

Reviews

Teaching U.S. History through Sports, edited by Brad Austin and Pamela Grundy. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2019. 343 pages. \$34.95, cloth.

Questions about the nature of, pedagogical approaches to, and value of sports history have animated academic conferences and scholarly journals recently, with roundtables, special issues, and panels. After decades of administrators and non-practitioners regarding the study of sport skeptically, questioning its rigor, relevance, and worth, sports history is catching on. The country is homing in on the intersections of sports, current events, and politics. Striving to fill seats, departments are responding.

Into this exciting era lands *Teaching U.S. History through Sports*, a comprehensive collection of twenty-two insightful essays written by eighteen scholars that is smartly titled to convey that American sports history is not concerned myopically with sports. The book is a timely and decisive response to those who still question the place of sports in the academy. Better still, it benefits teachers who already teach sports history and are seeking new ideas.

Editors Brad Austin and Pamela Grundy take a thorough approach. The book is divided into four parts: modernization and globalization, gender and sexuality, race and ethnicity, and case studies, which expands upon the method of most of the other essays to address how to, and why, take on certain subjects. Authors make recommendations, suggesting sources; assignments; questions for discussions, exams, and essays; and ways to structure lessons and lectures. Across the sections, the essays, well-organized and engagingly written, foreground history. “Resources and Suggestions,” the final entry, gives guidance on readings, archives, and topics minimally or not covered elsewhere.

If *Teaching U.S. History through Sports* were a team, it would be the best in its league. Many chapters are all-stars in their pedagogical and analytical offerings. The collection affords a rare opportunity for historians to glimpse the pedagogical skills of colleagues whose publications they have assigned for years. The multiple essays by Austin (“The Shifting Geography of Professional Sports” and “Colonial Sporting Cultures”), Grundy (“The Shaping of ‘Women’s

Sport” and “Jim Crow at Play”), and Rita Liberti (“‘Ambassadors in Short Pants’: Sport and the Cold Warriors” and, with Grundy, “Black Women Face Obstacles and Opportunities”) stand out for their largesse. All three historians generously share the archives used by their classes, exercises crafted over years, and stories that describe the ways that students have responded to assignments, discussions, and teaching techniques. Austin, Grundy, Liberti, and Sarah Field (“Issues of Sexuality in Sport”) bring the reader into the classroom with their words, walking us through activities and facilitating our ability to imagine ourselves adopting or adapting their respective approaches.

The essays are also impressive and multi-functional works of scholarship. Many of the contributors are highly respected historians. The essays work as refreshers as well as inspirational resources for research unrelated to teaching. Their notes are bonanzas. Teachers, moreover, can assign some readings directly to students. “What’s in a Name? Teaching the History of American Indian Mascots” by Andrew Frank, for example, is an incisive chronicle of white supremacy and protest in action in sports. Daniel Pierce’s “NASCAR 101: Moonshine, Fast Cars, and Southern Working-Class Agency” will enthrall students with its kinetic biography of Junior Johnson, examination of place, and the nefarious early history of auto racing. Those chapters, plus Bobbi Knapp’s (“Title IX: Contested Terrain”), Ron Briley’s (“Lights, Camera, Action: Teaching American Sport through Film”), and Leslie Heaphy’s (“Baseball and American Exceptionalism”), are also salient for their usefulness to instructors, not necessarily historians, in a variety of fields, including law, film, and international relations.

Teaching U.S. History through Sports, a first of its kind, is a must-have for teachers who want to incorporate sports into their curriculum, whether for a complete course or simply for the occasional unit. Anyone who teaches courses on women, gender, or race, ethnicity, and indigeneity will find merit here. The five chapters on African Americans are particularly rich and diverse. Still, the book has some oversights. Entries on Jews, Asian Americans, and so-called country-club sports are missing. More authors might have addressed the impact of identity and social dynamics, particularly those of race, gender, and nationality, in the classroom. Finally, the authors rarely if ever state the course levels or types of classes in which they teach their selected topics. Nevertheless, the book is a tremendous resource. Contributor Chris Elzey explains that, in his experience, teaching sports scandals “bring[s] history into sharper focus” for students and is a boon to teachers, who will face “no problem holding the interest of” their pupils (pp. 26-27). This collection makes a compelling case that the same can be said of teaching any aspect of U.S. history through sports.

