

implement it in the classroom, and provides student examples when possible. This approach is one that classroom teachers will appreciate and methods instructors will find easily adaptable to their current curriculum. Percoco's *applied history* teaching strategy can be implemented into a methods class curriculum as either one instructional strategy with each activity comprising its syntax, or one can integrate each as activities for use in a variety of instructional strategies such as cooperative learning, mastery learning, concept attainment, and jurisprudential inquiry.

Even after nine years of teaching high school American history and one year as a methods instructor, I was impressed with the variety of critical thinking activities used by Percoco in his U.S. history classroom. While secondary history teachers will find the book a valuable personal resource for adding to their repertoire of classroom teaching strategies, I believe college methods instructors will find it either a great substitute or supplement for existing social studies methods texts.

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**Antony Alcock.** *A Short History of Europe: From the Greeks and Romans to Present Day.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998. Pp. x, 304. Cloth, \$59.95; ISBN 0-312-21003-5. Paper, \$18.95; ISBN 0-312-21036-1.

Antony Alcock has managed to narrate the history of Europe, east and west, during the past 4,000 years in a scant 270 pages. An inherent instinct to charity inclines me to compliment him on this achievement, but having persevered through all of these pages I find charity elusive. Almost from the start I found myself out of sympathy with the author's predominant approach to history as past politics. Granted, one needs a central organizing principle in order to integrate such a vast array of information, and implicitly Alcock tries to find one in the idea of European integration, but Sir John Seeley's late Victorian conception of history is too outdated to speak arrestingly to most of today's undergraduates. Let me be fair: although politics--in the form of impersonal social and economic forces--dominates the book, the author is quite adept at explicating the intricacies of religious disputes such as Petrine doctrine and the Monophysite controversy (though I would have sacrificed here for later mention of Queen Victoria or Freud or Margaret Thatcher) or presenting the (comparatively) exhaustive history of tribal and ethnic groups migrating across or settling down in the Eurasian plain. But for all its lecture room sweep, this book remains a history devoid of humanity. While individuals do get mentioned--a half sentence is the norm--only two--Luther and Hitler!--are presented with any detail. One comes away with the sense that this is history written not for humanists but for--and there is a foreword that calls attention to this--the bureaucrats and technocrats at Brussels. Indeed the book's final chapter on Europe since 1945 treats little of the history of the period and instead

offers an extended essay on the politics of European union, leaving the reader swimming in a sea of acronyms: EMU, EFTA, CAP, QMV, SEA, EMS, CFP, ECSC, EEC, EURATOM, OPEC, EDC ....

In 1962 Stringfellow Barr wrote *The Pilgrimage of Western Man*, a brief history of western civilization organized around the idea of European unity. The usual politics was there, leagues and battles, but so too were the artists and philosophers so that one came away from the book with a feeling for what it meant to be European, an appreciation of the ideals, aspirations, norms, styles, sensibilities, and values that gave a specific texture to population migration, trade expansion, law, politics, and war in that particular region of the world. This is really what is lacking in Alcock's book: a comprehensive well-rounded, and up-to-date synthesis of the kind presented in many of the European history survey texts on the market today. This book's fourteen chapters will get one's students literally from Plato to NATO in the course of a fourteen-week semester, but of the genius of Plato and his relation to the classical inheritance they will have learned little; and the same can be said of NATO and the Cold War. Moreover, the interpretive structure framing individual chapters is sometimes outdated; the Pirenne thesis is no longer one of the key explanatory models for what was once called the "Dark Ages;" few now see the fall of Constantinople in 1453 as responsible for the introduction of Greek learning in Italy and the subsequent emergence of the Renaissance; and for over twenty-five years historians have spoken of a Catholic Reformation antedating Luther rather than simply a counter-reformation in response to him. As for an awareness of European women's history--well, thirteen queens do get mentioned in the course of the book.

The text is readable and the author's grasp of political history is impressive. But I cannot recommend it as appropriate reading for an undergraduate survey course. Most undergraduates would be overwhelmed by the unending flow of information. And with very little in the text to help them construct a hierarchy of significance, they would, I am afraid, put down the book convinced that history is nothing more than a laundry list of names, dates, and events, a view history teachers and scholars in this country have been combating for the past half-century.

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**William Woodruff.** *A Concise History of the Modern World: 1500 to the Present.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998. Second edition. Pp. xii, 401. Paper, \$18.95; ISBN 0-312-21332-8.

It would be difficult to imagine how anyone could write a better overview of the last five hundred years of world history. William Woodruff's book is filled with relevant facts, appropriate questions, interesting anecdotes, and insightful