrying cases of censorship), he is suggesting that we understand the process not as confrontation, but negotiation.

Similar negotiation occurred in the second case study, of British India in the nineteenth century. Here, the tension was between the rhetoric of liberalism—which claimed that the British were in India to promote progress for that country—and the reality of imperialism—which put strict boundaries on what could be done or demanded for such progress. Battle lines were not necessarily drawn between colonists and colonials, or even between censors and writers. Instead, within networks of production and censorship, negotiations occurred over what kind of information should be disseminated and collected and what that information might be used for. For instance, Darnton describes in great detail the quarterly catalogs compiled by the colonial government (by British or Indian censors) describing and assessing every book published in India. Again, censorship (including brutal censorship) did happen, but Darnton emphasizes that censors were engaging in a kind of ethnographic study

and linguistic analysis (since much of the writing was in indigenous languages) as much as stifling dissent.

Since the third case study focuses on Cold War Germany, it gave Darnton the unique opportunity to interview living censors about how they saw their work. In interesting journalistic fashion that students will find engaging, Darnton first presents these individuals' perceptions of censorship in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and then checks their views against the records of the archive (echoes of the "Darnton debate" here). In almost stereotypically German fashion, the GDR turned censorship into a bureaucratic process with forms in triplicate and endless meetings, always planning literature production a year in advance in good Communist fashion. Here, the main conflict was between authors trying to express criticism of the system and the authorities trying to mute any such criticism. The censors saw themselves (and Darnton partly agrees) as negotiating the two positions, working with authors like editors or collaborators, with some mutual respect, to produce the most challenging works possible (in the literary and the political senses). While the GDR did persecute and harshly punish some writers (I was somewhat surprised that Darnton didn't mention the Oscar-winning 2006 film *The Lives of Others*), GDR authors in retrospect seemed to be more concerned about the self-censorship into which the system forced or tricked them.

Thus, *Censors at Work* argues that "it would be misleading to characterize censorship simply as a contest between creation and oppression" and that "censorship can appear to be coextensive with literature" (p. 234). Censorship is organized differently according to historical situation and cultural context: "privilege, in the case of Bourbon France; surveillance, in British India; and planning, in Communist East Germany" (p. 235). This is all true, and Darnton's case studies are fascinating (though the study of France is clearly the most well grounded) as well as diverse (partly answering his critics' allegations that he relies on too narrow a body of primary sources). At the same time, though, some of his anecdotes belie his own argument—when writers are physically and mentally destroyed by prison sentences or other disenfranchisement, be it by the censors or by the censors' masters, it is difficult to see negotiation, collaboration, or complicity. Censors are certainly human beings with complicated motivations and varying goals, but we should not take Darnton's argument too far (which he fortunately doesn't do) and claim that censors are really on the same level as authors.

California State University, Long Beach Norbert Schürer

History Repeats Itself in the Classroom, Too! Prior Knowledge and Implementing the Common Core State Standards, by Gregory Gray and Jennifer Donnelly. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2014. 131 pages. $19.00, paper.

With the adoption of Common Core Standards, social studies teachers nationwide are hard at work to figure out, yet again, how social studies fits into the mix. With an ever-increasing emphasis on math and reading skills, we sometimes feel as though we are simply in a supporting role. In reality, the language arts Common Core Standards feature much for social studies educators to celebrate, including an increased emphasis on discipline-specific, non-fiction reading and writing. To aid social studies teachers

adapt their curricula to these demands, we have Gregory Gray and Jennifer Donnelly's *History Repeats Itself in the Classroom, Too! Prior Knowledge and Implementing the Common Core State Standards*.

This book, intended for classroom teachers and curriculum leaders, is an outgrowth of two articles authored by Gray and Donnelly. It is founded upon the same general classroom goals of those articles. First, a well-aligned curriculum recognizes students' prior academic content knowledge and experience as a taking-off point for further study; and second, that skills can be developed by using students' background knowledge. In this book, however, they take this idea a step further, arguing that vertical alignment and coordination within a school and social studies department is the best approach to maximizing student achievement in social studies. Essentially, this means that curricula from world history, to U.S. history, U.S. government, and economics can be structured to *build upon* what students learned in the prior classes, rather than repeat content needlessly, boring the students and missing an opportunity to *expand* knowledge and skills.

