



# History's Memory: Writing America's Past, 1880-1980

*Ellen Fitzpatrick*

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Enthusiasts and critics both have looked to the political upheavals of the 1960s to explain recent transformations in historical study. But how new, in fact, are our contemporary approaches to the study and writing of American history? This question lies at the heart of *History's Memory*, Ellen Fitzpatrick's sweeping study of the past century of American historical writing.

Through careful examination of hundreds of historical essays and books, Fitzpatrick has uncovered striking continuities in the writing of American history. The contributions of earlier scholars, some of them outside the mainstream of the historical profession, reveal that interest in the history of women, African Americans, Native Americans, and the working class has been long-standing. Whether in the Progressive era's attention to issues of class, or in the renewed concern with Native Americans in the 1930s and 1940s, Fitzpatrick demonstrates that over the past century historians have frequently grappled with issues that we think of today as innovative.

This reinterpretation of a century of American historical writing challenges the notion that the politics of the recent past alone explains the politics of history. Fitzpatrick offers a wise historical perspective on today's heated debates, and reclaims the long line of historians who tilled the rich and diverse soil of our past.

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