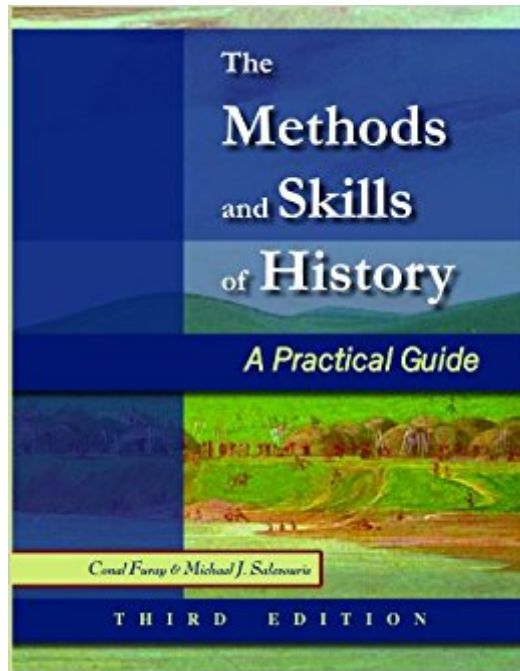


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# The Methods And Skills Of History: A Practical Guide



## Synopsis

Like its predecessors, the third edition of one of our most popular texts, *The Methods and Skills of History: A Practical Guide*, is a dynamic text/workbook that combines theory with "hands on" practice, providing engaging essays, documents, and exercises designed to make history more meaningful and accessible to student readers—whether they are majoring in history, taking a history course as an elective, or simply reading history on their own—as well as strengthen their critical-thinking and communication skills. While this third edition retains the essence of its highly successful predecessor in the form of its practical, timely advice on research and writing and a field-tested • exercises, it features important modifications as well, including a reorganization of the chapters to progress even more smoothly from a theoretical discussion of the nature of history (Part I), to practical considerations involved in confronting historical accounts (Part II) to actually doing • history (Part III). The final section (Part IV) provides a brief overview of how history as a discipline evolved and how it relates to other academic disciplines, as well as appendices that comprise interesting historical documents and helpful source references and bibliographies.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I've used this book for years now for both undergraduates and graduates, with great success. The new 2000 edition is even better (except for a too-brief section on films as historical sources.) The updating with regard to libraries is especially good, and the section on statistics is appropriately demanding. The essay assignment based upon the Missouri Fur Trade readily uncovers problems

and personal bias in students' work. Though written for undergrads, this guide is excellent for new grad students as a way of identifying weaknesses and building consistent skills. I require graduate students to probe more deeply in responding to the exercises, and they all agree it is a great workbook, even though it seems too basic to them at first glance!

Used this in an undergraduate class at a good liberal arts school. Many students found the workbook exercises simplistic. I like it, though, because it illustrates practical history skills using real historical examples. I am aware of no other book that does this. I particularly like the emphasis on the research process (lots of emphasis on looping back between research and writing), and analytical skills (where making categories looms large). My recommendation is to use the chapters loosely, adapting them to your own needs. When I use it again, I will use the material provided as the basis for more substantive short writing assignments.

This book is more of a workbook for students who are history majors. It often is used in conjunction with courses that focus on the technical side of historical thinking rather than on specific periods or events in the past. Students learn through their studies about the past and cover the facts. Yet, historians do more than that. They take these facts and study them using different techniques that help them develop interpretations of the past. It is one thing to gather information. It is quite another to make use of the information. That is where this book comes into play. Historians often say that context is everything and it certainly is. With today's Internet capabilities finding information is relatively easy compared to two decades ago. The problem is in placing the information in the context of the time it is from. To put it mildly, there is a lot of bad history out there. This book helps students explore what a historian does, how they do it, and also shows the difference between bad history and good history. No matter what, people are going to have to use their intelligence to separate the good from the bad. That is often the case with any subject. A degree in history is a thinking degree. Few fields require the deep thinking skills that historians develop in their education. A historian's work has often been compared to that of a detective. They encounter a problem or study. They research the information, try to develop new information, analyze the information, and make interpretations with what they have. This book helps students learn those skills. Under the tutelage of a skilled instructor, students will be able to realize their potential by using the scenarios presented in these pages. I highly advise instructors looking for materials in their courses on Historical Research and Methods to consider this book and to use it in conjunction with other books on the subject in order to develop a skilled student of history.

If you're thinking of becoming a historian, this book really helps. It was assigned in a historiography class I'm taking for my MA and it really is full of information. The exercises that the professor assigned in the book were helpful as well. If you're buying the book new, make sure the pages are all in it before you order it, the pages with the exercises are perforated and could be torn out really quickly. The copy I bought had a couple of torn out pages, luckily they were still in the book so I wasn't missing anything.

."The Methods and Skills of History" is both useful and readable. It puts the study of history into a rich context often neglected by the boring Instructors who believe teaching dates -and -places is enough. Although this a textbook, it moves along well, offers some exercises for students to apply their newly-found skills, and is worth re-reading for older scholars preparing to write articles, books and essays. Like Kim Burdick Stanton, Delaware

I love this book and will be keeping it for a long time. I'm a history major and am currently taking a Research Methods class at Webster University. My professor Michael J Salevouris (who is the author of this book) is very good at teaching and helping us practice methods of historical writing. There are many activities and writing exercises in the book, its easy and well written and covers different methods of historical detection. A must-have for anyone writing a history research paper or history majors in general. Also a good reference for many other majors when writing a research paper. Also, another good book to read along with this one, and one that we frequently use in class is After the Fact: The Art of Historical Detection

Really helps you find the inner historian. Nicely set up, and easy to use. Great for people with a love of history, or those that would like one.

The subtitle "A Practical Guide" fits the book, as overall it has usefull information on the methods of study, analysis, and writing on historical topics.

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