

# Taking People's History Back to the People

## An Approach to Making History Popular, Relevant, and Intellectual

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### ABSTRACT

This article takes the educational vision of people's history an additional step, combining it with experiential approaches to democratic education that have developed over the past century. It places this vision within a global framework for human survival, democratic protections, creative research, and responsive education, and then presents at a local level the tools for students and adults to take control of their own historical study, control their heritage, and personalize the study of history on the very landscapes of their own communities. Through this approach, history becomes an exciting democratic exercise not merely in storytelling but in discovery of, participation in, and interaction with history on the very grounds of the community. The new approach to history, being tested in several communities, takes history as a collection of "stories," and roots and expands it to places, landscapes, and environment in everyday life, where history is unavoidable and where protecting and making history are ordinary household and community activities.

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*Those who control the past control the future.*

—George Orwell, 1984

MOVEMENTS FOR DEMOCRATIZATION IN THE SECOND HALF of the 20th century often took to heart George Orwell's adage in his 1948 novel and have sought to create a more inclusive and diverse approach to history. Many democratic movements erupted spontaneously against those who sought to control history and to erase the cultural and environmental legacies that rooted community identity and survival. The teaching of history now includes more people's history and multicultural history, and there are more approaches to democratic education. Yet educators have often lost sight of the larger goals of teaching and using history along with democratic education.

Too often undemocratic, doctrinal, classroom teaching methods in history (and other curricula) are presented as being democratic when the curricula is simply supplemented with texts to represent different groups. Sometimes the opposite occurs. Methods change, allowing for more participation and activity by students themselves (often in organizational "service"-learning) but with a loss of focus on the larger questions and applications of

history, including measures of (social) progress, cultural protections, and sustainable development that are recognized as human universals and fundamentals for long-term human survival. The teaching of a full range of methodologies for "doing" history or social science is replaced by exercises focusing on single methods of data collection on a narrow topic, without considering how these fit into the larger context of modeling and interpreting history.

This article by an anthropologist, lawyer, and educator, working internationally to protect and promote cultural heritage

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and to apply concepts of law, equity, and democracy to history in the international legal framework of equity and peace, starts with the mid-20th-century concepts of democratic education and teaching people's history and combines them into a framework for the 21st century. It also presents a simple user's guide to putting these approaches into practice in any community for almost any type of audience. The approach takes a familiar and increasingly popular model of heritage trails and turns it into a democratic educational tool for studying and protecting history.

My colleagues and I are ready to test this new model in a global context, raising funds to put it into practice in Southeast Asia on a new cross-border project across the Mekong River in Laos and Thailand with funding from the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Foundation. We are documenting historic sites with the help of communities, putting them onto heritage trails and thematic tours, offering children's books and individually paced tour curricula, and seeking to protect sites of all kinds with signs describing their importance to different communities. We inventory what remains on the landscape from the many different peoples who have interacted with nature and each other through history. We then weave what is visible into heritage and theme trails that tell stories of how these peoples lived sustainably (or unsustainably) with nature and each other and look at their contributions to different aspects of human "progress" (perhaps the most fundamental question that can be addressed through empirical study of history). We raise questions for interpretation and discussion based on the interaction with this history on the landscape. We then open up dialogue among peoples and across borders to make this past history relevant again today to abrupt changes and movements of people in ways that are reexamining the harsh lessons of forgotten or partly erased history.

This article describes the theory, practice, and implications of such an approach in the context of democracy, education, and use of history, beginning with explanations of the two different democratic educational approaches: democratic experiential education, developed in earlier works by my colleagues and I, and the people's history approach, popularly known through the work of public historians like Howard Zinn. It then contrasts these two approaches and considers other approaches based on their specific elements, within a framework that sets out the goals of democracy, education, and study of history.

Before presenting this new approach, the article examines the previous approaches to democratic experiential education in the field of history, and where it needed improvement.

This article then presents the tools for students and adults to take control of their own historical study and heritage and personalize the study of history on the very landscapes of their own communities. Through this democratic educational approach, history becomes an exciting democratic exercise not merely in storytelling but in discovery, participation, and interaction with history on the very landscapes of the community.

### **Revisiting Democratic Experiential Education in the Context of a Larger Philosophy of Human Survival, Democracy, History, and Education**

In the 1980s and early 1990s, several colleagues and I had a breakthrough in democratic education that we termed

*democratic experiential education*. We presented it to colleagues in theory and various applications (many of which we tested), mostly starting at the university level (Lempert, 1995; Lempert, McCarty, & Mitchell, 1995).

The approach came out of a long tradition in both democratic and educational theory in the 19th and early 20th centuries and later (Dewey, 1944; Freire, 1970; Illich, 1971; Loewen, 2010; Rugg & Shumaker, 1926; Schor, 1987; Tolstoy, 1863/1967).

Beyond curricular content, we recognized that democratization of education requires change on two other key dimensions: on the form in which content is presented (the institutional structures of universities and research and the methods of teaching, which are largely hierarchical and focused on book learning rather than applied learning of skills and values) as well as the cultural context in which research, modeling, teaching, and debate is conducted (by whom, for whom and at what ages, levels, and settings as part of daily life). In education, we recognize the importance of transforming the formal curriculum (the content) by confronting the hidden curriculum, the form and context in which information is presented. The essential principles to ensure democratization of education at several levels—student empowerment for a democratic society, community relevance, and academic rigor—that colleagues and I presented almost two decades ago can be summarized quickly (below in the section on principles) and even applied by using a checklist (Lempert, 1995).

What I have discovered since then, working globally, is that these concepts logically fit within the universal rights and security framework at the founding of the United Nations in 1948 and can be presented within the larger framework of democracy and education. They can be understood (and even measured) as part of a coherent approach to democracy, education, and research in fields like history and social sciences, fitting the long-term goals of human survival embodied in some key international agreements. (They include the U.N. genocide convention for protecting cultural diversity and the related Rio Declaration of 1992 that describes the development goal of sustainability that protects cultures in their environments [Lempert, 2011].)

#### THE INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR DEMOCRACY AND EDUCATION (A BRIEF COMMENT ON APPLICABLE CONCEPTS FOR DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION)

The international legal framework provides a means to promote long-term survival on the planet (and then off it) through the following elements of global rights and democracy:

- the co-existence of diverse groups with each other and their sustainability with the natural environment;
- the promotion of human diversity and multiple approaches to adapting to that environment (through cultural protections and individual rights protections that are part of a legal framework); and
- the establishment of conflict resolution mechanisms and processes of political equality and symmetry that are the basis of that legal framework, encompassing the key principles (at

the level of cultural equality and then political equality within and consistent with those cultures) of democracy.

