Chapter 20

Historical Understanding

Beyond the Past and into the Present

Veronica Boix-Mansilla

> [B]y liberalizing the mind, by deepening the sympathies, by fortifying the will, history enables us to control, not society but ourselves—a much more important thing it prepares us to live more humanely in the present and to meet rather than foretell the future.
>
> —Carl Becker (1915)[1]

Introduction

A fundamental challenge underlies history education. While students explore the actions of individuals and societies in the past, most educators hope that what they learn will somehow inform their ability to make sense of the world they inhabit.[2] Yet, the relationship between past and present in history education remains broadly unexplained. What are the major stumbling blocks that students and teachers find as they begin to utilize what they know about the past to interpret the present? How can an understanding of the rise of Nazi Germany and the Holocaust prepare students to make sense of recent tragic events such as the mass murders in Rwanda, Bosnia, and Kosovo? Most important, how can we, as educators, assess students' ability to link past and present in ways that are respectful of the discipline of history and personally meaningful?

Attempting to examine the present through the lens of history carries with it important risks. Left to their "unschooled minds,"[3] students (and teachers) will likely exhibit the "sins" of anachronism and decontextualization. They may fail to properly historicize such constructs as "prejudice" or "propaganda" and remain unable to capture the unique ways in which "prejudice" or "propaganda" have changed form and meaning over time and across societies. In addition, linking past and present in history education may reinforce students' intuitive inclinations to interpret the past through the lens of their everyday contemporary experience. Unschooled in the discipline of history, students may believe that they can "know" the lives of people in the past in the same way they "know" their contemporaries. Conversely, they may come to believe that understanding the lives of individuals and societies in the past yields immediate understanding of people and societies in the present. Both stances are "illusions of understanding"; they may satisfy the standards of truth of the unschooled mind, but they fall short of disciplinary standards of historical understanding.

Simplistic linkages between past and present in history education impose additional threats to historical understanding. Teachers and students may succumb to the temptation to put history to the service of particular moral, social, or political values. No matter how desirable such passions may be (e.g., democracy, respect for human rights, or appreciation for national identity), subordinating history education to values in this manner often requires that historical accounts be simplified, indeed reduced, to a collection of facile "myths" about one group or one person's "heritage," "identity," or "culture." Thus conceived, historical accounts may become unimpeachable dogmas and moral "lessons" to guide present actions.[4] Within this moral framework, the disciplinary skepticism that might lead one to legitimately question the validity of historical accounts is mistakenly perceived as an affront to the values that such an account is said to embody. Subordinating history to values education undermines deep historical understanding when it forces teachers and students alike to lose sight of the meticulous process by which understanding of the past is established and revised by historians, no matter how difficult and morally problematic the past may be.

Misconceptions of this kind abound both in students' intuitive historical understandings and in their efforts to interpret the present. By linking past and present in history education and by challenging students to use what they know about the past to make sense of current events, teachers address a pivotal aspect of historical understanding. They embark with their students on the task of navigating the tension between the feeling of familiarity and the feeling of estrangement from the human

beings whose lives they attempt to understand. In referring to such tension, Wineburg alerts us to the fact that "neither of these poles [familiarity and distance] does full justice to history's complexity, and veering to one side or the other dulls history's jagged edges and leaves us with cliché and caricature" (p. 490).[5]

Faced with the challenge of preparing students to use what they learn about the past to think better about the present while avoiding cliché and caricature, teachers are left with two pedagogical options. They may chose to teach the past carefully and rely on the hope that students eventually will appropriately bring to bear historical knowledge and analytic tools when they confront novel social or political processes in the future. Alternatively, teachers may scaffold students to make such connections by giving them multiple supervised opportunities to do so, identifying students' difficulties, and orienting their efforts.

In this chapter, I examine the possibilities and challenges inherent in assessing and scaffolding students. If helping students use their understanding of the past to interpret the present is one of our goals for history education, we must find valid indicators that allow us to assess the degree to which students are moving in the desired direction. In other words, we must explore how students "use history" successfully and when they fail to do so with disciplinary rigor. Bearing this challenge in mind, I examine a series of criteria and standards that may help teachers discern when students are using their understanding of the past appropriately to examine comparable processes in the present.

Broadly speaking, particular developments in the past may be linked to contemporary events in two major, though not mutually exclusive, ways. A narrative link portrays the past as antecedent to the present under study, relating it by threads of continuity and change over time. The present appears as evolving from the past, and such a developmental process provides the body of the historical narrative. A comparative link contrasts past and present as somewhat discrete cases. The unfolding of events in each of the cases is compared across societies as examples of "totalitarization" or "genocide." As Peter Stearns proposes, underlying both a narrative and a comparative approach is the skill of identifying continuity and change, similarities and differences among periods or societies. However, a comparative approach proves more demanding because it requires consideration of two particular processes of change over time.[6]

In this essay, I focus mainly on the comparative link. I examine a series of assessment criteria that emerge from analysis of students' work in which they apply what they know about the Holocaust to a media account of Rwanda. I begin by describing the challenge of understanding the Holocaust and comparing this genocide with the one that took place in Rwanda in 1994. I propose four criteria to assess students' ability to use the Holocaust as a lens to explore the Rwandan case, and I illustrate these criteria with successful and unsuccessful examples of students' work. I conclude with an analysis of the possibilities and challenges of using historical understanding as a lens to examine contemporary processes in history classrooms.

Understanding the Holocaust

The Holocaust, the systematic murder during World War II of European Jews and other minorities, resists simple explanation. Understanding this dramatic historical episode entails becoming knowledgeable about (a) the social and human experiences that shaped (and were shaped by) the period, and (b) the fabric of disciplinary modes of thinking by which such experiences are established and interpreted. As students learn about the events that culminated in the Holocaust, they gain a sense of the range of forces that made possible the unleashing of genocide in Europe between 1941 and 1945. Key occurrences such as Hitler's ascension to power, Goebbels' propaganda, the passage of the Nuremberg Laws of 1935, Kristallnacht, and the adoption of the "Final Solution" are not isolated units of factual information. Rather, they are embodied in historical interpretations of the period that give them meaning.[7]

Naturally, narratives about the Holocaust vary. They do not embody an exact correspondence with the events as they took place.[8] Instead, they are driven by different questions and interpretive frameworks, establish different bodies of evidence, and consider different actors' points of view in order to propose distinct explanations of how and why things "seem to have happened."[9] For example, a great body of historical work (e.g., Dawidowicz, Jaeckel, and Nolte)[10] focuses on Hitler's ideology of hatred and his blueprint for mass murder as the driving force of the Nazi's anti-Jewish politics. Other historians (e.g., Broszat and Mommsen, and, more recently, Goldhagen[11]) reject this hypothesis and propose

that Jewish extermination emerged within the chaotic structure of a polycratic government system and a culture of "eliminationist anti-Semitism" in the Third Reich.[12]

For most historians, accounts of the Holocaust are validated when they survive the scrutiny of their community of peers—scrutiny that embodies contemporary standards for historical inquiry (e.g., a disposition against careless interpretation of sources, monocausal explanations, and unilateral accounts).[13] Likewise, in the best history classes, students are given multiple opportunities to explore currently held accounts of the past and to engage in historical modes of thinking. They examine social, political, and cultural developments by determining their historical significance;[14] building multicausal explanations and considering various historical actors' points of view;[15] weaving together historical narratives and discerning among competing accounts;[16] and interpreting sources to establish evidence.[17] Given the nature of historical knowledge, students demonstrate their best understanding of the Holocaust when they master events and broader interpretations about the period *and* when they are able to engage in the habits of mind and standards of thinking that have proven most powerful in determining whether and how things happened in the past.

