

cognitive lenses of that course's discipline to start to connect that horizon to the ground which they walk."

*Teaching Nonmajors: Advice for Liberal Arts Professors* is a versatile tool for professors at a liberal arts college. I would highly recommend this to seasoned professors but especially new professors. Working at a university is challenging with all the demands on a professor professionally, but the added work of engaging non-majors is a struggle. This text provides solid guidelines to equip a professor for a successful and less stressful academic year.

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**John Tosh. *Why History Matters*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008. Pp. 192. Paper \$19.95; ISBN 978-0-230-51248-3.**

In his fascinating book on the place of history in modern society, John Tosh, a social historian at Roehampton University in the United Kingdom, begins with the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Blithely ignorant of the historical forces and precedent in that region, Anglo-American citizens later would be surprised by Iraq's turmoil in the months and years that followed an apparently easy conquest. Other than the 1991 Gulf War, few had any inkling of past interventions or knowledge that British troops had fought their way to Baghdad during the First World War and, in the process of establishing its mandate, took heavy casualties in a series of revolts and insurgencies. The legacy to the modern world was an artificial state with Kurdish and Shiite majorities controlled by a Sunni Islam minority, multiple coups against dictatorial governments, and the ultimate dictator in Saddam Hussein. In Tosh's view, those watching speeches by Tony Blair and George W. Bush were generally unaware of the narrative of Iraqi history. Without this perspective, citizens of these democracies were unable to participate rationally in the political debate. What makes Tosh's message especially interesting is that he places much of the blame for the uninformed citizen squarely on the backs of modern historians who "are strangely reluctant to adopt the role of expert" in ongoing political debates.

The author explores the value of history to the democratic process. In an interesting observation, he notes that modern politicians and those who make up the governing class are "less minded and less qualified to draw on the lessons of history than were any of its predecessors." Yet, this absence of perspective has not prevented modern politicians from Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, to Tony Blair and George W. Bush, from using their own versions of national history to drum up popular support for their political programs. Tosh artfully illustrates the disconnect between fact and fiction by demolishing Thatcher's use of the Victorian age as a model for late twentieth-century social and economic programs. Rather than a golden age, especially for the family as Thatcher alleged, the Victorians lived in an age of economic insecurity, crime, prostitution, unplanned pregnancy, as well as child and wife abuse. Most citizens

of the period were not bourgeoisie but working class and lived according to different norms than those observed in middle-class photographs of the era.

It is the job of the historian, Tosh argues, to enter into the public discourse and challenge analogies the government propagates out of context. While the historian is not the provider of the solution, he or she can help shape the public debate by linking the present with both the past and the possibilities in the future.

John Tosh is an English historian and addresses his message primarily to historians and history students in the United Kingdom. However, American historians, as well as upper-division and graduate students, will find this short work engrossing and the author's comments and illustrations easily transferable to modern America. Teachers will find it contains more than enough grist to use as the basis for seminars on the role of history and its value to the modern era. It is a superb, thought-provoking book that should be in every history teacher's library.

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Stephen A. Bourque

**Linda S. Levstik and Keith C. Barton.** *Researching History Education: Theory, Method and Context.* New York: Routledge, 2008. Pp. 440. Paper, \$51.95; ISBN 978-0-8058-6271-3.

This volume presents a compendium of work by two outstanding social studies education researchers, Linda Levstik and Keith Barton. Its basis rests upon their previous work that has focused on how children and adolescents learn, develop, and apply historical thought and reasoning. The present book extends these efforts through the authors' discussions of the processes involved in their research as well as additional and updated material.

Much of the information noted here centers on the dissection of classroom research that analyzes the introduction of various historical and social studies instructional paradigms used in both elementary and high school classrooms and their effects on the development of both a child's and adolescent's historical thinking. These projects range from how children build a sense of time and chronology to perspectives of historical change. At the heart of these chapters is a continual concentration on the nature of how an historical thinking model might be constructed, used, and evaluated in elementary and secondary classrooms. This is done through developing an understanding of the context of young and adolescent learners and how they build a knowledge base that allows them to view history through a critical lens. The authors offer these thoughts by guiding the reader through a discussion of an idea, or issue, that each of the chapters will center on, providing a classroom example that leads to a research problem, and then concluding with an overview of experimental findings with concurrent analysis. Following these are summary thoughts that tie the chapters together along with an extensive bibliography.