The book is structured to illustrate exactly what the authors mean. *History Repeats Itself* features twelve chapters, each on a major subject commonly studied across these four major courses, including the Industrial Revolution, World War I, The Great Depression, and Globalization. Each chapter begins with a brief introduction to the major themes and concepts in that topic, followed by an area-specific exploration of the topic from the viewpoint of world history, U.S. history, U.S. government, and economics. Each of these subject areas is further divided into short lists of essential questions at a variety of ability levels, key terms and historic figures, suggested readings, sample writing assignments, and sample projects. Gray and Donnelly's suggestion is that students often study topics such as World War II multiple times throughout their education, but teachers rarely take advantage of their prior knowledge. An opportunity to explore the topic more deeply and further develop skills is therefore lost. They have structured each of these sections to show how knowledge and skills can be built over many years, thus avoiding repetition and boredom.

Most classroom teachers will find *History Repeats Itself* extremely useful. New teachers or those looking to reinvigorate their lessons with critical thinking and writing activities will find it most practical and pragmatic. The section of key terms for each topic and subject area is by no means exhaustive, but will serve as a good introduction from which to get started. The suggested sample readings are brief, but hit the necessary highpoints, including key primary sources, web-based articles, widely available trade books, and major works of literature. The sections for writing assignments and projects include thoughtful ideas that can be adapted to many academic and age levels. Furthermore, the book's organization lends itself to use in the practical lives of classroom teachers. Organized by historical topic, there is no need to read it cover to cover. Pick a topic and class, just read those few pages, and useful suggestions will abound.

Gray and Donnelly's conclusion makes an excellent case for the necessity of vertical alignment that should be read by all resistors and used by all promoters. Essentially, well-done vertical alignment helps teachers and learners avoid "wasteful repetitions or gaps in content coverage or skill development" and helps maximize college and career readiness. They also offer excellent guidelines for organizing and leading vertical alignment teams.

While the Common Core Standards may appear to ignore social studies, there is an opportunity here for social studies teachers to lead and create the sort of change that is needed to help students become ready for their future and model

what twenty-first-century public education can be. Gray and Donnelly's text could be part of leading the way.

The Harker School, San Jose, California Mark Janda

The Big Six Historical Thinking Concepts, by Peter Seixas and Tom Morton. Toronto, Canada: Nelson Education Limited, 2013. 217 pages. $99.94, paper with DVD-ROM.

In the introduction to *The Big Six Historical Thinking Concepts* by Peter Seixas and Tom Morton, the authors make it clear that "doing history should be fun and serious, difficult and rewarding, meaningful and creative" (p. 9). The purpose of the book is to enable history teachers to explore the concepts, articulate the problems, and suggest pathways for helping students achieve greater competency in historical thinking. The value of studying history—to enlarge students' possibly limited experiences of life by visiting the "foreign country" of the past and returning home with fresh insights and new ways of looking at what we might otherwise have taken for granted or never even noticed—is made clear through specific examples of concepts and instructional strategies. Essential questions to explore with students are focused on the six concepts: 1) historical significance; 2) evidence; 3) continuity and change; 4) cause and consequence; 5) historical perspectives, and 6) the ethical dimension.

Each chapter begins with a theoretical discussion of the concept with margin notes about key terms and teaching tips, as well as keys to the guideposts established for generating powerful understanding of each concept. The second part of each chapter gives specific instructional strategies and activities for working with each concept using historical examples. Each chapter concludes with a series of Black Line Masters that coordinate with the activities described in the chapter. This clear structure and the organization of historical thinking concepts supported by teaching strategies is an important contribution to the field. It is something that will appeal to instructors of pre-service teachers and professional development providers for in-service teachers.

The six concepts are authentic for teaching, as they come from the work of historians. As history educators, the authors' goal is to enable students to begin to do the same work as historians, in a step-by-step process that is challenging but not overwhelming. The big six concepts are designed to be integrated into all aspects of teaching—from the formation of objectives, to the assessment of students' performance, and the selection of resources and teaching strategies—and can be progressively applicable to all levels of students. This approach is similar to the process of Wiggins and McTighe's *Understanding by Design* (UbD) and will work well for teachers and teacher educators using this framework for curriculum design. The examples provided show that these transfer skills and "big ideas" can be explicitly taught in a step-by-step manner. Constructivist classroom principles are applied to help teachers make their classrooms more student-centered, which is often a weakness of traditional K-12 history classrooms.

