

Terms and conditions: using metaphor to highlight causal processes with Year 13

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Alarmed by his students' random use of causal language in their essays, James Edward Carroll resolved to help his students improve their understanding of causal processes. Carroll decided to introduce his students to the metaphors that historians use to describe causation in the historiography of the Salem witch trials. By modelling how historians use different types of metaphor to describe the conditions that allowed the witch trials to take place, Carroll showed his students how conditions of events differ from direct causes, and have a different causal role to play.

Word banks and higgledy-piggledy essays

In the past, I have relied heavily on 'word banks', supplying students with a resource tabulating isolated words or phrases, perhaps in the form of a handout, bookmark, or wall display.¹ For example, one word bank I used included words such as 'enables', 'triggered', or 'provoked' in the hope that encountering these isolated words would release the conceptual thinking that sits behind their use. My students would encounter difficulties, however, when I used the word bank as a shortcut for the historical thinking that the resource summarised, or divorced the language from specific historical enquiries. In those instances, I would sit down to mark my students' writing only to discover that they had failed to assemble their linguistic building blocks into architecturally sound and aesthetically pleasing essays. Instead, the essays would be higgledy-piggledy. They might have included all the right words, but not necessarily in the right order.

For example, after teaching my Year 13 students a causal enquiry on the Salem witch crisis I would set them the following question as an outcome activity:

'It was the unusual political conditions operating in Massachusetts in 1692 that explain the extraordinary events in Salem'. How far do you agree with this explanation of the Salem witch hunt of 1692? ²

Broadly, many of my students seemed incapable of wrestling with the question's focus on 'unusual political conditions'. Few, for instance, seemed aware that only certain types of things, such as 'political context', tend to be described by historians as 'conditions' in their causal arguments. Additionally, most students were unaware that 'conditions' had their own particular causal processes, that a condition did not directly cause a consequence but instead made the consequence possible.

A reliance solely on a 'word-bank' seemingly encouraged such misconceptions in my students' essays, resulting in a jarring effect for the reader. My students appeared to think the objective was to simply write the random words their teacher seemed to value. The students might use the causal verbs, nouns, and prepositional phrases seemingly arbitrarily, with little consideration of whether the language described a causal process appropriate for a condition or a direct cause. For example, I would read about 'unusual political conditions' behaving in a personal or direct manner by 'pushing forward the crisis', as if an abstract political situation can somehow reach out and push people into prosecuting witches.

In sum, my students had not seemed to grasp that a written historical argument expresses intricate interrelationships between factual elements, the construction of those elements in discipline-specific ways, and their interrelations structured by language.³ In other words, students were not sure when and how to describe conditions as opposed to direct causes, and vice versa. They did not know that conditions and direct causes resulted in different types of causal processes. And they apparently did not know how all this was expressed in writing. Worse still, the reduction of all this thinking to word-bank proxy had obscured the thinking the language was supposed to represent. I had inadvertently encouraged the worst of all possible worlds: historical misunderstanding *and* inelegant style.

Accordingly, I set out to identify how academic historians tend to argue about 'conditions' by referring to theories of history and the scholarship of the Salem witch trials of 1692. Having done so, I hoped I would then be able to better illustrate to my students the differences between conditions and direct causes and their respective causal processes.⁴ I now suspected that a 'word-bank', on its own, would be too blunt an instrument for these goals. The 'literacy' could not be a decontextualised afterthought to the history.⁵

What is a 'condition'?

In *The Historian's Craft*, Marc Bloch used a metaphor to characterise a 'condition'.⁶ A hiker walks along a mountain path only to slip, plunge into the precipice, and die. Here, the 'direct' cause – the cause that directly led to the consequence - of the hiker's death was his misstep. But to only say 'this person died because they slipped' explains little. People slip all the time with little or no consequence, so without knowing the broader context a reader might be baffled to find this particular slip led to a death. To explain why this specific fatality occurred, therefore, we have to know that the slip took place in particular circumstances: high up a mountain, on a poorly maintained path, when it was raining, and so on. Similarly, in their causal arguments historians often describe the 'conditions': processes of change that made the ultimate consequence possible.⁷ This is partly an issue of explicability. Acquainting the reader with the broader context allows them to understand why the 'direct' causes, which otherwise might seem innocuous, were so consequential. As John Lewis Gaddis noted, 'causes always have contexts, and to know the former we must understand the latter'.⁸

