
Toward A Balanced Adult Education Historiography: The Case Of Women In The Histories And Literature

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Abstract

Revisionist historians contend that women have been “marginalized” and “silenced” by their virtual invisibility in the standard histories of adult education. Such a contention, if true, has serious implications for the field, in terms both of women’s roles within adult education and the purposes that we expect our histories to serve. This research used a combination of historical and critical linguistic analysis (1) to analyze the adequacy of adult education historiography in addressing this issue and (2) to suggest possible interpretations and explanations of the problem of women’s historical invisibility. The results of this process are used to argue for a balanced approach to the historiography of the field characterized by a respectful yet judicious integration of multiple perspectives.

Introduction

Revisionist historians have advanced a number of explanations for the invisibility of women in histories of adult education. Many of these explanations have introduced gender as a category of historical analysis and involve variations of the concept of a “circle effect.” The circle effect posits that men construct a tradition of “received wisdom” validated by other men, resulting in a “charmed circle” that excludes women and within which no one asks what women think (Hugo, 1990; Noddings, 1990). The usefulness of this and related concepts as explanatory mechanisms has been limited by historians’ often superficial application of them to the question of women’s invisibility. Specifically, revisionist historians have (1) depended on generalizations and abstractions as explanatory devices, (2) confused consequences and intent, (3) failed to recognize differences

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between times and between contexts, and (4) neglected to examine adequately the changing nature of relationships between the field of adult education and its larger context. In this article I will address these limitations and offer an enhanced explanation that integrates earlier approaches with the results of a historical and critical linguistic analysis of literature from the early years of the field. I will also suggest one approach to an inclusive, yet balanced historiography for the field.

Process

In attempting to answer the question of why the documented contributions of women to the field of adult education have been minimized or ignored by historians of the field, I first examined the attempts of other adult educators to answer this question. This examination revealed methodological and analytical weaknesses that limited the usefulness of the answers offered by these earlier approaches; it also suggested ways to revise or expand earlier approaches in order to provide a sound basis for analysis, interpretation, and explanation.

In my own study of this question I used historical research methods to examine general social attitudes toward women, the changing internal context of adult education, and the changing relationship between adult education and the larger context within which the field has developed. Critical linguistic analysis, supported by psycho-linguistic theory and research, provided the basis for an examination of the descriptive (what is) and prescriptive (what should be) leadership discourse in adult education. This analysis also suggested how specific linguistic conventions may have made it difficult for historians to view women as leaders or potential leaders of the field and, thus, as appropriate figures to include in their histories. The texts chosen for linguistic analysis came from field-sponsored books and journals (texts) published between 1926, the year often cited as the beginning to the "self-conscious" American adult education movement, and 1962, the year in which Malcolm Knowles published *The Adult Education Movement in the United States*. This time period is generally recognized as that during which the field became "thoroughly professionalized" (Welton, 1993; Wilson, 1992).

Adult Education Historiography: Limitations and Expansions of Earlier Approaches

Abstractions as Explanatory Devices

The decreasing visibility of women in history has been explained

largely in terms of abstractions that underlie the circle effect. Hugo (1990), for example, names “professionalization” as a major factor in women’s historical invisibility. She and others also point to an underlying and pervasive “patriarchal” social structure as an explanation for women’s exclusion by historians. The abstractions represented by the terms “professionalization” and “patriarchal society” have been presented as if their meanings are both static and universally accepted. As such, they have been viewed as a sufficiently firm basis for an analysis of the events and trends to which they are applied.

