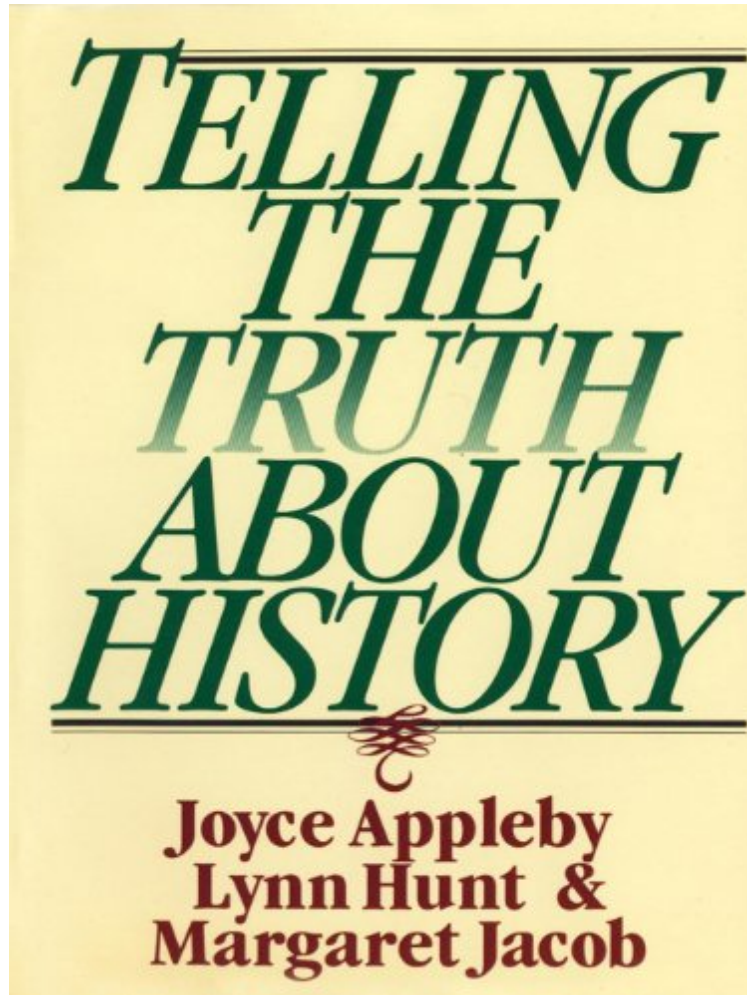


(Mobile book) Telling the Truth about History (Norton Paperback)

Telling the Truth about History (Norton Paperback)

*Von Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt, Margaret Jacob
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Von Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt, Margaret Jacob : Telling the Truth about History (Norton Paperback) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Telling the Truth about History (Norton Paperback):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A, H, and J offer a pragmatic view of truthVon Nathaniel GrubletIn the debate that currently rages over truth, objectivity, and postmodernism in history, it should come as no surprise that neither extreme is correct. Knowledge is not as absolute as the traditionalists would like it to be; nor is it as elusive as some postmodernists would have us believe. In this historiographical work, the authors convincingly argue that the overthrow of absolutisms which has characterized much of the scholarship of the past century does not carry in its wake the disavowal of all knowledge or truth. In place of the old absolutisms and of the new skepticism, Appleby, Hunt, and Jacob, offer a new model based on a more