#### HISTORY AS A DISCIPLINE WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK OF DEMOCRACY AND EDUCATION

History, as a subject of study and as a human need, also fits here in several ways.

First, it roots cultures in their identities and choices in ways that can promote their survival/sustainability and coexistence. Too often, history is taught as doctrine to root peoples in symbols and ideologies of their group. Too often, history repeats certain stories that promote practices or elites in ways that do not examine whether a culture is actually sustainable or meeting long-term human goals of coexistence. The universal rights view is that history is something shared across cultures for mutual understanding of choices and adaptation rather than a creed to promote blind nationalism. It is to be understood as a form of identity that elucidates specific choices and interactions (economic, political, and social) of groups within their environments that define them as a people exercising the creativity that makes us human. It also offers the basis for empathy and seeking forgiveness and understanding in recognizing legacies of colonialism and genocide, while providing the basis for building bonds in recognizing forms of exchange and mutual benefits.

Second, it offers data and models for comparisons of human activity over time that can be used to set and measure criteria for human progress that can help answer questions to promote survival needs on the planet and then, ultimately, off of Earth.

Third, history and the social sciences offer ways of measuring what is possible for human societies (including what kinds of progress and ideals are possible or likely). It offers insight into how human systems work and change, what can be predicted, and what can be improved.

Finally, these scientific determinations of what is possible that are revealed in models of history help shed light on what is determined and what is free choice in human societies. Where there are free choices, history offers the record of choices and consequences for learning and application for improvement.

#### SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HISTORY RESEARCH AND EDUCATION WITHIN THIS FRAMEWORK

Social science and history research and education must follow certain guidelines in order to achieve these purposes. If history is to be a science promoting the long-term human vision, it needs to follow democratic procedures for openness, accountability, and responsiveness to universal objectives (cultural and individual diversity, free expression) and due process rather than become top-down doctrine serving parochial, nationalist, elitist, or short-term objectives. It must measure its own advances in objective ways open to challenge and scrutiny. The educational system must also work to produce individuals who meet the needs for sustainability and adaptability of their cultures and, in technological societies, for history and social sciences that really are predictive and relevant to diverse, long-term human needs, expressed from the bottom up.

THE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION, REVISITED  
The essential principles of democratic education that colleagues and I developed some 20 years ago do fit easily into this framework. They can be presented in three categories: democratization of the hidden curriculum to empower students and meet their needs; democratization of the educational structure and processes as well as the environment (the extracurricula); and experiential learning meeting community and student needs for democratic participation and empowerment while assuring the teaching of measurable skills and perspectives as the basis for fundamental advance of human knowledge in the disciplines.

**Democratizing the hidden curriculum.** This means moving away from what historians and anthropologists often identify as the European colonial or church model (more recently, the factory model) of lecture, faculty-controlled discussions, and selection of materials in cloistered settings. It also includes challenging advancement procedures controlled by institutions and lacking accountability or meritocratic and due-process protections. It requires viewing education as a contract with students and with society to directly meet the needs of both in selection of methods, materials, and tasks through student-run learning activities and organizations that directly apply skills on actual exercises well beyond simulations or cookbook activities (the description given to natural science laboratory courses that are more like cooking recipes than applying techniques in ways that are more spontaneous, challenging, and applied). It requires empowerment of students with civic skills needed for active oversight of institutions in industrial society (military and police power; economic and financial power; social and religious institutions; government bureaucracies; international organizations) and for execution of power and interacting with society (developing the skills of management, administration, and presentation that are part of teaching, learning, and educational administration itself).

**Democratization of the educational structure and processes as well as the environment (the extracurricular).** This includes grading based on objective comprehensive skills testing<sup>1</sup> (rather than politicized loyalty tests along with fair appeal procedures) and funding of the university freed from politicized donor agendas (and from reinforcement of existing networks of financial or other authority and power that distort curriculum to serve those systems) rather than bottom-up needs of communities and students. Students and communities must act as the stakeholders and contractors of these publicly chartered institutions that are legally required to serve a public purpose under their registration laws, even as private institutions. Democratizing the extracurricular environment means challenging and replacing the corporate-controlled university campus or school environment in which expression, history, art, even behavior and clothing are regimented. It allows for the memorialization, protection, selection of the environment and expression by students and the community, themselves, not by administrative authorities serving other interests in the name of students and communities.

**Experiential learning meeting community and student needs for democratic participation and empowerment.** Assuring an experiential component in education requires laboratory

methods continually linked with theory, public issues, skills applied to real problems in the community, empirical measurements in nonuniversity settings and model building in ways that allow challenge to existing models (rather than obedience to existing theory or dogma that is not directly and constantly tested through real predictive modeling). Experiential education teaches skills, information, and values through direct application of skills to community needs of sustainable development, preservation of community rights and individual rights, and direct application of ethics and responsibility in the educational process.

These simple principles not only highlight the failures in existing education but also help reveal why many current approaches to teaching civics or to applying service-learning are inadequate. They fall far short of the goals of preparing citizens for democratic participation and for teaching the skills and perspectives that are vital to advancing human knowledge and solving human problems in a systematic way. Though the teaching of civics and of human rights has gained prominence in recent years, it hardly seems to consider real empowerment and skills development or real democratization that meets any of the standards for a democratic society that protects rights (Lempert, 2010). An actual measurement indicator to test compliance with democratic and human rights principles that are considered the fundamental universals in international treaties shows that most current approaches to teaching civics fail to reflect the actual intent (Lempert, 2010). Similarly, recent approaches to service-learning are too often in the form of free student labor subsidizing established organizations that gives credit to students for what is often menial work. Meanwhile, new curricula that are claimed to be democratizing the university often just reinforce top-down inequalities and exploitation by new political constituencies that were previously excluded.

### **Late-20th-Century Contributions to Research Methods and Content of History in Promoting People's History**

While we were developing methods of democratic experiential education at the university level, largely in the social sciences, colleagues in history and the humanities were working to democratize history in a movement that is best known as that of people's history and that focused on the diversity of the presentations of history.