In introducing the vocabulary of the feminist critique of history into adult education discourse, revisionist historians have neglected to consider the concept of ideologically contested meaning, that is, the idea that terms such as “patriarchal” or “professionalization” represent changing denotations and connotations that reflect alternative paths—and *ongoing* conflicts over meaning—with differing consequences for women. For example, in spite of many theorists’ attempts to convince us otherwise, the term “patriarchal” is not universally accepted as a pejorative; even in the present day it comprises a number of meanings that range from negative to positive, depending upon the discourse community in which it is being used. Neither is the term used exclusively to describe the hierarchical relationship between men and women; several early articles in *Adult Leadership* use variations of the term to caution adult educators against a teacher-student relationship in which the teacher treats adult students (male or female) as children, rather than as peers.

Similarly, within the present-day academic community “professionalization” means having followed certain clearly-delineated steps in a process and having taken on certain well-defined characteristics. However, as Young (1976/1977) points out in his study of the professionalization of public school administrators, the term professionalization “is not the sole property of the social scientist” and, rather than indicating “objective features of organization,” can refer instead to “the attempt to achieve a praiseworthy moral stance on the part of practitioners” (p. 11). The history of adult education shows that the term was not initially viewed in its present sense as a clearly defined path by which a field transformed itself; rather, it represented various degrees of and paths to organization and group identity. To use abstract terms in their current (and often contested) sense to explain events in a past in which the meanings of the terms may have been quite different (and also contested, although perhaps in different ways) is to succumb to “presentism in . . . terminology” (Rose, 1995, p. 230). It is also to neglect the evidence of

competing subuniverses of meaning (see below) that is reflected both in the initial dissonance between values within adult education and those of the larger social context and in an incongruity between the field's earlier values and those that characterize it more recently.

Consequences Versus Intent

Some revisionist historians have used outcomes to argue intentions and motivations: because women are generally absent from the written histories of the field, it is argued, they have been purposely left out; their pasts have been "silenced," "buried," and "repressed" from motivations of maintaining power and control (Hugo, 1990; Welton, 1993; Wilson 1993). These charges may be true; however, *as the arguments have been presented*, they reflect both bad psychology and inadequate historical analysis. As psychologist Jerome Bruner (1990) argues in *Acts of Meaning*,

When people act in an offensive fashion, our first step in coping is to find out whether what they seem to have done is what they really intended to do, to get some line on whether their mental state . . . and their deed . . . were in concordance or not. And if they say they didn't intend to do it, we exonerate them. (p. 18)

Even if we do not wish to exonerate them—if, for example, we believe the ideas they have presented are damaging, as well as misguided—we reason with them, try to talk them out of continuing in their current wrong path, engage in "procedures of negotiation." What we do not do, if we are sincerely interested in finding a basis for "a viable pluralism backed by a willingness to negotiate differences in world view" (Bruner, 1990, pp. 19, 30) is to evaluate difference of perspective as "willful malice." To do so curtails the "open, respectful, and passionate" (Cannon, 1995, p. 105) debate that should characterize academic discourse.

Additionally, revisionists who charge traditional historians with intentionally "repressing" women's past often neglect to support this charge with evidence of intent. Such evidence may exist; however, until it is produced, we should refrain from confusing the meaning inherent in the *consequences* of historical action with the meaning inherent in the *intentions* behind those actions.

Competing Subuniverses of Meaning: Adult Education and American Society

Jane Hugo's (1990) examination of women's decreasing visibility in adult education histories focused on the fact of women's underrepresentation

in the later, standard histories of the field. Although this low level of representation is presented in comparison to the higher visibility that characterized earlier histories, Hugo and others have paid relatively little attention to the significance of the earlier historical stance; in focusing on what the field changed *to*, they have virtually ignored what it changed *from*. However, an understanding of *decreasing* visibility of women must include an examination of the differences between adult education and its context, specifically an examination of that characteristic of the early adult education movement that stands out as one of its unique features: the visibility, acceptance, and recognition of women as leaders in an era otherwise characterized by widespread disapproval of women in positions of educational and social leadership.

