Politicians, parents, and the public debating history education is not new, but it seems historical content has become more politicized than ever in the United States. In their introduction to *Teaching Difficult Histories in Difficult Times*, the editors remind us that “the voices that are rarely included in these debates are those of classroom teachers, the ones who, on a daily basis, face their students, consider the controversies and make the decisions about how to teach such difficult histories” (p. ix). This volume centers experiences of such educators, highlighting frameworks, pedagogies, and examples other educators can utilize in their classrooms. The editors explain, “The term difficult history has generally referred not only to the nature of traumatic events in the past such as genocide, but also to the difficulty in teaching and learning such events in the present” (p. ix). This volume centers experiences of such educators, highlighting frameworks, pedagogies, and examples other educators can utilize in their classrooms. The editors explain, “The term difficult history has generally referred not only to the nature of traumatic events in the past such as genocide, but also to the difficulty in teaching and learning such events in the present” (p. ix).  Difficult history includes what is being taught, how it is being taught, who is teaching it, and who is learning it.

Part 1 focuses on content. The first chapter explores how educators at the 9/11 Memorial & Museum employ artifacts in their inquiry-based pedagogy. Instead of peppering learners with facts, the educators show them objects as symbols—from a high-heeled shoe of a survivor to magazine covers—to start collective inquiry. Chapter 2 explains how teaching Black history through centering Black people and their epistemologies is essential. They encourage teachers to use a Black historical consciousness so they can teach through Black history, not just about Black history (p. 31). Further, the three authors emphasize that educators must teach Black excellence as well as Black suffering. Teaching about World War II atrocities in Asia and human rights through the Nanjing Safety Zone Committee is the focus of the third chapter. Since many American students have little frame of reference when it comes to Asian history and culture, the authors approach the subject through Western sources and perspectives, allowing the teachers to avoid using graphic imagery that may cause students “unneeded stress” (p. 42).

The second part concentrates on teacher and student identities. In chapter 4, the three authors teach about the complex history of American slavery “through the eyes of a young Black woman” in *Never Caught, the Story of Ona Judge* (p. 57). Centering their own identities as Black feminists and educators, they explain how a teacher’s content knowledge impacts what students learn. For instance, many white teachers “are not fully equipped or comfortable to teach students about slavery” (p. 60), and this means that Black students may not learn about the histories of people who looked like them. The fifth chapter shifts to the experiences of an educator of European des-
cent teaching Samoan history to Pacific learners in New Zealand. In an environment where the students’ and teacher’s lenses differ, the teacher shares power with their students, making the teacher “vulnerable in the classroom” and “open to students teaching” them (p. 76). Using critical pedagogy and peace education, a military veteran turned educator discusses his approach to teaching about the United States’ perpetual wars. He leverages his military service to get students “to start asking more difficult questions” and begin to humanize war (p. 81). In chapter 7, the author explores how she came to rethink how she teaches the Holocaust through her dissertation research. She recommends that educators build a comprehensive content base and provide students with context about pre-WWII Jewish life because “the Holocaust can carry both universal and particular value, without having to be reduced to buzz words or clichés about memory” (p. 99).

The chapters in the third part are about context. The eighth chapter approaches Indigenous history through critical whiteness studies and tribal critical race theory. The two authors assert that “teaching difficult history from Indigenous perspectives must connect the past to the present, and focus on survival, not destruction” (p. 113). They also connect Indigenous peoples in the United States to those globally. In chapter 9, the three authors examine teaching about lynchings and emphasize the “centrality of place, identity, and context” (p. 119). They explore teaching about local lynchings to local students, noting the importance of creating a community in the classroom first. Shifting to Canada, the authors of chapter 10 share how they teach about historical wrongs through comparative injustices. They share international examples with students first, and then ask them to compare those with Canadian examples. While this helps students’ understanding, the teachers find the students tend to implement “a hierarchy of suffering” (pp. 136-137). Two authors present conflicting perspectives of the teaching of Confederate memorialization in chapter 11. While the white teacher who approaches the topic through classroom discussion thought he had failed his Black students, the researcher believes the experience allowed emotion and confrontation in the classroom. Overall, they agree that white educators share the history of racism, and we must teach it to keep from maintaining white supremacist structures.

The final part includes chapters about teacher decision-making. A teacher in an alternative school where students had personal connections to incarceration centers “students’ lived experiences and communities in the teaching process” (p. 155). The teacher aided a student coteacher in educating classmates on the Thirteenth Amendment through a connection to a hip-hop song. A teacher in a conservative part of Georgia tackles teaching non-European immigration to fifth graders in chapter 12. After online gallery walks, examining primary sources, and reading children’s books, the students gained historical empathy and racial literacy. In chapter 14, two teachers write about one of their mentor teachers and his approaches to teaching difficult histories to sixth graders through secondary sources and discussions centered around race, gender, and sexuality. They explain, “He argues if you’re not talking about difficult history, you’re not talking about history” (p. 180). In the final chapter, the educators explain their teaching of the Middle Passage in World History II. They have students evaluate the historical accuracy of a textbook passage considering four primary sources, allowing students to “question the authority of a textbook” (p. 199). While students felt the textbook was deceitful, being able to dissect it empowered them.

Since no two chapters explore the same topic, the reader only gets one perspective, which may not be applicable to their teaching circumstances. Nonetheless, this volume is appropriate for undergraduate students in social studies and history education programs and those pursuing public history degrees. Professors can easily assign the
self-contained chapters individually. While the volume is geared toward elementary, middle, and high school as well as museum educators, professors will find many of the analyses applicable to college classrooms as well.

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