

## Why Study History? (1998)

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By Peter N. Stearns

People live in the present. They plan for and worry about the future. History, however, is the study of the past. Given all the demands that press in from living in the present and anticipating what is yet to come, **why bother with what has been?** Given all the desirable and available branches of knowledge, **why insist—as most American educational programs do (SAT)—on a good bit of history?** And **why urge many students to study even more history than they are required to?**

Any subject of study needs justification: its advocates must explain **why it is worth attention**. Most widely accepted subjects—and history is certainly one of them—attract some people who simply like the information and modes of thought involved. But audiences less spontaneously drawn to the subject and more doubtful about why to bother need to know what the purpose is.

Historians do not perform heart transplants, improve highway design, or arrest criminals. In a society that quite correctly expects education to serve useful purposes, the functions of history can seem more difficult to define than those of engineering or medicine. History is in fact very useful, actually indispensable, but the products of historical study are less tangible, sometimes less immediate, than those that stem from some other disciplines.

In the past history has been justified for reasons we would no longer accept. For instance, one of the reasons history holds its place in current education is because earlier leaders believed that a knowledge of certain historical facts **helped distinguish the educated from the uneducated**, the person who could reel off the date of the Norman conquest of England (1066) or the name of the person who came up with the theory of evolution at about the same time that Darwin did (Wallace) was deemed superior—a better candidate for law school or even a business promotion. Knowledge of historical facts has been used as a **screening device in many societies**, from China to the United States, and the habit is still with us to some extent. Unfortunately, this use can encourage mindless memorization—a real but not very appealing aspect of the discipline. History should be studied because it is essential to individuals and to society, and because it harbors beauty. There are many ways to discuss the real functions of the subject—as there are many different historical talents and many different paths to historical meaning. All definitions of history's utility, however, rely on two fundamental facts.

### History Helps Us Understand People and Societies

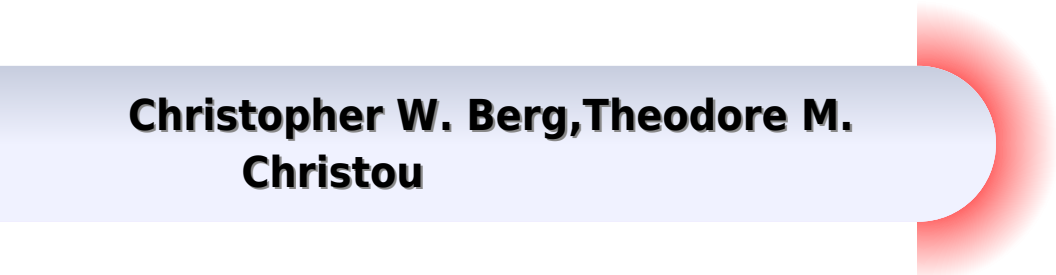
In the first place, history offers a storehouse of information about how people and societies behave. Understanding the operations of people and societies is difficult, though a number of disciplines make the attempt. An exclusive reliance on current data would needlessly handicap our efforts. How can we evaluate war if the nation is at peace—unless we use historical materials? How can we understand genius, the influence of technological innovation, or the role that beliefs play in shaping family life, if we don't use what we know about experiences in the past? Some social scientists attempt to formulate laws or theories about human behavior. But even these recourses depend on historical information, except for in limited, often artificial cases in which experiments can be devised to determine how people act. Major aspects of a society's operation, like mass elections, missionary activities, or military alliances, cannot be set up as precise experiments. Consequently, history must serve, however imperfectly, as our laboratory, and data from the past must serve as our most vital evidence in the unavoidable quest to figure out why our complex species behaves as it does in societal settings. This, fundamentally, is why we cannot stay away from history: it offers the only extensive evidential base for the contemplation and analysis of how societies function, and people need to have some sense of how societies function simply to run their own lives.