Attitudes toward women changed dramatically as the field developed, and early attitudes differed markedly from the attitudes that characterized the larger educational and social contexts. Indeed, the degree of difference is profound enough to support an argument that the early field represented what Berger and Luckmann (1966) term a “subuniverse of meaning” within the larger educational and social context. Within these different and competing universes of meaning, reality—in this case “knowledge” about the leadership of women—differed because it was socially constructed under different conditions and for different purposes. As a result, the “circle effect” also operated differently and to different extents within these subuniverses.

The initially accepting attitude toward women as leaders of adult education apparently was influenced by several factors: values and a philosophical orientation based in Progressivism, a belief in the power of science to provide solutions to social and educational problems, leadership by “social philosophers” rather than professional educators, and conceptions of leadership based on traditionally feminine values and activities. Initially, adult education was a social movement that sought to alter some of the hierarchies and values prevailing in American society (Cotton, 1968; Zacharakis-Jutz, 1991). Indeed, many of the male reformers associated with the adult education movement consciously rejected the Victorian prescriptions of masculinity that they blamed for capitalistic expansion and destruction. Instead, they adopted the ideals of cooperation and reform long associated with women (Rosenberg, 1984). The early literature of the field projects a social *vision* that apparently included a reorientation of hierarchical relationships between men and women. This accepting stance toward women as leaders was not congruent with prevailing social attitudes, which continued to reflect and perpetuate long-

held beliefs of women's "proper place." Traditional social attitudes toward women were particularly evident in (1) reactions to women in the professions and (2) the pronouncements of scientific experts, particularly psychologists, about women.

Between 1910 and 1940 the percentage of women in the labor force remained relatively constant at 25%. During this time period few significant inroads were made into new occupational areas; three-fourths of new career women went into teaching or nursing, while the proportion of women in male-dominated careers remained steady or declined (Solomon, 1985). Much of the resistance to women in the professions focused on the *idea* of women in the workforce, and this resistance was widespread and vociferous. A contemporary of Jane Addams, commenting on the reactions of families to their daughters' refusal to follow traditional paths, lamented, "Our families make us feel like murderers rather than joyous adventurers" (cited in Rosenberg, 1982, p. 65). Another form of resistance was expressed in the reluctance of employers to consider women for certain positions, particularly leadership positions. Solomon (1985) reports that, although the number of women in secretarial or typist positions increased dramatically through this period, "in the business corporations there was no place for women at either the middle range or the top. Only under unusual circumstances in a family enterprise would a woman wield much power or influence" (p. 198). Similarly, Tyack (1974) notes that, although the teaching profession had become "feminized," with women holding 98% of elementary teaching jobs, school systems were run almost exclusively by men.

Part of this resistance to women in leadership positions may have resulted from the fact that women, even highly educated women, did not match the models of leadership that had come to dominate most sectors of American society by the early twentieth century. Within the field of education, as within the larger social context, the new forms for the legitimation of knowledge and power were those reflecting business practices and the "scientific" method of the expert (Callahan, 1962; Hofstadter, 1974). This situation had a significant effect on the professional context of women as leaders. The bureaucratization and "industrialization" of education resulted in a separation of the managerial aspect from that of teaching. The resulting intentional division of labor was based on sex-role stereotypes: women, presumed to be naturally nurturing, understanding of children, and accustomed to patriarchal authority, were viewed as the ideal classroom teachers or "workers"; men were viewed as able to manage women and discipline students and as capable of linking schools to the

power structure in the surrounding district through contacts formed in all-male clubs and activities (Tyack, 1974).

Developments in the new social sciences initially promised increased respect for women and their contributions to society. Experiments in social psychology, many of them conducted by women, provided evidence that differences between men and women traditionally thought to be based in biology were often the result of social conditioning. However, these developments proved disappointing in their ability to change significantly attitudes toward women and the value of women's contributions. Within the field of social psychology, which soon fragmented into different academic specialties, women were encouraged to enter the less prestigious, practice-oriented area of social work, while men dominated in the higher-status, research-oriented areas of sociology and social psychology (Rosenberg, 1982). Even more damaging to women's academic credibility, the scientific findings related to sex differences increasingly were forced to compete with an alternative and popularly satisfying "scientific" interpretation of differences based in the "New Psychology." Although initially offering hope of a truly scientific approach to sex differences, the work of the social psychologists was ultimately unable to counter the influence of popularized Freudian psychology: "psychology became the favored 'modern' science for understanding women and society" (Showalter, 1978).