Beyond the Holocaust: The Rwandan Genocide of 1994

During the past five years, Americans have been confronted with extensive media accounts of the mass killing of Tutsis by Hutus in Rwanda and the impossibility of reconciliation between these two groups. Such reports have provided opportunities for students and their families to use what they have learned about totalitarian regimes and genocide in Nazi Germany to make sense of the incomplete, fragmentary, and partisan information presented to them. Important questions emerge as the tragic experience of Rwanda (or Kosovo) enters our collective consciousness. Would an in-depth study of Nazi Germany enhance students' ability to look deeply into these more recent cases of genocide? What misconceptions would students elicit in such a complex attempt at transfer?

Like post–World War I Germany, Rwanda in the early 1990s experienced a sustained progression of state-sponsored mass murder of innocent members of a minority group. While distant from each other in time and space, both societies experienced the preconditions, development,

and consequences of genocide, as defined by Article II of the United Nations Genocide Convention. In potentially genocidal societies, ancient conflicts between groups are harbored in the collective memory. Such hatreds may lie beyond the manifest beliefs of a people at a particular time but remain alive, tacitly, in the songs, rituals, humor, and everyday customs handed down from previous generations. In pregenocidal periods, indicators of an exaggerated sense of "the other" abound, where "otherness" can be defined as ethnic, cultural, religious, or economic difference. During such periods, political or economic crises typically find a bureaucracy and business leadership under the direction of the undemocratic elements of society. These crises build on religious leaders and educators who fail to stress cooperation or respect and monolithic media that present a distorted view of history in the hope of establishing a new social order. Conditions of this sort deepen the economic and political fractures, precipitating mass killings.[18]

While common features across cases of genocide are interesting to the social scientist, they are insufficient to the historian who seeks to discern the unique path taken in each instance of genocide.[19] Generic characteristics of potentially genocidal societies play out according to the particular material and social contingencies within which they operate. For example, while Germany and Rwanda both operated with an exacerbated sense of "other," the distinct meaning of "otherness" in each case impacted the development and reach of the resultant genocide differently.

In Europe, anti-Semitism was rooted in the perceived theological and psychological need to differentiate Christianity from the religion from which it had separated.[20] During the twentieth century, and under the pressures of the Treaty of Versailles, hyperinflation, and the progressive ungovernability of Germany under the Weimar Republic, the Nazis built on an existing anti-Jewish sentiment to gain access to power. They transformed "otherness" into an "unredeemable" trait by adopting a biological definition based on "race." Thus defined, Judaism served as the basis for a ghastly, coherent, and single-minded ideology demanding the total elimination of stateless Jews who were unable to counterattack as a cohesive unit.[21] The technology that allowed the Nazis to carry out their total elimination plan—modern railway networks and gas chambers established for the sole purpose of murder—responded to the country's industrialized status. Its systematic nature and efficiency responded to the way such technology was used to "protect" Germany from the biologically defined "Jewish threat."

In Rwanda (as well as in Burundi, and in parts of Uganda and Tanzania), the tensions between Tutsis and Hutus were long-standing. While no reliable record of precolonial Rwanda remains, analysis of the oral tradition suggests that Hutus and Tutsis arrived in Rwanda in distinct and successive immigration streams (with the Hutu groups having settled there several centuries ahead of the Tutsi). Hutus descended from the Bantu people, Tutsis from the Nilotic people, and each group had its particular customs and physical archetypes. Over time, these two groups came to share language and religion; they intermarried and lived intermingled with each other, sharing the same territory in small chiefdoms. Historians and ethnographers have highlighted the limitations of the term "ethnicity" and the controversial expression "tribal rivalries" to characterize the differences and tensions between these two social groups.[22] They propose, instead, that differences and tensions stemmed from their differing economic status and political placements within those chiefdoms. Tutsis were herdsmen and thus considerably wealthier than their Hutu neighbors in a country where cattle were perceived by both groups as a most valuable possession. Hutus, on the other hand, typically were agriculturists. Hutus were not allowed to own cattle, a symbol of wealth, power, and good breeding.[23] Although some Tutsis worked the land and some Hutus did indeed own cattle, the term "Tutsi" became synonymous with political and economic power and prestige, and Tutsis and Hutus defined themselves in opposition to each other. Such perceptions of self and other changed over time.[24]

Under colonial rule, Germans, and later Belgians, utilized racial theories to justify the social stratification that they found upon their arrival. They saw Tutsis, whose physical archetypes are tall, thin, and more "white looking," as a race of warrior kings. Hutus, more commonly shorter and darker, were seen as natural subordinates.[25] Hatred between the Tutsi rulers and the Hutu majority grew with progressive incidents of violent oppression committed by Tutsis against Hutus. After the Hutu revolution of 1959, the racist ideology that had dominated the colonial period was not destroyed but merely turned on its head. The Tutsis (many of whom sought refuge in neighboring Uganda and Zaire) became the symbol of old economic and political oppression and the scapegoats for all social injustices.

By 1991, exiled Tutsi-armed groups were reentering the country in an attempt at initiating a civil war. In most cases, these were the sons of the original exiles, many of whom had never lived in postindependence

Rwanda. In 1994, the economic crisis trigged by the fall of the coffee market and the assassination of Rwandan President Habyarimana left the country in the hands of the most radical Hutus, who openly incited mass murder of all Tutsis as a move of "self-defense." Opportunistic looting, deadly beatings, and machete assassinations of armed as well as innocent Tutsis and "moderate Hutus" spread across large parts of the country. The "incomplete" and unsystematic character of the Hutu genocide corresponded to the political and economic content of the perceived "Tutsi threat" in agrarian Rwanda.

In sum, while an extreme sense of "other," rooted in long-standing differences and conflicts, is observable in both interwar Europe and late-twentieth-century Rwanda, the definitions of "otherness" and the contexts in which such definitions took root were distinct, as were the implications for the nature of the two genocides that unfolded. In Germany, millions of stateless, landless, and unarmed Jews, unable to defend themselves in any systematic manner, became victims of a stepwise progression toward mass murder. The enviable German technological capacity of that time was tragically put in service to the Nazi policy of total elimination of (what they saw as) the "Jewish threat" to the biological pool of the nation. In Rwanda, by contrast, the "Tutsi threat" was evidenced by visibly armed groups returning to the country in 1994 and rooted in centuries of Tutsi political and economic domination. Indeed, systematic killing of Hutus by Tutsis had taken place in neighboring Uganda in 1972. The predominance of theft and the disorderly machete killings instigated by deadly agrarian metaphors (e.g., "cleaning the bushes") reflected the political and economic definition of "otherness" in agrarian, preindustrial Rwanda and the long-standing history of violence between the groups in the region.