**(ex. Câu chuyện về châu Âu thanh bình ngày nay??? Có thực như thế không?)**

### History Helps Us Understand Change and How the Society We Live in Came to Be

# Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers

**Christopher W. Berg, Theodore M.  
Christou**



## **Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers:**

The Palgrave Handbook of History and Social Studies Education Christopher W. Berg, Theodore M. Christou, 2020-04-03 This Handbook presents an international collection of essays examining history education past and present Framing recent curriculum reforms in Canada and in the United States in light of a century long debate between the relationship between theory and practice this collection contextualizes the debate by exploring the evolution of history and social studies education within their state or national contexts With contributions ranging from Canada Finland New Zealand Sweden the Netherlands the Republic of South Africa the United Kingdom and the United States chapters illuminate the ways in which curriculum theorists and academic researchers are working with curriculum developers and educators to translate and refine notions of historical thinking or inquiry as well as pedagogical practice      **Annotated Instructor's Edition** Addison-Wesley Longman, Incorporated, 1999-08      *Data Book of Social Studies Materials and Resources* ,1980      Teaching World History Heidi Roupp, 1996-12-26 This practical volume includes a unique selection of materials proven effective in classrooms across the country These are selections on global comparative and cross cultural approaches to world history with individual chapters on art gender religion environment civilizations cities political systems religion and philosophy literature trade and technology World history teachers from high school to college undergraduate will profit from its lesson plans reading and multi media recommendations suggestions for classroom activities      The Publishers' Trade List Annual ,1988      Catalog of Copyright Entries. Third Series Library of Congress. Copyright Office, 1975      **El-Hi Textbooks and Serials in Print, 1995** R R Bowker Publishing, 1995-02      Civilization Past & Present Palmira Johnson Brummett, 2000 The new edition of Civilization Past and Present is a major revision of a classic text the last edition had Wallbank as the lead author Civilization Past and Present has a strong European core with excellent global coverage and is well known in the marketplace as a highly readable accessible survey text This is important since students often complain that they are overwhelmed with too much content in this course The main thrust of the revision is to make the book more inclusive of areas beyond Europe With two new authors an Annotated Instructors Edition a new unique feature that focuses on primary maps a beautiful new four color design and a premiere supplements package on the market this edition of Civilization Past and Present offers students and professors an accessible and exciting survey of World Civilization For the first time we will be adding an Annotated Instructors Edition which will provide numerous useful teaching suggestions and ideas The Annotated Instructors Edition is unique in this market and will prove invaluable to professors who invariably end up teaching parts of the course which are out of their area of expertise since the course is so broad This edition is available electronically on CD ROM that includes the entire text study guide videos web links maps charts and photos Free when bundled this exciting new multimedia learning tool is easy to navigate and makes reading the textbook fun Students will love how simple it is to take notes online search for a topic create a binder of documents take practice tests and watch historical videos      **The College Board Review** ,2000

**Medical Books and Serials in Print, 1979** R. R. Bowker LLC,1979-05      *El-Hi Textbooks in Print* ,1982      *Books and Pamphlets, Including Serials and Contributions to Periodicals* Library of Congress. Copyright Office,1968      **Paperbound Books in Print** ,1991      *The American Catholic Quarterly Review* James Andrew Corcoran,Patrick John Ryan,Edmond Francis Prendergast,1880      *The American Catholic Quarterly Review ...* ,1880      **Medical and Health Care Books and Serials in Print** ,1997      *The Christian Union* Henry Ward Beecher,1891      Outlook Alfred Emanuel Smith,Francis Walton,1891      **The Literary World** ,1897      *Medical Books and Serials in Print* ,1983

## **Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers** Book Review: Unveiling the Magic of Language

In a digital era where connections and knowledge reign supreme, the enchanting power of language has become much more apparent than ever. Its ability to stir emotions, provoke thought, and instigate transformation is really remarkable. This extraordinary book, aptly titled "**Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers**," written by a highly acclaimed author, immerses readers in a captivating exploration of the significance of language and its profound effect on our existence. Throughout this critique, we shall delve into the book's central themes, evaluate its unique writing style, and assess its overall influence on its readership.

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### **Table of Contents Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers**

1. Understanding the eBook Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers
  - The Rise of Digital Reading Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers
  - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers
  - Exploring Different Genres
  - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
  - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
  - Popular eBook Platforms
  - Features to Look for in an eBook Platform
  - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers
  - Personalized Recommendations
  - Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers User Reviews and Ratings
  - Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers and Bestseller Lists

5. Accessing Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers Free and Paid eBooks
  - Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers Public Domain eBooks
  - Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers eBook Subscription Services
  - Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers Budget-Friendly Options
6. Navigating Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers eBook Formats
  - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
  - Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers Compatibility with Devices
  - Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers Enhanced eBook Features
7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
  - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers
  - Highlighting and Note-Taking Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers
  - Interactive Elements Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers
8. Staying Engaged with Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers
  - Joining Online Reading Communities
  - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
  - Following Authors and Publishers Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers
9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers
  - Benefits of a Digital Library
  - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers
10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
  - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
  - Minimizing Distractions
  - Managing Screen Time
11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers
  - Setting Reading Goals Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers
  - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers
  - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Peter Stearns Study Guide Answers
  - Distinguishing Credible Sources
13. Promoting Lifelong Learning

- Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development
- Exploring Educational eBooks

14. Embracing eBook Trends

- Integration of Multimedia Elements
- Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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