

Confessions of a Former History Teacher

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I am sorry.
For thinking
I was the teacher.
For talking
instead of listening.
For believing
and conceiving that
my ways would
teach you something about
your history.
For preaching
to the choir.

I am sorry for
pop quizzes,
vocabulary tests,
written exams, and
tedious notes
on the overhead projector.
And for using them
to gauge how much
you know about
your past.

I thought I had what
I needed to show you
what you needed

to know.
The winds of change blew
yourstories
right past me.

I should have known that in
one year
you could tell me
more about
“Micronesian History”
than I could ever hope to
learn in a lifetime.

You were *jitdam*.¹

I am sorry.
That “F” was meant for me.

1. In Marshallese, *jitdam* means to study one’s genealogy.