Many specific strategies included, such as the diamond-shaped ranking model, are new and immediately applicable ideas. Teachers often say they "use primary sources" with students, but without these strategies/guideposts for using them, they do not provide students with an appropriate and useful resource. Specific examples

of useful strategies include sentence stems that are a good scaffolding tool to practice the academic language of history, especially historians' discourse patterns. This is an important element of the new pre-service teacher assessment, the Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA). Any teacher preparation program using the edTPA will find these particularly useful as techniques in preparing students. Also useful are the descriptions of other new ideas to make traditional techniques like timelines and role playing better practices to encourage historical thinking.

The authors do strong work in providing strategies to bridge the long-standing gap between theory and practice in history education. Overall, the text is well written with clear and straightforward explanations of concepts. One interesting feature for readers in the United States is that the authors use Canadian history examples. This might make the concepts even easier for those not as familiar with this content because it forces us to focus on the process being used rather than content we have often taught. Parallels to reading strategies will reinforce the significance, importance, and utility of using these methods to support Common Core State Standards, providing another argument for the importance of including history in all curricula. These strategies provide teachers ways of teaching literacy skills through the study of history. One note to prospective users is that this reviewer experienced problems with the included DVD-ROM. It was almost impossible to access materials which also all seem to be provided in the book. This technology should be replaced with an Internet-based resource. In summary, this book is one of the most useful and practical resources in the field, and it is highly recommended for all history educators, especially those preparing pre-service teachers.

Lake Forest College Rachel G. Ragland

The Myth of Seneca Falls: Memory and the Women's Suffrage Movement, 1848-1898, by Lisa Tetrault. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2014. 279 pages. $34.95, cloth.

Lisa Tetrault provides sweeping historical background to the postbellum Women's Suffrage Movement in the United States. Her goal is to historize the master narrative of the Seneca Falls origins myth. The result is a work that spans the fields of women's history, political history, postbellum history, and Progressive history in an effort to examine the role of memory and storytelling in constructing history. Tetrault claims the Seneca Falls origins myth "fundamentally reshape[d] the movement over the second half of the nineteenth century" (p. 2). While Tetrault provides a comprehensive review of the post-Civil War era and women's reform efforts, her main goal of examining the origins myth as an historical actor is not fully realized. Her evidence is at its weakest when she attempts to attribute intention in the crafting of the Seneca Falls story to Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton as a way to silence the competition, shape the movement under their leadership, and politically outmaneuver the opposition. Still, Tetrault ultimately succeeds in "undoing the master narrative" of Seneca Falls by "dissect[ing]" it and "expos[ing] its historical life," thus "free[ing] the historical record" (p. 181).

The way she opens up the historical record provides teachers opportunities to craft history lessons full of critical reading and thinking for students. Her research provides a wealth of information in concise, engaging, and easily followed narratives

well suited for inclusion in lectures. This allows the instructor to examine the story of women's reform efforts and suffrage from several levels of society. Tetrault provides useful frameworks for interpreting history at the national, state, and local levels, reviewing the mediating factors of important social constructions such as race, class, and religion, and comparing regional differences. Her careful examination of the Seneca Falls story provides an excellent and interesting way to introduce students to primary and secondary sources, the complexity of social movements, and the importance of understanding the difference between culturally dominant stories and the historical events. In short, her work allows us to see behind the façade of great men and women, such as Stanton, Anthony, Mott, Truth, and Douglas, and to view the lesser-remembered individuals, such as Lucy Stone, Mary Ann Shad Cary, and Harriet Hanson Robinson.

This is not a monograph easily accessible to students. It would be a challenging text for undergraduate students. Use of this research would be most effective if presented by the teacher to the students in more manageable chunks of information. The broader implications of Tetrault's work—studying origin myths, seeing the wider reform efforts—would be most impactful in grades seven through twelve. Tetrault's research supports Thomas Hietala's insight that "the way in which historical events are interpreted significantly influences the ongoing process of defining national identity, national character, and national purpose." Hence, this book would help a teacher to develop a rich exploration of expanding citizenship in the United States. The research also lends itself to students performing a media literacy analysis on the origins myth produced in the *History of Woman Suffrage* and historical newspapers. The historical events and actors of her work could be excellent raw material for projects involving younger students. Despite focusing on Stanton and Anthony, she provides a much richer set of actors beyond the oft-referenced, white, Northeastern, middle-class activists. In the younger grades, teachers could use the book to generate lesson plans and projects based the wider span of historical figures. For example, teachers could offer students an expanded pool of subjects for biography assignments. Whether for the benefit of students or instructors, there is much to dig out of this monograph.

