

Godfrey, Donald G., ed. *Methods of Historical Analysis in Electronic Media*. Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2005. 420 pp. \$39.95.

*Methods of Historical Analysis in Electronic Media* is an excellent resource for guiding researchers through the complexities of conducting broadcast histories. This anthology of essays, written by some of the leading broadcast historians in the United States, addresses basic methodological issues, the challenges of carrying out historical research, and current trends in broadcasting history. The essays are well written, accessible without being simplistic, and exceptionally useful to novice historians.

The anthology is comprised of fifteen essays edited by Donald Godfrey, a noted broadcast historian and current editor of the *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*. The essays are organized into categories that provide a broad perspective on many different aspects of broadcasting history. The inaugural section, "Traditional Historiography," contains four essays that focus on canonical issues in broadcasting history. His lead essay establishes a strong foundation for the entire collection by explaining basic, but nonetheless useful, methodological issues, such as literature reviews, discovery and analysis, and organizational structures. Louise Benjamin provides an excellent explanation of primary and secondary sources, and guidelines for evaluating historical evidence, and Michael Murray offers valuable insights on conducting personal interviews and their uses—and pitfalls—in making historical claims. Finally, Mary Beadle's essay presents effective tutelage on the usefulness of the visual components of electronic media to historical analyses.

The second major section is entitled "Eclectic Methods of History." While the essays are indeed eclectic, focusing on legal history, critical theory applied to media history, and quantitative methods in historical research, they nevertheless provide interest-

ing insights into the research process. Kyu Ho Yuom's essay offers useful information about conducting legal research, particularly assessing the quality of online sources versus print, where to publish, and the undeniable (but often overlooked) importance of proofreading one's work. John Armstrong's relevant piece on applying critical theory to historical research is the anthology's only nod to a controversial issue within the larger historical community: the conflict between "objective" versus theory-driven historical research. The last essay in this section is Robert Avery's well-argued piece on the usefulness of quantitative methods in historical research.

Section three concentrates on "A New Look at Electronic Media" with three authors assessing new trends in broadcasting history. Michael Keith supplies a detailed literature review of cultural histories in broadcasting, while Craig Allen wisely tutors researchers to reassess the accepted wisdom of traditional broadcasting histories, particularly those written by celebrities and corporate insiders that lack scholarly rigor. Marvin Bensman's essay on the impact of technological changes on both broadcasting media and the process of historical research provides positive and useful insights.

The fourth section of the anthology, "New Perspectives in Topical Issues," also addresses current trends in broadcasting histories. Rebecca Ann Lind's excellent essay reminds us that women and people of color played significant roles in the development of radio and television, although the difficulty of finding primary sources makes their stories difficult to research and reveal. Tim Larson effectively illuminates the significance of local broadcasting histories, which are often overlooked in favor of corporate histories, and Dale Cressman,

delivers a well written essay on both the importance and the difficulty of conducting biographies.

The final section provides two essays under the heading "For the Record." Chuck Howell shares extremely useful information regarding archival resources around the United States, while Christopher Sterling effectively reviews specific areas of broadcasting history and energetically reminds us of the considerable research that remains to be done.

Despite its many positive attributes, the anthology has some shortcomings. While many of the essays furnish excellent literature reviews, others tend to repeatedly cite the same established sources. Furthermore, although the title suggests an overview of historical methods for all electronic media, the majority of the essays focus on the broadcasting media exclusively. Although information contained in the essays may be applied to researching other electronic media (such as film, the World Wide Web, or digital media), few of the essays focus significant attention on anything other than broadcasting.

Nevertheless, *Methods of Historical Analysis in Electronic Media* is an excellent resource for individuals who want to learn how to conduct broadcasting histories, as well as professors looking for a textbook for their students. The well respected authors who contributed to this anthology effectively shared their considerable knowledge, expertise, and obvious passion for doing historical research, and the book is an excellent resource for anyone wanting to share in those qualities.

Susan L. Brinson  
Auburn University

Presnell, Jenny L. *The Information-Literate Historian: A Guide to Research for History Students*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. 242 pages. \$12.95.

Many who teach journalism or communication history are familiar with the "deer in the headlights" look of undergraduate students when the dreaded research paper that is due at the end of the term is discussed. The very mention of primary sources and, gasp!, the fact that they cannot be found on Wikipedia sends students into shock. Overcoming their research paralysis can be challenging, and teaching the differences between primary and secondary

sources can be time-consuming—especially for those on the quarter system.

Jenny L. Presnell, an information services librarian and a history and American studies bibliographer at Miami University of Ohio, found undergraduate history students at her institution to be similarly unprepared to do basic research. The idea for *The Information-Literate Historian* germinated during a required course on historical research that she taught to prepare undergrads

for capstone classes in topics as diverse as modern China and the fourteenth amendment. Dissatisfied with other textbooks, she decided to write the book she wished had been available.

The paperback aims to give students the information they need to conduct a project successfully, and chapters take them step-by-step through the process of historical research: finding a topic (and making it manageable); developing a research question;

locating secondary sources; tracking down primary sources in collections and on the Internet; vetting the information; and presenting the research in written form or via a PowerPoint presentation or Web site. Numerous resources are included in each chapter (there is no bibliography). Students working on journalism history topics will want to pay particular attention to the newspaper indices, and the list of sources of historic images contained interesting leads, including the Internet address for the Daguerreian Society.