Conditions both shape and limit an individual's scope for action. Someone who finds themselves on a wet mountain path, for example, is far less likely to start doing cartwheels than someone in a gym. For Arthur Marwick, conditions 'both establish the possibilities that there are for change and set the constraints which will inhibit change'.⁹ Crucially, however, this is not the same as saying conditions determine or dictate human behaviour, or that humans do not have the agency to act in individual

ways.¹⁰ An extreme-sports enthusiast, for example, may well choose to do cartwheels on a slippery mountain.

Conditions such as 'disinterest in mountain safety precautions' are often collective and structural factors which may well be couched in conceptual or statistical terms. In this sense, they tend to stress circumstance rather than individual action. Conditions, therefore, are often trends in geography, demography, economy, technology, ideology, culture, society, or politics. A condition might be concrete (for example, a mountain range) or abstract (such as governmental negligence).

Furthermore, conditions are often 'remote' in the sense that they might begin far before the consequence being explained. Our mountain range, for instance, was uplifted from the plain by geological processes that first occurred millennia before the hiker died. Furthermore, conditions tend to be long-term and slow-moving. Gradual tectonic shifts, for instance, still push our mountain upwards, albeit at a rate imperceptible to the human eye. A condition, therefore, might also exist simultaneously with and outlast the consequence being explained.¹¹ The mountain, for example, will remain in place long after the hiker's death.

'Conditions' and the Salem witch trials

When reading the historiography of the Salem witch trials, it was clear that several historians operated with such a view of 'conditions'. For example, Norton explained how the defeats suffered by the Massachusetts Bay Colony against the Native American Wabanaki in the early stages of the Second Indian War (1688-97) made the Salem witch crisis of 1692 possible. In doing so she clearly distinguished between 'conditions' and 'direct causes':

Had the Second Indian War on the northeastern frontier somehow been avoided, the Essex County witchcraft crisis of 1692 would not have occurred. This is not to say the war 'caused' the witchcraft crisis, but rather the conflict created conditions that allowed the crisis to develop as rapidly and extensively as it did. .¹²

Similarly, Norton noted that the young accusers' violent convulsive fits (which they went on to blame on witches), took place against the broader backdrop of a strictly Puritan society:

*The wartime context could well have influenced the onset of those fits – that the afflicted first accused an Indian of tormenting them certainly suggests as much – but more important than such plausible, if not wholly provable, origins was the long-term impact of the young women's charges in the context of Puritan New Englanders' belief system.*¹³

In these examples, Norton suggested that the initial accusations would not have been so significant/consequential had they not occurred in the context of a Puritan providential worldview looking for scapegoats during a failing war effort. These particular conditions help explain why witchcraft accusations – which were not unheard of in seventeenth-century New England but rarely led to convictions – had particularly cataclysmic consequences in Salem in 1692. When referring to conditions, however, Norton deliberately avoided using verbs such as 'caused' which imply that the context directly forced people to take accusations seriously. Instead, she used phrases which imply conditions only made the crisis possible ('allowed the crisis to develop') and informed people's behaviour ('influenced'). Such language still allows for human agency to operate in her causal model. Finally, Norton's conditions were collective (lots of New Englanders were affected by the war and held Puritan beliefs) and long-term, slow-moving trends. The Second Indian War, for example, began four years before the Salem witch trials and only ended five years after the last executions.

Norton's causal model helped me to understand that it makes no sense to write that the type of things which are often categorised as 'conditions' – supra-personal, remote, slow-moving – behave in individual, direct, and fast-moving ways. This realisation helped me to explain why my students' essays had been so higgledy-piggledy. By tearing words and phrases from the broader context of causal argument in a 'word bank', students had no opportunity to appreciate that their causal claims needed to make sense at the level of the clause or sentence, beyond the atomised word or phrase.