Well-framed comparisons between past and present genocides recognize important commonalties but do not seek to assert identity between cases. On the contrary, comparisons provide the background against which particular qualities of separate instances are brought to light. By highlighting specific commonalties and differences, historical comparisons are necessarily selective. Conclusions drawn from a comparison depend to a great degree on the terms compared. Consider, for example, two explanations for the weak democratic edifice of the Weimar Republic that resulted from two distinct comparisons.

On one hand, compared with its Dutch and English counterparts, the German liberal bourgeoisie during the years preceding the rise of

National Socialism surfaces as relatively limited in size, power, and liberal qualities. Historians have argued that the "premodern" aristocratic orientation of the German upper bourgeoisie was a key threat to the sustainability of the democratic spirit of the Weimar Republic.[26] On the other hand, compared to the preindustrial or quasifeudal social organization that prevailed in Rwanda, the characteristics of the dynamic German bourgeoisie, interested in science, scholarship, arts, and culture, appear particularly modern. The "premodern" character attributed to it by historians in the first comparison loses ground and explanatory power as a precursor to the Third Reich. Instead, other typically modern coexisting factors emerge as defining the unique qualities of the German path toward genocide. For example, Germany's social unrest resulted from a rapid process of industrialization. Its long-standing bureaucratic tradition gave way to public trust in an authoritarian welfare state. Its militaristic path to forming a nation-state was accompanied by the growing prestige of the military. Overlapping in the end of the nineteenth century, the factors that set the conditions for the emergence of National Socialism were clearly absent in premodern Rwanda.

In sum, historical comparisons are more than algorithms to identify similarities and differences. They prove helpful to shed light on the particular qualities of specific historical developments by placing them against the background of other developments of the kind. Because comparisons are always selective, they invite scrutiny of the very terms on which a comparison is built. Changing the partner compared (e.g., German social organization against its Dutch and its Rwandan counterparts) makes this selectivity visible and lessens the distortions that necessarily result from single comparisons.

Using the Holocaust to Think about Rwanda

How can we assess students' ability to use their growing understanding of the Holocaust to guide their inquiry into Rwanda, a genocide about which they likely know very little? With this question in mind, a group of middle school teachers, teacher educators, and researchers collaborated in the development of a performance assessment task for middle school teachers and students to use after an in-depth study of Nazi Germany and the Holocaust. Members of the group were associated with Facing History and Ourselves and Harvard Project Zero.[27] Heated debates preceded

our decisions to use Rwanda as a comparison case and to choose *Forsaken Cries* (an Amnesty International documentary on the history of Rwanda) as a source of information about Rwanda. We also deliberated about the type of tasks that would best reveal the most important qualities of students' understanding of this period of European history and their ability to transfer such understanding to a present case of genocide.

Our choice of Rwanda as a contemporary comparison case was grounded in a series of historical-pedagogical arguments. First, it was the differences between Germany and Rwanda that were most striking. As noted, the premodern Rwandan organization contrasted sharply with its modern German counterpart. The military nature of the Tutsis' return differed significantly from the helpless position of Jews and other minorities in a changing Germany. The immediacy and the speed of the Rwandan genocide was opposed to the slow stepwise progression that characterized the Holocaust. The presence of interested colonial sponsors who supported both Tutsis and Hutus was a direct contrast to the lack of such postcolonial conditions in Germany. We hoped that such sharp contrasts would alert students to the risks of assimilating the present case (Rwanda) uncritically into an unrevised representation of the past one (Germany), and vice versa.

We also valued the contrast between life in rural Rwanda and our students' lives in urban or suburban Boston, Massachusetts. We hoped that such a contrast in life styles would raise their skepticism about projecting their local values and world views onto a contemporary case of genocide. We wanted to avoid the illusion of understanding that takes place when local and personal experiences are used as the sole blueprint for understanding the world.

The choice of Rwanda as a comparison case was not without risks. We feared that the contrast between Rwanda in the 1990s Germany in the 1930s, on one hand, and the students' own lives, on the other, would render Rwanda's experience inexplicable or esoteric. As one student carelessly put it, "Rwanda was all a crazy mess"—a stance that is likely to undermine their efforts to make sense of this dramatic process.

The choice of the Amnesty International documentary was as promising as it was controversial. The documentary had been released a few months earlier by public television, and some of the students had seen at least parts of it. We wanted the assessment-task to create an authentic situation for transfer. The fact that students would recently have had access to the TV documentary supported the authenticity of the task. We hoped

that showing the documentary in class once, with just a few interruptions and a very brief background on Rwanda, would create conditions comparable to those under which students had watched the documentary at home, without a rich context in which to place the information provided by the program. In addition, some students knew that Amnesty International was a human rights organization dedicated to denouncing violations worldwide. We hoped that students would consider the source of the video in their assessment of its account of Rwanda. Finally, the documentary was short and could be shown in one class period.

On the other hand, we were aware of the challenges of presenting Rwanda through this medium. Some participants in our group thought that the few but ghastly scenes of the genocide in the video were too horrifying to be shared with eleven- and twelve-year-olds and an infallible invitation to parental complaint. For other participants, the video's strong activist agenda was manifest in the history of Rwanda narrated by an anonymous voice and in the interview excerpts where expert analysts spoke in support of the interpretations put forth in the narrative. The video's purpose and its use of language and images risked overriding any attempt on the part of students to engage in a critique of it as a source.

The Rwandan assessment task illustrates the risks and possibilities of asymmetrical comparisons, comparisons in which the parts compared are not attended with equal precision and depth. The teachers with whom we worked dedicated between six and ten weeks to the study of the Holocaust and barely three days to the introduction and analysis of the situation in Rwanda. Our goal was clearly not to teach Rwandan history. That would have required additional time and work on the part of students, time our teachers did not have. Instead, we sought to provide a manageable and authentic context in which to explore what students were able to do when presented with an opportunity for transfer. Would they be able to identify relevant grounds for complex comparisons? Would students question their source and actively pursue alternative interpretations of what had happened in Rwanda? Would they be skeptical of the illusion that they could understand all genocides by understanding one?

The task was designed to assess the sense-making apparatus that students counted on as they confronted an unscaffolded situation in which to use what they had learned. We asked students to write about the conditions that had allowed the Holocaust to happen and the characteristics that they would expect to find in an African society on the verge of committing genocide. Students were advised to consider similarities and differences between the cases; to keep in mind that genocides like the ones in Germany and Rwanda are complex social processes; and that no one simple explanation can do justice to the depth and multifacetedness of the experience.

