

essential for the history profession to exist. Without bias, there would be no need for a historian to interpret the past for the general public. Arnold suggests that bias, when both the historian and the reader are aware of it, helps the study of history rather than hinders it.

There is also of course the consideration of whether Arnold's argument of how historians tell stories is widely accepted or not. Arnold directly says in the text that 'I have used the term 'true stories' to talk about history... The past itself is not a narrative. In its entirety it is chaotic, uncoordinated, and complex as life. History is about making sense of that mess.'¹ In unknown support, the very much respected E. H. Carr states in his book *What is History* that 'History therefore is a process of selection in terms of historical significance... Just as from the infinite ocean of facts the historians select those which are significant for his purpose.'²

This comes back to Arnold's previously stated point historians select their data to the appropriate situation. It is clear from this that Arnold is clearly reiterating points made previously by past historians, therefore not furthering the field of this argument as much as he may have wanted to. However, it is undisputable that at the time of publishing this book has caused a huge amount of pleasure to history lovers throughout and the generation that will have the luck of reading this text will be greatly benefitted by the clear and helpful explanations included.

Despite a few issues of formatting, Arnold's *History: A Very Short Introduction* serves as an interesting treatise on history and historiography. Whether the reader agrees entirely with the author or not, Arnold raises several important issues all historians must consider as they approach the study of history. This book has if not furthered, definitely reiterated some crucial points in a welcoming, clear way to an age that is desperate for clarity within history.

¹ J. Arnold, *History: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) p.13.

² E. H. Carr, *What is History*, (London: Penguin Books, 1990) p.105.