Abstract: This article surveys the writing of university history in Great Britain since the 1960s, when its modern foundations were laid through the impact of the new social history. Specific features of the British case include the separate university histories of England and Scotland, which have conditioned the kind of history that can be written; the duopoly of Oxford and Cambridge before the nineteenth century; and the growth of a national system by the accretion of new strata, with their own distinct histories. The 1980s and 1990s were marked by large collective projects, at Oxford, Cambridge and Aberdeen. The tradition of writing histories of individual institutions (including Oxford and Cambridge colleges) has continued, though today on a more scholarly basis than in the past. Among the general themes investigated in recent years have been relations between universities and industry, the growth of state intervention and finance, universities and elites, links with the British empire, the deve-

Resumen: Este artículo examina los trabajos sobre la historia universitaria en Gran Bretaña desde la década de 1960, cuando sus fundamentos modernos fueron despedidos por el impacto de la nueva historia social. Las características específicas del caso británico incluyen las historias separadas de las universidades de Inglaterra y Escocia, que han condicionado el tipo de historia que se puede escribir; el duopolio de Oxford y Cambridge antes del siglo XIX; y el crecimiento de un sistema nacional mediante la adición de los nuevos estratos, con sus propias historias diferenciadas. Los años 1980 y 1990 se caracterizaron por grandes proyectos colectivos, Oxford, Cambridge y Aberdeen. La tradición de escribir historias de las instituciones individuales (incluyendo las universidades de Oxford y Cambridge) ha continuado, aunque hoy en día de forma más académica que en el pasado. Entre los temas generales investigados en los últimos años han sido las relaciones entre las universidades y la industria, el crecimiento de
The aim of this essay is not to provide a full bibliography of British university history, but to survey the development of research since the 1960s. For some themes, it seems useful to bring together fairly comprehensive references; for others, and for the work of leading scholars in the field, representative examples are given. Textbooks and introductory works, and books aimed at the general reader (often scholarly and visually attractive) have not usually been listed.

University history in Britain has features and problems in common with other countries. One of these is defining the subject’s boundaries. Universities have connections of all kinds with the political, social, religious and cultural life of the countries in which they are situated. They are also the academic home of many branches of thought: how far is the history of academic disciplines part of university history? Universities have libraries, buildings, art collections, museums, and publishing houses, all of which attract their own historians. Here a pragmatic approach has been taken, and only historical work which is predominantly about universities themselves is generally considered.

It is typical of scholarship in this field that the “history of universities” has been separated from the “history of education”, and the relationship of universities to schools and to national education systems has been...
neglected. Britain has a flourishing History of Education Society, founded in 1967, which organizes an annual conference and has published a journal, *History of Education*, since 1972. But until recently university history has been a minority interest. It has found a home instead in the journal *History of Universities*, published by Oxford University Press since 1981, but without a corresponding society. *History of Universities* has always seen itself as an international journal, and articles on Britain have probably represented less than half of the total. The journal also had a bias in its early years to the medieval and Renaissance periods.

The other feature of university history everywhere has been the predominance of institutional histories of individual universities, often of a celebratory kind linked to anniversaries. Universities are long-lived bodies with rich archives for historians to exploit, but the result has often been inward-looking, focusing on administrative questions, the lives of celebrated professors or alumni, and the university’s scientific and scholarly achievements. This began to change in the 1960s, under the impact of the “new social history”, reflected in Britain in the influence of the *Annales* school and of an undogmatic marxism. University historians moved closer to the general trends in historical scholarship, and examined wider social and cultural questions.

**Collective projects**

The pioneer in Britain was Lawrence Stone, originally at Oxford but later at Princeton, where he directed a project whose results were published in two volumes. One, on Oxford, contained Stone’s own study of long-term student enrolments, which emphasized the movement of a lay clientele into the university in the sixteenth century, and the high point reached in the early seventeenth century. Other historians in the Princeton project included Nicholas Phillipson, on eighteenth-century Scotland, and Sheldon Rothblatt, whose earlier study of Victorian Cambridge was itself a pioneering work.

