

structure, about teaching strategies and the nature of students, and about providing students with options or choices. In the brave new world of assessment now dawning, this book, as well as others of a similar character, should prod professors of history to take a self-conscious and critical look not only at what they teach, how they teach, and why they teach, but also at the students whom they teach.

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**James B. M. Schick.** *Teaching History with a Computer: A Complete Guide for College Professors.* Chicago: Lyceum Books, Inc., 1990. Pp. xxii, 251. Paper, \$29.95.

James Schick is the founder and editor of the *History Microcomputer Review*. While this book is certainly not the first to deal with computers and history and is not really "A Complete Guide," it does go beyond the "number crunching" applications of quantitative history and provides excellent explanations of a wide range of uses from writing, to study aids, to programming.

Schick begins with a discussion of the basic issues facing the historian contemplating using a computer: Why (or why not) use the machine and what kind of machine should one use? The next four chapters deal with specific applications, beginning with "tools" or software (programs) such as gradebooks, testmakers, and study guides, progressing to word processing and its support software (grammar and spelling checkers) and software that assists in the development of research skills, and then on to databases, spreadsheets, and simulations. This material will be of most use to those who are new to the technology, although Schick's specific examples of classroom applications will be valuable to even the seasoned "hacker." Also of note is that the user can sit at the computer and easily go through each of the applications presented.

Schick then turns his attention to an explanation of how to integrate the computer into the classroom. This is by far the most valuable material in the book and serves to point out one of Schick's strengths: He is not a fanatic. The philosophical tone throughout is that the computer is a tool that can facilitate the teaching and doing of history; computers are not historians, and they are not universally applicable in the classroom. As Schick states, "Historians contemplating the use of computers in their teaching should use them sparingly unless special circumstances indicate otherwise."

The book concludes with discussions of programming in BASIC, and speculation on the future of the computer and the history teacher. Programming is not for everyone, but as with the rest of the book, Schick gives some very good, user-friendly examples.

The only real drawback to the book is that much of the information on commercial hardware and software is outdated; two years is virtually an eternity with computers. However, one should not purchase this book as a buyer's guide for computers or printers or packaged simulations. James Schick has written a handy guide that will explain how to select and use both machinery and programs. Computers are here to stay and every history teacher should have a copy of *Teaching History with a Computer*.

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