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A former high school history teacher, Robert Bain is associate professor of both history and education at the University of Michigan and member of the board of trustees at the National Council of History Education. Recent publications include: "They Thought the World Was Flat?" Principles in Teaching High School History" in How Students Learn: History, Math, and Science in the Classroom (National Academy Press, 2005), and "Rounding Up Unusual Suspects: Facing the Authority Hidden in the History Classroom," Teachers College Record 108 (2006): 2080-2114.

¹ Sean Cavanagh, "World History and Geography Gain Traction in Class: Seeds of Internationally Themed Lessons Were Planted in the 1980s," *Education Week*, March 21, 2007, 10.

² Thomas C. Holt, "Marking: Race, Race-Making, and the Writing of History," *American Historical Review* 100 (1995): 7, 8.

³ Michael Adas, "Bring Ideas and Agency Back In: Representation and the Comparative Approach to World History," in Philip Pomper, Richard Elphick, and Richard T. Vann, eds., *World History: Ideologies, Structures, and Identities* (Blackwell, 1998), 97.

⁴ Though often quoted by historians, I have never found the place where Ladorie wrote or said this. Recently, J. H. Elliott reported that in a correspondence Ladorie urged Elliott to cite him as the source of these distinctions "with confidence." See J. H. Elliott, *Spain, Europe, and the Wider World, 1500-1800* (Yale University Press, 2009), xviii.

⁵ Sam Wineburg makes the compelling argument that the type of thinking in which historians engage needs to be taught; that is, thinking practices such as sourcing, corroborating, contextualizing, or historical empathy are not things people generally just pick up on their own. See Sam Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past* (Temple University Press, 2001).

⁶ Lauren McArthur Harris, "Building Coherence in World History: A Study of Instructional Tools and Teachers' Pedagogical Content Knowledge" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 2008).

⁷ *Ibid.*, 183.

⁸ Mario Carretero, Asunción López-Manjón, and Liliana Jacott, "Explaining Historical Events," *International Journal of Educational Research* 27 (1997): 245-253; Mario Carretero et al., "Historical Knowledge: Cognitive and Instructional Implications," in Mario Carretero and James F. Voss, eds., *Cognitive and Instructional Processes in History and the Social Sciences* (Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1994), 357-376.

⁹ Carretero, López-Manjón, and Jacott, "Explaining Historical Events," 253.

"THE MUSIC IS NOTHING IF THE AUDIENCE IS DEAF": MOVING HISTORICAL THINKING INTO THE WIDER WORLD

Linda K. Salvucci

Readers of *Historically Speaking* are certainly no strangers to practicing and reflecting upon "historical thinking"; witness the 2008 publication of several essays and interviews in the *Historians in Conversation* series, as well as explicit or implicit references to its nature and process in virtually all recent issues.¹ Still, most academic historians, scholars, and authors of popular works of history rarely connect with what goes on in terms of historical thinking in K 12 classrooms in more than a casual usually parental way. To be sure, ongoing controversies such as those involving the Texas social studies standards, the role assigned to slavery in textbook accounts along with commemorations of the outbreak of the Civil War, the Thomas B. Fordham Institute's recently issued report card for state standards for U.S. history, and the yearly polls every July 4th that suggest how poorly Americans understand their Revolution provoke a collective beating of breasts followed, in some circles, by ritual finger pointing at K 12 educators. Unfortunately, with the conspicuous exception of collaborative opportunities presented by the U.S. Department of Education's Teaching American History Grants program, there is little constructive and sustained interaction between those who teach at the university or college level and those who prepare the very students we eventually encounter in our own classrooms. The essays by Fritz Fischer, Bruce Lesh, and Robert Bain each offer compelling reasons for why the larger historical community, if not the general public, should be paying much greater attention to issues involving

the training and professional development of K 12 teachers, the effective instruction of U.S. history high school students, and the pedagogical challenges of teaching increasingly popular and state mandated courses in world history.

