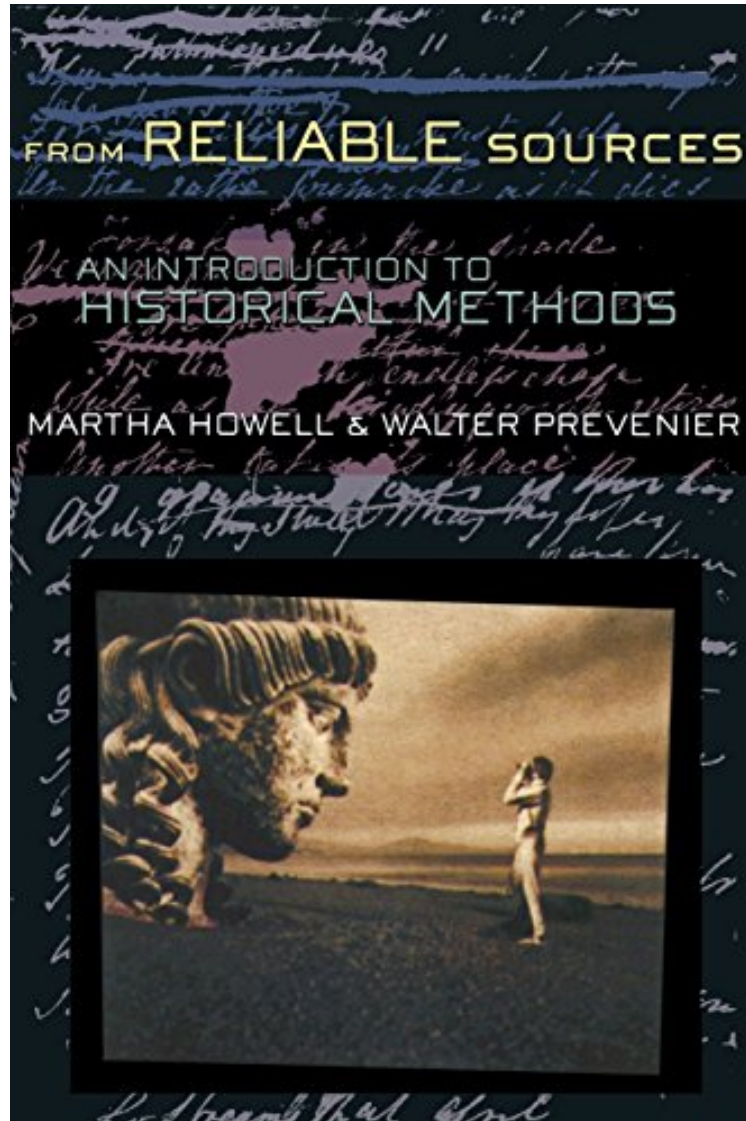


From Reliable Sources: An Introduction to Historical Methods

Martha C. Howell, Walter Prevenier

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Martha C. Howell, Walter Prevenier : From Reliable Sources: An Introduction to Historical Methods before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised From Reliable Sources: An Introduction to Historical Methods:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. It's a good introduction By Gregory B. Welch It was a good introduction, and that was what I was looking for, but I really could have used a more advanced book. I have done grad school work in sociology, so much of what was covered was old hat. But if you had no background in any sort of

social science, this would be fine. It would actually be nice to give at least part of this as an assignment in an advanced high school history course, to give students a better understanding of what they are getting when they read history: an informed argument.⁶ of 7 people found the following review helpful. Amateurs playing at being professionals
By David Pappas
While Howell and Prevenier may be experts in their respective narrow fields of study, namely various aspects of the Low Countries, but when it comes to explicating the skills of historical methodologies to the nascent historian they don't have a clue. The book is written in a confusing and cumbersome style which often overshadows the main criteria they are attempting to explain. Further confusing the issue there is very little in the way of elucidating examples or evidence to back up their presentation of criteria. For example the typology breakdown offered as a mainstay in historical research may be founded on the development of historical research, but they do not say so, in fact the typologies as presented to the amateur audience appear to be little more than random elements of much more sophisticated typology tools that are available. Same thing with their rendering of source evaluation criteria. The common CRAAP test is easier to understand and much more comprehensive in scope. They simply fail to explain in any cogent manner why the various criteria and skills they present are the ones to use for the historian. There are a few hidden gems in here but the reader has to slog through a lot of poor writing to spot them. The best part is - it is a slim volume.⁰ of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Keeper !
By jane the reader
Loved this required reading for history graduate school. a Keeper !

From Reliable Sources is a lively introduction to historical methodology, an overview of the techniques historians must master in order to reconstruct the past. Its focus on the basics of source criticism, rather than on how to find references or on the process of writing, makes it an invaluable guide for all students of history and for anyone who must extract meaning from written and unwritten sources. Martha Howell and Walter Prevenier explore the methods employed by historians to establish the reliability of materials; how they choose, authenticate, decode, compare, and, finally, interpret those sources. Illustrating their discussion with examples from the distant past as well as more contemporary events, they pay particular attention to recent information media, such as television, film, and videotape. The authors do not subscribe to the positivist belief that the historian can attain objective and total knowledge of the past. Instead, they argue that each generation of historians develops its own perspective, and that our understanding of the past is constantly reshaped by the historian and the world he or she inhabits. A substantially revised and updated edition of Prevenier's *Uit goede bron*, originally published in Belgium and now in its seventh edition, *From Reliable Sources* also provides a survey of western historiography and an extensive research bibliography.

"Among the books designed to teach aspiring historians proper procedures for their work, this volume ranks high. . . . Readers will especially appreciate the care taken to show the link between methodological innovations and the historical contexts in which they occurred." *Choice*, January 2002, Vol. 39, No. 5 "If the best historians, beginning with Thucydides, have been skeptical of metaphysical absolutes, they have also been reluctant to immerse themselves in antiquarianism. The present book draws strength from this tension." Charles Sullivan, *Common Knowledge*, 2003 "Historians generally have had to work out for themselves the different ways to read and use sources, the issue of how much we actually can learn from the past, the different ways that historical questions have been asked, and the uses to which history can be put. *From Reliable Sources* makes this process easier by laying out the principal elements of historiography and source criticism. No one, after reading this book, will be able to think again of sources as unproblematic conveyors of simple facts." Constance Brittain Bouchard, University of Akron "Both learned and informative, *From Reliable Sources* is clearly the outcome of extensive archival and critical experience. With its accessible balance of exposition and example, it is also a pleasure to read. There is nothing else like this in English." Isabel V. Hull, Cornell University
About the Author Walter Prevenier is Emeritus Professor of History at the University of Ghent (Belgium) and the author or coauthor of numerous books, including *From Reliable Sources: An Introduction to Historical Methods*, also from Cornell, and *The Promised Lands: The Low Countries Under Burgundian Rule*, 13691530.