

These frameworks are initiated from both national and international perspectives. For example, one of the selected studies compares groups of young students in the United States and Northern Ireland in terms of their socio-cultural perception of historical change. Yet another talks about New Zealand high school students understanding of their national history. The use of interviews in gathering much of the data provides the reader with a framework from which one can begin to understand a child's historical understanding. These research constructs offer the reader a great insight into the developmental aspects of historical learning.

It is interesting to note that the authors do not limit their research techniques to a qualitative vein. Indeed, their research perspectives are wide ranging and present the reader with a variety of excellent classroom experiments.

While the audience of this book is clearly aimed at post secondary history and social studies education professionals, those teaching history at the elementary and high school levels will also greatly benefit from studying Levsitk and Barton's analysis of historical reasoning so that they might understand these applications and thus move towards improving their student's historical skills. These treatments provide a guideline to the higher level of critical thinking and reasoning skills needed by today's students to successfully understand historical frameworks and concepts.

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**Nena Galanidou and Liv Helga Dommasnes, eds. *Telling Children About the Past: An Interdisciplinary Perspective*. Ann Arbor, MI: International Monographs in Prehistory, 2007. Pp. 324. Paper, \$25.00; ISBN 978-1-879621-40-4.**

*Telling Children About the Past* is an anthology of essays on a diversity of subjects. The focus is on representing the past to "younger audiences." I found it interesting to see that neither of the two editors and none of the contributors are historians in the usual sense of the word: The editors are archeologists and most of the contributors are archeologists or psychologists. Because many of the authors' academic interests are in archeology, most of the chapters focus on the distant past.

The book includes sixteen chapters divided into four parts. The chapters in Part I, "Learning Paths: Cognitive and Psychological Perspectives," are written primarily by psychologists who are interested in the ways in which children come to understand the past. The authors examine the neuro-cognitive and psychological processes that are involved in enabling young people to relate to, recreate, and appreciate past events.

The three other sections of the book examine modes in which the past is conveyed to children. In Part II, "Contexts of Telling I: Digital and Printed Media," three scholars look, in turn, at films, electronic games, and book illustrations. Another compares an author's version of a book with the final, published version. These scholars reveal the contradictions between what scholars know and have written about and what is

presented to children via popular media. The last essay of this section takes a more optimistic view of digital and printed media by presenting the author's experience of his own illustrated children's books.

A helpful critique in this section is Helaine Silverman's chapter on Disney's "visually stunning" film, *The Emperor's New Groove*. Unfortunately, according to the author, Disney created blatant stereotypes and constructed a past that blurs the line between the simulated and the real. Because of the popularity of Disney's films, this chapter might be of special interest to teachers, parents, and other adults, who should be concerned about the false information and images of people and civilizations of the past that are fed to youths and the public at large.

In Part III, "Contexts of Telling II: Museums and Cultural Heritage Sites," the authors argue for creating museum environments that can convey aspects of the past effectively to children through the use of language, family-friendly exhibitions, mixed media, and hands-on activities. One successful interactive activity is discussed in chapter eleven by Lauren Talalay and Todd Gerring, who describe a program at the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, where museum educators teach children about Egyptian mummification practices using a Barbie doll and candies.

Part IV, "Contexts of Telling III: Schools and Special Classrooms," is the final section of the book. It includes three chapters that offer case studies that explore issues of ethnicity and nationhood in very different locales. Chapter 14 presents the Lakota ways of relating the past; chapter 15 examines Brazilian government policy regarding national heritage, and chapter 16 discusses the teaching of prehistory to children in Romania.

The quality of the essays is uneven, but as a whole, the writing is clear and the essays offer a variety of insights into the teaching and learning of the past. Those who would find this collection most useful would likely be public historians, museum educators, and early childhood and elementary school teachers.

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**Frank W. Elwell.** *Macrosociology: The Study of Sociocultural Systems*. Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2009. Pp. 492. Hardback, \$129.95; ISBN 13: 978-0-7734-4900-8.

Frank Elwell's *Macrosociology* is a rare find because it is well written and accessible, yet treats its subject, sociological theory, in the proper manner. Elwell's choice of theoretical traditions covers the "big three" classical thinkers—Marx, Durkheim, Weber—but the readers might find themselves pleasantly surprised by the inclusion of Robert Malthus. The book is broken down into sections based on these four essential theorists, with additional chapters in each section covering thinkers whose ideas build upon or complement the classics. For instance, to Weber's treatment of