Fischer brings a wealth of professional experiences as a K 12 teacher, college history professor and scholar, and program director for history education to bear in striving to link the world of academic history with the world of history pedagogy. As a "go between," or "translator," he emphasizes the process of historical thinking at all levels, drawing upon cognition based studies, such as Sam Wineburg's path breaking *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts*, that explore how students learn history.² In many respects, those of us who teach undergraduate and graduate students instinctively practice what Fischer preaches; that is, we blend "content" with "process" in our classrooms. However, he rightly exhorts us, borrowing the words of Ed Ayers, to show the "ropes and pulleys" by *doing* history in an even more deliberate and transparent manner. The goal is to transcend what Stéphane Lévesque labels as "memory history" by showing students at all levels how we practice our craft.³ After all, when was the last time we merely memorized some facts in preparing a college lecture or professional presentation? Rather, just as when we pursue our own research, we teach college students by moving well beyond the collection and compilation of evidence to analyze, contextualize, and interpret sources, culminating with the articulation of arguments about the past. If K 12 students

could learn history by thinking historically as opposed to memorizing bits of information, they would be more apt to be college, career, and citizenship ready. When it is their turn to debate history and social studies standards, they would do so with an enhanced appreciation of perspectives and points of view, and thus be able to lift the current level of public discourse above silly squabbling about "your heroes versus mine." They would have learned to construct and even appreciate well reasoned and informed arguments; in short, they would know how to engage and listen and debate in meaningful, productive ways because they had internalized "History's Habits of the Mind."

Pie in the sky, you say? Not so, according to Bruce Lesh, who effectively demonstrates how content and process can be taught simultaneously in a sophisticated and demanding manner to public high school students in Maryland (admittedly a state with relatively enlightened standards). Several years ago, this master teacher began his own journey away from memory based history, determined to teach the tools necessary to understand how historical knowledge is created. As Fischer proposes, Lesh employs well crafted questions to organize and drive his instruction, which is grounded in primary and secondary sources rather than intensive text book reading and regurgitation of simple content. Students in his "historical laboratory" examine causality, chronology, perspectives, contingency, empathy, change and continuity over time, significance, and motivation. As his lesson on the Panama Canal demonstrates, Lesh pushes his students to investi

gate text, context, and subtext and then derive reasoned, evidence based conclusions. The process is carefully structured and repeated throughout the year with other case studies, as detailed in his recently published book.⁴ “Just tell me what I need to know for the test!” or “Why won’t you just give us the answer?” give way with these exercises to the development of strong historical thinking skills on the part of Lesh’s students. Indeed, in the current acrimonious political environment, educators, parents, public figures, and policy makers should consider what better serves our students: learning merely *what* to think, or rather learning *how* to think. Emphasizing process over content may even serve to depoliticize the larger public debate.

Fischer has issued calls for building bridges between academics and teachers and for integrating historical thinking into the K 12 curriculum and instruction, while Lesh has proven that the latter can indeed be accomplished in U.S. history high school classrooms. Robert Bain ups the ante even more, challenging us to bring historical thinking to world history, which has emerged as the fastest growing Advanced Placement examination, and is now a year long required course in many states. Here the challenge of how to organize centuries of seemingly disparate content, “the stuff,” is addressed through a variety of strategies that move “messy thinking” toward nested connections, coherent frameworks, and usable big pictures. To make any sense of things, let alone to provide meaningful instruction, world history teachers must demonstrate their own thinking processes, as they move along a variety of pathways between events and concepts. For Bain, the “levels problem” requires teachers to suggest plausible connections, all the more so because of the cognitive inclinations of adolescent students. And here, I think, lies an important insight. Today’s history students approach the past in very personal, if not self referential terms. Aside from reasons best addressed by theories of developmental psychology, there may be other explanations for why this tendency is exaggerated in recent precollegiate generations. Those familiar with the very popular “expanding horizons” approach to social studies curricula will recall that students over the last decades have been encouraged to begin their historical journeys by “thinking locally” in elementary school, as lessons progress outward from home to neighborhood to region to state, then to national and hemispheric communities. At the same time, biography is a preferred tool for early instruction, since reading about historical figures, extraordinary and ordinary, presumably allows students to identify with such characters, and thus to forge emotional and imaginative connections with the past. While this makes a certain amount of sense in terms of trying to hook children on history, Bain rightly points out that history centered upon or emanating from the individual (it’s all about me!) simply does not work well at the global level. The high

