Reading Log #1
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1. The main thesis of this article is that history isn't just about learning the past; it's also about "how we know what we think we know about the past". This statement paves the way for a lot of interesting questions and statements made by Belshaw. His main points are about the fact that there is no reason to learn history unless there is credible proof, reliability, and verification behind an author's theory about the past. Belshaw also makes some great points about how the field of history is ever changing. It is a much more dynamic field than most people realize. Another strong argument he makes for his case is about perspective. History is most reliable when it is taken from sources that had no motives to write what they were writing.

2. Belshaw uses the example of Bartolome de las Casas to support his argument about motives. "We are inclined to believe him, not least because he wasn't going to win himself any friends by speaking out". This argument is compelling because it says something about how important it is to know who the source is and why they wrote what they wrote. Belshaw also talked about "quantitative historical techniques". The use of these new techniques in new eras often helps emerging theories to replace older ones.

3. This article makes me wonder what recorded history will be like when future historians look back on our era. Our current situation including use of the internet, provides opportunity for everyone to record events that could someday be read as important human history. Belshaw's thoughts on history made me realize that I need to ask a lot of questions when I study historical documents.