Additional "Search Tips" provide concise information for finding items such as articles and monographs in library catalogs or resources in subject-specialized indices such as *America: History and Life*. "Screen shots" of Web pages often accompany these tips, which help readers visualize the skills being described. For example, Presnell takes students through a keyword search of *Historical Abstracts*, "demonstrates" how to use the database's date-limiting feature, and then includes a third screen shot to illustrate the results of one search.

These portions clearly are geared for her undergraduate audience, but other sections seem much more appropriate for doctoral students undertaking longer projects. For example, she includes considerable information about locating information in

archives in the United Kingdom and other countries, as well as searching for primary sources dealing with ancient history or medieval European history. Most undergraduates would not have the research or language skills to explore arcane topics, let alone the time required for such projects.

The final chapter covers options for presenting the completed research project: papers, talks utilizing PowerPoint, and designing Web sites. Most of my undergraduate students have trouble organizing and writing an eight- to ten-page paper, so I was hoping that Presnell would discuss outlining, ways to present other scholars' arguments, how to cite information, and more. Unfortunately, she devotes less than four pages to the mechanics of constructing a paper and instead directs students to sources such as *Writing History: A Guide for Students*. Most of the chapter—some twenty pages—focuses on planning and designing a Web site, with examples drawn from Monticello, the Web of Memory, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Only one student-constructed site was discussed, and it was completed about eight years ago during a University of Virginia seminar on Digital History and the American Civil War. Site visitors are encouraged to e-mail the student creators—all of whom have long since graduated—so a more recent example

would be helpful. Also, given that many communication departments and journalism schools are trying to incorporate new media into curricula, I would have appreciated information about how the instructor integrated teaching (and primary sources) with technology.

This book seems like a good fit for mainstream historians who teach classes such as Presnell's. It also has a place in journalism schools or communication departments that offer graduate seminars on qualitative historical research methods, although the revised edition of *Historical Methods in Mass Communication* by James D. Startt and Wm. David Sloan is always a good text. I would not, however, assign it to my mass communication history students due to its focus on mainstream history and breadth of material.

One final note: A second printing would benefit from a more thorough proof-reading. Quite a few errors occurred in typesetting, causing odd substitutions (such as 4 3 6 cards instead of 4x6) and incorrect addresses for a number of Web sites, including the Louvre Museum and the Center for Research Libraries' Foreign Newspapers database.

Kimberley Mangum  
University of Utah

**Stole, Inger L. *Advertising on Trial: Consumer Activism and Corporate Public Relations in the 1930s*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006. 290 pp. \$25.**

In *Advertising on Trial: Consumer Activism and Corporate Public Relations in the 1930s*, Inger Stole begins from the standpoint of a contemporary United States in which few citizens question commercialization of the public sphere; omnipresence of advertising messages; or political dominance by U.S. business institutions. She looks back to a time in the late 1920s through the 1930s when a second-wave consumer movement challenged the condescension, puffery, and misrepresentation then endemic to print and radio advertising.

Before addressing the consumer critique of advertising and the advertising industry's successful counterattack, which is the focus of *Advertising on Trial*, Stole begins by describing the transformation of the U.S. economy from local production and distribution by many manufacturers to national mass production and distribution by a few oligopolistic industries following the Civil War, an economy that matured after a decade of mergers around 1900. This shift fueled the first-wave consumer movement

of the Progressive Era, with its focus on regulating the quality of foods and drugs manufactured in distant cities. That movement led to the passage of the federal Pure Food and Drugs Act of 1906; but Stole, an assistant professor at Illinois' Institute of Communications Research, argues these activists largely ignored the emerging field of advertising.

In the 1920s, following the success of propagandistic advertising during World War I, advertising became the chief means by which manufacturers communicated with consumers. As the depression began, the second-wave consumer movement criticized advertising as wasteful and deceptive. The leading consumer group seeking advertising regulation was Consumers' Research, Inc., the main focus of the book. Founded in 1929 by Stuart Chase and Frederick Schlink, who co-authored the bestselling *Your Money's Worth: A Study in the Waste of the Consumer's Dollars* in 1927, Consumers' Research soon became a testing laboratory for consumer products with results distributed

via the *Consumers' Research Bulletin*. Chase left Consumers' Research in 1932 to continue his writing career, and Schlink, an engineer, became director and was joined by Arthur Kallet, another engineer from the American Standards Association.

Stole notes that the advertising critique was gaining popularity at the same time when companies were cutting advertising budgets as the economy collapsed. Of equal concern, the new Roosevelt administration—especially Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Rexford Tugwell—clearly sympathized with consumer interests. The advertising industry realized it must defend itself against the growing consumer movement and the introduction of the Tugwell bill (S1944) in 1933. Its passage would treat false and ambiguous advertising claims for foods, drugs, and cosmetics as misbranded and subject the advertised products to confiscation by the Department of Agriculture.

Although the advertising trade press earlier attacked Consumers' Research for misleading consumers with unscientific

Copyright of Journalism History is the property of E.W. Scripps School of Journalism and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.