Faculty Review of Open eTextbooks
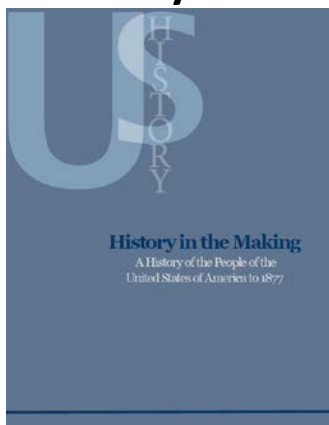
The California Open Educational Resources Council has designed and implemented a faculty review process of the free and open etextbooks showcased within the California Open Online Library for Education (www.cool4ed.org). Faculty from the California Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California were invited to review the selected no/low cost and open etextboks using a rubric. Faculty received a stipend for their efforts and funding was provided by the State of California, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Textbook Name:

History in the Making:
A History of the People of the United States of America to 1877

License:

Find it: **eTextbook Website**

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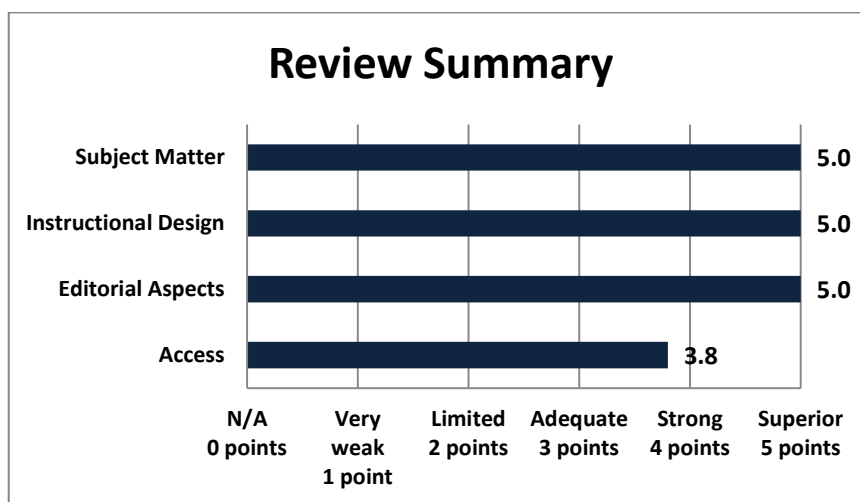
Assistant Professor

History

Format Reviewed:

PDF

A small fee may be associated with various formats.

Date Reviewed:

August, 2014.

Review Summary

Subject Matter	5.0
Instructional Design	5.0
Editorial Aspects	5.0
Access	3.8

N/A 0 points	Very weak 1 point	Limited 2 points	Adequate 3 points	Strong 4 points	Superior 5 points

California OER Council eTextbook Evaluation Rubric

CA Course ID: HIST 130

Subject Matter (30 possible points)	N/A (0 pts)	Very Weak (1pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
Is the content accurate, error-free, and unbiased?						X
Does the text adequately cover the designated course with a sufficient degree of depth and scope?						X

Subject Matter (30 possible points)	N/A (0 pts)	Very Weak (1pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
Does the textbook use sufficient and relevant examples to present its subject matter?						X
Does the textbook use a clear, consistent terminology to present its subject matter?						X
Does the textbook reflect current knowledge of the subject matter?						X
Does the textbook present its subject matter in a culturally sensitive manner? (e.g. Is the textbook free of offensive and insensitive examples? Does it include examples that are inclusive of a variety of races, ethnicities, and backgrounds?)						X

Total points: 30 out of 30

Please provide comments on any aspect of the subject matter of this textbook:

- I really like the textbook! It provides a balanced social and cultural history of America that considers experiences and the cultural process from the perspective of women and men of diverse socioeconomic status, racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. I believe it would provide students with a strong understanding of the early American experiences.

Instructional Design (35 possible points)	N/A (0 pts)	Very Weak (1pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
Does the textbook present its subject materials at appropriate reading levels for undergrad use?						X
Does the textbook reflect a consideration of different learning styles? (e.g. visual, textual?)						X
Does the textbook present explicit learning outcomes aligned with the course and curriculum?						X
Is a coherent organization of the textbook evident to the reader/student?						X
Does the textbook reflect best practices in the instruction of the designated course?						X
Does the textbook contain sufficient effective ancillary materials? (e.g. test banks, individual and/or group activities or exercises, pedagogical apparatus, etc.)						X
Is the textbook searchable?						X

Total points: 35 out of 35 points

Please provide comments on any aspect of the subject matter of this textbook:

- More historical images should be included as historical evidence. Many of the images are portraits of elite men or otherwise famous people. Historical images (like those of the slave trade, depictions of American Indians, political cartoons, events, members of given ethnic groups, etc.) could help students understand how people and events were perceived.

Editorial Aspects (25 possible points)	N/A (0 pts)	Very Weak (1pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
Is the language of the textbook free of grammatical, spelling, usage, and typographical errors?						X
Is the textbook written in a clear, engaging style?						X
Does the textbook adhere to effective principles of design? (e.g. are pages latid0out and organized to be clear and visually engaging and effective? Are colors, font, and typography consistent and unified?)						X
Does the textbook include conventional editorial features? (e.g. a table of contents, glossary, citations and further references)						X
How effective are multimedia elements of the textbook? (e.g. graphics, animations, audio)						X

Total points: 25 out of 25 points

Please provide comments on any aspect of the subject matter of this textbook:

I think the book is well structured.

Access (25 possible points)	N/A (0 pts)	Very Weak (1pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
Is the textbook compatible with standard and commonly available hardware/software in college/university campus student computer labs?						X
Is the textbook accessible in a variety of different electronic formats? (e.g. .txt, .pdf, .epub, etc.)					X	
Can the textbook be printed easily?						X
Does the user interface implicitly inform the reader how to interact with and navigate the textbook?						X
How easily can the textbook be annotated by students and instructors?	X					

Total points: 19 out of 25 points

Please provide comments on any aspect of the subject matter of this textbook:

- This material was easily accessible using most standard Internet browsers. However, the material can only be navigated in a linear fashion.
- I could not find a way for students to annotate the material and there was no glossary of terms or other ancillary materials.

Overall Ratings						
	Not at all (0 pts)	Very Weak (1 pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3 pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
What is your overall impression of the textbook?						X
	Not at all (0 pts)	Strong reservations (1 pt)	Limited willingness (2 pts)	Willing (3 pts)	Strongly willing (4 pts)	Enthusiastically willing (5 pts)
How willing would you be to adopt this book?						X

Total points: 10 out of 10 points

Overall Comments

If you were to recommend this textbook to colleagues, what merits of the textbook would you highlight?
- This book provides a balanced social and cultural history of America that considers experiences and the cultural process from the perspective of women and men of diverse socioeconomic status, racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. It is concise while providing a nuanced examination of the historical and cultural processes.

What areas of this textbook require improvement in order for it to be used in your courses?
- I'd add historical images and links to the primary source reading rather than just the web addresses that are currently available.

We invite you to add your feedback on the textbook or the review to the textbook site in MERLOT.
(Please register in MERLOT to post your feedback.)

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COUNCIL
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For questions or more information, contact the CA Open Educational Resources Council