Metaphors in history

As Bloch's hiker illustrates, some historians and philosophers consider it appropriate to use metaphors in historical writing. I now started to consider the possibilities of introducing my students to metaphors, situated in historians' authentic arguments. I expected that this would serve three purposes. First, it would serve as inspiration for my own curricular design. My reading would help inform my decisions about what questions to ask my students and what language would best help them argue in answer to those questions. Second, it would help my students see how historians describe the conditions of events and their causal processes. Third, it would act as a model for my students' writing.

I was still wary, however. Among philosophers of history there is little consensus regarding the appropriacy of metaphors in causal arguments. For some, the inclusion of metaphor is proof positive of explanatory deficiency because, by definition, metaphors are not supported by evidence.¹⁴ Philosophers of history at the other extreme, however, suggest that all historical explanation is extended metaphor because historians structurally 'emplot' their evidence into widely understood tropes.¹⁵

I decided to put aside discussions of what philosophers think historians should do and instead concentrate on what the historians of the Salem witch crisis *did* do. In the case of the Salem witch trials, it appeared that one could find many examples of:

*middle-level, regulative metaphors of history, which generate explanations rather than adorn them: the organic features of growth, life-cycles, roots, seeds and so on; the figures of time with their rises and falls, weather catastrophes, seasons, twilights; the figures of movement (flow of events, crossroads, wheels); the technical figures of construction, gears, chains; theatrical figures of stage, actors, context.*¹⁶

For example, Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum – the historians who have perhaps most strongly argued for the importance of conditions in explaining the Salem crisis – provided a particularly

pronounced example of the use of metaphor. In one paragraph, they by compared the Salem witch crisis to a plant ('flower', 'soil', 'root'); a play ('script', 'roles', 'actors', 'melodrama', 'tragedy'); and a disease ('outbreak') (Figure 1). For historians stressing the importance of conditions, these metaphors are not linguistic ornamentation – they are a fundamental part of the argument. For example, Richard Francis noted that historians who refer to the Salem crisis as a 'tragedy' tend to de-emphasise the importance of individual decision-making and action. For Francis, 'tragedy implies that individuals are preyed upon by forces more powerful than themselves'.¹⁷ The use of non-personal medical metaphors such as 'outbreak' serve a similar function. By using these metaphors, Boyer and Nissenbaum imply that the crisis was a 'natural' development from the initial conditions, with human action relatively incidental.

My reading of the historiography of the Salem witch trials led me to conclude that Christopher Behan McCullagh was right to argue that 'historical interpretations often do rest upon metaphors' and I was therefore justified to introduce them to my students.¹⁸ This was not just to improve the students' written style: I deemed that carefully chosen metaphors might help students to recognise when and how they can convincingly characterise conditions of events and their accompanying causal processes. As Gaddis noted:

*if metaphors help us think – if, to use yet a final one, they can open windows and let in fresh air – then we have every reason to rely on them, and to do so unashamedly. We need all the help we can get.*¹⁹

In deciding to introduce historians' metaphors in my lessons, I was operating within an existing tradition among history teachers. When surveying history teachers' curricular theorisation regarding causal arguments, for instance, Counsell noted many have managed to 'develop analogies or metaphors to show pupils the difference between different types of causes'.²⁰ I recognised, however, that my enthusiasm must be tempered by caution. As Foster warned, 'a poorly conceived metaphor can impede analysis, either by encouraging the distortion of historical events to make them fit the metaphor, or by offering weak analytic power. Finding the right metaphors would be crucial'.²¹

I therefore formulated the following criteria for judging appropriate use of historical metaphor by my students. First, a metaphor should 'appeal to some familiar experience or perception to illustrate the less familiar'.²² In other words, the metaphorical object – such as a tragedy, flower, or outbreak – should be relatable to the reader and therefore help the writer communicate something that would otherwise have been more difficult to understand. Second, the metaphor should be carefully chosen, avoiding transgressions into banality. As Marwick noted, 'when it comes to writing history, pains (literally!) have to be taken to write precisely and explicitly, avoiding the temptation to reach for ready-made metaphors and clichés'.²³ Third, the metaphor must 'ring true to your audience's ears'.²⁴ While a metaphoric statement cannot be literally true, it might still be metaphorically apt. The metaphor therefore needs to display an adequate resemblance between the metaphor (such as a tragedy) and the object being metaphorised (for example, the Salem witch trials). In sum, as William Kelleher Storey recommended, I wanted students to 'use metaphors and similes judiciously'.²⁵

Historians' metaphors of conditions

I then began to think about which metaphors of conditions I would introduce to my students. I wanted to select metaphors that might force students to think about conditions, conditions' typical causal processes, and how these are expressed in writing. I also made a conscious effort not try to siphon the 'history' from the 'literacy' in my planning.