Zinn and others who are known for innovating in people's history have worked in popularizing, democratizing, and improving upon the research of history (content and curriculum). They generated a fresh presentation of the history of the United States in an approach that could be applied elsewhere. In doing so, they helped emphasize the study of history as an empirical humanities subject with attributes of social science, rather than part of theology and myth making used for social control. Zinn did it by introducing two key principles in the study of history: symmetry or equality and systematic presentation of struggles for equality and diversity that included both the actions and the reactions by the powerful and the powerless.

One might characterize the people's approach to historical study as simultaneously applying these two principles, assuring that historical research was:

- relativistic and symmetric—promoting greater objectivity in historical methods by focusing on who tells it, working from how relevant and useful the questions and revelations seem to the common person, and starting from the perspective of the victim and the dissident to assure greater objectivity of presentation, and
- systemic and organic—looking at dynamics of power in terms of actions and reactions from those in power and without, viewing societies as holistic systems of power relations moving across time.

In doing so, Zinn and others promoting people's history also called for a standardized measurement of change that included value judgments of progress. Such measures assumed historic study had a humanist end measured in terms of equity, diversity, and promotion of human expression.

The people's history approach can be seen as part of a movement for intellectual progress in historical study that combined with other social models could also test notions of progress. It is complementary to works of other scholars in related fields such as Noam Chomsky (linguistics) (1991) and Frances Fox Piven (sociology) (1972), because it provides the tools for testing the models of social change they offered.

Chomsky introduced concepts and models from linguistics—such as deep structure (revealing a structure of real power, ideology, and incentives behind the cloak of formal institutions and processes like elections or three branches of government)—into the study of politics and history. He showed how semantic methods could expose powerful institutions for their contradictions and double standards in promoting short-term self-interest rather than adhering to principles that supported long-term progress (e.g., exposing political science as theology and not science for its use of -isms rather than laws and axioms and governments for their Orwellian use of terms like *democracy* to hide hegemonic patron-client state relations).

Piven and Cloward established a standard for measuring whether social distributions that were claimed to promote equity were in fact forms of social change and progress to social equity or attempts at social control through “soft power” tools of “regulating the poor” (Piven & Cloward, 1972)

Real intellectual activity with a humanistic basis isn't just the purview of a small group of scholars. This is why the democratization and broadening of history to include what was left out also made it fresh and alive. As with exploration of the natural sciences, authentic study of history and its principles is something captivating that has a universal appeal and offers a measurement of progress, though it is often precisely suppressed for that reason. Millions of young students and adults have been attracted to the people's history approach because it offers people a way to see themselves (and their families) in history. People's historians like Zinn were aware that the struggles of ordinary people en masse

through their participation in demonstrations, in unions, in discussions, in civil society organizations, and even in minor acts of voting are the basis of reform and progress. In many ways, people's history is defined by the valuable activities of citizenship and humanity (Zinn, 1980).

The people's history approach made the study of history exciting. It highlighted that history is a process of choices and consequences. A soldier's act to follow or not follow an order, participation or nonparticipation in protest and challenge, representative government's use of tax money for violence or compassion, and decision making based on long-term planning or short-term emotional reactions or ideologies all make a tangible difference to people's lives. In the teaching of history, Zinn and others who have taken the first steps in the democratization of history education saw learning not merely as an activity of obedience and regurgitation. They believed that the study of history could be an engaging process of involvement and preparation for civic engagement, preparing responsible, empowered adults to see themselves as links between past traditions and ideals and the future expression and implementation of those ideals. They saw the study of this people's history as an essential element of democratic education.

People's history and lectures by people's historians tell personal and participatory stories and create a sense of mystery and excitement by filling in the blanks in the history books with hidden or suppressed history. These stories supplement or challenge the storytelling used by elites for social control in what is a form of myth making to legitimize their power and protect their positions. People's historians fill in the picture with some of the missing stories of how individuals react to power and hierarchy to demand and create accommodation.

Many contemporary approaches to the teaching of history seek to discover, protect, and disseminate the overlooked stories of different ethnic communities and social interests so that their stories—in oral histories, in diaries, and in other forms—are retold, promoting the continued openness, democratization, significance, and universality of the content of historic research.

Yet, ironically, the people's history approach often fails to include the approaches of democratic experiential education in its own methods and measures. The works of people's historians who address issues of social change and progress are often appreciated mostly for the political results they expose and how this contributes to contemporary debates. They devote less attention to standardizing measures of democratization of education, protection of history, and progress and showing how those measures could be implemented. The reason for that may be a result of the lack of systematization of these methods and theories into textbook form so that they become part of the routine tool kit and modeling criteria that is used in history and the social sciences. But the two approaches can be combined.

## **Comparing and Building on the Approaches of People's History and Democratic Experiential Approaches in Democratizing the Teaching and Exploration of History (Quick Overview)**

There is an easy way to compare and combine the approaches of traditional history, of people's history, and of experiential education. Figure 1 shows how the initial people's history focus on popularizing content of historical research and curricula through innovations in research methods fits into new action-oriented approaches that can broaden and deepen the research, teaching and learning, modeling, use, enjoyment, and even the "making" of history.

The top of the chart compares the standard, traditional top-down approach to the research and teaching of history with the initial people's history approach, as well as with two new ways: the democratic experiential approach to people's history that we pioneered in the 1980s and 1990s and described below, and taking people's history back to the people—history as an everyday activity on the landscape, which is offered as the innovative model in this article.

The left column briefly presents the different elements that are added in to each approach as a process of progressive democratization of history and its study—adding elements one at a time to fulfill the goals of democratization of history.

Democratic experiential education not only democratizes the content of history but it transforms the form of education (teaching methods and institutional form of the university; the hidden curricula) so that it is democratic and community based, field oriented, and responsive both to students and to the public.

The approach of democratizing history on the landscape includes democratizing the content of history as well as the context, making communities and members of communities the participants in researching, protecting, discussing, and living among their history. This approach is part of changing the overall culture in which history is used and in which individuals are socialized. Socialization that democratizes the process of using history in the culture can include university or school history teaching but it can also supplement it through extracurricular learning inside the university or school environment (student museums and memorialization of the history in educational institutions themselves) or outside of it.

These are described more fully in the sections that follow.

## **Previous Experience in Practice: Combining a People's History Approach with Democratic Experiential Education (Changing the Hidden Curriculum)**

At the same time that the initial approaches to people's history were focusing on the content of history, working to democratize the curriculum to incorporate a people's history, we were focusing on the hidden curriculum and seeking to democratize the structures of educational institutions, themselves and the methods of teaching, including the teaching of history.