Once generally informed by the video and by a chronology of events included in the task, students were asked to hypothesize about the reasons that, in their opinion, the Hutu majority may have engaged in a brutal mass killing of Tutsis in 1994. Students were advised to bear in mind that historical phenomena result from a combination of factors, rather than from any single cause. They were also reminded that to understand why this genocide occurred, one needs to focus on the particular characteristics of Rwanda. In a second portion of the task, students were asked to propose what they thought might be important similarities and differences in the use of propaganda in Germany and in Rwanda. In this case, students were again advised to recognize that similarities and differences exist between the cases. They were asked to take into account the content of propaganda (use of language, calls for action, justifications), as well as the technological medium (radio, film, loudspeakers) used in each case. In a third portion of the task, students were provided a biographical sketch of a Rwandan Tutsi woman and were asked to hypothesize what options were available to her at different points in the genocidal process. Students were alerted to attend to how changes in a society over time may affect people's options at different moments in the process. They were asked to consider the actor's perspective as they assessed her options over time. After each portion of the task, students proposed questions raised by their hypotheses and suggested empirical inquiry strategies that might help them address these questions. As they did so, they were instructed to think about how an expert historian would go about resolving the questions at hand.

The task was tested among twenty-five eighth graders (ages 12–14) and ten ninth graders (ages 13–15) in a public and a private school in the Boston area respectively. All students had taken the Facing History and Ourselves curriculum and responded to the task in writing toward the end of the unit. Students worked on the task for three forty-minute periods in the public school and two forty-minute periods in the private one. Analysis of students' responses yielded a four-level assessment rubric for each section of the task. Prior research or students' conceptions of historical accounts, causality, perspective taking, and historical

significance informed the development of the rubric by suggesting progression models to describe levels of understanding. Two independent raters assessed students' responses and discussed their analyses to enrich the assessment criteria.

Assessing Students' Understanding of the Rwandan Genocide

Examining students' ability to use their knowledge of the Holocaust to inform their thinking about Rwanda confronts teachers with the challenge of defining the criteria by which such transfer should be assessed. Our analysis of students' work on the Rwanda assessment case converged on four such criteria. Successful students were able to (1) build an informed *comparison base* between both cases of genocide; (2) recognize *historical differences* between them; (3) appropriately apply *historical modes of thinking* to examine the genocide in Rwanda; and (4) generate *new questions and hypotheses* about the Rwandan genocide. In the section that follows, each criterion is explained and illustrated with students' work—their misconceptions and unwarranted inferences as well as their sophisticated comparisons and distinctions. Toward the end of the next section, I highlight some understandings that students might develop by way of deepening their ability to use what they have learned about the Holocaust to make sense of Rwanda. I also suggest teaching designs that might foster such understandings.[28]

Building an Informed Comparison Base

The first criterion we used to assess how students use their understanding of the past to guide their thinking about the present stemmed from the fact that historical analogies require a factual basis for comparison.[29] What sort of events took place in Germany that might be relevant in trying to understand Rwanda? The *comparison base* criterion referred to the degree to which students had built a rich (rather than oversimplified) representation of such types of events. It assessed, for instance, the degree to which students were able to consider a variety of interrelated factors that led to the Holocaust, which may have informed their exploration of Rwanda.

Students' ability to identify such factors ranged in accuracy and informative power. Before watching the documentary on Rwanda, students

like Andrew[30] exhibited an oversimplified version of the conditions that allowed the Holocaust to happen. He focused solely on the power of ideas, without contextualizing his account in the specific historical events and processes that preceded the Holocaust and provided fertile ground for eliminationist ideas.

> The followers of Hitler passed on the idea to other racist groups who hated the Jews and other groups. They put the idea into the Jews head that they are terrible human beings. They put crazy and outrageous ideas into people's minds scaring other groups who stood up against these ideas.

Andrew's intuitions about the conditions that might be expected in pregenocidal Rwanda were limited by his perception of the Holocaust.

> If you put ideas into people's head things will happen. Ideas lead to actions. If you do this slowly people will feel the same way you do especially if you have a lot of power, if you have power people will listen to you.

His account was generic and excluded any reference to contextual factors or to variables other than "ideas." He situated his analysis against the background of an everyday-life logic by which contemporary people (such as "you," referring to his reader or to anyone else) convince others, particularly when in power.

On the other end of the spectrum, some students held rich, substantive knowledge about the interrelated conditions that led to the Holocaust (i.e., the social, political, cultural, and economic long- and short-term conditions) and the particular contexts in which these conditions played out. Typically, these students were equipped with a richer set of working hypotheses about Rwanda before watching the documentary. Gina's description exemplifies this point:

> In Eastern Europe there was already antisemitism, pre-Hitler. After the Weimar Republic failed, the citizens needed a strong leader to follow.
>
> [In Rwanda] I would expect to see bred-in prejudice, which had been there for hundreds of years. From this the people would have a sense of righteousness in discriminating against others. I would also expect to see a weak government, so that a rebellion would be inevitable. I would expect unhappy citizens; underpaid, maybe or treated poorly—maybe some crisis like in the economy. I would expect some people in the society to display prejudice, and form a sense of belonging for others who would join in the group. I would expect for discrimination to be acceptable—part of their way of lives.

In a similar vein, after watching *Forsaken Cries*, Alfred used his understanding of propaganda in Nazi Germany to inform his explanation of why propaganda "worked" in Rwanda. In his reflections he went beyond the fragmented images provided by the video. His account suggested that he had built a rich comparison base from which to analyze propaganda. For instance, Alfred drew on video information about the language used to refer to Tutsis and offered an interpretation of how such dehumanizing language supported the killings:

> People used a lot of propaganda in Rwanda to lead to genocide. Hutus called the Tutsis rats and cockroaches, two animals generally thought of as bad, very bad, and difficult to get rid of. . . .

He went beyond the documentary's images of Belgian anthropologists measuring Hutus' and Tutsis' physical traits and spontaneously contextualized such practices as part of eugenics studies (a term not used in the video) and interpreted them as early official propaganda.

> But I think the very beginning of propaganda was when the Belgians measured the Rwandans skulls, brought in eugenics, and separated the people. They indoctrinized people into believing they were truly divided. The Tutsis didn't necessarily think they were better, but the Hutus felt very belittled and oppressed.

He concluded with a personal interpretation of the role of the sociocultural context as a contributing force to the success of propaganda in Rwanda.

> I think one reason propaganda worked so well is because of the fact that the discrimination was so widespread and felt so vividly. The need for propaganda was maybe minimal, and the propaganda just added to the people's rage.

Recognizing Historical Differences

One of the greatest risks in inviting students to use their understanding of the Holocaust to guide their thinking about Rwanda involved the likelihood that, despite the striking differences between the cases, students' comparison would minimize defining distinctions between the two processes. In doing so, students would build the illusion of "understanding Rwanda by understanding the Holocaust." In comparative history, underscoring distinctions is a condition of validity.[31] Because a perfect fit between historical processes never exists, a comparison between past and present processes is valid as long as the past is not used as a simplistic blueprint to interpret the present.

The second assessment criterion, historical differences, examined the degree to which students exhibited healthy skepticism regarding apparent similarities between the cases. In their open reflections after watching the video, some students, impressed by the similarities between the cases, failed to recognize distinctions. Consider Laura's reaction:

> It [Rwanda] is *so* much like the Holocaust! There is hierarchy, there are killings there are so many comparisons. The Nazis are like the Hutus and the Jews are the Tutsis.