school students he studied tended to personify large structural forces and see change as the byproduct of human agency alone. In the case of world history, I would argue, this leads to tunnel vision, to an inability or reluctance to discern perspective, apply context, and make plausible connections across time, space, and place. Without coherent frameworks, without usable big pictures, students end up with the equivalent of unrelated historical sound bites or are simply overwhelmed by “one damned thing after another.” Again, those who teach world history are wise to model the organization of otherwise unmanageable content around central concepts and themes (defined through a variety of paths) to drive student learning. Unless, as Bain suggests, instructors explain their “intellectual moves,”

As an unintended consequence of the 2000 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, popularly known as No Child Left Behind, instructional time in history continues to decline.

students are left to assemble the 500 piece puzzle without the picture on the box.

Fischer, Lesh, and Bain have argued and, indeed, have demonstrated that teachers can be taught to teach well and students can learn to learn well when instruction is grounded explicitly in the principles of historical thinking. Coincidentally, the College Board’s Advanced Placement program recently “redefined” historical thinking skills and now asserts in boldface on its website that they “apply equally to all fields of history.”⁵ Yet K 12 teachers encounter more challenges than ever when attempting to implement these best practices. As an unintended consequence of the 2000 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, popularly known as No Child Left Behind, instructional time in history continues to decline, particularly at the elementary level, since schools (administrators, teachers, and students) now are “held accountable” on the basis of high stakes testing in reading, math, and sometimes science. Several elementary school teachers report that they have been ordered by principals to shift time away from social studies and apply it to the assessed subjects; one study from Indiana suggests that students now receive on average twelve minutes per week of instruction in history.⁶ If this weren’t bad enough, there is evidence that even history courses at the high school level are vulnerable to being replaced by courses in career and college planning, as happened recently with 9th grade world history at a high performing school in San Francisco.⁷ And then there are the problems of severely flawed state standards and poorly designed assessments, as well as drastic and devastating budget cuts that drive even well trained

and dedicated teachers out of classrooms and negatively impact students. Increasingly, K 12 history education has been adversely affected, directly or collaterally, by bitter social debates and damaging fiscal policies. Regrettably, few public figures have stepped forward to sound the alarm, or to champion the cause of history education.

And this brings me to the larger issue of audience, a concern touched upon by all three essayists, but one that goes well beyond the K 12 classroom. If, as Bain suggests, “all politics is local, but all history is personal,” then we need to acknowledge and address the state of “arrested adolescence” in the nation at large when it comes to understanding the nature and value of history. What “the American people” including voters, politicians, and the media seem to want from history (if they want anything at all) are inspiration, affirmation, identification, and/or entertainment from a past that is straightforward and unambiguous. But what professional historians respect and reward most highly are works that use evidence well and craft creative, contextualized, and challenging arguments about pasts more complicated and nuanced. This clash between the commemorative (often celebratory) and the analytical (often critical) is nothing new; consider the epic battles

over the Smithsonian’s Enola Gay exhibit and the National History Standards in the mid 1990s. The historical literalism or fundamentalism so popular in certain circles these days collides almost violently with the impulse among trained historians to privilege revisionism and originality. The result is that one side talks past or shouts at the other, and nobody really listens. Of course, uninformed or ideologically driven opinions will predominate in a world where the skills honed by historical thinking are underutilized. Sadly, it appears that history viewed as “comfort food” versus history understood as “stepping outside of one’s comfort zone” remains a gap nearly impossible to bridge.