In early attempts to apply democratic experiential education in the 1980s and 1990s, I worked with colleagues to offer sample curricula across disciplines, starting at the university level but allowing for applications in secondary and primary education. We directly offered tools so that teachers, administrators, members of

**Figure 1.** Democratizing Three Dimensions of History Research and Learning

<i>Approaches</i>	<i>Traditional Historical Education</i>	<i>The Concept of People's History</i>	<i>Democratic Experiential Education Approach to People's History</i>	<i>Taking People's History Back to the People: History as an Everyday Activity on the Landscape</i>
<b><i>Democratizing Features</i></b>	Top-Down, Undemocratic	Democratizing the Content (research methods and curricula)	Democratizing the Form: (university, research and formal teaching; the hidden curricula)	Democratizing the Cultural Context (of learning and appreciating history; the socialization process)
None	X			
Add stories of popular movements for social justice and rights		X	X	X
Democratize the teaching methods and the curriculum			X	X
Teach the full array of field skills and civic tools in teaching of history			X	
Democratize the extracurricular			X	
Preserve history on the landscape				X
Popularize the landscape				X
Popularize museums, tours, discussions				X
Add healthy visits (biking, boating, walking) and restore traditional activities (gardening, crafts)				X

the community, and even students themselves can design, introduce, and accredit courses that are more balanced, more theoretical, more skills oriented, more protective of communities, and more democratic in teaching, grading, and content than the top-down, ideological, classroom education offered in the traditional factory-model style of education still dominant throughout the world today (Lempert, 1995). Like Zinn's people's history, the theory, curricula, and methods that we tested at Stanford, the University of California, and George Washington University and with overseas students from Harvard and Brown Universities broadened the curricular content to include the Unseen America—the peoples, places, and histories left out of the formal curricula. It also added the elements that democratized the classroom methods, grading, and form of education while ensuring that education would have an experiential component that promoted rigor and advances in each discipline.

The Unseen America was also inspired by an historian, the late Stanford professor of history and African American studies Kennell Jackson. The goal of democratizing both the formal curriculum and the hidden curriculum at the same time was to find a way that would

teach skills, systems thinking, modeling, tolerance and empathy, and awareness at once. We sought to do it in ways that were cheaper and more effective than the traditional model and that would be popular with students and the community.

We offered a step-by-step guide to creation of courses in history and the social sciences and professional schools, to accreditation, to funding, and to convincing faculty and administration. We focused on democratic and field- (community-) based data collection and skills learning that target real problems of communities and offer new thinking on solutions and new organizations that are the basis of social change.

The community did not need to be convinced. Nor did students. They both wanted universities and schools to be relevant, accessible, skills oriented, and cost effective. Graduates still face increasing debt burdens and employment difficulties and want value for their education. So do communities, which no longer see real value in education investments and choose between budget priorities for education and military and incarceration. Yet the reason these approaches are hardly known and little applied is a

result of the power dynamics of the university and educational system—often reflecting corporatism (Barrow, 1990) rather than the market (sovereignty of the students paying for the education). It also seems to be the result of a class of professors now appearing to be more representative than their predecessors but also seemingly eager (or under direct and subtle pressures) to continue to reinforce institutional and social hierarchies. One recent study of teaching approaches and ideologies of women and minorities, who have made university faculty appear more diverse, described the result as a façade that could best be described (for women) as “every woman for himself” (Duncan, 2011). These new “diverse” faculties may claim they are free and represent change, but the selection procedures and systems seem to limit that freedom in ways that may more effectively mask the reality and reaffirm it. In reflecting this political reality, service-learning and internships, along with clinical education projects, are among the most widely used forms of learning in the community. These are too often limited to field skills training within already existing institutions (not those created by or subject to challenge by students) without real democratization or social change. In these approaches, students would seem to fit Piven and Cloward’s definition as servants in the hierarchy “regulating the poor” rather than promoting social change with independent projects and skills (Piven & Cloward, 1972).

This is not to deny that there are some excellent, creative teachers and schools, or that there are students who thrive and offer independent thinking even in traditional educational environments. Despite the hidden curriculum and its controls and methods, many students still benefit from the critical thinking they learned at home before being subject to schooling and are able to retain these despite their formal schooling. The fact that some students still do well even under these conditions, however, reinforces the attitudes that make change difficult. Real change requires careful focus on the key components that need to be changed rather than on the cosmetics that can hide a lack of real change. It requires an appeal to the energies of many teachers, students, and those in the community who do have incentives for change.

Given these political realities, we recognized that even changing the content of history research and offering practical, effective ways to change the hidden curriculum are themselves not enough to achieve a major impact in changing scholarly disciplines, the university, or society. Since institutions oppose this kind of change, despite it being in overall interest of industrial culture and human survival, it has to emerge through simple and noncostly mechanisms that are attractive, reinforcing, and self-replicating. This is why we now look also at the next step, for transforming the context, the culture and processes, of socialization.

We envisioned applications to teaching of history that combine content with democratic experiential methods at the university level and even earlier. We called for teaching of history that would be transformed from story and classroom activities about those stories into a field approach to discovery, protection, interaction, analysis, and application of history in daily life. We offered three different applications of student-initiated democratic experiential people’s history courses at the university level and have seen parts of this

approach very slowly entering curricula, though hardly achieving our larger vision. We offered the following course syllabi:

- *Economic History: A Field Approach* with a syllabus for a course designed to be taught at Harvard or other universities in the Boston area (but applicable in almost any urban area) and looking at the rise and decline of different industries, the control of the means of production and the political implications, the different utopian alternatives, and the cultural choices for economic production in relation with the environment (Lempert, 1995, pp. 210–211),
- *U.S. Political History on the Landscape*, a field course with discussion of political economy, and changes in rights (Lempert, 1995, pp. 158–159), and an
- *Oral History Project* focusing on teaching methods combined with the testing of theories of history (Lempert, 1995, pp. 105–106).

There are certainly many other possibilities for designing an effective history curriculum that teaches skills, builds models and tests theories, and offers applications in a democratic context. We offered the tests and measurements for how to do that and remake the curriculum. But those approaches weren’t enough. Now we go beyond.