Any instructor who takes the time to read through this monograph will be well rewarded. Their knowledge of women's rights, the post-war political world, and women's suffrage will be greatly enriched. Tetrault brings back to the historical frame important activists—male, female, black, and white—long disappeared by Seneca Falls. She demonstrates the importance of telling the history of women's suffrage campaigns as part of a complex political world. Her research reveals the breadth, depth, and variety of women's reform efforts and their relationship to the initiative of women's suffrage. Tetrault's work suggests a maturation of gender history to the point where we can re-examine our first great historical works, challenge the heroes of those narratives, without denigrating their efforts, and rethink their conclusions.

Clarkson University Jennifer L. Ball

Ring of Steel: Germany and Austria-Hungary in World War I, by Alexander Watson. New York: Basic Books, 2014. 608 pages. $35.00, cloth.

All too often, it seems, classes on the First World War focus on what was happening in the Entente countries of Great Britain, France, and Russia. I suspect that is because

we have more literature available detailing the military history of their armies and domestic issues faced by their populations. That should change, however, with *Ring of Steel.* Alexander Watson has provided us with a magisterial narrative history of the First World War in Germany and Austria-Hungary, covering military action, domestic challenges, and diplomatic choices. It is enormous in scope and size, yet still eminently readable. Watson has a mastery of detail and an eye for appropriate anecdotes.

At the outset, Watson pronounces that he both "seeks to understand the conflict through…statesmen's eyes" and to present "the story of their peoples" (p. 1). This dual focus is ably juggled through the book. For example, the first chapter examines the diplomatic crisis and the actions of the two governments, both singly and in tandem, as the response to Archduke Ferdinand's assassination led to continental war. The second chapter investigates the response of the populace of both states during the summer of 1914, detailing how the crisis was presented by the government and how civilians responded to mobilization.

Already in these first two chapters, the book's strength is evident. Watson navigates the reader through the levers of government in both countries, showing how each was structured and, importantly, setting out the weaknesses in each system. This allows him to point out, as his narrative continues, where systemic breakdowns in government occurred in later years of the war. His is one of the best overviews of the complicated governing system of Austria-Hungary that I've seen. This understanding of Austria-Hungary's political system is key to another emphasis throughout the book—that of the difficulty of managing a multi-ethnic population with both varying levels of political rights and resistance to imperial war arms.

Subsequent chapters deal with the initial military offensive; the Russian invasions; home front culture during 1914-1915; 1916's disastrous summer campaigns; the experience of civilian deprivation; the deeper mobilization of the economic system from 1916; the U-Boat war; domestic unrest in 1917; the implications—military, ideological, and political—of the Brest-Litovsk treaty; and the final collapse of both states. Except for the chapter on the U-Boats, which deals entirely with Germany, the experience of Austria-Hungary and Germany are presented in each chapter.

As a narrative presentation of the Central Powers' experience of war, the book is brilliant. As a classroom text, however, many of us would likely not assign a work of such magnitude to any class outside of a graduate course. That does not mean, though, that this book's utility in a teaching context is only to provide background information for the instructor. Instead, this book commends itself in several ways to classroom use. And, thankfully, Watson's language is clear and direct, easily understood by a typical undergraduate.

Any of the chapters could be used as stand-alone readings about World War I—while the book builds chronologically, the chapters can be understood and discussed on their own merits. In particular, the chapters on popular mobilization at the outset of the war, the food shortage, and the U-Boat campaign are excellent readings for a class focused on the First World War. More broadly speaking, the excellent chapter on the Russian invasions in the German and Austro-Hungarian East, and the chapter on the rise of anti-Semitism in the last part of the war, provide a sound overview of the onset of ethnic turmoil that Central Europe faced throughout the twentieth century. These chapters additionally provide an underpinning for understanding the development of Nazi ideology, particularly *Lebensraum* and anti-Semitism. Finally, *Ring of Steel* would be an excellent selection for an upper-level historical methods class. Watson ably uses all sorts of evidence, including numerous quantitative compilations, as he

builds his narrative and his argument. Close examination of how that evidence is used and deployed would provide the basis for fruitful discussion about the historian's craft as well as the structure of historical argumentation.

In short, Watson's overview of the Central Powers' experience is a well-researched, deftly written, and valuable contribution to our understanding of the totality of the First World War experience in central Europe. Useful not just to scholars, but also to teaching professors, this work will be an important academic reference and classroom resource for the foreseeable future.

Suffolk County Community College, Grant Campus Martha (Murph) E. Kinney