A little guidance from you (and perhaps an extra reading or two) will get them through it. It is a special challenge for world history teachers to make documents such as *The Jainist Book of Sermons* and *The Meiji Constitution and the Imperial Rescript on Education* relevant and interesting to students, but by balancing them with such tidbits as Christine de Pisan's "L'Avision Christine" and the Traditional Oral Texts from Africa, it should be easier.

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Evan Mawdsley and Thomas Munck. *Computing for Historians: An Introductory Guide.* **Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 1993. Pp. xvi, 231. Cloth, $59.95. ISBN 0-7190-3547-3. Paper, $19.95. ISBN 0-7190-3548-1.**
Daniel I. Greenstein. *A Historian's Guide to Computing.* **Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1994. Pp. xiii, 268. Cloth, $48.00. ISBN 0-19-824235-2. Paper, $16.65. ISBN 0-19-823521-6.**

Computers have changed everyone's lives and historians confront a variety of choices of how to utilize this technology to increase their productivity. The real challenge, however, lies in their discovering how to incorporate the computer into teaching and research tasks. The first step is to inquire about what is available at his or her workplace and then talk to colleagues who are already familiar with computers. This reality alone makes it difficult to write any one book that accurately and in a timely fashion deals with how to employ computers and their accompanying technology in any one setting, since every institution has a different framework and wide discrepancies exist even among departments on the same campus. Furthermore, every individual using computers has their own preferences–especially when disagreeing about IBM versus Macintosh platforms–and it takes time to figure out what is best for any one person. Finally, the explosion of the Internet is so recent that it is only dealt with briefly by Greenstein and barely at all by Mawdsley and Munck.

The authors of both *Computing for Historians* and *A Historian's Guide to Computing* have obviously utilized this technology in their own work and do a reasonable job of explaining the results of their work. Both books, however, tend to be overly technical for anyone without some previous computer knowledge. Oftentimes, it is simply a case of too much highly-detailed information being too overwhelming for the beginner to comprehend. Furthermore, both works concentrate only on the use of computers in research and do not deal with employing them in the classroom. (For the best book on this topic consult J. B. M. Schick's *Teaching History With A Computer*. The *History Microcomputer Review* is the best journal currently published specifically about computers and history. For sources on both, contact Schick, History Department, Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, KS 66762; 316-235-4312 or e-mail at jschick@pittstate.edu). All the authors readily admit that any book can hardly claim to describe the "leading edge" because of the publication lag time.

Both books, however, do a good job in their explanation of how to utilize databases in research projects. Economic historians Mawdsley and Munck, in fact, point out that databases and their utilization are the primary forces of their book. On the other hand, Greenstein provides the best description of the advantages and the limitations of their use. Both give concrete examples and tables showing their work with these types of projects. Mawdsley and Munck, for example, discuss the "Gorbals Census Datafile," voting and census sources, and the use of multiple tables in analyzing data. These authors, as well as Greenstein, also argue the validity of this type of research and demonstrate that it can help make previously unmanageable data intelligible for further historical analysis. Both works correctly point out that "garbage in is garbage out" and that data tables in and of themselves do not necessarily yield worthy results. Anyone wanting to enter the world of quantitative history would find both of these books useful. Professors could also assign them to graduate students and some upper-division students who plan to utilize this historical research method.

In comparing the two books, Greenstein's contains the broadest coverage of the use of the computer. He discusses spreadsheets, word processing, and text analysis. In addition, he discusses the growth of the Internet and Janet, as its sister network in the United Kingdom is known. Any book on this

topic, however, is dated before it is even published. Greenstein gives an adequate introductory explanation of electronic mail (e-mail), discussion lists, and file transfer protocols. The latest information on any of these topics, however, can only be found on the Internet itself since daily changes are common. The next best sources are Internet magazines and more general computer periodicals.

A further detractor to both works is their lack of discussion about computer simulations and their use in today's history courses. These activities provide some of the best ways to interest students in history and develop their critical thinking skills.

Anyone interested in learning computers should first talk to colleagues. Attending on-campus workshops is another step that novices can take to learn how to use the equipment available to them. It would then be a good idea to consult some of the e-mail discussion lists of interest to them and ask other subscribers what they recommend in the way of both hardware and software since both often rely on personal preferences. There is division in most departments concerning the use of Macintoshes or IBMs--often what is available at the institution can determine this choice until one is knowledgeable enough to decide which they prefer.

Although Greenstein describes a few of the word processing options, neither book adequately describes the currently available options in this arena. This is important because it is the most logical place for any historian to begin using the computer. First, find out which word processing program is preferred on your campus and compare it to those accepted by journals in your field. More and more journals prefer submissions on disk as well as paper format to decrease the cost of publication. Also, consult computer magazines or the computer section in the larger newspapers about comparisons and contrasts between the programs. Microsoft Word and WordPerfect stand at the forefront, and knowledge of at least one of those is usually sufficient. Furthermore, these programs are becoming increasingly interwoven--the latest version of Microsoft Word provides on-screen help for users familiar with WordPerfect so that they can easily manipulate text in the Word format. Once you become familiar with this use of the computer, expansion into the use of spreadsheets and databases in both research and teaching is much easier.

The best books about computers and some of the major programs are the "Dummies" series available in almost all stores. Their titles, such as "WordPerfect for Dummies" should not offend anyone. These guides provide instant answers to what you want to do and save you from searching through pages of information in the user's guide.

In conclusion, Mawdsley and Munck would have been better served to title their book "The Use of Computer Databases for Historians." They do, however, correctly assert that the computer "is a truly multi-purpose machine able to carry out a wide variety of complex operations quickly and accurately." Greenstein's book deals with the use of the computer more broadly, yet often superficially enough just to confuse the novice even further; experienced computer users already know the information he is providing. Any historian wanting to enter the world of quantitative history would find these books useful. In the realm of teaching, however, they provide little that cannot be found better explained in other sources.

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Adam Sisman. *A. J. P. Taylor. A Biography*. London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1994. Pp. xiv, 468. Cloth, $30.00.
Christina Scott. *A Historian and His World. A Life of Christopher Dawson*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1992. Pp. 238. Cloth, $34.95.

Christopher Dawson and A.J.P. Taylor were major mid-twentieth-century English historians of international repute. Dawson's major interest was the role of Christianity in Western culture, Taylor's English and European history, especially international relations, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Both men were also what Russell Jacoby has termed "public intellectuals," speaking out in their time on a variety of political issues. For Dawson these issues had mostly to do with the increasing secularization