Allan Megill noted that historians who privilege the causal importance of 'conditions' often employ particular types of metaphor.²⁶ One type of metaphor Megill identified refers to events developing upward from conditions existing below, such as from 'foundations' which sit beneath the building above. The second type might overlap with the first and highlights latency, in that the condition is often less visible to historical agents than the event being explained. Besides the example in the previous sentence, these might include metaphors such as 'roots' which are hidden beneath the soil. Such metaphors were particularly commonplace in the influential interpretative frameworks of the mid-twentieth century, influenced by the social sciences such as the *Annales* school (deep currents/surface waves). What these metaphors share is an implication that what was visible to historical agents at the time was less causally important, from the historian's perspective, than latent,

invisible or 'underlying' conditions. The currents in the depths of the ocean are far less visible than the surface above, yet they profoundly affect the way the waves we can see more easily behave.

In the historiography of the Salem witch trials, I identified three common types of metaphors that historians used for conditions of events. The first were metaphors of atmosphere and fire. According to historian Frances Hill, for instance, on the eve of the crisis in Salem 'the atmosphere in the parsonage was so charged as easily to spark the latent madness'.²⁷ Similar metaphors used by historians to describe conditions included 'highly toxic climate of fear' and 'tinderbox' (Figure 2).²⁸ I judged that discussing these metaphors in the classroom might allow me to illustrate the common characteristics of the conditions of events to my students. I hoped that the metaphors might help demonstrate that under certain conditions usually unremarkable actions can have cataclysmic consequences. Only in particular circumstances, for example, does lighting a match cause a devastating explosion. Furthermore, the metaphors might help illustrate the 'over-determined' quality of some historical causal explanation: the idea that any one direct cause might not in itself be necessary for a consequence. For example, if there is an undetected gas leak, a number of possible actions – such as lighting a cigarette or turning on a gas oven – could cause an explosion, implying that the occasioning cause is less important to the explosion than the background conditions.

An overemphasis on the causal importance of conditions, however, might result in overly 'scientific' or 'mechanistic' explanations of human behaviour. 'A reduction', according to Henry Ashby Turner,

*of history to long-term, impersonal causes easily gives rise to a deterministic version of the past that lends a spurious air of high probability to what happened and blots out the effects of contingencies that spring from immediate circumstances and individual choices.*²⁹

Perhaps to avoid accusations that they were downplaying the importance of human agency, some historians used verbs which downplayed determinism. When explaining why Phillip English came under suspicion of witchcraft, for instance, Norton argued that English's 'origins and mercantile pursuits made him a marked man in the climate of fear pervading Essex County in 1692'.³⁰ The use of atmospheric verbs such as 'pervade' or 'permeate' imply background influence but do not deny the possibility of human agency.³¹ An atmosphere cannot, by itself, force people to prosecute witches.

Indeed, historians such as Benjamin C. Ray used metaphors of atmosphere and fire to emphasise the importance of individual agency. Ray, for example, argued regarding the importance of Salem Village's minister Samuel Parris' role in the bringing the events of 1692 about. For Ray, Parris' actions helped create the conditions which were conducive to a witch hunt. In particular, Parris' 'aggressive preaching about the devil at work against his ministry created a dark and foreboding atmosphere that legitimated accusations'.³² Similarly, Ray stressed that the initial actions of the young people who were afflicted by fits were required to bring the crisis into effect by noting 'the accusers ignited the witchcraft crisis in Salem'.³³ In this example, a conducive atmosphere is not sufficient for a crisis; human actions are required to bring about the consequence. Finally, Ray highlighted that magistrates' endorsement was required to transform initial accusations of witchcraft into a full-blown crisis. For instance, Ray argued 'the court poured fuel on the flame in the form of confessions wrought by intimidation and apparent extortion'.³⁴ Here, human actions, as described with a fire metaphor, had an exacerbating effect on the situation. In sum, such atmosphere and fire metaphors might be extended to indicate the crucial interplay between background conditions and human action to create a persuasive historical causal explanation.

