

Not the least value of *Telling the Truth* is the authors' nuanced and masterful analysis of three centuries of western intellectual history in which they explain how the "heroic science" model of history (i.e. the historian's work is disinterested and value free; the history that is written is objective and "true") emerged out of the Enlightenment, and how that model (dominant until recent decades) fell by the wayside when a new generation of historians came of age in the 1960s.

It was the history profession itself, claim the authors, that opened the door to the skepticism and relativism they are trying to counteract. When history became "democratized" by opening the doors of graduate schools to women, blacks, and the sons and daughters of recent immigrants, the consensus view of the American past was put to the test and found wanting. Broad agreement about the national past was replaced with a medley of competing "truths" written from a variety of ethnic, gender, and class perspectives (the origins of multiculturalism). One result: a growing conviction that writing a universally valid history for an increasingly fragmented nation had become an impossibility.

At the same time the natural sciences' reputation for value-free objectivity was undermined by countless studies (often social histories of science) showing that even scientific knowledge was to some degree socially constructed and contextual. Finally, post-war deconstruction and postmodernism (e.g., Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault) advanced doctrines that challenged the very possibility that scholars could say anything about "the world out there" that was objective in even a limited sense. (A primary value of this book is its brief, coherent summary of postmodernism [of which deconstruction is a part] and its implications for history—an excellent primer, in other words, for those who finished their professional training before postmodernism became a staple of academic life.)

In the face of such intellectual currents, Professors Appleby, Hunt and Jacob attempt, in a balanced and reasonable way, to reassemble Clio's mansion. As beneficiaries of the democratization of education referred to earlier, and as practitioners of the myth-challenging social and intellectual history that has caused so much consternation to cultural conservatives of late, they welcome a certain amount of skepticism as an ally in the search for truth. "Complete skepticism, on the other hand, [they argue] is debilitating, because it casts doubt on the ability to make judgments or draw conclusions." In essence (and this greatly oversimplifies), they argue that even though history can never deal in absolutes historians must continue to trust the reality of the past and its knowability. As for those who claim that all investigations are inherently subjective and self-referential, those critics cannot "imagine the complexity of a human situation in which workable truths appear as the result of messy, ideologically motivated, self-absorbed interventions undertaken by myopic people whose identities may be vastly different from one's own." In other words, as imperfect as an individual's efforts might be, *collectively* we can discover "workable truths" that can satisfy our curiosity about ourselves and our society. And, by reading this book, historians will discover (or rediscover) many workable truths about our common enterprise.

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Robert Blackey, ed. *History Anew: Innovations in the Teaching of History Today*. California State University, Long Beach: The University Press, 1993. Pp. xi, 324. Cloth, \$65.00; ISBN 1-878981-03-X; paper, \$22.50; ISBN 1-878981-04-8.

Bob Blackey served as vice president of the Teaching Division of the American Historical Association from 1992 to 1995. In 1988 he had assumed major responsibility for the "Teaching Innovations" column of *Perspectives*, the AHA's monthly newsletter. In 1993, at the midterm of his tenure as vice president, Bob published *History Anew*. It is an anthology of 43 articles by history educators. 41 of these articles were published under Blackey's aegis in *Perspectives* during the previous period, most of them since 1984.

History Anew is a contribution that has become immediately useful to teaching historians and student teachers. *The American Historical Review*, departing from precedent, published a short but

favorable review in its December 1994 issue. The AHA and the Society for History Education have helped with promotion.

History Anew marks the appearance among academic historians of a fresh awareness of the importance of historical pedagogy for our profession and for the public. A glance at the book's table of contents shows that starting in the 1980s "Teaching Innovations" began to publish articles with an appeal to audiences ranging from secondary school historians to teachers of graduate students. Textbooks, Student Activities, Advanced Placement Teaching, Multimedia Approaches, Quantitative History, World History, Social History, History of Science, Local History, and Teaching Teachers, are among the topics debated and explored.

Blackey has focused attention on the role that the history teacher is called upon to play both in the classroom and in the country's public life. This, be it said, could not have happened without a struggle. Few impresarios have worked harder than Robert Blackey in coaxing and cajoling contributions out of busy writers and teachers. The book, by the same token, salutes teamwork. It drives home the elementary truth that professional growth is stunted and students shortchanged unless teaching historians learn from each other.

Thanks to this book and the "Teaching Innovations" column of which it is an accurate reflection, the American Historical Association is being helped to rediscover an historiographical tradition in this country linking the historian as writer or scholar with the historian as teacher. This tradition had its roots in the progressive movement a century ago, flourished in the New Deal, and was disrupted by the outbreak of World War II and the deep political freeze that followed. Responding originally to the needs of Advanced Placement teachers, the AHA is now beginning to develop perspectives that reach far beyond this starting point and to achieve a new stature as a professional organization.

History Anew is just the tip of the iceberg. Blackey's exploration of the history teacher's world has led him to create fresh themes and formats for his column. The innovative quality of this work has stimulated exchanges of ideas on many fascinating and important topics of concern to a broad historical audience; and the space allotted overall to history education in *Perspectives* has continued to expand impressively since the publication of *History Anew*. With this book and his subsequent work Blackey has laid the basis for an upsurge of creative writing on many aspects of the history teacher's craft.

The time is ripe for the publication of a second volume of *History Anew* to bring together for the benefit of the wider teaching public some of the remarkable articles that have appeared in the "Teaching Innovations" column since 1993.

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