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### **Something New in Application: Combining the People’s History Approach with a Third Dimension (the Context)**

We are just now ready to test, in Southeast Asia, the theory and practice of an additional transformation that goes beyond democratic experiential education to make history an holistic experience in the community and to become a part of daily life. If contemporary societies are to democratize formal study and teaching of history at the university level, to make history a participatory, useful, and fun activity that is inclusive, we need to start by changing the context in which we confront and deal with history in our daily environments throughout our lives. We need to reach all adults and young people to see teaching, history, and themselves in a different way, so that they understand and can call for democratic experiential approaches in their institutions.

History is everywhere around us, on our landscapes, on objects like currency that we handle every day, in symbols and shapes of ordinary objects. The way we think about who controls and protects it and who presents it constitutes our cultural approach to history and to our political life. If we begin to democratize our activities related to the history around us in our daily life, we become active participants not only in our history but in our political lives and our future.

The next step beyond the research of full, alternative history and attempts to democratize it at the university level is a popularization of history in which people learn to take control of their own historical study, control their heritage, and participate in analyzing and discussing their local history. Landscapes are

controlled by those with power, and their transformation can destroy imagination and create a sense of fatalism. Touring the landscapes to reveal these transformations is a way to counter that through a physical act that links memory and emotions directly to action and to place, sending reinforcing empowerment messages.

This is not something entirely new. It is already happening in popular culture in special heritage tours and in other popular activities. There has already been a growth in specialty walks and tours (African history tours, slavery-era tours, women's history tours, Jewish heritage tours) and of similarly themed museum exhibits prepared by various interest groups.

On university campuses, ideas for museums of student history and inventions, preservation of student art, memorialization of famous students and the places they lived (at Stanford, a plaque at the home of student, later U.S. president, John F. Kennedy) as well as student movements have been tested and documented. There are ways students themselves can research and sometimes do present alternative alumni histories outside of campus controlled alumni magazines (Lempert, 1995). We have described how to seek administration approval, media attention, and alumni funds and how to document the attempts by school administrators to control and distort history for their own purposes in ways that can promote democratic transitions of these institutions (Lempert, 1995). Films like Michael Verhoeven's *The Nasty Girl* (1990) on a German student's project to discover the Nazi past of her community also demonstrate how this can be done. Although almost no student history departments involve students in documenting and memorializing the student and community history and teach skills in preserving that history as part of the history curriculum, it is possible to do it even when it touches on the difficult issues and potentially on legal violations.

All of these types of collections and presentations can be integrated into a unified, systematic process for identifying all of the various themes of history on the landscape so that all voices are protected and exercised, so that exciting questions of identity and choice are continually raised, and so that meaningful history is rooted in everyday life.

What we are developing and testing now with several audiences in a number of countries in Southeast Asia and in Eastern Europe is everything from individual curricula and tours, to bicycling time-machine tours taking children back in history in their own cities, to government and NGO preservation and history popularization projects. The idea of popularizing history is to identify forgotten and unseen places, to organize them into stories of different periods and themes for discussion, and to add a slow, individualized process that is self-paced without any top-down tour guides or commercialization. If possible, one should use a technology that replicates the historical speed of passing through the areas (using bicycles, paddled boats, or on foot) rather than motorized vehicles and should try to incorporate some of the original activities like gardening and crafts to informally live the experience. While commercially re-created sites like rural villages can be placed on a tour as part

of the experience, our idea is to incorporate questions and challenges to such sites as part of an individualized challenge to how history is controlled, commercialized, and distorted. Another linked element of this is that of heritage protection—to use identification of history as a way to advocate for and achieve additional protection in ways that present competing stories, for pride in local cultures and for interaction across borders. This approach can also be used to spur new museums and healthy activities with nature, along with attempts to reintegrate communities with nature and the landscape in ways that have also been lost to history.

The quickest way to understanding this approach may be to explore the basic steps for actually doing it, following the templates designed in doing this around the world (currently for six countries). We put our approach in the public domain so that everyone can apply it and help build the approach along with us.

#### THE PRACTICE: HOW TO DO IT: METHODS FOR TAKING CONTROL OF HISTORY

The idea of “mapping cultures onto their terrain” in order to understand them comes out of anthropology and, more recently, human geography. Anthropologists do it for nonindustrial societies and on archaeological maps. Urban planners also do it. When anthropologists do historical mapping, it can also be used to reveal circles of political and economic power, economic and spiritual interaction and integration with environments, as well as class structure, systems of apartheid and ghettoization, and processes of historical change. What's new here is the use of this technique by layers across time and by themes. The trick is in mapping the history in the same place by historical period and then using successive maps to imagine oneself actually in these different periods when visiting the places. In doing that, the missing stories jump right out. Though it takes a commitment of time to do this, it's easy to do and fun to experience. It can be broken down into some simple steps.

History is under our feet, around us, in our conversations and interactions, in the changes to the natural environment, and in symbols of ordinary life, but we rarely organize all of this information around us by time and by different kinds of groups to draw meaning from it and to think about our choices. We live in history with much of it still visible on our landscapes in subtle ways. Other aspects of history are invisible or hidden, or unseen, but suddenly become visible when we stop just reading about it in books or listening to presentations or focusing on memorials and key sites and actually move through the whole of our geography. Rarely do we stop to look at remains and changes to landscapes and try to discover what they mean, what choices people made and how they defined themselves. Here's how to do it in an easy tool kit of five steps and some easy-to-use templates.

The process below for mapping history onto terrain—a methodology of historical gridding; endangerment assessments; organization of sites to derive meaning; and raising of questions as a basis for discussion, curriculum and choice—includes steps on how to find what's missing from history and how to search for it. For example, revolutionary movements aren't memorialized when

they are suppressed, victims of genocide and their landscapes often disappear, and devastated environments disappear. Beneath what has disappeared is the flip side of what remains, and this can help reveal and memorialize those ghost sites. Often old place names (and particularly old American Indian names for places in the United States) can be the basis for recreations of the history that has disappeared.

The curricula and products that come out of this kind of historical research are walking tours, bike tours, films, and preservation projects that can be geared to a variety of audiences and age groups and used both in classroom and in independent public education.

**STEP ONE: COMPREHENSIVE INVENTORY FOR SEVERAL POTENTIAL TOURS**

Inventory what is already available on a current map of the area where you are looking at the history (e.g., a community or university campus). Visit the places, speak with others about who they are and were, and collect information in available sources (already existing books on architecture and history, articles in the media). Classify all current sites by historical periods and themes. Use grids like the examples in Figure 2 as a start. Some of this is easy—cemeteries have tombstones, religious and public buildings often post information; factories and companies have websites. Some takes more legwork, including interviewing and research skills.