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Ashley Brown

Occupied Territory: Policing Black Chicago from Red Summer to Black Power, by Simon Balto. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2020. 360 pages. \$37.50, cloth. \$29.95, paper. \$19.99, electronic.

Chicago during World War I, similar to many northern cities, experienced a great influx of rural African Americans fleeing the Jim Crow South in hopes of better lives in the industrialized urban North. Race riots across the North in the summer of 1919 revealed harsh realities about life for the newly arrived black citizens who quickly discovered that discrimination and race-based violence was just as prevalent if not worse than it was in the South. Sojourners of the Great Migration were forced into grossly overcrowded, subpar housing accommodations and were relegated to the most dangerous and lowest paying non-union industrial jobs. The death of more than twenty and injury of over 300 African Americans in July of 1919 at the hands of white rioters and a seemingly apathetic Chicago Police Department (CPD) only confirmed what black Chicagoans already knew—policing procedures in the Black Belt were different from other neighborhoods throughout the city.

Simon Balto finds that black neighborhoods were consistently reported to be overpopulated, yet underprotected by the police force paid for by taxpayer dollars. Using Chicago as a case study, he aims to explain how Chicago and similar cities arrived at this reality. In this important addition to our understanding of the African American experience in twentieth-century urban America, Balto reveals complicated and inconvenient truths about the intersection of urbanism, political economy, the criminal justice system, and endemic racism embedded in the practices of the CPD. Drawing upon community organizational records, local American Civil Liberties Union files, Chicago municipal records, CPD arrest and institutional records, the black and white press, and secondary scholarship of historians and sociologists, Balto contends that systemic racialized violence and harassment in the CPD toward black Chicagoans has a long history that predates most scholars' focus on mid-twentieth-century America by a few decades. For instance, he asserts that in the early 1920s, African Americans only constituted about 4% of Chicago's total population, yet accounted for 11.3% of CPD's arrests (p. 43). Additionally, African Americans represented more than 40% of people killed by police in which courts ruled the death as justifiable (p. 48). Balto adroitly points out that in popular memory, excessive police force in Chicago is historically linked with police actions against demonstrators at the Democratic National Convention in 1968, where no one was seriously injured, yet minimal attention has been given to the dozens of black Chicagoans killed by the CPD from 1967 to 1969. Of particular significance is the final chapter of the book in which Balto uses the murders of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark to demonstrate an ideological alignment between the black power and civil rights movements on the issue of police reform. One minor weakness in the analytical chronology presented by Balto is the minimal attention given to Chicago during World War II and the Second Great Migration. However, this does not detract from the strength of his overall arguments.

Occupied Territory can most effectively be used in an upper-division college or graduate-level course. It would be a great addition to a reading list in an urban history, African American history, sociology, or criminal justice course. Though the author clearly states the main arguments and topics for each chapter, the vocabulary level and sophisticated layering of his arguments may prove

challenging to students in lower-level classes. The book can also provide high school and college instructors with historical context for understanding the complexities of urban crisis and various themes in Chicago history, including systemic racism, racial profiling, local and national government policies leading to neighborhood degradation, and historical roots of police brutality and institutionalized violence. Instructors seeking to pull specific examples or excerpts from this work for use in high school or survey-level college courses will want to do so cautiously and provide appropriate context, since much of the evidence of police violence and white terrorism against African Americans presented by Balto is disturbingly graphic and upsetting.

The black Chicagoans depicted in the pages of *Occupied Territory* are not passive recipients of police brutality. Rather, Balto gives agency to various individuals and community-activist organizations that attempted to seek justice in a policing system rampant with institutionalized racial inequality and corruption. Though this book is rooted in historical topics, it is incredibly relevant to contemporary conversations about police brutality, failures to the social contract in urban America, and embedded racism in the American justice system. Many parallels can be drawn from the Chicago stories presented by Balto to other urban centers throughout the country.

North Park University

Sarah E. Doherty

A Primer for Teaching African History: Ten Design Principles, by Trevor R. Getz. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018. 184 pages. \$94.95, cloth. \$24.95, paper. \$24.95, electronic.