The focus on psychological motivations and drives influenced perceptions of women in or striving for professional or leadership roles. Freud stressed the uniqueness of feminine sexuality, delineating normal and non-normal patterns of behavior; thus it was the desire to overcome "genital deficiency" that drove "a mature woman . . . to carry on an intellectual profession" (Freud, 1969, p. 22). From this perspective women were not only out of place as professionals, they also were jeopardizing their happiness and chances of healthy "adjustment" to personal relationships and to society. This view of women and leadership was not limited to popular culture; it made its way into the professional educational literature as well (see, for example, Tead, 1935).

Adult Education's Changing Reality

Although previous historians examining the issue of women's historical invisibility have paid relatively little attention to the significance of the differences between the early field of adult education and the larger social context within which it developed, these differences affected the relationship of adult education to its social context and, as a result, the way in which the

field developed and changed. Understanding the movement of women within adult education toward the margins of importance and influence must be based on an understanding not only of the differences between the contexts, but also of the relationship that existed between the contexts. Examination of the dynamics of this relationship suggests explanations for the early incongruence and the later congruence between the two contexts in regard to apparent attitudes toward women.

In the early years of the adult education movement its activities received private support from the Carnegie Corporation through the American Association for Adult Education (AAAE). This independence from institutional or public funding allowed the leaders of the field to set their own standards of credibility, which differed considerably from those of professional educators affiliated with and dependent on public or higher education institutions. Withdrawal of the Carnegie support, however, necessitated finding new sources of support, and "major foundations, the government, and universities became adult education's logical partners" (Carlson, 1977). The field of adult education, now in the role of "poor relative" rather than "independent operator," was forced to contend with a contextual reality represented by the image of "marginality." Coping with this new reality resulted in several changes within the field including adoption of higher-education goals, a change in the composition of the field's leadership population, and a separation of theory and practice.

The alignment with educational institutions forced adoption of higher education goals, methods of knowledge creation, and standards of professional credibility. This move toward accommodation was encouraged by the university's tendency to demand allegiance to its goals and methods as the price of institutional support. As John Dewey commented at the end of his career, "The drive of established institutions is to assimilate and distort the new into conformity with themselves" (as cited in Hofstadter, 1974). The alliance with public and higher education also resulted in a change in the leadership of the field. No longer were intellectuals and social philosophers the dominant influence; rather, a new leadership population comprised of university-trained professional educators began to determine both the direction the field should take and acceptable leadership standards. Finally, institutional affiliation resulted in an increasingly clear-cut division between theory and practice. This division was reflected in (1) the concept of a "pyramid of leadership" of which volunteer leaders formed the base, mixed-responsibility professional educators the middle, and an elite core of professionally trained educators with "career expectations" the apex; (2) a distinction within the Adult

Education Association between general and professional members; and (3) the publication by the Adult Education Association of two adult education journals: *Adult Education* to serve educators devoted exclusively to adult education and *Adult Leadership* to enlighten part-time practitioners and others whose primary responsibility was to a field other than adult education (Knowles, 1962).