As you visit sites, keep a separate log of where they are, what you see, and what issues are sparked about choices made, as well as what issues are unresolved. The way sites make you feel and what you think about their history as you see them is what makes them important for this approach. Think about the resources invested in each place, who made the investments, what else could have been done with the same funds, who sacrificed and who benefited, as well as what the current owners want you to think and not to ask. Now you are doing people’s history!

**STEP TWO: HISTORICAL MAPPING**

Look for historical maps. Overlay an historical map over contemporary maps to see what street outlines remain (and what original names were), what architectural and structural features remain or have been changed (roads, bridges, aqueducts, parks), and what continuities there are even if buildings are different (religious, government, recreational sites) to try to put an historical period on a contemporary map. Use this basic map for a tour of what remains in fact, in similar use, or in spirit; what important sites have been lost (that you can mark on a contemporary map as ghost sites); what is memorialized; what is forgotten and why. This is the starting point of a tour going back in time.

**STEP THREE: OUTLINING THE GEOGRAPHY AND REMAINS OF EACH HISTORIC PERIOD**

For each period (or theme), even where there is no historical map, list everything one would expect to find and note its location. The list below can help to get you started. These can be entered on the grids in an interactive process with maps and tour itinerary. Place the list of sites both in the inventory grids and on a tentative map for a theme tour. If you are also working on historical preservation, you will see how many examples of a specific structure from a specific point of history that reflects a particular idea or event still remain, the condition each site is in, and how important it might be. Note that the more information you have, the more periods and themes will be available for tours. If you know where sites were, but they were destroyed, list them as ghost sites. If some of the ghost sites are entirely different today from what they were (a special garden or forest, for example, or a mansion) try to look for another area even outside of the location that could recreate the same feel and that you can visit as a way to spark the idea of what was destroyed. If you know a site must have existed but can’t find it, keep it on the list and speculate on where it might be. Often what is destroyed or disappeared from memory is what tells the most important story!

**Figure 2:** Sample Grids for Use in Cataloguing Actual Historic Sites and the Absence of Expected Sites by Period (and Social Group) and by Themes, as well as for Assessing Preservation and Research Needs

<i>Era and Time Period</i>	<i>Kind of Site</i>	<i>Where to Find It</i>	<i>Tour / Our Rating</i>
Peroid One	Ruling Elite: homes, recreation area		
	Tombs		
	Schools and worship		
	Major constructions		
	Minority group: work area		
	Minority group: living areas		
	Riots, opposition, or protest site		
	International influences		

**Figure 2:** Sample Grids for Use in Cataloguing Actual Historic Sites and the Absence of Expected Sites by Period (and Social Group) and by Themes, as well as for Assessing Preservation and Research Needs (*continued*)

<i>Type of Craft or Profession</i>	<i>Name of Village or Site</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Tour / Our Rating</i>
Artisanry			
Gold and silver Embroidered wares			
<i>Religion or Cult and Origin</i>	<i>Type of Site</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Tour / Our Rating</i>
Animistic religious from prehistory			
Contemporary nature worship cults			
Historic leader or ideology (e.g., militarism, consumption) worship cults			

This is the place for research and thinking. Start with what is there and the “official story” and look for it. Then start looking for the unofficial story. Reconstruct the lives of elites as well as ordinary people with their houses, their foods, their diseases, their markets, their animals, their gardens. Meanwhile, you can also add places of demonstrations, plots, assassinations, celebrations, and inventions. Here is where you can begin to examine and find ways to tell the stories of individual people, following aspects of their lives and struggles on the landscapes, and of groups of people through history. Zinn (1970) offered tips on how to depoliticize the standard story and to repoliticize it in a way that reflected goals of progress, social justice, and equity, listing the questions to ask and approaches in his book on the politics of history, and you can apply this in your search.

You should also create categories for memorials both for the periods they memorialize and the time the memorials were created. Sometimes memorials are entirely fictional, in the wrong places or myths. You can spark controversy and critical thinking by the way you place these on a tour with the actual sites and actual stories.

**STEP FOUR: INTERPRETATION AND THEMES**

After the basic work, you will have an idea of the potential tours, heritage protection approaches, and field curricula through history on the landscape that you can create and the kinds of issues that can be raised. Even though you could start here with a single theme and avoid the first three steps, doing so would mean that you are already starting the study of history with a specific political agenda and bias and are closing your mind off to a real understanding. That’s why you should do all the steps before focusing. In Figure 4, you will find a list of sample themes that include multiple historical periods. These supplement the tours that can be done by chronological period (that will also have their themes and even multiple themes that can focus on movements and personalities in an historical period). You should try to link the sites in a way that tells the story and maps it onto the geography based on geographic concepts of social and political (human)

**Figure 3.** Sample List of Expected Finds from Each Historic Period

- Ruling elite homes, country clubs
- Political center and administration
- Prison
- Religious institutions
- Cemetery
- Military/police
- Hospitals
- Schools, libraries
- Economic productive places:
  - Agricultural lands
  - Factories
  - Processing
  - Small shops
  - Markets
  - Banks
  - Pawn shops
- Economic infrastructure:
  - Roads
  - Ports
- Social institutions:
  - Stadiums
  - Theaters, newspapers
  - Recreation areas
  - Brothels, red light district
  - Minority district

geographies. Even if you want to create just a theme tour for a particular minority group through history, the geography will also be a key.

To do the mapping, look for the structure and the deep structure. See life as a full system with actions and reactions.