Those preparing to teach their first survey of African history face a challenge. Most doing so at the university level are products of graduate programs where research and publication were valued over instruction. Those teaching at secondary schools likely have limited background in the field's content, much less its methodology and historiography. In both cases, these instructors-to-be will not simply be faced with educating students who have little previous experience with the subject, but will also be forced to help these students unpack and overcome a host of stereotypes and misrepresentations of the continent's history at the same time. Further, unlike fields such as American history, Western civilization, or Chinese history, there is no accepted "standard model" for organizing African history. There is similarly no dominant framework of periodization or even a consensus on geographical units of analysis.

As a result, until recently, most new instructors were left to "wing it"—either by copying the organizational framework of a course they had previously taken themselves or by choosing a textbook and sticking close to the publisher's organizational framework. Neither strategy is unique to African history, of course, but nor are they optimal for ambitious instructors or students. Thankfully,

a brief text by the highly regarded Africanist Trevor Getz has been published to address precisely the challenges identified above.

Getz's *Primer for Teaching African History* is far from a formulaic "how to" guide. Rather, as the title promises, it sets out ten key design principles that help to steer the instructor towards creating the sort of course that both they and their students aspire to. These ten principles each receive a chapter of their own, yet are themselves wrapped up in a sort of methodological frame tale, wherein Getz uses the *lukasa*, a Central African mnemonic device, to introduce and ground the discussion presented in each of the book's three main parts. Part I is entitled "Conceiving a Student-Centered Course," and encourages the reader to consider what brings students to African history classes—and what they bring with them. Part II, "Content and Design," comprises chapters three through six and is the part of the text most grounded in making nuts-and-bolts choices about course design. In Chapter 3, "Locating Africa: Designing with Space," Getz uses issues of physical scope and historical space to deftly engage how we define what is African and how African history relates to other fields of history, including world history. In Chapter 4, "When Was Africa? Designing with Time," he takes on the advantages of, pitfalls to, and ways to complicate systems of periodization for African history. Chapter 5, "Who Are Africans? Designing with Identity," takes as its topic how African history courses can teach us not only about African identities, but also how African systems of identity can get us to critique our own established categories of identity (such as race, ethnicity, gender, or class). Chapter 6, "Making Hard Choices: Coverage and Uncoverage," deals the harsh reality of the scope demanded by surveys of African history and provides insights into how instructors can balance issues of coverage with issues of depth and analysis.

The final section, Part III, is entitled "Opportunities." Here, Getz goes beyond issues of organization and content to make a case for the potential of teaching more than just African history in the course of an African history class. The three chapters in this final part of the book deal with ethical thinking, methodology and sources, and the politics of knowledge production in the digital era. These chapters may seem a bit esoteric to those worrying first and foremost about getting a new class (and perhaps career) up and running, but taking the time to read these brief chapters may well plant seeds of ambition that will bear fruit as one becomes more comfortable and more enterprising in their teaching as the semesters go by. The final chapter addresses real-world issues such as syllabus presentation, learning outcomes, and assessment.

Engagingly written, accessibly brief, and sprinkled with experiences, ideas, and pointers not only from the author, but also from a broad sampling of talented teachers of Africa from the continent and beyond, *A Primer for Teaching African History* should be required reading for any graduate student or instructor aspiring to teach African history. Even late-career professors such as this reviewer will find much to reflect on and potentially incorporate into established courses.

Reconstruction: A Concise History, by Allen C. Guelzo. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018. 180 pages. \$18.95, cloth. \$18.95, electronic.

Doubtless, many historians will ask the same question upon learning of Allen Guelzo's slim volume, *Reconstruction: A Concise History*—is that even possible? The answer is yes, but with obvious and probably unavoidable limitations. Guelzo has written a rapid-paced chronological narrative of the major events of the era that focuses almost exclusively on actions at the federal level. The author concedes from the start that the book is a political history with essentially no discussion of the growing scholarship that examines gender, veterans, family dynamics, or literature. In a mere 130 pages of text, Guelzo manages an introduction, seven chapters, and an epilogue. Despite relatively limited coverage of wartime Reconstruction and a nod toward historians who have recently begun to expand the scholarly examination of the era into the later nineteenth century, *Reconstruction* follows the traditional 1865-1877 timeframe.