A second relatively common metaphor for conditions of events in the historiography of the Salem witch trials was that of plants (Figure 1). For instance, Bernard Rosenthal summarised common interpretations of the Salem witch trials which stress the importance of 'ongoing political disputes with England' as well as:

*persistent threats from 'Indians' (i.e., Native Americans) against the colony and a decline of power among orthodox clergy – all ingredients for broad social instability, providing fertile ground for the discovery of enemies in the invisible world.*³⁵

In this example, conditions such as political uncertainty, the war with Wabanaki and fears among the Puritan clergy about their declining influence are described as 'fertile ground' because they helped make a witch crisis possible. A seed cannot take root in infertile ground. Similar metaphors used by historians to characterise conditions included 'soil' and 'roots' (Figure 3).³⁶ Additionally, plant metaphors for conditions' causal processes included verbs such as 'flower', 'grew from', and 'sprouted into'. Emerson W. Baker, for example, argued that 'the case against John Alden *stemmed from every*

possible root of accusation: social, political, religious, sexual, geographical, and military' [my italics].³⁷ Such metaphors might help imply a chronological causal process – a relatable story - that link background conditions to their 'natural' developments.

The third and final metaphor that I wanted to introduce to my students was that of buildings, such as the characterisation of a condition as a 'foundation' or 'framework' (Figure 4).³⁸ Elaine Breslaw, for instance, argued:

*The combination of new threats from Indians, the intrusion of royal power into Massachusetts affairs, and increasing experiences with religious dissenters also helped to lay the groundwork for growing sentiment in favour of blaming outsiders for continuing problems.*³⁹

Metaphors such as Breslaw's 'laying groundwork' might demonstrate other characteristics sometimes associated with conditions. First, like an invisible or hidden root, 'foundation' or 'groundwork' evokes latency in that a foundation is usually hidden from the observer. Second, the 'foundation' metaphor hints at necessity: just as a fire needs oxygen to burn and a plant requires fertile soil to grow, a building cannot stand without foundations.⁴⁰ In these senses, the threats from native Americans, the English government's attempts to centralise power, and the decreasing power of the clergy all enabled the Salem witch trials.

The enquiry

In each of the first four lessons of our enquiry 'Why was there a witch crisis in Salem in 1692?', my students and I concentrated on different possible 'conditions' of the Salem witch crisis (Figure 5). In each lesson, we read historical scholarship where the historians employed metaphors. I judged this to be crucial so students could see how the language was used in its full argumentative context. After each reading, I explicitly modelled how and why the historian might have written in this way (Figures 2-4). Each lesson also included a counterargument by an academic historian who argued against the condition's causal importance. At the end of each of these four lessons, I asked the students to write a paragraph in which they might consider using similar metaphors to explain what role that lesson's particular condition played in the Salem witch crisis. At the end of the enquiry, students wrote an

essay explaining the relative importance of the 'unusual political conditions' in the events in Salem in 1692.

The students' essays

My reading of the students' final essays suggested that at least some students appeared to grasp what conditions of events are and the causal roles they play. For example, when referring to the mass fear caused in Salem Village by Tituba confessing there was mass conspiracy of witches, Abigail argued:

*In this context, it is clear to see why these initial accusations and confessions accelerated into a witch craze: the magistrates, guardians and ministers found themselves in a position where they felt they had no choice but to act quickly to limit the Devil's destruction within the colony.*⁴¹

In this example, Abigail seemed to provide a description of conditions for explicability: we, the readers, can start to 'see' why the crisis escalated when we understand the broader 'context'.

This is not to say that students adopted a deterministic, mechanistic view of human behaviour in response to their context. Some students still recognised the importance of human agency.