But confront this divide we must, or the public will continue to fail to understand and fail to support the pressing need for high quality history education in the schools. Thus, it is imperative for practicing historians to know, engage, and challenge our general as well as particular audiences, a point driven home to me recently in casual conversation with a friend. The day after the first versions of these essays were presented at the June 2010 conference of the Historical Society, I happened to be chatting with Lawrence Wolfe, assistant principal bass of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and principal bass of the Boston Pops, the latter in the midst of its 125th season. When I asked him about the demands of performing the conventional classical repertoire for much of the year and then switching to ostensibly different programming for several holiday and spring weeks, Wolfe seemed unperturbed. In short, he regarded the shift from “classical” to “popular” more as a broadening opportunity than as a schizophrenic chore. The tradi

tional formula for Pops programming, it turns out, blends lighter orchestral works and concerti with new American pieces and aims to educate its listeners and deepen their curiosity and openness to potentially more demanding fare. In other words, there is both an emotional and (calculated) cerebral grab to this approach, generating both engagement and excitement as audiences are spurred to new levels of musical awareness.⁸ This embodies, in short, the process of discovery, as the performers consciously challenge their listeners to stretch themselves a bit. The Boston Symphony Orchestra's classical offerings are never supplanted or dumbed down; rather, they are supplemented, supported, and expanded in carefully thought out ways, thus enhancing the prospects for new dialogues with the audience and eventual engagement with the fuller repertoire. To paraphrase Walter Lippmann, the music becomes something once the audience learns to hear.

So what does all this have to do with the teaching and learning of history? The lesson for historians and history educators, I think, is that we cannot take the audience for granted for any of the history we produce, or alternately write it off or, worse yet, attempt to pander. To the contrary, we need to grab, define, and educate the audience. Courses in music appreciation are offered all the time. Why not make the concerted effort to foster "history appreciation" among the broader public? This should be a collective enterprise, although it does not imply that professional historians must all do the same thing in the same way at the same time. Talented scholars should continue to produce high quality, carefully researched, and well argued monographs and thus *create historical knowledge*. Other publishing historians may utilize such specialized literature to offer interpretive syntheses or even enlightened textbooks. Such writers *convey historical knowledge*, as do skilled authors who write for trade rather than academic presses and thus more explicitly address a wider popular audience. When done well, such work hooks readers on history, which can then be appreciated in ever more sophisticated ways. The point is that an intelligent audience can be cultivated, nurtured, and nudged to new levels of historical understanding. But such purposeful engagement needs to be a conscious, collaborative, and continuing effort by us all.

On the morning after the participants in this forum presented their papers at the Historical Society conference, I attended the panel in which Allan Kulikoff offered "A Modest Proposal to Solve the Crisis in History." Speaking less to the decades long jobs crisis than to: 1) the decline in student enroll-

ments in history courses as well as in numbers of history majors, which peaked in the 1970s; 2) the "antiquated" requirements for the history major, for graduate study, and for tenure; and 3) the fact that at least a segment of the public "craves history" but



THE BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, GEORG HENSCHEL, CONDUCTOR
BEFORE THE "GREAT ORGAN" IN MUSIC HALL

A late 19th century photograph of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. From Mark Antony De Wolfe Howe, *The Boston Symphony Orchestra: An Historical Sketch* (Houghton Mifflin, 1914).

largely ignores the work that academics produce, Kulikoff blamed institutional inertia (path dependence, as he labeled it) and then laid out bold and provocative suggestions to address these problems. What struck me was the extent to which several of them resonated with issues articulated above, even though Kulikoff's focus was post secondary, not K 12 education. For example, using questions rather than content as the organizational principles of survey courses or stressing themes rather than places and eras to define the history major are essentially strategies taken straight from Lesh's and Bain's play books. This suggests once more that a K 16+ coalition is in order. Coincidentally, in response to Kulikoff's exhortation to historians to write "sprightly" books for a wider public, panelist Jon Keljik hit the proverbial nail on the head by responding that the real crisis in history is "the disconnect between us and the public" and that "the general public needs to be better educated before historians can write for them."