Consistent with the traditional chronology and political narrative, Guelzo recognizes the shortcomings of the Reconstruction era, but highlights important successes as the interpretive foundation of the book. Predictably, and correctly, he emphasizes that Reconstruction brought forth the restoration of the union and the passage of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments, and witnessed significant, albeit temporary, economic and political achievements of freedpeople. Interestingly, Guelzo includes a fourth success alongside these important accomplishments—namely, the assertion that “Reconstruction followed the route of generosity—it created no conquered provinces, no mass executions for treason” (p. 12). Most important, within this context of relative achievement amidst broader failure, Guelzo attributes the overall collapse of Reconstruction to a variety of factors, including in-fighting among Republicans and widespread corruption at the state and federal levels. Ultimately, however, the author convincingly ascribes the general failure of Reconstruction and the nation's inability to achieve the desired dramatic progress in civil rights to powerful and violent resistance orchestrated by southern Democrats, rather than to a failure of will on the part of Republicans. “The end of Reconstruction is often spoken of in psychological terms, as a collapse of white Americans' nerve, or as a failure of Republican political will, when in cold truth Reconstruction did not fail so much as it was overthrown” (p. 124).

The introduction includes an exceedingly brief summary of general Reconstruction historiography that begins with a helpful summary of the Dunning School. Guelzo then combines multiple later generations of scholars into a catch-all category that he labels “anti-Dunningites,” a designation overly broad and unwieldy even for a concise history. Clearly designed to establish the scholarly context for the monograph and to provide an introduction to the major historiographical debates in the field, the section perfectly illustrates one of the immense challenges for this type of project. Specialists will likely consider the historiographical discussion too brief to be of use, while general readers might deem the inclusion of such material a distraction from the fine narrative, particularly in light of the brevity of the book and because the author, understandably, rarely

engages such questions throughout the remainder of the text. Because the book is probably too short to delve into historiographical analysis, perhaps those pages could have been better used for the author's excellent narrative of the period.

Ultimately, Guelzo's study is indeed an admirable and useful concise history of Reconstruction, but it is not exactly an introduction. Although designed as neither an authoritative monograph based on primary research that charts a new interpretive course, nor as a true classroom textbook on the period, *Reconstruction: A Concise History* is nonetheless a useful tool for scholars and teachers. Guelzo is especially adept at illustrating and analyzing the motives of prominent individuals and groups, and the timeline that follows the text is more detailed and helpful than most. Finally, Guelzo's excellent epilogue engages big-picture, far-reaching questions on the era in a manner more compelling than that presented in the introduction. Indeed, the epilogue is a strong point of the book and should inspire teachers who seek ideas to push students to consider the successes and failures of Reconstruction. Teachers at secondary schools and instructors of undergraduate classes at colleges and universities would do well to consult this modestly priced study of a complex era crafted by an accomplished historian.

East Central University

Bradley R. Clampitt

Searching for Black Confederates: The Civil War's Most Persistent Myth, by Kevin M. Levin. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2019. 228 pages. \$30.00, cloth. \$22.99, electronic.

In March 1861, as the Civil War approached, Confederate Vice President Alexander H. Stephens delivered his Cornerstone Speech. In it, he declared that the Confederacy "rests upon the great truth, that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery...is his natural and normal condition" (the full text of the document is available at the State Historical Society of Iowa). The great majority of historians, and history teachers, today agree with Stephens that the Confederacy fought the Civil War in defense of black slavery, but since the late nineteenth century, the Sons of Confederate Veterans and other southern "heritage organizations" have denied this (p. 7).

As Kevin M. Levin notes in *Searching for Black Confederates*, this radical difference of opinion is well known. Levin explores the origins, growth, and recent decline of the "mythical narrative" of black Confederate soldiers used in support of the claim that the Civil War was not about slavery (p. 4). Some recent scholars have recognized the existence of black Confederate soldiers, most prominent among them are Henry Louis Gates Jr. and John Stauffer, both of Harvard University. They have been criticized by Levin and others for shortcomings in their interpretation of evidence. As Levin notes, "claims that the Confederate government recruited significant numbers of black men into the army first emerged within the Confederate heritage community in the late 1970s" in reaction to the Civil Rights Movement (p. 3).

