

The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences



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In "The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences" eleven scholars widely known for their interdisciplinary work investigate one of the most striking developments in the intellectual world today: the return to history by a wide range of academic disciplines. From "new historicism" in literary theory, to "ethnohistory," to "historical sociology," these new approaches have resulted both in more works of historical analysis and in a more self-conscious attempt to locate the human sciences in their own histories. The essays in "The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences"--eight of them published here for the first time--take stock of these changes from the perspectives of some of the disciplines most deeply involved: anthropology, sociology, political science, law, literary studies, and history itself. Many of the authors have played a crucial role in producing the historic turn in their own disciplines. The volume as a whole, therefore, goes significantly beyond a mere inventory of these changes to ask how and how much history can make a difference; how the practice of history is affected by post-structural and other theories; and what is left of both unproblematized history and social science after the historic turn. Taken together the essays give a sense both of what these various turns to history have in common and what sets them apart. This comparative dimension distinguishes the volume from those that have analyzed the

impact of history on a single field or have assayed its effects without including historians themselves. In the wake of the historic turn neither the historical actor nor the historical analyst will ever again be seen as a colossus striding over the pages of history. This volume explains in an extraordinary thought-provoking and challenging way why this must be so. Terrence J. McDonald is Professor of History, University of Michigan.

作者介绍:

目录:

[The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences_ 下载链接1](#)

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