Other students, by contrast, pointed directly to perceived distinctions between cases. Kathy, for example, highlighted the openness of the Hutu oppression and the alternating nature of the role of victims and perpetrators between Hutus and Tutsis over time—two distinct features of the Rwandan genocidal path.

> It is very hard to imagine how a genocide could happen again (after the holocaust) [*sic*]. One thing that I really picked up on, was how in the Holocaust people waited so long to respond. If the signs were so obvious in Rwanda, why didn't they respond sooner. Hadn't they learned from Germany? Another thing about the UN backing out: If they had stayed this might not have happened. Were they being threatened in Rwanda? Maybe they were afraid of favoring one side. The Hutus were doing wrong things, but so were the Tutsis. It seemed like big events happened every time the Hutus and the Tutsis switched power.

Similarly, in her comparison of propaganda, Gina went beyond identifying common patterns across cases (e.g., dehumanizing language, threat, and fear) to highlighting unique aspects in each case of genocide. She recognized that propaganda in Germany was subtler and more organically embedded in national institutions than in Rwanda (where open, violent, anti-Tutsi discourse increased dramatically in a matter of months in early 1994).

> In both cases [Germany and Rwanda] (a) people are compared to insects: something people dislike and want to get rid of. Somethings that are useless and parasitic [*sic*].

> In Germany propaganda was more widespread; taken for granted. They used it not only on the radio, etc. but also in school and art. This was not

> used in Rwanda, or at least not portrayed [in the video]. This strategy made the propaganda more feasible. It made the prejudice seem standard and okay. Very clever. . . . Propaganda in Rwanda seemed much more open and straightforward. They did not hide their purposes or goals. The propaganda did not seem so much a general strategy as a pep talk before the "big rebellion."

In addition, Gina sensed a contrast in the general level of education in each society and the ways in which propaganda was geared toward a rural audience in Rwanda.

Applying Historical Modes of Thinking

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, history provides not only a body of substantive knowledge about the past but also a collection of modes of thinking that can be applied in examining societal and individual experiences over time. An in-depth study of the Holocaust challenges students to build multicausal explanations of events such as the Final Solution; to confront conflicting narratives; to consider various historical actors' points of view; to examine evidence; and to attend to continuities and changes over time. Students demonstrate an understanding of such modes of thinking when they apply them to their analysis of and further inquiry into contemporary events like Rwanda. At their best, students develop a healthy skepticism toward monocausal explanations, oversimplified accounts, single points of view, insufficient evidence, and anachronism.[32]

Consider the challenge of building multicausal explanations. To assess students' ability to do so, the Rwanda assessment task confronted youngsters with a chronology of events preceding the Rwandan genocide and a question to be addressed: "Why do you think so many Hutus may have participated in the mass murder of Tutsis?" To respond to this question in a rigorous way, students needed to move beyond naïve monocausal or linear explanations (i.e., explanations in which several causes are linked consecutively). Instead, they needed to consider a variety of causes (long and short term, structural, intentional, and unintentional) that affect one another as well as the final result.[33] Consider the following examples of causal explanations of varying degrees of sophistication:

> They did what their leader told them to do. Maybe their leader was a good speaker like Hitler. *Monocausal explanation:* Sonia

> The Belgians divided them into Hutus and Tustis. Hutus and Tutsis hated each other and so the Tutsis killed the Hutu president. That made the Hutus angry so they participated in the massive killing. *Linear explanation:* Mauro

> A big factor is the way Belgium [*sic*] divided the Hutus and the Tutsi. Since the Tutsi had all the power and the Hutus had none it made the Tutsi look evil and greedy in the eyes of the Hutu. This stereotype continued even after the Hutus claimed power. Even though it was Belgium that divided them the Hutus needed a scapegoat that was closer to them like the Nazis targeted the Jews instead of the Allies who created the Treaty that made life rough for them. Not only that but when the Tutsi returned to Rwanda a depression took place. Although this was because of the drop of coffee prices it was all that was needed to rekindle the hatred. Of course this wouldn't have made all the Hutus hate Tutsi. That is what propaganda is for. The Hutu fanatics used many propaganda tricks such as radio air time and names such as cockroaches for the Tutsis. *Complex explanation:* Jennine

The Rwanda assessment task also asked students to demonstrate their ability to use historical modes of thinking when it challenged them to describe how they would further investigate this and other aspects of the Rwandan genocide. It assessed the degree to which students would be able to grasp the constructed, uncertain, and provisional nature of knowledge about contemporary historical processes. It sought to shed light on whether students would be able to distinguish "what is" the case from "what one can legitimately say" about the case, provided certain historical modes of thinking are put to work.[34] On one end of the continuum, students would design a strategy for inquiry that was rooted in the rituals of schooling (e.g., synthesizing, memorizing, asking teachers as sole sources of knowledge, reading textbooks and encyclopedias). Mauro, for instance, described his strategy to find out more about the reasons for Hutu participation in mass murder as follows:

> I would get all the written info I could about the genocide and research and memorize it. Then after memorizing it, I would visit as many survivors as possible and get their side of the story. After this I would compare what the people said happened with what I know really happened.

In his mind "all the written information" embodied "what really happened" in Rwanda. Triangulating such information against the survivor's oral testimonies would not affect the already established account of what "really" took place.

In some cases, students elicited a more sophisticated conception of the nature of historical inquiry. For example, Alfred exhibited the beginning of a healthy skepticism regarding the constructed nature of historical "facts." He understood the importance of considering various historical actors' perspectives, although he still held a simplistic belief about how such perspectives could be gathered.

> I would talk to: (a) a Rwandan historian (b) a Tutsi refugee (c) a Hutu extremist (d) a Hutu who was opposed to the genocide (e) someone in the UN. I would talk to them and gather the facts I could. Many of the "facts" would be terribly biased and wouldn't do much good, but the different points of view would be good sources.

Toward the upper end of the continuum, students like Mara were able to recognize the intrinsically limited nature of historical knowledge.

> I would talk with survivors, victimizers, bystanders and people from outside the country. I would try to look at the problem for all sides and would read up on it by researching in libraries. . . . I would never be able to have total knowledge on the subject without being there. Even then I wouldn't completely know because I couldn't know all the sides to the story.

Searching for Generativity

Comparisons between past and present events are informative when they transcend mere taxonomy of similarities and differences and suggest perspectives that neither the past nor the present could yield by themselves. The present presents itself to us in an immediate fashion. It is such immediacy—such illusion of familiarity—that makes understanding the present a difficult task. We cannot know present circumstances in the way we know past ones because we lack the perspective gained by hindsight. In the present we still don't have the "end of the story," as it were, since significant events linked to the story are still unfolding. History makes available to us a repertoire of comparable past experiences through which we interpret current processes and assign them meaning. The Holocaust defined for subsequent generations the meaning of the term "genocide," a term we now use to characterize the events in Rwanda. By providing analytical categories and textured pictures of past experiences, history provides working hypotheses to explain present processes, attribute significance to particular people and events in them, and shed light on aspects that might otherwise remain unattended. Without the power to generate

new questions and hypotheses to orient their further exploration, students' efforts to use historical understanding to interpret contemporary events risk becoming a dull algorithmic endeavor.