**Figure 4.** Sample Themes for History Tours (Based on Actual Tours)

**Adventures By Historical Geography**

- River Tour
- Sacred Hills Tour
- Dead Rivers and Dead Lakes Tour

**Adventures By Cultural Interest And Historical Comparisons And Continuity**

- By Minority Group
  - Ghettos and Neighborhoods: Movement of Particular Groups and Different Class Strata of those Groups over Time
  - Slave Markets and Heritage
- The Colorful Side
  - Favorite Religious and Spiritual Worship Sites
  - “Famous Leaders” Cult Tour
  - A Day with the Dead
- The Dark Side
  - Harems and Hookers Tour
  - Prison Diary Tour
  - Hallucinations through History Tour
  - Back Alleys and Curiosities
- By Professions
  - Economic Infrastructure and Change Tour
  - Craft Villages and Specialties
  - Law and Injustice Tour
  - Medical Cure Tour
  - Universities and Education Tour
- By Social Group
  - Social Activists and Movements Tour
  - Famous, Infamous, and Ordinary Women Tour
  - Rich and Poor Tour (How Both Halves Live)

**Figure 5.** Basic Template for a Bicycle or Walking Tour through History

Name of Tour Keyed to Theme and Place:

Sites by Historic Period and Culture:  
[List of what will be seen on the tour]

Summary List of Historic Eras and Highlights (Culture, Nature, Politics):

Map:

Ratings: (1–5)

- Difficulty: 
- Romantic Value: 
- Historic and Cultural Significance: 
- Harassment/Hassles: 
- Pollution and Dangers: 

Distance and Travel Time:  
[Overall advice on options for taking the tour, also considering weather, time of day, time of year, conditions, and purposes]

Historical Background:  
[Important themes, puzzles, disputes and controversies]

Itinerary (Route, Travel Time, Time to Spend at the Site):  
  [Order and logic of presentation of the sites by subtheme, followed by advice on how to find each site]

Site and Short Interpretive Description:

Hints (Health, Safety, Enjoyment, Human Comfort Issues):

Why [Trip Leader] Likes This Trip (Political and Social Commentary):

References for Further Reading and Study:

Consider what is missing. Some of the key things to look for on the geography are:

- Political geography; concentric circles of power (how status, power, and control are reflected by placement of institutions and living areas on the geography)
- Ethnic geography and class; apartheid of districts
- Economic geography of districting and interactions
- Nature, symbol, sacred places, and protected places; cosmography—hills, water, gardens, and what made places important for survival (floods, elements), control, or a resource access

**STEP FIVE: PACKAGING CURRICULA OR TOUR IN A STRUCTURED WAY (AS A BASIS FOR STORIES, ESSAYS AND OTHER PRESENTATIONS THAT COULD FOLLOW)**

The final step of putting all of the information together in a way that can be used for tours, curricula, and/or for the basis of popular or academic writing is to organize everything for a

specific historic period or theme. Figure 5 offers a way to do that in the form of a basic template for a Bicycle or Walking Tour through History.

Complete the tour using the suggested template, with the opportunity to add full commentaries in the sections on historical background and in the final section on why you liked the tour. The place for competing perspectives and debate is in these two sections, where you can introduce the different theories on your own or allow multiple authors to offer their comments at the end. For each site you also have the opportunity to present an interpretive view of why you consider the site important and what meaning you find in it. Embellish the stories of history; use interpretation to reexamine and search for the missing pieces, the logical inconsistencies, the histories of choice and of suppression, memorialization and omission. Meanwhile, organize the sites in a way that is efficient but that also builds a story either chronologically or by contrasting themes. You are leading people through a process of imagination and seeing the landscape in a new way.

#### CAVEAT: HOW NOT TO DO IT: UNESCO AND OTHER TOP-DOWN APPROACHES TO HISTORY, EDUCATION, TOURISM, AND HERITAGE

Note that like any technology, there is always a potential that it will be co-opted by those who wish to exploit an approach for political purposes. We all bring biases to any activity and even with an approach that is designed to expose and hold biases up to scrutiny, the same biases can be reintroduced even subconsciously.

One way to try to ensure honest, objective presentations (free of conflicts of interest)—that are rich in offering competing perspectives and move toward truthfulness by presenting evidence and holding it to scrutiny—is to look at those that have become distorted to understand what has gone wrong and to take precautions against it.

Several international organizations and businesses now do memorialize history for commercial or political purposes. They inventory and protect sites. They map them. They organize them into themes. They offer educational materials and amusements.

What characterizes the approach of these organizations, such as UNESCO and international organizations working in the area of heritage for “pro-poor” tourism is that they are top-down, working directly with authorities or for benefit of outsiders to the history or for commercial uses. They exploit history in a colonial fashion through exploitation of cultural assets that are profitable in the global economy to wealthy tourists seeking certain kinds of packaged experiences rather than debates over historical choices and the meaning of social progress. They freeze history into particular periods or themes and recreate entire landscapes to serve those single themes, creating theme parks of history that suppress all competing stories and periods and reinforce the power and ideology of already favored interests.

Good research and attempts to include the full picture can expose the creation of myths. To become attuned to some of these myths and research methods to expose them, you can take a look at historical works that do this (Shenkman, 1992, 1996).

#### INTELLECTUAL BENEFITS OF THE POPULAR APPROACH: USING HISTORY TO UNDERSTAND CHOICE AND SOCIAL CHANGE: LINKING HISTORY TO SOCIAL SCIENCE FOR PREDICTION AND PROGRESS

Zinn’s people’s history has sometimes been criticized as seeking to politicize history and to put an emotional spin on it that goes beyond the realities of success and failure of social movements and the abuses and continuities of power. Similar claims can be made against the above approach to taking people’s history back to the people by placing it on the landscape, particularly if this tool is misused. The test that distinguishes a scientific advance from politics or ideology is whether it directly promotes predictive modeling. In testing this approach in the field by combining the research methods with historical questions, it is possible to create a synthesis that offers a new tool to model and predict history.

This process of historical identification of sites comes out of archaeology, anthropology, and human geography. In extending it to history, it serves a role in testing of hypotheses and developing larger theories about history and social change. Social scientists can use this history to try to re-create the basics of culture/ethnicity in particular settings and then to examine how changes occurred and how we can better adapt in the future as the basis for modeling and hypothesis testing.

An example of how information collected from this kind of inventory of sites by historical period and by themes fits into a systematic analysis of cultures at historical points in time, as a basis of modeling change, is presented in Figure 6: This information comes from my unpublished manuscript on Viet Nam that used the method of visiting and mapping hundreds of sites in the country as a tool for measuring historical strategies in their geographic environments, challenging the contemporary histories to see if they made logical sense, and also looking at the interpretations of identity and change to see how they were supported by realities on the landscape (Lempert, 2013). The table here, for Viet Nam’s Red River period (Dong Son), roughly 300 BCE, represents an attempt to codify different aspects of a society during a specific period as a way of looking at changes and determining which elements change together and why. Most history focuses on one or two elements that are taken out of context without appreciation for holistic systems and how systems change, a bit akin to studying evolution by focusing only on one body part. The interpretation of culture is a process of identifying specific strategies for living that fit the natural and human environments beyond what is cosmetic (language, clothing styles, song and dance, religious ceremonies, foods and diet) in a particular environment and landscape.