Levin devotes a significant part of *Searching for Black Confederates* to the Civil War years to show that such recruitment did not exist during almost the entire war. Only as advancing Union armies threatened slavery and the Confederacy's existence did the Confederate Congress in March 1865 approve enlistment of black soldiers. However, throughout the war, the Confederate government forced slaves to work as laborers for its armies. Other enslaved black men, whose masters were Confederate soldiers, served those masters as "camp slaves" (p. 4). Levin focuses on these camp slaves, who sometimes wore a Confederate uniform, accompanied a master into battle, aided a wounded master, and carried a deceased master's body home. They were not paid, did not earn soldiers' pensions, and sometimes resisted their enslavement in various ways. Nevertheless, the line between soldiers and camp slaves could be ambiguous in practice.

Most of *Searching for Black Confederates* deals with the development of the myth of black Confederates from Reconstruction to the 2010s. During Reconstruction, former Confederates did not claim that slaves had been soldiers. Instead, Levin explains, they relied on stories of "fiercely loyal" camp slaves to argue against the necessity of Congressional laws to protect black rights (p. 6). Black southerners, former Confederates insisted, supported white supremacy and they placed images of camp slaves on Confederate monuments. According to Levin, pensions for camp slaves adopted by former Confederate states starting in the 1880s served the related purpose of encouraging black submissiveness. Levin demonstrates that during the early post-war years, "Lost Cause writers were careful to distinguish camp slaves from soldiers" (p. 6). Not until the end of the twentieth century did the Sons of Confederate Veterans and Daughters of the Confederacy begin contending that the black men who received the pensions had been Confederate soldiers. The organizations did so, Levin contends, to counter United States history textbooks that increasingly held that the Civil War was over slavery and fought by the Union for emancipation.

Levin quotes a 2018 report by the Southern Poverty Law Center that "concluded that [schools] are not adequately teaching the history of American slavery' [and] textbooks do not have enough material about it" (p. 7). Such "widespread misunderstanding and confusion surrounding the history of slavery" led to the portrayal of the "historical record as supporting the existence of hundreds if not thousands of loyal black Confederate soldiers" (p. 8). Levin reports that the Internet has spread this contention, and that there are stories of black Confederates in history textbooks, museum exhibits, and television programs (p. 9). Levin discusses at length a small number of African Americans today who endorse "the black Confederate narrative" (p. 154). He concludes, however, that all of these tactics have failed to halt the spread, academically and popularly, of an understanding of the Confederacy as proslavery and racist.

This book covers a very long stretch of American history, but because it focuses on a relatively narrow issue, it is probably best suited for use in college-level courses dealing with the contemporary United States. For more specialized use, portions of this book could be assigned reading in courses dealing with the Civil War and Reconstruction.

The Oxford Handbook of Disability History, edited by Michael Rembis, Catherine J. Kudlick, and Kim E. Nielsen. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018. 535 pages. \$150.00, cloth.

The Oxford Handbook of Disability History provides a helpful introduction to a relatively young field unfamiliar to many students of history. As contributor Regina Kunzel summarizes, “Disability is not a self-evident attribute of the bodies or minds of individuals,” but a “set of meanings and a primary way of signifying relations of power and is made socially, culturally, and historically” (p. 470). Disability scholars study a wide range of people “who identified as, or who were described as mad, insane, disabled, infirm, deaf, deformed, lame, crippled, blind, unsound, and numerous other terms” (p. 1). Disability, unlike many permanent features of identity, can be formed through accident, illness, or age. Depending on the definition employed, perhaps fifteen percent of the population will experience disability at some point in their lives.