This fourth and last assessment criterion focused on students' ability to raise questions and establish working hypotheses and interpretations that went beyond the information given in the video. As with earlier criteria, students' performances on this criterion also varied in sophistication. For some, the Rwandan documentary raised basic questions of clarification, strictly linked to the information provided by the video: "Who killed the president?"; "How did they kill the president?"; "Why was the presidential security working with the Hutus?"; "Why did France give Hutus weapons?" These questions failed to probe more deeply into central aspects of the Rwandan genocide and showed no apparent connection between Rwanda and the Holocaust.

Toward the other end of the spectrum, some students inquired about the long-term roots of the conflict, the nature of Habyarimana's leadership, and the role played by propaganda.

> Was the Hutu president nominated by vote by the people, or was his goal to be president of the Hutu people and he kind of weaseled himself into [the] presidency? Basically, was he a good man?

> How popular was the Hutu president? Was he only liked by the extremists or did he have national approval? Was he a good leader or did he have dictatorship qualities?

> Was the genocide known by everyone in the country? Because in Germany the Nazis' killings were not known everywhere.

> Why did the UN leave? Was it in their best interest? Was it difficult to decide who to support? Isn't the UN's job to prevent civil wars (or any wars) and large amounts of injustice?

Some students' questions revealed attention to specific historical modes of thinking. Some sought alternative points of view not presented in the video. Others showed skepticism toward the slightly idealized portrait of precolonial Rwanda that the video proposed. In most cases, successful inquiries were informed by hypotheses stemming from their understanding of Nazi Germany and the Holocaust.

> Was it really true that before the Belgians came, the Hutus and the Tutsis thought that they were equal and get opportunities, and get along [as

suggested by the video]? Didn't they think that they were better than one another?

Was the large amount of hatred towards Tutsis shared by all (most) Hutu? Was the time of peace [portrayed in the video] really peace, or just an uneasy happy medium?

Enhancing Students' Understanding

Assessment situations like the one I have described provide opportunities for students to make their understanding public—to demonstrate their understanding to themselves and to others (teachers, peers, school authorities, parents). They also provide rich opportunities to advance students' understanding, not only because they ask students to use what they know in novel situations, enriching the meaning of what they know, but, most important, because, informed by students' performance, teachers are in a better position to further their learning. Public understanding allows teachers to identify students' achievements, difficulties, and misconceptions and to design additional learning experiences especially geared to address understanding challenges.

Most students in our study were able to think about substantive aspects of the past—the various conditions that contributed to the totalitarization of Germany, the stepwise progression toward mass murder, the actions and dilemmas faced by individual rescuers. In most cases, they recognized the complexity of the past by highlighting the multiple causes that led to the Holocaust, recognizing how conditions in Germany changed over time or considering perpetrators', victims', and bystanders' perspectives in their descriptions. However, with a few exceptions, students failed to recognize the constructed nature of the very account on which they were grounding their hypotheses and interpretations about contemporary Rwanda. Students tended to treat the Amnesty International video as an epistemologically unproblematic portrait of Rwandan history. They rarely engaged in what Sam Wineburg calls "sourcing heuristics"—the ability to inform our interpretation of a source by examining its context of production.[35]

How can teachers help students, in Denis Shemilt's words, understand *the past* (i.e., the lives of people and societies in times gone) *and* understand *history* (i.e., the disciplinary thinking processes and criteria by which accounts of the past are produced and validated)?[36] Specifically,

how can teachers help students understand the constructed nature of historical accounts like the one portrayed in the video documentary? The multiple teaching approaches that might follow the Rwanda assessment task are rooted in a few challenges central to teaching history for disciplinary understanding: understanding precisely how students conceptualize historical accounts; problematizing students' naive conceptions; and making the historian's narrative craft visible to students.

Teachers may engage students in a conversation about the degree to which the Amnesty International video is believable. Students may learn about Amnesty International as an organization and identify claims or scenes in the documentary that reflect its allegiances and political purposes. They may compare the story told in the documentary to alternative conflicting accounts of Rwandan history. At first, as Peter Lee and Ros Ashby report in this volume, students are likely to reduce differences in accounts to "the way authors tell the story" or to an undesirable "author's bias." Teachers may problematize such beliefs by posing dilemmas: "How can there be two conflicting stories about the same bit of the past?"; "If two historians are using the same sources and they do not lie, how can their stories be different and both be true?"[37]

To bring such epistemological conflicts closer to home, students may be asked to compare the explanations they proposed about why Hutus may have participated in the mass killing of Tutsis in 1994. Alternatively, they can compare individual narratives about a school event experienced by all. Confronted with differences among accounts, students may propose a series of criteria to determine what counts as "truth" in writing narratives about past events. It is at this point that teachers may begin to make the historian's craft visible to students. They may address notions such as historical significance, use of primary and secondary sources, sourcing heuristics, or the role of guiding inquiry questions and temporal frames in the construction of historical narratives.

The work undertaken after the Rwanda task should help students understand that narratives are humanly constructed, that they embody particular world views, that they are written with a contemporary audience in mind, and that they seek to be faithful to life in the past. Ideally, students will have access to historians and their accounts of the challenges and decisions they need to make in the process of establishing "truth about the past" (even if imperfect and provisional). By sharing their challenges, reflections, and expertise with young students, historians may help them perceive that the work that students carry out in their history

classrooms is important to society beyond the confines of their school. Interaction with men and women who dedicate their lives to investigating the past humanizes children's perceptions of the discipline, rendering the process of learning a more intrinsically meaningful task.[38] One hopes that such interaction will help students develop a disposition toward healthy skepticism—not only vis-à-vis the narratives of the past that they encounter but also with respect to their own interpretations and hypotheses about contemporary events.

Understanding and Assessment Revisited

In what ways can an in-depth study of Nazi Germany and the Holocaust inform students' understanding of contemporary Rwanda? As members of their cultures, students acquire collections of beliefs about how past societies worked, what people were likely to have experienced, and how a society came to be the way it is today. Beliefs about the past are embedded in cultural artifacts such as monuments, films, and commemorative holidays. They are organically intertwined with common sense and everyday life. Prior to careful instruction, students' predisciplinary sense of the past is typically ill shaped and unquestioned. Frequently, stories about the past are dogmatically believed as part of a society's foundational myths or heritage.[39]

Students' naive beliefs set the background against which they interpret contemporary events. Against such a background, they are likely to reduce the Holocaust to Hitler's demented plan and the Rwandan genocide to stereotypical African tribal rivalries. Counteracting such naive perceptions, history education informs students' efforts to interpret contemporary events by providing them with well-grounded accounts of processes like the totalitarization of Germany. Such accounts demand careful analysis of multiple causes and points of view, serious consideration of supporting evidence, and delicate temporal distinctions. Even if fallible, history provides an alternative superior to the naïve, rather unconscious, and distorting sense of the past that students are likely to espouse as grounding for the examination of the present.[40] In sum, history prepares students to examine the present by undermining the myths, oversimplifications, and distortions embodied in popular views of the past.[41] In so doing, a careful study of the past prepares students to

be skeptical about the possibilities of knowing events past and present. At the same time, it enhances their confidence in the epistemological tools that communities of experts have developed as our contemporary societies' best attempts to investigate the lives of individuals and societies as they change over time.