Madeleine, for instance, argued:

Factors such as the political limbo, social anxiety and religious tensions were necessary to instil unease in the community. While these factors may also have motivated individuals to act the way they did, an atmosphere alone does not create a witch hunt. Individuals needed to exploit the conditions.

Furthermore, some students' essays seemed to demonstrate that they appreciated conditions' characteristic of making previously impossible consequences possible, as evidenced by students' use of verbs such as 'facilitated' and 'allowed'. When explaining the role of the political conditions in New England in the early 1690s in the Salem crisis, for instance, Caroline argued that 'the Salem witch craze dating from 1692 to 1693 was the result of different factors functioning in Salem making it susceptible to a crisis. The unusual political conditions operating in Massachusetts enabled the crisis to grow'.

Certain essays supplied evidence of students recognising other typical characteristics of conditions. Jason, for instance, referred to conditions such as the 'growing tensions between the pre-modern puritan demographic and the newer, less religiously centred and more economic settlers'. Such examples might indicate these students appreciated conditions are long-term, slow-moving, and remote processes as well as supra-personal phenomena which might refer to demographic, economic, ideological, and social trends.

Some students used metaphors of atmosphere such as 'air', 'climate; and 'environment' to characterise conditions. Jason, for example, argued: 'an atmosphere of tension and unease permeated the air of Salem, created by the religious tension and political uncertainty from the upheaval of governor Andros'. This example might suggest that Jason grasped that conditions often create circumstances which might inform people's behaviour. Furthermore, Ava used a similar metaphor to argue that the condition of 'political stability' was a necessary precondition of the crisis. According to Ava, this instability generated an 'atmosphere of tension, fear and uncertainty that was needed to spark a witch craze'.

Furthermore, some students used building metaphors to describe other characteristics of conditions. Caroline, for instance, employed one to evoke latency when she argued 'underlying village tensions partially led to the Salem witch craze'. Additionally, Elena used a building metaphor to argue conditions set constraints for human actions and informed repetitious behaviours when she wrote 'a further factor partially explaining the extraordinary events in Salem regarded legal processes, which worked within a framework that allowed convictions to easily take place'.

Finally, in some essays the students used plant metaphors with Madeleine arguing that 'the political instability following the absence and introduction of a new Charter was a long-term precondition which provided fertile ground for a witch-craze to grow'. Others used similar metaphors to express chronological, causal processes linking background conditions to direct actions. Jason, for instance, argued 'tensions are more likely to have stemmed from religious uncertainty as a result of the political limbo'.

Implications for my future practice

The students' essays seemed to confirm some of my initial concerns about the limitations of a 'word bank pedagogy', as well as point towards possible alternatives. A student's causal claim can only be convincing if it indicates that certain types of substantive phenomena, once characterised as particular types of causes, perform different types of causal processes. If this alignment does not exist in the students' causal claim, it will inevitably produce a grating effect for the reader. For students to appreciate this, however, they need be introduced to complete causal claims written in their full context. The 'word bank' – which necessarily remove individual words and phrases from their context – if used in isolation immediately disable students seeing this. Ultimately, no language mat can ever be a panacea. In fact, as previous history teachers have persuasively demonstrated, banks might only be of limited use unless situated in the context of an enquiry that makes clear the disciplinary and substantive knowledge that sits behind such language's use. Like any proxy, unless the rationale for its construction is understood any potential effectiveness will almost certainly be lost in transit.

In terms of planning, my investigation might have at least two ramifications for history teachers. First, a teacher cannot necessarily assume the language mats or word grids one might see on social media, in examination board guidance, or teacher-resource marketplaces can be treated as 'off-the-peg'. The ones I have designed, for instance, were very deliberately created with particular enquiries in mind.⁴² But what may have worked effectively for my students arguing why there was a witch crisis in Salem will not automatically be suitable for another teacher's students explaining why William won the Battle of Hastings.