pragmatic understanding of objectivity and truth. The authors begin by tracing the development of Enlightenment absolutisms, then catalog their demise. These first two sections take up the bulk of this work, setting up their positive agenda. While the historiography is more than adequate, this is where the work scintillates. The authors are more than willing to acknowledge that the pursuit of knowledge is affected by the personalities involved, yet they insist that a greater diversity of perspectives also brings historical fact into greater focus. For example, let's assume we are all sitting at a table and an object is placed in the middle of it. We are all historians, and that item is a given part of human history. The postmodernists would say that because my perspective differs from yours, we can't know what the object TRULY looks like. The traditionalists would say that our perspectives must be the same, because the item is the same. A, H, and J would claim that our perspectives differ, but that they differ in such a way that, if we combine them, we will have a better sense of what the characteristics of the object are. Overall, I find this argument very convincing. Multiculturalism (or, the pursuit of multiple perspectives) is not the enemy of Truth, but rather its friend. In effect, the democratization of the academic world will serve as a check against unsupported interpretations and theories, thus honing our understanding of the human past. For an intelligent, if somewhat weighty, look at some of these same issues, I strongly recommend HERITAGE AND CHALLENGE by Paul Conkin and Roland Stromberg. It is most definitely a scholarly work, but for those who are interested in a more theoretical book on the questions facing the field of history today, it is well worth the effort. 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Excellent! Von Coleman J. Goin I found this book to be one of the most valuable and most hopeful books I have read in a long time. As a High School teacher of American history, I have long grappled with the question of historical truth and how best to teach it to students. I have also wondered if I could justify my own profession, since American history instruction so often seems to be simply political indoctrination in one form or another. This book gave me hope that my efforts are not in vain. The book traces the evolution of history from the enlightenment model of scientific history through postwar issues of postmodernism and relativism; and the authors persuasively argue that historical truth is possible, even if not absolute. The book is not light reading - I was not able to race through the book, but had to wade through it, so to speak. However, I do feel the book is well worth reading. It is well written, balanced and fair-minded, and it transcends the simplistic conservative-liberal debate over the teaching of history. I feel the book should be read by everyone who is concerned with the teaching of history or the question of historical truth.

Kurzbeschreibung "A fascinating historiographical essay. . . . An unusually lucid and inclusive explication of what is ultimately at stake in the culture wars over the nature, goals, and efficacy of history as a discipline." Booklist From Booklist What is the role of history--what is the point of history--in a postmodern world of "absolutisms dethroned," in a technological society that has become deeply skeptical of the Enlightenment's heroic model of science? Telling the Truth is a fascinating historiographical essay that traces the scientific and political ideas and ideals of the Enlightenment through American history from the Revolutionary War to the present. It is the "insistent democratization of American society," the authors argue, that has produced our "skepticism and relativism about truth, not only in science but also in history and politics," yet they maintain "that truths about the past are possible, even if they are not absolute, and hence are worth struggling for." Appleby and her coauthors have produced an unusually lucid and inclusive explication of what is ultimately at stake in the culture wars over the nature, goals, and efficacy of history as a discipline. Mary Carroll From Kirkus sA "late-twentieth century understanding of historical truth," outlined by three women historians, Appleby (History/UCLA), Hunt (History/UPenn) and Jacob (History/New School for Social Research). While there has been widespread discussion in the United States about the current state of academe, the supposed decline in its standards, and the prevalence of political correctness, there has not been much reflection, outside the profession, of what the authors call the "ferocity of the current argument about how United States history should be taught." It is, the authors note, a controversy about values, objective knowledge, cultural diversity, and the nature of truth. The virtue of this book is that it makes a history of the study of history, particularly as it applies to the United States, more accessible to the general reader by turning a relatively dispassionate eye on the various schools of history that have prevailed: the protagonists of history as a science, the Frontier school, the Economic Interpretation School, the Marxists, the "City on the Hill" enthusiasts, the postmodernists, and the multiculturalists. The very prevalence of the different schools is, in itself, a caution against too heavy a reliance on any one of them, and the authors plump for "the most objective possible explanations" and the traditional narrative form of history. They believe passionately in the importance of what they are doing, in the "intense craving for insight into what it is to be human," and reject those who are skeptical of the entire enterprise. The archives in Lyons, France, they note, are "reached by walking up some three hundred stone steps. For the practical realists...the climb is worth the effort; the relativists would not bother." Underlying the argument, the authors contend, is "the collapse on all fronts of intellectual and political absolutism," and they try to cut through the "variety of noisy conversations" with a more reasoned and less disputatious view. A tad tactful at times, and occasionally repetitive in noting the central role played by men in most historical accounts, but clearheaded, and often a pleasure to read. -- Copyright 1994, Kirkus