Our universities and educational systems currently cut up all of these activities and separate them so they lose their relevance, their humanity, and their joy. By contrast, if you are active in participatory people’s history and in thinking about that history, there is a clear link to scientific thinking about modeling societies, power, and social change in holistic ways. You can then take these scientific findings and apply the normative and humanitarian steps of measuring and working towards being a part of protecting

human diversity, the human spirit, the development of intellect, the protection of the species, of the planet and of ideals of progress.

Such studies and measures used for modeling of history can be used to determine whether or not progress is occurring or reversing and why. The measures of human progress that are the long-term goals of society include: promoting diversity of cultural groups and creating systems that protect that diversity of human cultures and of individual choices within those cultures; confronting hierarchies that are not essential to the survival of individual human cultures and promoting equality; allowing for conflict that promotes diversity and ideas but that minimizes violence, suffering, and hierarchies; promoting not just technological change or conversion of resources into paper value but intellectual and institutional advance; and moving toward sustainable systems. This approach provides the basis for social modeling that can help answer those questions.

In some of my most recent completed work, this kind of data has opened up a new approach to looking at cultural identity and issues for cultural protection in terms of different roles played by cultures in groups in which there appear to be defined roles through which cultures may move (or cycle) over time. It has also opened up a window into an approach to culture change that draws on evolutionary biology and psychology and also looks at cultures in terms of their processes in groups over time. Among the possibilities are that cultural life and death may include defined categories of cultural suicide analogous to individual suicide. These two theoretical advances both have strong implications on how we measure progress and try to explain what appear to be the collapses of different cultures and societies (possibly our own).

Overall, history is often about identity and place that answers large theoretical questions as well as individual and community questions. This new form of exploring history, in a participatory

**Figure 6:** Quick Codification of a Cultural System at a Given Point in History to Use for Modeling and Describing Social Change Over Time

<i>Category of Cultural Trait</i>	<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Continued throughout Next Period or Not</i>
<b>Social structure</b>		
Family	Probably extended, living in longhouses	No
Sexuality	Described as nonexclusive, individual choice, and free	No
Community	Probably group decision making with dependence on village elders and local mores, probably with rule by age segmentation, with autonomy of the community and not outside control	Partly
Role of Women	Equal status, possibly matrilineal inheritance; some differing views on whether or not there was matriarchal or patriarchal leadership	Partly
External Relations	Extensive trade relations and probably intermarriage among a loose federation of tribes	No
Socialization	Not clear; no writing system	?
<b>Political Structure</b>		
Role of Warfare	Probably mostly defensive rather than imperial; not really clear if it was ritualized to assure boundaries between tribes and maintain population; not clear if tribes were able to exert control over others	No
Central versus Decentralized	Apparently a system of federated autonomous tribes	No
Caste or Class	Apparently a military leadership of “lac” “quan” in later period and dynastic inheritance, though rigidity is not clear; not clear if there was an exploited slave/worker class or contributed labor	No

Role of State	Minor role in organizing military protection; probably some role in organizing water control systems, though not clear; not clear whether state provided distribution of surplus in emergency	Yes and No
Religion	Animist with prayers to nature and view of animals as possessing magical properties; prayers to spirits of mountains and water	Yes but merging with and alongside imported religions
<b>Economic Structure</b>		
Production System and Diet	Integrated production linking various land areas: water (fishing), agriculture (rice and other crops), forest products (hunting, collecting), with some animal husbandry	Less so
Technology and Specialization	Apparent specialization of production to create diverse specialized metal objects, to mine the ores	No
Role of Science	Though no writing, there is evidence of scientific innovation and use of science both for production implements (the unique hoe-scythe) and weaponry (possible invention of crossbow)	No
Interaction with Nature	Apparent worship of birds, somewhat integrated ecosystem, no evidence of environmental damage	Somewhat
Accumulation of Savings; Attitudes Towards Accumulation versus Childbearing	No evidence of major accumulation of surplus by a ruling elite for palaces, burials, or other works; wide distribution of artifacts like bronze drums suggests that some fine objects were spread throughout the area; no evidence of a fertility cult stressing reproduction rather than production and savings among a smaller population	No
Property Ownership and Inheritance	Probably a mix of communal property and inheritance through mother	No
Arts	Several types of ornamentation; depiction of rituals and daily life on drums; animal patterns as well as geometric, depictions of sexuality, musical instrumentation	More patterned and less expressive, following Chinese style

democratic experiential way can be linked to objectives of diversity, tolerance, and peace on shared landscapes as well as to ethnic pride. Understanding one's roots and activities in places can also fuel diaspora bridge projects. They lead back to interaction in landscapes of ancestral identity in a meaningful way, that promotes the human diversity and experimentation that has been and will continue to be a key to human survival.

## Conclusion

Achieving a democratic and a sustainable future and measuring real progress in the dimensions of our humanity (perhaps to have any future at all) also requires democratizing the preservation, the

teaching, and the discussion of human history of coexistence of different cultures and of human groups with the natural environment. By definition, doctrinal history (and teaching) distorts the record of human adaptation, experimentation, and interaction in ways that make learning and future advances and adaptations more difficult, if not impossible. Democratic processes combined with standards of protection and discussions are the keys to safeguarding the human legacy and contributing to advances.

We can't wait for experts to write people's history, and we can't wait for experts to teach people's history. People's history also needs to be researched, protected, taught, and applied by all of us. By adding specific, identifiable factors and following measurable steps,

it can be, providing benefits and joy in several ways. These are the linked steps to go beyond the initial achievements of democratization of history education and of people's historians of the 20th century.

## Notes

Historians and social scientists rightly object to the idea that they are simply training students in technical skills and note that education involves learning:

- new information,
- both technical applied skills as well as high-level skills (recognizing patterns and solving various kinds of problems), and
- understanding of different perspectives (including ethics, ability to see the long-term and to look at problems from a global or macro level as well as micro levels, and capability to troubleshoot and recognize ideologies and biases).

In fact all of these *are* skills. Certainly disciplines can inventory these and develop curricula that build all of these skills and offer specific, recognizable value to students, the public, and the discipline. Today, this kind of objective approach to competencies and teachings is often second to teaching about topics and reinforcing a single perspective and a limited range of skills. An objective approach to skills and to grading promotes objectivity (something that is testable, replicable, empirical, verifiable, and predictive) in the advance of the discipline.

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