For example, different causal enquiry questions might presuppose a pronounced focus on certain types of causes – say 'conditions' or more direct causes - due to the way the questions are phrased. This in turn has implications for the types of causal processes being explored and the linguistic conventions that will be appropriate. An A-Level question demanding students explain the role of 'political conditions' in the Salem crisis demands different types of causal explanations to one requiring a focus on direct causes such as the young people in Salem's initial accusations.⁴³ The substantive focus of one might shape the disciplinary in ways that would be inappropriate for the

other. In terms of resources such as word banks, therefore, teachers must use their professional judgement to use, adapt, or discard as required, because the words and phrases within them will be more or less appropriate depending on the question.

Word banks, used in isolation run the risk of encouraging students to visualise conceptual thinking as a 'process' or 'skill'.⁴⁴ It might be all too easy for a student to think that when they encounter any new topic all they need do to answer a causal question is reach for their trusty toolbox, grab the appropriate 'tool' (the word bank), and apply the same repeatable, tried-and-tested processes for explaining why things happened in history. Such approaches, however, might lead the student to believe that historical substantive content is free-floating, inert information that does not affect the disciplinary, essentially another interchangeable slab students just need to set to work on. But this is not how historical argument always works. In reality, the disciplinary and the substantive often do not operate in discrete silos. Disciplinary conventions and unique substantive content meet, mesh, and modify one another in order to construct historical knowledge. And no bolt-on linguistic shortcut will be able to substitute that profundity of thinking.

Many thanks to Simon Gould for his illustrations.

- ¹ See, for example, Carroll, J. E. (2016). 'Grammar. Nazis. Does the grammatical 'release the conceptual'?' in *Teaching History*, 163, *Get Excited and Carry On Edition*, pp. 8-16; Carroll, J. E. (2018). 'Couching counterfactuals in knowledge when explaining the Salem witch trials with Year 13' in *Teaching History*, 172, *Cause and Consequence Edition*, pp.18-29.
- ² Pearson Edexcel (2016). *Sample Assessment Materials Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in History (9H10) First Teaching from September 2015 First Certification 2017 Issue 1* London: Pearson, p.355.
- ³ Counsell, C. (2016). 'Genericism's children'. *The Dignity of the Thing*. Retrieved from <https://thedignityofthethingblog.wordpress.com/2016/01/11/genericisms-children/>
- ⁴ For a discussion of this tradition of history teachers' curricular theorisation see Fordham, M. (2015). 'Realising and extending Stenhouse's vision of teacher research: the case of English history teachers' in *British Educational Research Journal* 42, (1), pp. 135-150; Chapman recommended characterisation of causal roles such as 'preconditions' being made explicit to students. For example, Chapman, A. (2003). 'Camels, diamonds and counterfactuals: a model for teaching causal reasoning' in *Teaching History*, 112, *Empire Edition*, pp.47-49.
- ⁵ Counsell, C. (2004). *History and Literacy in Year 7: Building the lesson around the text*. London: Hodder Education, pp. 4 & 111.
- ⁶ Bloch, M. (1963). *The Historian's Craft*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, pp. 190-192.
- ⁷ Sukanami, H. (2011). 'Causal explanation and moral judgement: undividing a division' in *Journal of International Studies* 39, (3), pp. 717-734.
- ⁸ Gaddis, J. L. (2002). *The Landscape of History: How historians map the past*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.97
- ⁹ Marwick, A. (2001). *The New Nature of History: Knowledge, evidence, language*. London: Palgrave, p.204
- ¹⁰ Sukanami *op. cit.*
- ¹¹ Bloch *op. cit.* p.192
- ¹² Norton, M. B. (2002). *In the Devil's Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, pp.296-297
- ¹³ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁴ For example, Hempel, C. G. (1942). 'The function of general laws in history' in *Journal of Philosophy*, 39, pp. 35-48.
- ¹⁵ White, H. (1978). The historical text as literary artefact. In R. H. Canary and H. Kozicki (Eds.) *The Writing of History: Literary Form and Historical Understanding* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, p.52.
- ¹⁶ Kellner, H. (1989). *Language and Historical Representation: Getting the story crooked*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, p.8.
- ¹⁷ Francis, R. (2006). *Judge Sewall's Apology: The Salem Witch Trials and the forming of a conscience*, Harper Perennial: London, p.15.
- ¹⁸ McCullagh, C. B. (1993). 'Metaphor and truth in history' in *Clio*, 23, (1) p.30.
- ¹⁹ Gaddis *op. cit.* p.128.
- ²⁰ Counsell, C., Foster, R., McConnell, T. & Burn, K. (2019). 'What's the wisdom on...causation?' in *Teaching History*, 175, *Listening to Diverse Voices Edition*, p.27
- ²¹ Foster, R. (2013). 'The more things change, the more they stay the same: developing students' thinking about change and continuity' in *Teaching History*, 151, *Continuity Edition*, p.13.
- ²² Marius, R. & Page, M. E. (2007). *A Short Guide to Writing About History*. Pearson Longman: London, p.161
- ²³ Marwick *op. cit.* p.xiii.
- ²⁴ Storey, W. K. (2013). *Writing History: A guide for students (4th Edition)*. Oxford University: Oxford, pp.112-113.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.* pp.12-13.
- ²⁶ Megill termed these types of metaphor 'metaphors of verticality' and/or 'metaphors of differential visibility'. Megill, A. (2007). *Historical Knowledge, Historical Error: A contemporary guide to practice*. The University of Chicago Press: London, pp.82-93.
- ²⁷ Hill, F (1996). *A Delusion of Satan: The full story of the Salem Witch Trials*. London: Penguin, p.36
- ²⁸ Robinson, E. A. (1991). *The Devil Discovered: Salem witchcraft 1692*. New York: Hippocrene Books, pp. xiii-xiv & 189; Boyer, P. & Nissenbaum, S. (1976). *Salem Possessed*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. p.191; Demos, J. (2008). *The Enemy Within: 2,000 years of witch-hunting in the western world*. Viking: London, p.215.