So this, in fact, is the task at hand: to train and engage a broader audience for history. This demands systematic and sustained collaboration, as Fischer has suggested, between academic historians and K 12 history teachers. University professors need to learn more about what actually goes on in K 12 classrooms, and to be particularly mindful of the sometimes shocking constraints (most often in the form of state and local requirements) that teachers face. Academic historians must become directly involved in the preparation and professional development of teachers, a pressing responsibility

since at least half of those currently at work in K 12 history classrooms neither majored nor minored in the subject in college. But it is a two way street: professors might well profit from becoming familiar with some of those cognitive studies and pedagogical techniques that make Lesh and Bain so effective with their own history students and student teachers. Beyond the classroom, more historians might consider involvement in worthwhile programs like National History Day, whose student participants, including the non gifted, have been found to outperform their peers in standardized tests in all subjects, to write better, and to demonstrate valuable college and career skills.⁹

There is an important political dimension to all this as well. Unlike those infamously defective social studies standards produced last year by the State Board of Education of Texas, social studies standards created recently in Colorado actually incorporate clear principles of historical thinking. Why? Because the co chair of the committee that wrote them was Fritz Fischer.¹⁰ Professional historians ought not be bashful about volunteering their much needed expertise in the public arena, just as readers of *Historically Speaking* and lovers of history, be they lawyers, physicians, or accountants by day, also must speak to the value of history education. If Kulikoff is correct in his analysis of trends, then we have to reach not just the children, but also all those people who chose not to major in history since the 1970s and who now (hint hint) make decisions and set policies that affect the teaching, learning, and appreciation of history. Again, the nation faces declining instructional time in history, misguided or mindless standards, inadequate assessments, diminished opportunities for professional development, and increasing disregard for historical studies. In pushing his blueprint for educational reform, President Obama often speaks of "winning the future." But we are the ones who must not be bashful about questioning policies that put all of us in danger of losing the past.

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"Cuba and the Latin American Terms of Trade: Old Theories, New Evidence," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 31 (2000): 197-222, which in 2001 was awarded the Conference on Latin American History Prize for Best Article. She is co-author of *Call to Freedom, a U.S. history text book for 8th and 9th graders published by Holt, and is writing a book with the working title of "Ironies of Empire: The United States Cuba Trade in a New Atlantic World, 1762-1868."*

¹ Donald A. Yerxa, ed., *Recent Themes in Historical Thinking: Historians in Conversation* (University of South Carolina Press, 2008).

² Sam Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past* (Temple University Press, 2001).

³ Stéphane Lévesque, *Thinking Historically: Educating Students for the Twenty-First Century* (University of Toronto Press, 2008)

⁴ Bruce Lesh, "Why Won't You Just Tell Us the Answer?" *Teaching Historical Thinking in Grades 7-12* (Stenhouse, 2011).

⁵ See the AP's "Historical Thinking Skills" at <http://advancesinap.collegeboard.org/historical-thinking>.

⁶ Phillip Van Fossen, "Reading and Math Take So Much of the Time...: An Overview of Social Studies Instruction in Elementary Classrooms in Indiana," *Theory and Research in Social Education* 33 (2005): 376-403.

⁷ "History Class is History at San Francisco's Lowell High

School," *San Francisco Examiner*, April 7, 2011, at <http://www.sfoxaminer.com/local/education/2011/04/history-class-history-san-franciscos-lowell-high-school>.

⁸ See also "America's Orchestra: The Boston Pops at 125," National Public Radio, Weekend Edition, July 3, 2010, at www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=128239422&sc=emaf

⁹ The full National History Day Program Evaluation is found at www.nhd.org/NHDWorks.

¹⁰ For the current Colorado Social Studies Standards, see [http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/AdoptedAcademicStandards/Social Studies Adopted 12.10.09.pdf](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/AdoptedAcademicStandards/Social%20Studies%20Adopted%2012.10.09.pdf).



