

Good article review on a historical crisis

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



For those that have decided to embark on a History career as a way to fulfill their life goals, jobs are not easy to come by. It is definitely not of the most profitable job markets, and many end up unemployed. The study of two articles will allow the study of this problem and offer possible solutions. The text “Redefining Historical Scholarship: Report of the American Historical Association Ad Hoc Committee on Redefining Scholarly Work” believes that the main problem is the definition that historical scholarship has taken and looks to broaden it so that it becomes a more holistic and humanist profession. The German university model contemplates three criteria to be used for ranking and advancing professionals in academic positions: research, teaching and service; the problem that “critics maintain that too much emphasis is now placed on the research component, with the other two relegated to considerably lesser if not irrelevant status” (AHA). Therefore, it was decided that a redefinition of the job had to be made, constructing an ad hoc committee to analyze the subject and change it. This modification was done following Eugene Rice’s model, which divides disciplines according to their treatment of scientific knowledge: it separates the advancement, the integration, the application and the transformation of knowledge. After developing smaller fields within these categories, a new definition of historical scholarship was made that had a vaster spectrum, integrating different aspects of the discipline, allowing the research hegemony to be dispersed.

On the other hand, Robert Townsend’s “The Ecology of the History Job: Shifting Realities in a Fluid Market” evidences that the job market is influenced by the general economic state and that this should be taken into

account when considering the ratio of PhD graduates to academic jobs, the time that these programs take and the shift in the conceptualization of history from a social science to the humanities. Townsend believes that the relation between PhD graduates and academic jobs should not be so highly regarded as an indicator of the Historical job market, as the availability of academic jobs follow larger economic trends, while the number of PhD graduates stays relatively the same. The variability of the job market should also be taken into account, as PhD graduates usually last ten years in the program, which leads to a very different market with respect to what they began with. Finally, the association of History with the humanities has lowered salaries, as it used to be thought of as a social science, which was more prestigious because it was thought of as more rigorous. “ As history has become more closely identified with the humanities over the past 25 to 30 years, history salaries have fallen below the average for all disciplines” (Townsend).

In conclusion, both of these articles show that there is a crisis in the Historical job market. Nevertheless, while one thinks that it is due to the definition of what a History graduate should be the other links the troubles with larger economic trends. As one can see, this is a complex subject that should be carefully studied from many areas.

Reference List

American Historical Association. (1993). Redefining Historical Scholarship: Report of the American Historical Association Ad Hoc Committee on Redefining Scholarly Work. Retrieved from <https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/archives/redefining>

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Townsend, R. (2011, Dec.). The Ecology of the History Job: Shifting Realities in a Fluid Market. Retrieved from <http://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/december-2011/the-ecology-of-the-history-job>