- ²⁹ Turner, H. A. (1999). 'Human agency and impersonal determinants in historical causation: a response to David Lindenfeld' in *History and Theory* 38, (3), p.305.
- ³⁰ Norton *op.cit.* p.144.
- ³¹ Breslaw, E. G. (1996). *Tituba, Reluctant Witch of Salem*. New York: New York University Press, pp.105-106.
- ³² Ray, B. C. (2015). *Satan and Salem: The witch-hunt crisis of 1692*. London: University of Virginia Press, pp.132 & 144-145.
- ³³ *Ibid.* pp.132
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*
- ³⁵ Rosenthal, B. (1993). *Salem Story: Reading the Witch Trials of 1692*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.34.
- ³⁶ Karlsen, C. F. (1989). *The Devil in the Shape of a Woman: Witchcraft in colonial New England*. New York: Vintage, p.2; Boyer & Nissenbaum *op. cit.* pp. 12 & 161; Rosenthal *op. cit.* p.4.
- ³⁷ Baker, E. W. (2015). *A Storm of Witchcraft: The Salem Trials and the American experience*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.137 & 147-153; Boyer & Nissenbaum *op. cit.* p.12; Robinson *op. cit.* pp. 45-46 & 189.
- ³⁸ Norton *op. cit.* p.295; Fels, T. (2017). *Switching Sides: How a Generation of Historians Lost Sympathy for the Victims of the Salem Witch Hunt*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, p.128.
- ³⁹ Breslaw *op. cit.* pp.143-145.
- ⁴⁰ E.g. Cohen, M. R. (1942). 'Causation and its application to history' in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 3, (1), pp. 12-29.
- ⁴¹ In line with ethical research practices, all students' names have been changed.
- ⁴² See, for example, Carroll (2016) *op.cit.*; Carroll (2018) *op.cit.*
- ⁴³ Van Bouwel, J. & Weber, E. (2008). 'A pragmatist defense of non-relativistic explanatory pluralism in history and social science' in *History and Theory*, 47, (2), pp.168-182.
- ⁴⁴ Both Counsell and Lee have discussed dangers of this tendency, e.g. Counsell, C. (2000) Historical knowledge and historical skill: the distracting dichotomy. In J. Arthur and R. Phillips (Eds) *Issues in History Teaching*, (pp.54-71). Abingdon: Routledge; Lee, P. (2005) Putting principles into practice: understanding history. In M. S. Donovan and J. D. Bransford (Eds) *How Pupils Learn: History in the classroom* (pp. 31-78). Washington DC: National Academies Press.