

lively, easy-to-follow guidebook describing the techniques of researching and then writing the history of local businesses.

Logically organized, this slim volume begins with an overview explaining the value of exploring local business history. It then covers the nuts and bolts of doing such a history: examining the internal story of a company and setting that narrative against the broader fabric of the community, the industry, the labor force, and the role of government. This section is followed by two chapters dealing with the issue of sources. Readers are not only introduced to the various types of sources (primary and secondary as well as internal company documents and external governmental records) to consult but also advised on the types of questions to ask. The book concludes with a short survey of the field of business history itself—its research approach, the institutional or organizational synthesis—and offers readers ideas on what to do with their completed local business histories.

But this book offers more than just a treasure trove of tips for novice business historians. Interspersed within the narrative are several short two-to-three-paragraph explanatory pieces that use the research and findings of professional historians to illustrate some of the major issues and problems currently encountered in the field. In addition, for those wishing to delve deeper into business history, brief, up-to-date bibliographies including the most recent research may be found at the end of each chapter.

Local Businesses seems to dispel the old adage, "Those who can, do, and those who can't, teach." Although all of the book's authors actively pursue their own research projects, they are also very successful in teaching the business historian's craft to their readers. Written for anyone interested in history and particularly those wishing to examine local businesses, this fine how-to book should also find a wide audience among students and scholars.

Public and Academic History: A Philosophy and Paradigm, by Phyllis K. Leffler and Joseph Brent. Public History Series. Malabar, FL: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Co., 1990. viii, 97 pp. Notes, index. \$16.00 cloth, \$11.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY PHILIP V. SCARPINO, INDIANA UNIVERSITY/PURDUE UNIVERSITY, INDIANAPOLIS

Public history has been alive and well throughout the twentieth century, even though the present public history movement is only about fifteen years old. As recent public historians have sought a past for themselves, Benjamin F. Shambaugh, who edited the Iowa Applied

History Series, has emerged as a pioneer in public history. *Public and Academic History*, however, is largely about a debate among academics; the public in public history remains mostly in the shadows as passive recipients of what professionals deliver.

The authors, Phyllis K. Leffler and Joseph Brent, explain that this book grew out of their disagreement with two assumptions that "underlay" the Institute on Teaching Public History, which took place at Arizona State University in the summer of 1984. The authors, who are both academic historians, contend that those assumptions were (1) "that historians needed training to teach 'public' history because it somehow constituted a different . . . type of historical inquiry," and (2) "that those who *used* history in the public arena were involved in a 'profession' far different from those who taught in an academic setting" (1).

Leffler and Brent have divided *Public and Academic History* into three chapters: "History and its Audiences," "History and Science: A Debate from the Past," and "The Methodological Value of History." Chapter one addresses the evolution of academic history in the twentieth century and then touches on audiences for history, the "reemergence of public history," public history programs, and professional ethics. Chapter two offers an overview of the transformation of history into an objective social science by academic historians who felt a need to justify their profession in the face of criticism by scientists. By the 1950s, the authors argue, history as social science had emerged triumphant, with resulting extreme specialization and disconnection from public and student audiences.

This high point of the impact of science on history becomes pivotal in chapter three, where the authors outline changes in scientific thinking that in the twentieth century have called objectivity into question. Thus, the authors argue, "the strained attempts so many historians have made to be 'objective' have been based on a misconception of scientific 'truth'" (76). Leffler and Brent conclude that this reconstructed scientific epistemology provides a new scientific basis for a historical methodology "because it is now clear that history is a human science which does furnish knowledge of consequences to people concerned with practical outcomes" (77). The final fifteen pages of *Public and Academic History* consider the impact of this conclusion on academic history and on public history.

The authors are to be congratulated for emphasizing that all historians share a common process, which they label as research, analysis, and expression and presentation. This line of analysis puts the emphasis where it should be, on the audiences for the historians' work. Unfortunately, *Public and Academic History* depends on a long

examination of the history of science and of the relationship between science and history to "prove" conclusions that could easily have served as points of departure. Indeed, in the past decade, the bonds of the objectivity straitjacket have already loosened considerably, with a resulting excitement and creativity in public history that is largely missing from *Public and Academic History*.

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