

Summer Reading Book: *I Wish I'd Been There: Twenty Historians Bring to Life Dramatic Events that Changed America*, edited by Byron Hollinshead. New York: Anchor Books, 2007. ISBN# 978- 1-4000-9654-1

As you begin to read the essays in *I Wish I'd Been There*, there are a few essential questions you need to consider with each chapter. When you finish a chapter, jot down brief notes to help you remember what's important so you will have that information when you begin class.

You will have a short paper (2-3 pages) to write during the first weeks of school; having notes on these essays will help you get off to a good start.

Main ideas:

1. Each historian has provided a chapter based on an event in American history they would most likely want to observe. In each instance, what is their motivation in making that choice? What question(s) are they hoping to answer as an observer that that they can't otherwise answer?
2. Each historian makes an argument regarding the event they have chosen as their topic. What is the central underlying thesis for each chapter? Underline or make margin notes in your book so you can find the important passages that helped you determine the thesis.
3. Which essays did you enjoy most / least and why? Was it the historical topic, the author's writing style, or some other factor that made an essay interesting to you? What factors made you dislike an essay? If you wrote a review of a specific, what would it say?