



Faculty Review of Open eTextbooks

The [California Open Educational Resources Council](http://www.cool4ed.org) 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:

Sage American History: A Survey of America's Past



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Find it: [eTextbook Website](#)

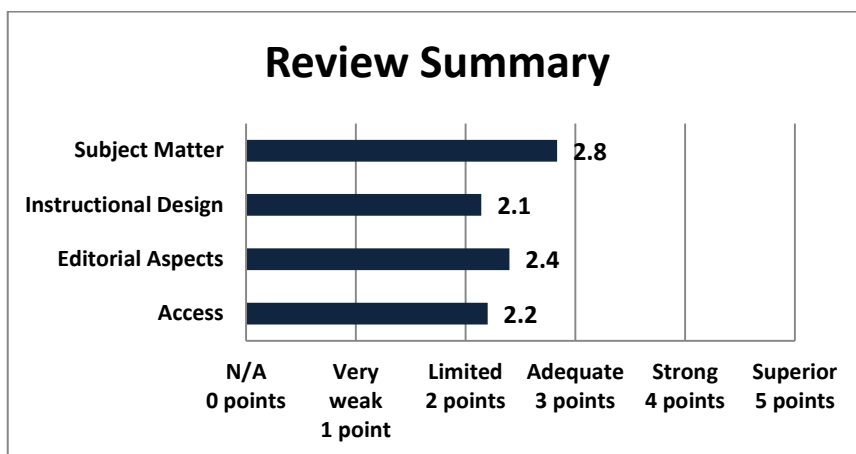
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Format Reviewed:
[Online](#)

A small fee may be associated with various formats.

Date Reviewed:
August, 2014.



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	
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: 24 out of 30

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

- I take a bottom-up social and cultural approach that focuses on the experiences of common people. This book takes a more top-down political and economic approach. It could complement lectures that have a social and cultural focus. Additionally, the primary sources help to give a voice to the masses.

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: 24 out of 35 points

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

- I like the imbedded links to primary sources in the textbook. However, I think it would be less confusing if all the links opened in a new window. Some take you out of the textbook to a new webpage, making it difficult to refer back to the textbook. Also, if you accidentally close the window (instead of hitting the back arrow) you have to start all over again.
- Would be nice if you could advance through the text by clicking a "next page" or "next section" button at the end of each sub-chapter. Currently you have to go back to the top, click the previous page arrow, then scroll down to the next sub-chapter link. This also creates some confusion as the some of the subchapters merge together, while others can only be accessed by clicking on the link.
- The document links for the chapter titled "American Colonies and the British Empire" located at http://www.sageamericanhistory.net/colonies_empire/index.html could not be accessed.

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 laid out 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:

- The textbook should provide more images and maps. I like to use images as historical sources that might reveal truths, but also reveal the perspectives of the audience they were intended for. Many of the images are portraits of presidents. Political cartoons, depictions of Native Americans, slaves, women, white laborers, etc. could reveal how these people were regarded and treated.

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: 15 out of 25 points

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

- No comment.

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: 8 out of 10 points

Overall Comments

If you were to recommend this textbook to colleagues, what merits of the textbook would you highlight?

- The book is well written, accessible, easy to navigate, and provides a concise overview of American history.

What areas of this textbook require improvement in order for it to be used in your courses?

- Need to make it easier to advance through the chapters; from one sub-chapter to the next.
- Needs more primary sources--perhaps a reader.
- Better and more images that engage students. Perhaps include a link with each image that places the image in its historical context.

We invite you to add your feedback on the textbook or the review to [the textbook site in MERLOT](#).
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