In exploring the relationship between past and present in history education, a question is often raised. If history does not repeat itself, how can a substantive understanding of events like the Holocaust inform students' views of contemporary events like Rwanda? Understanding the past does not ensure understanding of the present. Rather, it triggers informed questions and hypotheses that only a careful exploration of the contemporary world can resolve. Conversely, contemporary concerns may inform valuable questions and hypotheses about the past, which only careful exploration of the past may unravel. While it is indeed legitimate to let concerns from one time dictate the questions to be explored about another time, it is entirely unacceptable to let anachronistic views determine the answers to such questions.[42] Students must recognize that passage of time has changed material life and world views between then and now. Moreover, they need to recognize that human and social experience is unpredictable and embedded in particular contexts.

The development of the Rwanda assessment task was triggered by two important concerns. First, our exploration responded to the worrisome distance between the analytical capacities that are valued in contemporary societies at large, on the one hand (e.g., the ability to interpret an unfolding ethnic conflict or to decide about conditions that demand international intervention to protect human rights), and the type of skills increasingly favored by current national and state assessments, on the other (manipulation of fragmented facts). As Howard Gardner eloquently states it

> Understanding [of the multiple worlds students inhabit] will never come about through the piling of facts. It can only emerge if students have the opportunity to tackle authentic problems; to use their skills appropriately in plausible settings; to create projects, alone and in cooperation; to receive feedback on these endeavors and ultimately to become willing productive thinkers.[43]

By challenging students to use their understanding of the past to make conjectures about a contemporary development, the Rwanda assessment

case aims at providing students with such *authentic problems* and *plausible settings* to exercise and develop *culturally valued understandings* with the help of their teachers.

The second concern driving our study stemmed from two important limitations embodied in the collection of assessment strategies and criteria available to teachers as alternatives to "standardized" or "objective" tests. First, most of the so-called alternative or authentic assessment literature has focused on tools such as rubrics, performance tasks, and portfolios emphasizing the mechanical rather than the substantive challenges involved in eliciting, valuing, and reorienting students' understanding. A preoccupation with measurement (explicitness of criteria, multiplicity of formats for students' expression) has obscured the difficult question of which qualities of disciplinary understanding we aim to assess and support.[44] Second, the alternative assessment tools typically proposed are so idiosyncratic and admittedly tightly linked to particular curricular experiences that they become limited as instruments for comparisons among children across schools and social groups. Responding to these concerns, our project aimed to produce a task rich in options in order to open room for students with a wide range of experiences learning about Nazi Germany and the Holocaust. We attempted to develop a collection of explicit assessment criteria that were so central to the discipline of history on the one hand (e.g., understanding change over time, multiple causality, multiple perspectives) and to that particular period on the other (e.g., conditions that allowed the Holocaust to take place, the role of propaganda, victim's experience over time) that teachers committed to teaching *history* as well as the *past* would perceive as valuable a lens through which to examine and share students' work.

The assessment challenge we set for our project was multifaceted. We aspired to develop an assessment case that would shed light on culturally relevant outcomes of good history education; that would engage teachers and students in a careful reflection about understanding in the discipline; and that would allow for comparisons beyond particular curriculum units and schools. In the end, the degree to which we were successful in our attempt will be determined by the way in which teachers come to appropriate the themes highlighted by this assessment case. The task's success will depend on the extent to which teachers see it as a springboard for deeper scholarly inquiries into their discipline and for more enlightened analyses of their students' understanding—a challenge that stands at the very center of the remaking of the teaching profession.

NOTES

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1. Carl Becker, Dial 59 (September 2, 1915): 148.
2. See B. von Borris, "Methods and Aims of Teaching History in Europe: A Report on Youth and History," this volume. See also J. Appleby, L. Hunt, and M. Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History* (London, 1994); and G. B. Nash and C. Crabtree, *National Standards for History* (Los Angeles, 1996).
3. In his book *The Unschooled Mind: How Children Think and How Schools Should Teach* (New York, 1991) Howard Gardner defines the "unschooled mind" as the robust collection of naive and often misconceived theories about the natural and social world that children develop early in life and that are difficult to replace with more disciplined understandings.
4. See P. Seixas, "Schweigen! die Kinder! Or, Does Postmodern History Have a Place in the Schools?"; J. Wertsch, "Is It Possible to Teach Beliefs, as Well as Knowledge about History?"; and S. Wineburg, "Making Historical Sense," this volume. For a more detailed treatment of the distinction between history and memory and between history and heritage, see also J. LeGoff, *History and Memory* (New York, 1992), and D. Lowenthal, *Possessed by the Past: The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History* (New York, 1996).
5. For a careful analysis of the tension between familiarity and distance in historical understanding, see Seixas "Conceptualizing the Growth of Historical Understanding," in D. Olson and N. Torrance, eds., *Handbook of Education and Human Development*, (Cambridge, MA, 1996), and S. Wineburg, "Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts," *Phi Delta Kappan* (March 1999), pp. 488–499.
6. See P. Stearns, "Getting Specific about Training in Historical Analysis: A Case Study in World History," this volume.
7. M. Marrus, *The Holocaust in History* (Hanover, NH, 1987).
8. See G. R. Elton, *The Practice of History* (London, 1969); J. Appleby, L. Hunt,

and M. Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History* (New York, 1994); and P. Seixas, "The Community of Inquiry as a Basis for Knowledge and Learning," *American Educational Research Journal*, 30(2) (1992). See also R. Bain, "Into the Breach: Using Research and Theory to Shape History Instruction," and P. J. Lee and R. Ashby, "Progression in Historical Understanding," this volume.

9. Elton, *The Practice of History*.

10. See L. Dawidowicz, *The War against the Jews 1933–1945* (New York, 1975); E. Jaeckel, *Hitler's Weltanschauung: A Blueprint to Power*, Herbert Arnold, tr. (Middletown, CT, 1972); and E. Nolte, *The Three Faces of Fascism: Action Française, Italian Fascism, National Socialism*, Leila Vennewitz, tr. (New York, 1966).

11. See W. Lacqueur, *Fascism: A Readers' Guide, Analysis, Interpretation, Bibliography* (Berkeley, CA, 1976); D. Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germany and the Holocaust* (New York, 1996).

12. Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners*.