The Textual Basis Of Women's Invisibility

The obvious methodological challenge is documenting these relationships and their changes. Language, in this case the textual discourse comprising the literature of the field, provides tangible artifacts of these social processes. Because text both structures and maintains "shared versions of reality" (Brazerman & Paradis, 1991, p. 3) within a field, changes in texts can be related to corresponding changes in the field that influenced attitudes toward women as important contributors or leaders. Earlier investigations of women's historical invisibility have suggested that "biased data sources," meaning institutional sources that excluded women (universities, the military, government, etc.), were one factor in historians' tendency to ignore women. This research, through critical linguistic analysis of the foundational texts of the field, has expanded the concept of biased sources to demonstrate that through the use of exclusionary linguistic conventions and representations, the *texts themselves*, rather than just their institutional contexts, became biased sources of data for historians constructing their commentaries on the field's past. The findings of my linguistic analysis have been reported in detail elsewhere (Thompson, 1996; Thompson & Schied, 1996). What follows is a brief summary of that analysis.

An Inclusive Vision

Until the 1940s much of the literature of the new field of study and practice shared several characteristics: it reflected adult education's Progressive roots in its focus on education for social change; it assumed that adult educators would possess a desire to serve others; and it presented leadership in terms of traditionally "feminine" activities such as teaching, providing support, and preserving culture. The rhetoric of this period was characterized by its projection of a normative vision for adult education, and it is apparent from the references to women and women's activities that many early adult education leaders believed that this vision included equal status for women. Representations of women throughout this period

were positive and consistent with acceptance of women as leaders. Little distinction was made between men and women as leaders; adult educators were discussed as a mixed group with common characteristics. However, the literature was also characterized by consistent use of what we now term “sexist” language. Although use of exclusionary linguistic conventions does not appear to have reflected the conscious beliefs of most adult educators, psycholinguistic theories and research suggest that such language may have made it more difficult for both men and women to think of women as leaders. Additionally, it may have influenced historians in their identification of “leaders” of the field.

An Exclusionary Reality

Changes in the field and in its relationship to the larger social context were reflected in and perpetuated by changes in adult education discourse. The field’s response to decreased funding and a disappointing lack of acceptance on the part of the greater educational community was reflected in changes in both tone and content within the literature. Specifically, the content changed from a focus on theoretical, “visionary” pieces written by nationally known intellectuals to an emphasis on descriptive and evaluative research reported by “scientifically” trained professional educators. The eloquent and crusading tone of earlier texts gave way to measured assurances of basic similarities to the larger educational field and to a “scientific” tone and focus. Concurrently, women began to be represented as a separate population, and references to women as leaders were characterized by specific differences in tone and vocabulary. As the field attempted to mirror the values and “scientific” culture of professional educators, the adult education literature increasingly associated men—and only men—with power and leadership functions. Texts in the literature associated women almost exclusively with social service and supporting functions; journal articles, photographs, even cartoons reinforced the idea that men were leaders and that women were followers and helpers. As in the earlier literature, adult education texts during the 1940s, 1950s, and early 1960s were characterized by the pervasive use of exclusionary or “sexist” linguistic conventions.

As the field of adult education developed, it defined and maintained itself largely through texts. One aspect of this definition was the meaning of leadership: texts constructed a version of the reality of leadership in adult education and served as linguistic expressions of the social and professional forces acting on and within the field. Although the androcentric language early used to describe and prescribe leadership roles mirrored the gender-related roles and power relationships prevalent in the larger

society, the effects of these traditionally restrictive and exclusionary linguistic conventions were initially mitigated by other, more affirmative, representations of women, making possible a positive association between women and leadership. However, later changes to a “scientific” orientation in leadership discourse, facilitated by the consistent and pervasive reliance on restrictive linguistic conventions, may have made it increasingly difficult both for women to view themselves and for men to view women as leaders or potential leaders of adult education. It also may have made it difficult for historians to view women as actors sufficiently credible or important to include in their narratives of the field.

An Integrated Explanation of Women’s Historical Invisibility

An integration of the results of my historical and linguistic research suggests the following intermediate conclusions regarding women’s virtual invisibility in standard histories of adult education: (1) changes in the field of adult education encouraged institutional associations to enhance credibility and stability; (2) new associations necessitated adoption of institutional goals and values, so that developing a favorable image became a high priority; (3) institutional perceptions of women generally were incompatible with women’s credibility and leadership; and (4) changes in the language of leadership both reflected and structured changes within adult education, and this new discourse inhibited associations between women and leadership. These intermediate conclusions support the main conclusion of the research.

