

PowerPoint, for example, to augment a lecture. The authors urge instructors to mine websites for primary sources and illustrations. The unit on the Great Depression, for example, includes websites with photographs of migrant laborers, stories of teenage hobos, the recording of a Fireside Chat, and much more. Reich and Daccord know that websites vary in quality. One of the virtues of their book is that the authors have done the legwork of tracking down websites with excellent content on a variety of historical topics. Both instructors and students might read several sections of the book, notably "Taking Notes with Computers." Indeed an instructor might photocopy these sections for distribution to students.

The book is particularly valuable as a compilation of websites. The authors do not, however, provide a central listing of websites. Rather the reader must search the index for a topic. As the examples in the book reveal, much of the content is aimed at middle and high school teachers. The college and university instructor accordingly must choose material with care. The authors acknowledge that students who are ostensibly taking notes with their laptops might instead be emailing friends, checking sports scores, or playing games, but they offer few solutions to this problem beyond vigorous policing of students. The authors admit, as they should, that technology cannot substitute for inspired teaching. Good teachers will use technology not as an end but rather as a means to making the classroom experience richer. *Best Ideas for Teaching with Technology* succeeds to the degree that it helps instructors stimulate students to think.

Independent Scholar

Christopher Cumo

Ian Tattersall. *The World From Beginnings to 4000 BCE.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. Pp. 143. Paper, \$19.95; ISBN 978-0-19-533315-2.

Human evolution is defined as both the biological and cultural development of humans. Ever since the existence of scientific research, human evolution has been a central topic in the crossfire of scientific fields such as physical anthropology, linguistics, and genetics. Through the examinations done in paleoanthropology, we know today that human beings evolved from the homo sapiens species. Thanks to the results achieved in studying human origins and species, we are nowadays able to estimate that the history of human evolution began more than 4,000 years ago.

This complex history of human evolution is the topic of Ian Tattersall's *The World From Beginnings to 4000 BCE*. In an effort to provide a comprehensive, thoroughly readable overview of the "new world history," Tattersall's work is the first volume in the series *The New Oxford World History* published by Oxford University Press.

The World From Beginnings to 4000 BCE is clearly ambitious in providing the reader with an overview of the first 4,000 years of evolutionary history within 143

pages. The writing style is simple enough to understand, though it is assumed that the reader knows well the basics of early human history in order to follow the content. Each of the seven chapters covers a significant step in the development of the human being. The book does not skip any major historic period, beginning with evolutionary biology and ending with the settlement of homo sapiens, the species from which the modern human directly descended. While all chapter titles concretely follow a "bottom-up" structure in historical order, the content mainly focuses on research (and research methods) of notable human evolution researchers, from evolutionary biologists to primatologists. Tattersall discusses all significant discoveries, including the Heidelberg man, and provides a nine-page summary of the discovery and research on *homo neanderthalensis*. Readers find themselves exposed to results of scientific research of the past and the present, and, if they haven't been familiar with them so far, learn about anthropological methods such as the potassium/argon (K/Ar) technique or the more recent mtDNA technology.

It does not come as a surprise that the author's conclusion is an anthropologist's viewpoint. According to Tattersall, the development of human history has been influenced mainly by external factors that in turn led people to "write" history the way we learn it in classrooms.

This book is well written and structured, though it seems difficult to use "as is" for a classroom book assignment. It is appropriate for an introductory history or anthropology course at the university level. However, the research-rich content will require group discussions led by the teacher. In general, one could say that a strength of the book is the delivery of good teaching material resources. They are useful even at the high school level, such as the chronological overview table or the maps displaying human evolution through migration. A "weakness" of this book is its strong orientation toward academic research of this complex topic. Though it contributes without doubt to provide a better understanding of academic research in this field, this book is not easy to read, nor is it easy to use for a publication series ambitious to offer a comprehensive and readable overview of world history.

Independent Scholar

Elizabeth Do Lam

Paul J. Dosal. *Cuba Libre: A Brief History of Cuba*. Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, 2006. Pp. 152. Paper, \$14.95; ISBN 978-0-882-95246-8.

At a time when many scholars are producing works of big history, Paul J. Dosal and the editors of the Global History series at Harlan Davidson have chosen to produce a work of very small history and have done so with great success. With much recent historiography, particularly in world history, focusing on international developments, multinational occurrences, and issues of global consequence, Professor Dosal's 152 pages of text serve as a reminder of the utility of national histories in undergraduate