The editors apply Joan Scott’s influential dictum about gender as a “useful category of analysis” to disability. Like gender, disability offers several possibilities for exploring intersectionality. First, many chapters illustrate the way disability intersects with other identities: race, colonial subjectivity, gender, and class. To take just one example, minstrel shows and “freak” shows displaying physically atypical individuals were often performed together in antebellum America, reflecting shared white anxieties about different forms of the Other. Second, several chapters reveal how disability intersects with major movements in particular eras: masculinity and labor in the industrial revolution, eugenics in the Progressive era, and advocacy for equal access in the civil rights era. Third, a number of chapters make transregional connections. One chapter, for example, investigates transnational links in New Zealand’s nineteenth-century asylum system and another examines transatlantic links among nineteenth- and early twentieth-century deaf communities. Disability historians, the editors argue, work to make themselves obsolete by weaving disability so thoroughly into the fabric of historiography that its *raison d’être* as an independent field disappears.

A number of key themes recur throughout the text. First, shifting classifications of disability over time and space directly hinge upon those with power to define the disability community, the institutions that were created to aid and/or control those identified with disabilities, and the agency of people with disabilities. Second, definitions of disability in the U.S. and western Europe have been deeply shaped by racist assumptions about civilization, development, and evolution. The mainstream status of eugenics in the early twentieth century is epitomized by Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes’ notorious comment in the 1927 Supreme Court case authorizing eugenic sterilization: “three generations of imbeciles are enough” (p. 93). Third, historiographical debates often hinge on turning points in the status of individuals perceived as disabled. How did changing views of anthropology in the ancient world shape understandings of disability? To what extent was the industrial revolution’s need for able-bodied workers crucial to shaping views of disability? Did the disability rights movement begin with the zenith of civil rights protest in the 1960s, or was there a longer trajectory akin to Jacquelyn Dowd Hall’s “long civil rights movement”?

Disability History offers a valuable exploration of key themes and intersections in disability history, though the book feels more like a collected work resulting from a conference when compared with other texts in the Oxford Handbook series—the Atlantic World, the Cold War, and World History handbooks, for example, include broad chapters and uniform divisions. Chapters function more like narrow research projects or case studies rather than general surveys of the field, with twenty-seven chapters divided into five parts of varying length: Concepts and Questions, Work, Institutions, Representations, and Movements and Identities. As with so many texts across disciplines, the focus is overwhelmingly Anglo-American. Although there are occasional forays into other regions, Latin America, Africa, Central Asia, East Asia, and Oceania apart from Australia and New Zealand are either largely or completely absent. Also, despite several transnational chapters, there are very limited efforts at comparison, reflecting the relative youth of the field (which only began in the 1980s) as well as the location of scholars (overwhelmingly concentrated in North America, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand). Such gaps underscore the need for expanded scholarship in many areas of disability history.

Given the relative unfamiliarity of most historians with disability history—certainly when compared with race, class, and gender—instructors at the college or even the high school level may want to take up the editors' challenge to embed disability history in all of their courses. Weaving the stories of people with disabilities into history survey courses, upper-division classes, and graduate seminars alike would immensely enrich students' learning experiences. For instructors who see their classrooms as sites advocacy for inclusion and justice, *The Oxford Handbook of Disability History* will prove an essential resource.

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

David Neumann

History's Babel: Scholarship, Professionalization, and the Historical Enterprise in the United States, 1880-1940, by Robert B. Townsend. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2013. 258 pages. \$104.00, cloth. \$34.00, paper. \$34.00, electronic.

Members of the American Historical Association (AHA) and curious, or anxious, job seekers will likely know the work of Robert Townsend, a frequent contributor to the organization's *Perspectives on History* magazine. For years, Townsend has alerted historians to emerging trends in and potential alternatives to academic employment. *History's Babel* is a natural extension of these interests. Examining the creation of the discipline broadly and the formation of the AHA specifically, Townsend charts the original, unsteady, and contentious relationships that developed between professional historians and historians outside the academy.

Three distinct periods within the AHA's early decades, from 1880 to 1940, mark the progression and degeneration of a unified historical community, from the AHA's inchoate yet inclusive beginnings to its more defined yet fissiparous

modern form. At its inception, the AHA was both a catalyst for and evidence of an emerging sense of professionalism. The group catered to a growing historical community: teachers, college professors, amateur historians, and archivists. By the start of the Second World War, the AHA was highly regarded by academics, but alienated from an expanding body of non-collegiate professionals.

