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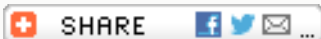
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## The gifts of historical fiction

**Teaching History**

**Volume 47 Issue 2 (Jun 2013)**

**French, Jackie**

**Abstract:** I write historical fiction for two reasons. The first is the joy of the endlessly interweaving of complexity as you learn about the past and see its connections with today - and for tomorrow, too. Ignoring what makes us who we are is like waking up with amnesia: is that strange woman offering us toast our mother or an axe murderer? We need the past - both its small things and large - to understand the now. The second reason is that it's just plain fun. I like the past. I did as a child too.

History has the best adventures. The past has pyramids and mummies and tsunamis and invading armies and the bubonic plague, all safely far away where they can't touch you, when you are a lucky child in the Australian suburbs. Non-fiction can teach you the facts. Historical fiction brings it alive. Humans like stories. Stories are how we tell not just our past but what we did at school. The great books of our religions are based on stories. Successful advertisements usually have storylines too.

 FULL TEXT PDF (311KB)

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