Historians were influenced to overlook or ignore women as leaders because:

- the need to project an image of adult education as a valuable and credible field encouraged the omission of women, who lacked credibility in the larger educational and social contexts; and
- the literature of the field, from which they drew the sources for their histories, increasingly represented women as followers or helpers rather than as the type of leaders who could strengthen the image of the field.

Conclusion: Towards a Balanced Historiography of Adult Education

Although the original intent of the research reported in part in this article was to address a historical problem, i.e., women’s decreasing importance in histories of the field, the process resulted in an additional focus: understanding the relationship of adult education historiography to

the field itself. Doing history—both the questions we ask and the means we use—tells us who we are now; it also points to who we will become. As does the language we use, the style of our historical inquiry both reflects and structures our identity as a field. My examination of various approaches to the specific historical problem of women's invisibility has suggested several distinct perspectives which have, to date, characterized much of adult education historiography. Following are brief descriptions of three perspectives (admittedly oversimplified for the purposes of illustration) from which adult educators have viewed the past:¹

On the Shoulders of Giants: This perspective often characterizes “traditional” or “standard” histories of a field or era (e.g., Knowles, 1962; Stubblefield, 1988). History is viewed as a collection of past events and inspirational personages from which we can obtain justification for current practices or as a combination of forces and trends that we can shape in order to fulfill a vision of what the field should be. As revisionist historians have pointed out, the vision of traditional historians often has channeled movement down “the same path to institutionalization, bureaucracy, and professionalization as other educational fields” (Rockhill, Carlson, & Davenport, 1982, p. 248). Hence, actors (e.g., members of “marginal” groups) or activities in the field's past that threatened attainment of these goals became—consciously or unconsciously—“acceptable losses,” casualties of a somewhat narrowly focused, often exclusionary vision for the field.

The Dysfunctional Family: This approach reflects the perspective of many “critical,” revisionist, and postmodernist commentators (e.g., Hugo 1990; Welton, 1993; Wilson, 1993) who have emphasized the barriers constructed in the past that impede progress toward an inclusive history, and present, of the field. Their overt intent has been to serve as advocates for the groups and activities excluded from earlier histories and to reveal the oft-hidden forces and motivations—particularly power and control—that they believe precipitated and now maintain exclusion (Rockhill, Carlson, & Davenport, 1982). The discussion of these forces often includes overt or covert charges of intentional malice, particularly through the use of terms such as “censored,” “insidious,” “control interests,” etc. “History,” from this perspective, becomes a source of psychological explanations (often rationalizations) for the current “maelstrom of contestation, questioning, [and] doubt” (Welton, 1993, n.p.) surrounding the issue of adult

education's "identity." Following the example of traditional psychoanalysis, this approach focuses on analyzing problems rather than on constructing solutions or alternatives. As Johnson (1995) notes in discussing contemporary educational philosophy, "In focusing all their energies in combating the fallacies of the past, postmodernists rendered themselves impotent in the equally significant task of recreating the present and future" (p. 93).

I'm OK, You're OK: In this historiographic approach we hear echoes of the words of Mr. Rogers (the "Carl Rogers" of children's television): "Everybody's special, everybody's fine." For historians operating from this perspective (e.g., Stubblefield & Keane, 1995), the goal is ensuring that no contributors to the adult education enterprise have been excluded from the story of the field's development. Adopting inclusiveness as the primary goal appears to encourage description, rather than analysis. Because no judgments are made and no evaluative criteria for inclusion are applied, all reported activities seem to be valued equally; soap operas, for example, are just as important as classes in settlement houses. As a result, one can get the impression that those previously excluded as outsiders—e.g., women and minorities—now have been included not because they are viewed as important, but rather because everything and everybody has been included. Those writing from this perspective are not *universally* accepting, however; the "giants" chronicled in traditional histories, as well as the historians who focused on them to the exclusion of marginalized groups, are portrayed as often working selfishly or manipulatively to maintain their privileged status in society.