The gradual yet inevitable detachment of the “professional historian” develops by way of three complementary narratives. Distinct identities for secondary educators, college professors, and public historians emerge over time and through Townsend’s use of institutional records, private correspondence, and an array of less obvious yet equally relevant sources, showing that the AHA facilitated historical professionalism both within and without the academy.

Public history, Townsend argues, draws its origins from archive-focused government commissions established in the waning years of the nineteenth century. Their herculean efforts to catalog the country’s massive stockpile of public records provided a rationale for the National Archives and gave impetus and structure to state and local collections. The AHA provided leadership for these efforts and, through the sponsorship of field-specific conferences, also lent a purpose, dignity, and identity to archival work. Disciplinary and priority shifts diminished these connections over time. When transcriptions and primary source compilations no longer dominated mainstream historical scholarship, interactions between academics and archivists became less conspiratorial and more transactional. The AHA’s interest in archival matters diminished and a spate of new professional organizations rose up to accommodate the concerns of national, state, and local archivists.

The AHA was similarly helpful in delimiting the scope and intentions of secondary education. Through work on federally sponsored boards, such as the Committee of Seven and the Committee on Social Studies in Secondary Education, influential AHA members helped create and promote a series of nationally recognized curricular improvements. The AHA was less successful in providing pedagogical leadership as short-term successes gave way to an increasing sense of professional distance. The AHA’s inability to translate specialized historical content to pedagogy or to provide a forum for other matters related to public schooling left teachers to manage their own professional destinies.

Academic historians were, Townsend concludes, no less susceptible to the guiding influences of the AHA. By the end of the nineteenth century, uncritical, secondary-source-driven “literary historians” gave way to a rising generation of professionally trained and credentialed college professors. These “scientific historians,” trained according to the seminar method, favored primary over secondary sources and emphasized original scholarship. AHA publications and conferences promoted rigor and helped establish venues apart from other works of history and other disciplines. The AHA’s legitimacy grew in proportion to an expanding scope of scholarly endeavor and the organization became the unquestioned leader and shaper of professional standards.

The professionally self-reflective quality of Townsend’s work makes it an interesting choice for undergraduate- and graduate-level history courses. Links between class, education, and the rise of professionalism allow broad applicability,

yet provide instructors narrow, discipline-specific examples. Townsend's connections between demographics and professionalism are particularly compelling for instructors covering Progressive-era reforms. America's early twentieth-century population surge, for example, influenced all aspects of academia, but had a disproportionate influence on public school teachers grappling with unfamiliar demands. Instructors might draw from these descriptions and ask students to consider the effects of demography—specifically, how population pressure affects learning and the public's perception of education. But *History's Babel* is perhaps most useful as a primer to twentieth-century American historiography. Common Core standards now compel instructors to provide refined understandings of the historical process, including not only how historians approach questions, but also how they interact and complement each other. Townsend demystifies these processes by surveying the real-life concerns that limited and then expanded historical opportunities. Primary source evidence takes on a new meaning for students when attached to realistic questions of access and status. Townsend's narrative of historiographic progress, from an exclusive club of antiquarian enthusiasts to a more diversified field of social-historical professionals, works towards these ends, but also helps illustrate the concept of historiographic change over time.

Western Michigan University

James P. Cousins

Why Learn History (When It's Already on Your Phone), by Sam Wineburg. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2018. 240 pages. \$60.00, cloth. \$20.00, paper. \$20.00 electronic.

"Why learn history when it's already on your phone?" In this question, Sam Wineburg assumes the persona of a skeptical high school student. Wineburg then provides eight semi-independent essays, arguing from multiple slants that history has the potential to be one of the most important school subjects—a potential that is rarely realized. He begins by establishing the problems with traditional lecture-based and textbook-based instruction. In its worst form, it is boring, yields little long-term retention of information, is assessed poorly, and rarely promotes higher order thinking. And the costliest effort to correct these problems, the billion-dollar Teaching American History initiative, made few measurable improvements. By the end of Chapter 2, I began to side with the imagined whiny high school student: why learn history?

