

REVIEWS

D. Antonio & Wilson J. Warren. *Teaching History in the Digital Classroom.* Armonk, NY & London, UK: M.E. Sharpe, 2003. Pp. xiii, 361. Cloth, \$68.95; ISBN 0-7656-0992-4. Paper, \$26.95; ISBN 0-7656-0993-2.

Finding good books to use with pre-service teachers in history or social studies is not easy. In a class for future teachers, one of the reviewers was derided for contradicting the textbook one term—a sure sign a new one was needed. It is equally if not more difficult to find books for in-service history or social studies teachers. That is why Cantu and Warren's volume is a welcome addition. Many texts in this field reflect a traditional approach to history education. In the last decade, they might have added a chapter on teaching with technology, or taken a stab at updating the sections on assessment and standards, but the basic shape of the texts has not changed.

Cantu and Warren have tried to integrate these topics from the beginning. Rather than ask how technology will change the traditional chalk and talk lesson plan, they challenge students to rethink how technology can create new forms of history and social studies learning. They also allow extended space for discussions of standards in history and social studies, the various approaches of the standards, and different means of assessing historical knowledge.

They also draw readers into research in the field in a more sophisticated and thoughtful way than other comparable texts. Their discussions of research have the missing component—voice—that is lacking in most literature summaries. They do not try to summarize the whole field, but they do try to tell the reader what is important in each research field, and how it applies to improving teaching. This provides an invitation to the reader to engage the research community, not simply to blindly accept findings as “research says ...”

The aim of the book is to change the way people teach history and social studies and to focus teaching on historical thinking and authentic learning. This approach has a strong basis in research that has shown that students need to do history in order to learn it, and to focus on learning a smaller number of historical topics in depth, rather than covering every topic in the textbook.

This book would be a strong choice for a history/social studies methods class. It provides a solid framework for students to understand lesson and curriculum design, serves up good information on topics such as collaborative learning and several detailed chapters on assessment. Charts and tables are used for quick summaries of key points, such as how to write a good essay test.

However, the book would be an even better choice for in-service teachers. Much of the research, information, and history provided would be lost on most pre-service teachers. Students without much experience in schools might get lost in some sections of the book (such as the chapter on teacher beliefs), while those same sections would provoke deep discussion among veteran teachers. People who have been in the classroom for some time would find this book a valuable resource in improving what

they do, changing their class to incorporate technology, getting a better handle on assessment, and extending their teaching to include the AP level.

In future editions, the book should expand its range of vision a bit. A section on the issues raised by students with learning disabilities would be helpful for both novice and experienced teachers, and more examples of best practices from classrooms would round things out. There are also points where the authors could apply some historical and political analysis, such as the politics of history and social studies standards. However, these suggestions of changes are not pointed out as criticisms, but in the spirit of the book, which suggests that history and social studies education will be in a constant state of change and flux for our professional lifetimes.

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Mary Spongberg. *Writing Women's History Since the Renaissance.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. Pp. 308. Cloth, \$65.00; ISBN: 0-333-72667-7. Paper, \$21.95; ISBN: 0-333-72668-5.

Over the past several decades the marked increase in attention given to the field of women's and/or gender studies has opened up many new avenues of study, such as women's narrative and queer theory. Mary Spongberg, Senior Lecturer in Modern History at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia, sets out to complete an ambitious task by chronicling the writing of women's history from "proto-feminism" in the Renaissance to the present. Few studies of this scope have been tackled in the past; Spongberg points to a 1985 *American Historical Review* piece by Bonnie Smith as one of the few to look specifically at women as historical writers. She concedes in the introduction that much of her focus will be on the connection between writing women's history and the development of modern feminism, but she must take the reader through the development of recording women's history in order to make sense of the modern period. To that effect, her first two chapters are devoted to detailing the prevailing view of women and their role in history through the Romantic period. Starting with the Greeks (Aristotle in particular), the author presents standard views of women. This brief overview at times seems a bit perfunctory. She takes some time to explain the concept of books of women worthies through the ages, but completely omits early modern examples of women writing their own stories, such as Laura Cereta, Veronica Franco, and Moderata Fonte. The handful of women with a humanist education who wrote would seem to clearly add to her argument, if only she had made full use of them.

The text becomes stronger as we approach the modern period. Spongberg sees the French Revolution as an important period for women and their view of history, citing Madame de Stael and Mary Wollstonecraft as examples of women putting their own spin on the political activity of the day. She spends the majority of the text examining the