

REVIEWS

Terry Lee Seip. *"We Shall Gladly Teach": Preparing History Graduate Students for the Classroom.* Washington, DC: American Historical Association, 1999. Pp. viii, 76. \$5.00. ISBN 0-87229-114-6. Order from American Historical Association, Publication Sales, 400 A St., SE, Washington, DC 20003.

Noting the increased attention over the last decade to the quality of postsecondary teaching of history, historian Terry Seip has written a useful pamphlet on the topic. His target audience is university departments of history with graduate programs in which graduate students work as teaching assistants with faculty and/or as instructors of their own courses. Rather than offering a training manual or teaching handbook, Seip has prepared what he calls a "'good practices' proposal for departments to consider and modify" as they develop a history teaching program for their graduate students.

The pamphlet includes three sections: a rationale; teaching assistant preparation; and instructor preparation. In the rationale, a brief history of the recent attention to teaching history is offered, including the initiatives of several professional associations to expand their efforts in this regard. The benefits of formal preparation of graduate students as teachers are suggested, and potential obstacles are identified. Seip also defines the commitment a history department should undertake for a successful teaching preparation program, notably senior faculty leadership and involvement and an investment in a departmental teaching resources library. These factors along with required participation convey to graduate students that teaching is important.

Section II addresses the needs of new teaching assistants through a series of sixteen modules with a suggested time sequence covering one semester. Topics include the first class meeting of the discussion section, ethics, classroom strategies, testing and grading, diversity, and relationships with students. Introduction of a professional teaching portfolio is also recommended. The third section is relevant to graduate students teaching their own courses for the first time; it develops more fully some of the topics in Section II and introduces several new considerations, including various instructional approaches plus the prudent use of technology.

One of the most valuable features of the pamphlet is an extensive set of briefly annotated references at the end of each section. Additionally, there is a bibliography of teaching journals, websites and online manuals, and articles and books related to the teaching of history at the postsecondary level.

The author suggests that after completing the modules on teaching included in the pamphlet, subsequent consideration should be given to theory and undergraduate student learning. Greater attention to the way students learn in undergraduate history courses would further enhance the work. The body of research on how students learn history has expanded greatly in the last decade and Teaching History 26(2). DOI: 10.33043/TH.26.2.102-103. ©2001 Susan Wunder

has contributed to our understanding that teaching and learning are individual and simultaneous. Additionally, encouraging new college history teachers to help their students develop an understanding of the purposes of studying history would be beneficial.

"*We Shall Gladly Teach*" is a readable and persuasive work. It makes the point repeatedly and clearly that preparing graduate students for the teaching aspect of their careers should be a priority of history departments. That this can and should be accomplished through a formal, ongoing program is explained and a prototype is laid out. Sponsorship of the pamphlet by the American Historical Association and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching adds weight to this assertion.

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Don Nardo, ed. *The Rise of Christianity*. San Diego: Greenhaven Press, Inc., 1999. Pp. 224. Paper, \$14.96; ISBN 1-56510-962-7.

The Rise of Christianity is one of a series of anthologies, "Turning Points in World History." The series aims to describe past events that have had "effects and outcomes that change the course of history." This example comprises an introductory essay on the early history of Christianity (down to c. 604); nineteen seminal scholarly essays with contextualizing introductions for each; a selection of primary sources; a secondary bibliography; and an index. The essays range from discussions of the Jewish and Roman contexts of Jesus's life to a brief survey of Christianity since c. 600.

The essays in the volume are accessible; some of them are classics. They are abridged without being violated. Words, names, and ideas that might not be known to students are thoroughly and thoughtfully glossed. The primary sources are also well chosen to document points made in the essays; they too have clear, concise introductions. All in all, the book entirely fulfills the plan laid out by the editors of the series. What this means for teachers will vary, depending on how one uses such material in one's courses. For those who have had success with similar anthologies and/or short excerpts, I recommend this book highly. It is one of the best of the genre that I have read. Those who prefer fewer, longer sources and the voices of fewer experts might not want to assign the book. But in its clear exposition of issues and problems, its presentation of varied ideas, its bibliographies and introductions, they will find much to use in writing lectures and designing syllabi and assignments. Anyone who teaches about the rise of Christianity will find the book an interesting and useful read. All that in 224 pages is a feat indeed.