13. J. Appleby, L. Hunt, and M. Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History* (London, 1994); and P. Seixas, "The Community of Inquiry as a Basis for Knowledge and Learning" *American Educational Research Journal*, 30(2) (1992). The reaction to Goldhagen's eliminationist anti-Semitism hypothesis illustrates the predisposition among historians against monocausal explanation as a standard for scholarly work. For an overview of critiques and positions, see Franklin H. Littell, ed., *Hyping the Holocaust: Scholars Answer Goldhagen* (New York, 1997); and N. Finkelstein, *A Nation on Trial: The Goldhagen's Thesis and Historical Truth* (New York, 1998).

14. See, in this volume, L. Levstik, "Articulating the Silences: Teachers' and Adolescents' Conceptions of Historical Significance." See also P. Seixas, "Mapping the Terrain of Historical Significance," *Social Education* 61 (1997), pp. 22–28.

15. See R. Ashby and P. J. Lee, "Children's Concepts of Empathy and Understanding in History," in C. Portal, ed., *The History Curriculum for Teachers* (New York, 1987), pp. 62–88. See also R. Ashby, P. J. Lee, and A. K. Dickinson, "How Children Explain the Why of History: The Chata Research Project on Teaching History" *Social Education*, 61(1) (1997), pp. 17–21.

16. For an excellent treatment of this topic see, in this volume, R. Bain, "Into the Breach: Using Research and Theory to Shape History Instruction," and P. J. Lee and R. Ashby, "Progression in Historical Understanding." See also P. J. Lee and R. Ashby, "None of Us Was There: Children's Ideas about Why Historical Accounts Differ," in S. Ahonene et al., eds., *Historiedidaktik, Nordisk Konferens om Historiedidaktiks, Tampere* (Copenhagen, 1999), pp. 23–58.

17. See, in this volume, M. A. Britt, C. Perfetti, J. Van Dyke, and J. Gabrys, "The Sourcer's Apprentice: A Tool for Document-Supported History Instruction"; and G. Leinhart, "Lessons on Teaching and Learning in History from Paul's Pen."

18. See H. Fein, "Genocide, Terror, Life Integrity, and War Crimes: The Case for Discrimination," as well as R. Hovannissian, "Etiology and Sequelae of the Armenian Genocide," in George J. Andreopoulus, ed., *Genocide Conceptual and Historical Dimensions* (Philadelphia, 1994). See also P. Bookbinder, *Weimar Germany: The Republic of the Reasonable* (New York, 1996).

19. See M. Marrus, *The Holocaust in History* (Hanover, NH, 1987).

20. See S. Friedlander, *Nazi Germany and the Jews: The Years of Persecution* (New York, 1997); and D. Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners*.

21. For a historiographic accounts of the possibilities and limitations of including the Holocaust in comparative history see Marrus, *The Holocaust in History*.

22. See P. Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families: Stories from Rwanda* (New York, 1998); S. Hameso, *Ethnicity and Nationalism in Africa* (Commack, NY, 1997); and A. Klinghoffer, *The International Dimension of Genocide in Rwanda* (London, 1998).

23. See G. Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide* (New York, 1996); and P. duPerez, *Genocide: The Psychology of Mass Murder* (New York, 1994).

24. D. Newbury, "Understanding Genocide," *African Review*, 41(1) (April 1998), pp. 73–97.

25. J. H. Speke, *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (Edinburgh and London, 1863).

26. For an overview of this thesis, see J. Kocka, "Asymmetrical Comparison: The Case of the German Sonderweg," *History and Theory*, 38(1) (1998), pp. 40–50. For further reference, see L. Krieger, *The German Idea of Freedom* (Boston, 1957); and G. L. Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (New York, 1964).

27. Facing History and Ourselves is a nationwide organization dedicated to the teaching of history and social responsibility. In this collaboration FHAO was particularly interested in exploring the challenge of providing good disciplinary history education to teachers and students *and* fostering civic values such as democracy and respect. Project Zero is a research and development organization based at THE Harvard Graduate School of Education and dedicated to research in teaching, learning, assessment, and development in the arts and other disciplines. In this collaboration HPZ was particularly interested in examining the challenge of assessing students' ability to use knowledge to understand the world around them in ways that were culturally relevant and rigorous.

28. For a previous attempt to examine the possibilities of using history as a frame of reference to look at the present, see P. Rogers, "The Past as a Frame of Reference," in Christopher Portal, ed., *History Curriculum for Teachers* (London, 1987).

29. C. Maier, *The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust and German National Identity* (Cambridge, MA, 1988).

30. All names are pseudonyms.

31. Maier, *The Unmasterable Past*.

32. For a careful overview of historical modes of thinking, see P. Seixas, "Conceptualizing the Growth of Historical Understanding," in D. Olson and N. Torrance, eds., *The Handbook of Education and Human Development: New Models of Learning, Teaching, and Schooling* (Cambridge, MA, 1996).

33. See J. Voss and M. Carretero, "The Collapse of the Soviet Union: A Case Study in Causal Reasoning," in Mario Carretero and James Voss, eds., *Cognitive and Instructional Processes in History and the Social Sciences* (Hillsdale, NJ, 1994).

34. See P. Lee et al., eds., *The Aims of History: The National Curriculum and Beyond* (London, 1992). See also J. Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods, and New Directions in the Study of Modern History* (London, 1991).

35. See S. Wineburg, "Historical Problem Solving: A Study of the Cognitive Processes Used in the Evaluation of Documentary and Pictorical Evidence," *Journal of Educational Psychology* 83 (1991), pp. 73–87.

36. See the essay by Denis Shemilt in this volume. See also P. Seixas, P. Stearns, and S. Wineburg, "History, Memory, Research, and the Schools: A Report on the Pittsburgh Conference," *Perspectives* (March 21, 1999).

37. These questions were used by Peter Lee in his study of children's conceptions of why accounts differ. For an extended report on developing conceptions of accounts, see Lee and Ashby, "None of Us Was There," pp. 23–58.

38. For a careful description of the importance of linking expert mentors with students in schools, see H. Gardner, D. H. Feldman, and M. Krechevsky, *Building on Children's Strengths: The Experience of Project Spectrum* (New York, 1998).

39. H. Gardner and V. Boix-Mansilla, "Teaching for Understanding in the Disciplines—and Beyond," *Teachers College Record* 96(2) (Winter 1994), pp. 198–218.

40. For an extended analysis of the relationship between memory and history relevant to this point, see J. LeGoff, *History and Memory*. See also E. Hobsbawm, *On History* (New York, 1997).

41. For a careful analysis of the corrective function of history see J. Tosh, *The Pursuit of History.*

42. For an analysis of the relationship between past and present in the history of the discipline see J. L. Gaddis, "The Nature of Contemporary History," occasional paper for the National Council for History Education, Westlake, Ohio; and A. Stoskopf, "The Uses of History: Then and Now," unpublished paper prepared for Facing History and Ourselves, Brookline, MA, August, 1998.

43. H. Gardner, "Foreword," in David Allen, ed., *Assessing Student Learning: From Grading to Understanding* (New York, 1998), p. viii.

44. For an analysis of qualities of disciplinary understanding see V. Boix Mansilla and H. Gardner, "What Are the Qualities of Deep Understanding?" in Stone Wiske, ed., *Teaching for Understanding: Linking Theory with Practice* (San Francisco, 1998).