Attempts to redress the exclusion of "outsiders" from the early histories of adult education often have resulted in a reactive exclusion or devaluation of the "insiders" who wrote those early histories. However, reaching the goal of a comprehensive, fully human history depends on attention not only to the goal itself but also to the means we use to achieve it. The questions we ask of the past and the means we use to construct our own interpretations of that past must reflect the multidimensional nature that we wish for our future. We cannot achieve an *inclusive*, equitable goal by *excluding* past interpretations and judging as valueless earlier, other-focused—even narrowly focused or exclusionary—viewpoints, nor can we achieve our goal by either indiscriminate inclusion or by the reduction of complex historical problems to any one factor or force, whether that be

of consensus or of control. Because earlier approaches have proven inadequate for providing an inclusive, yet *balanced* historiography, we need to seek new perspectives on the study of our past. Following is an initial attempt to develop an alternative perspective based in a respectful approach to our past and the judicious integration of multiple perspectives and stories:

Partners in Dialogue: In this approach past events and historical figures are viewed as our partners in an “I/Thou” dialogue (Buber, 1965). Rather than viewing past actors, including historians, merely as “objects” of analytic study, we approach them in their wholeness as acting “subjects” like ourselves. Instead of approaching and defining them solely in terms of our own meanings and experiences, we interact with them on the basis of their own “particularity—a particularity which is by no means to be circumscribed by the circle of [our] own sel[ves]” (Buber, 1965, p. 24).

Welton has suggested that historians have moved beyond a belief in the objectivity of historical inquiry to a realization that, in discovering the meaning of history, “stories are not found, they are invented” (1993, n.p.). However, viewing the study of the past as a dialogue suggests an alternative to these perspectives on the making of historical meaning: “We do not find meaning lying in things nor do we put it into things, but between us and things it can happen” (Buber, 1965, p. 36).²

As feminist historian Jane Sochen (1974) points out, “All human actions, admittedly, are not of equal worth; all human thought is not of equal validity. Evaluations and distinctions must be made in historical, as well as other kinds of writing” (p. 4). Although we need not, and ought not, accept past interpretations and past actors on their own terms—certainly we must judge their relative value and appropriateness for particular purposes—we do need to integrate them in a meaningful, respectful way that recognizes their worth as well as their limitations. Thomas Mann (1965), in his introduction to Herman Hesse’s *Demian*, uses the words of one of the book’s characters to pose a question: “The new is beginning and for those who cling to the old the new will be horrible. What will you do?” Mann’s answer is appropriate for all of us interested in writing history in our field: “Assist the new without sacrificing the old . . . The best servitors of the new . . . may be those who know and love the old and carry it over into the new” (p. xi).

Notes

1. The labels I have assigned to these perspectives have been borrowed from other contexts: "On the Shoulders of Giants" from a PBS series and "I'm OK, You're OK" from the book by the same title.
2. Interestingly, the rhetoric of this approach has been used recently by Wilson and Melichar (1994). However, I believe their approach is more truly what Martin Buber (1965) terms "monologue disguised as dialogue" (p. 19). Although they write of "entering into a conversation with the past," they seem to bring with them ready-made answers reminiscent of the Dysfunctional Family perspective. For example, after less than one page of discussion, their "conversation" with the past becomes transformed into a "critical encounter." Past historians are not true partners in dialogue, to be respectfully questioned and heard; rather, they have already been analyzed and judged as those who "deliberately ignored" (Wilson & Melichar, 1994, p. 402) the field's alternative pasts.

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