The third chapter does little to restore confidence in history instruction. Wineburg challenges Howard Zinn's popular text, *A People's History of the United States*, which is used in many high school and university classrooms. Wineburg argues that Zinn frequently violates a basic rule of historical inquiry: claims and interpretations must emerge from carefully vetted evidence. Additionally, Wineburg criticizes Zinn's clean narrative, an unswerving path of oppression, intolerance, greed, and dishonesty. Like other textbooks, Zinn's work removes uncertainty and makes a mockery of the academic humility that historians feel. "The question mark falls victim to the exclamation point," Wineburg concludes

(p. 78). Zinn is not the only target of Wineburg's criticism. He courageously challenges a plethora of time-honored educational staples. Textbooks, multiple-choice tests, the National Assessment of Educational Progress, the Educational Testing Service, Bloom's Taxonomy, and the Common Core State Standards' are all subject to Wineburg's biting critique. And one of his most pointed condemnations is aimed at Donald Trump's tendency to make claims without evidence. Trump's post-election shenanigans justify Wineburg's prophetic attack.

To be clear, Wineburg's opening chapters are more than just a rant. While lamenting the sorry state of history teaching, Wineburg also helps the reader gain a deeper understanding of the discipline of history. He highlights the role of evidence, the process of vetting accounts, and the challenges students (and many adults) face in constructing historical understandings. He contrasts the historical reading of experts with the reading of novices. He establishes groundwork for the way history might be taught and how young people's historical understandings and skills might be assessed in ways that make sense in the twenty-first century.

In Chapter 6, Wineburg recounts the story of his work to promote the "intellectually honest" teaching of history (p. 106). Wineburg describes how a series of events, conversations, observations, lucky breaks, and strategic networking has led to the development of resources for teaching and assessing historical thinking—resources downloaded over six million times. Wineburg's narrative continues in Chapter 7 as he describes a shift in focus toward digital literacy. He documents his surprise in finding that even historians abandon critical reading strategies when they move from yellowed document to blue monitor screen. Wineburg introduces new expert readers: professional fact checkers who use online reading strategies that could save democratic institutions from the onslaught of fake news, misinformation, and evidence-less claims. That, he contends, is the answer to the question, *why learn history?* Ironically, Chapters 6 and 7, the most important in the book, were somewhat disappointing to me, in that Wineburg downplays the wrong turns, false leads, dead ends, rejected proposals, and outright opposition that researchers inevitably face. By omitting these frustrations, he simplifies a complex account that undoubtedly has many missing subplots, conflicts, and even antagonists. This creates a straightforward story—the kind of history that he argues against through much of the book.

In contrast to the opening chapters of the book, Wineburg's final chapter provides hope in the youth who attend history classes. Instead of documenting what students do not know, he shows what they do know. While reading the final chapter, I considered the audience of Wineburg's book. Some chapters are important for pre-service and in-service teachers, yet others might be less useful for them. Some chapters are important for designers of professional development. And some chapters seem especially important for everyday citizens who are trying to navigate the web. Each of the semi-independent essays targets a slightly different audience, making some chapters essential reads and other chapters merely interesting. Wineburg's analysis of online reading in Chapter 7 carries the most universal importance. With changes in history teaching, Wineburg's work reminds all of us why young people need to learn history and how historical thinking skills must be applied when we find information on our phones.



The History Teacher

by THE SOCIETY FOR HISTORY EDUCATION

The History of *The History Teacher*

Collaboration, Cooperation, Innovation, and Excellence

In 1940, the **Teachers' History Club** at the University of Notre Dame created the "Quarterly Bulletin of the Teachers' History Club" to improve the learning experience in the history classroom.

By 1967, the expanding collaboration of educators reorganized as the **History Teachers' Association** and decided to transform the bulletin into an academic journal—*The History Teacher*.

In 1972, the association transferred guardianship of *The History Teacher* to coordinating faculty members at the Department of History at California State University, Long Beach. In the interest of independence and self-determination, the associated teachers incorporated as a non-profit organization.

The Society for History Education, Inc. (SHE) was recognized by the State of California in 1972.

In 2012, the Society began offering full-text, open access to recent archives of *The History Teacher* at its website, thehistoryteacher.org.

In 2016, *The History Teacher* entered its **50th Volume**, and we look forward to 50 more!

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