GALILEO THEN AND NOW: A REVIEW ESSAY

William R. Shea

The authors of these books about Galileo and the science of his age follow paths that diverge in interesting and striking ways, but they all agree about Galileo's towering achievements in astronomy and physics. An instrument, the telescope, changed the world and compelled us to rethink our place in the universe. Galileo had eyes that were prepared to see new things and a hand that enabled him to depict what he saw. He was not only a gifted observer, but also an exceptional draftsman, which enabled him to discover what others had failed to see or lacked the ability to record. The telescope, invented around 1590 in Italy, was a crude device that enlarged four or five times and was little more than a plaything. Galileo had the brains to see its potential. He also had the good fortune of having access to the best lenses in Europe, those that were made on the island of Murano, just off Venice and to the present day the capital of glasswork. Without the unknown and unsung craftsmen who made excellent lenses, Galileo would not have been able to improve the telescope and render it capable of magnifying fifteen times, which is required to see the features of the celestial bodies that he recorded. Nor would he have achieved lasting fame as the Columbus of a new heaven. With his new instrument, Galileo made eight discoveries, all of them confirmed except the last, whose correct interpretation was beyond his ken. First, Galileo saw that the Moon has mountains and valleys and, hence, that it resembles the Earth. This was exciting news: if the Moon is like the Earth, then it might be inhabited! Second, innumerable stars popped out of the sky, and untold worlds were suddenly and unexpectedly revealed. Third, the Milky Way, which looks like a

white band in the sky, turned out to be a vast number of small stars that are invisible to the naked eye. Fourth, the Moon has "earthshine" for the same reason that we have "moonlight," only brighter be

H. Floris Cohen, *How Modern Science Came into the World* (Amsterdam University Press, 2010).

J.L. Heilbron, *Galileo* (Oxford University Press, 2010).

David Wootton, *Galileo Watcher of the Skies* (Yale University Press, 2010).

cause the Earth is four times as big as the Moon. The fifth discovery was even more sensational, as Galileo loudly proclaimed, for it made him the first person to observe new satellites. They were four in number and they went around Jupiter. Such a discovery had not been anticipated, even in the wildest dreams of philosophers or astronomers. Galileo named them, "Medicean stars," in honor of the ruling family of Tuscany where he was born and where he soon hoped to be recalled. Sixth, Venus was revealed as having phases, an observation that proved that it orbited around the Sun, not the Earth. Seventh, even the Sun held a surprise: its face is covered with spots. The eighth, and the only problematic of Galileo's discoveries, was what he took to be two satellites revolving around Saturn. They were troublesome because they changed shape

and occasionally even disappeared. Galileo was baffled and made no secret of his embarrassment. What he had observed were what we now know to be the rings of Saturn that are sometimes seen edgewise, when they are hard to detect, and sometimes slanted when they can be identified with a more powerful telescope than the one he had. This was only achieved by Christiaan Huygens several years later.

The three authors also concur in celebrating Galileo's achievements in physics and especially his discovery that all bodies fall at the same speed regardless of their weight. This was historically important because it led Newton to realize that new laws of motion were required to explain why this should be the case. The story that Galileo dropped balls from the Leaning Tower of Pisa is probably apocryphal, but he showed great ingenuity in devising experiments with rolling balls along an inclined plane. He carefully measured the distance they traveled and the time it took. The outcome was the law that relates distance to the square of the time (for those whose memory reaches back to high school physics, this will be familiar as: $s = \frac{1}{2}gt^2$, where s stands for distance, g for the acceleration caused by gravity, and t for time). The insight behind Galileo's reasoning is the surprising fact that the vertical and horizontal components of projectile motion are independent. He illustrated this by showing that when balls are projected horizontally from the same height they go further if impelled with a greater force but regardless of the force, they strike the ground at exactly the same time as a ball dropped vertically from the same height when the balls were projected.

H. Floris Cohen's *How Modern Science Came into*