

Joyce Oldham Appleby, emerita professor of history at the University of California, Los Angeles, died after a short illness on December 23, 2016 at her home in Taos, New Mexico. She was 87 years old. A prolific scholar, a dedicated graduate mentor, and a charismatic teacher, she was also an active citizen of, and an ardent proselytizer for, the historical profession. “History,” Appleby observed in 1997, “can help human beings think better, live more richly, and act more wisely.”

Appleby served as president for three of her discipline’s premier organizations in the United States: The American Historical Association in 1992, the Organization of American Historians in 1997, and the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic in 1999. With her UCLA colleague and close friend, Gary B. Nash, she ably defended the National History Standards from political attacks in the 1990s. In 1996, she co-founded with James M. Banner the History News Service, providing a venue for historians to publish op-eds in newspapers and bring their expertise to a wider public.

A fearless and elegant writer, Appleby produced two books in quick succession after her retirement from UCLA, both of which earned widespread popular and scholarly acclaim. *The Relentless Revolution: A History of Capitalism* (2010) expertly illuminated how the particularities of cultures and time infused capitalism with endless variety and compelling force, for better and for worse. *Shores of Knowledge: New World Discoveries and the Scientific Imagination* (2013) addressed questions about the sources of curiosity. Appleby’s interview on Moyers & Company enabled television audiences to witness first-hand her qualities as raconteur and scholar. Indeed, Appleby was a restless and productive retiree. Not only did she continue to write a string of captivating op-eds on current topics and support a variety of progressive causes; she also personally served a community that depended on “Meals on Wheels.”

Joyce Appleby was born in Lincoln, Nebraska on April 9, 1929 but spent much of her youth in Southern California. After her graduation from Stanford University in 1950, she worked as a journalist in New York City before returning to California to marriage and family. At thirty-two, a mother of three, and married to her second husband Andrew Appleby, she entered the Claremont Graduate University, receiving a Ph.D. in U.S. history, specializing in American revolutionary ideology. She joined the history department at San Diego State University in 1967 and in 1980 accepted a position at UCLA where she stayed until retirement in 2001. A scholar of great depth and influence, Appleby challenged the primacy of classical republicanism in the historiography of America’s revolutionary era. Her string of authoritative books and articles featured an irresistible combination of passion, clarity of prose, and penetrating analysis of political ideology as it collided with the sweeping currents of economic change. In particular, Appleby revised the rationale behind Thomas Jefferson’s resistance to the Federalist Party in the 1790s. The Federalists’ desire for order and authority, she insisted, inevitably faltered in the face of a socially democratic and market driven expansive political movement built by Jefferson and James Madison that culminated in the election of 1800.

Appleby's first monograph, *Ideology, and Economic Thought in Seventeenth-Century England*, appeared in 1978, winning the Berkshire Prize; it was followed in 1984 by *Capitalism and a New Social Order: The Republican Vision of the 1790s*. A collection of her journal articles was published in 1992 under the title of *Liberalism and Republicanism in the Historical Imagination*. Appleby's work gained sizable recognition as a major contribution to Jeffersonian scholarship and to Revolutionary era political and economic history. Turning to historiography, she co-authored with Lynn Hunt and Margaret Jacob *Telling the Truth About History* (1994), exploring the effects of postmodernism on the writing of history. Appleby's next book, *Inheriting the Revolution: the First Generation of Americans* (2000) depicted the world of men and women born between 1776 and 1800. These children and grandchildren of the Revolution, she suggested, collectively forged a unique American identity based on individual enterprise, energy, and a strong commitment to an egalitarian society.

Given Appleby's prominence, she received many honors. A member of the American Philosophical Society, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the British Academy, she served as the Harmsworth Professor of American History at Oxford University in 1990-91 and in 2012 was chosen by the ACLS to deliver the thirtieth Charles Homer Haskins Prize Lecture in Philadelphia. Appleby's professional accomplishments were intimately bound up with an intense interest in and generosity toward others. As mother to Ann Lansburgh Caylor, Mark Lansburgh, Frank Appleby, and as a grandmother of four, Appleby was continually learning, listening, connecting and communicating, drawing sources of stimulation and creativity from those around her. She cared about people, about their situations and circumstances, about what they thought and how they managed their lives. She retained her lively spirit of inquiry about many things. But she never doubted history's utility to illuminate the past and to inform the present.

The UCLA history department and general community have benefited greatly from Joyce Appleby's twenty-one year tenure. She has left not only a legacy of committed service, inspirational teaching, and leadership, but also a treasure trove of memories about a life fully-lived.

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