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3 The two journals are referred to in the footnotes as *HE* and *HU*. UP is for University Press.


Student enrolments and the social origins of students became for a time a speciality of the journal *Past and Present*, in which Stone was a leading figure. These studies usually involved the analysis of quantitative evidence, at that time without much assistance from computers. It was an interest no doubt stimulated by what was happening in universities at the time, with the expansion of student numbers after the Second World War and the democratization of secondary schooling.

Similar concerns inspired the four-volume history of European universities launched in 1982, which appeared between 1994 and 2010. This was organized on thematic lines, without chapters on individual countries, but British scholars were involved in the project, especially the fourth volume. It was valuable for putting Britain in a comparative context, something which has remained regrettably uncommon. British universities have often been seen as standing apart from European patterns of development, and while American scholars have made distinguished contributions to British university history, there has been less interest among continental ones. One important American example was Fritz Ringer, who included Britain in his *Education and Society in Modern Europe*, and was a contributor along with Roy Lowe and other British historians to two collections of comparative essays oriented to social history which appeared in the 1980s.

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A specific British feature is the existence of separate university systems in England, Scotland and Ireland (though Ireland is excluded from this essay). In England itself, there were only two universities, Oxford and Cambridge, until the early nineteenth century. The system later grew through the accretion of new strata: the University of London in the early nineteenth century, the civic colleges in English cities later in that century, new universities in the 1960s, and then again in the 1990s. Each of these developments gave rise to histories of individual institutions, and sometimes to studies of the group as a whole (as for the civic universities), but attempts to examine a theme for the English system as a whole have been rare, and those which embrace both England and Scotland rarer still10.

Another peculiarity of the English situation was that as Oxford and Cambridge developed, practical training in law and medicine decayed, and these subjects came to be taught outside the universities. Their history is an important part of university history in many countries, but not in England until the nineteenth century - though this was one of the differences between England and Scotland.

**Oxford and Cambridge**

For centuries English university history was the history of Oxford and Cambridge, and both have organized large-scale historical projects. Oxford chose multiple authorship, with separate chapters by leading scholars. This mode of publication moves with the slowest author, and the eight-volume series, planned in the 1960s, was published between 1984 and 2000.11 These massive volumes embody much scholarship, and make Oxford the best documented British university; but there is no easily accessible list of chapters and authors. In 2016 Laurence Brockliss published a comprehensive one-volume account, and since the twentieth-century volume of the

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10 I may be allowed to cite Robert Anderson, *British universities past and present* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2006).

major history was published in 1994, his work has primary value for recent years\textsuperscript{12}. Cambridge University, with a similar project, opted for four volumes by single authors, which provided more coherence but still extended over sixteen years\textsuperscript{13}.

Oxford and Cambridge were both collegiate universities. The colleges have their own rich archives, and have been as much a focus of emotional loyalty as the universities themselves. There is a long tradition of writing college histories. Their quality varies greatly, but even when they make important scholarly contributions, their often parochial concerns and their targeted readership among alumni limit their wider impact. There have been periodic surveys of college histories as a genre, and these articles can be consulted for fuller references\textsuperscript{14}. Here we may list a sample of recent scholarly histories for Oxford, where there seems to be more current activity\textsuperscript{15}, and Cambridge\textsuperscript{16}. (It is symptomatic of the inward-looking nature of college histories that Oxford or Cambridge may not appear in their title; the reader is expected to know this.) College histories are today generally written or edited by historical specialists, but often as a one-off assignment rather than part of a continuing interest in university history. This is also true of the individual chapters in the Oxford history, and of institutional histories of other universities, and it has limited the evolution of the history of universities as a subdiscipline.


Medieval and early modern England

For this period, the Oxford and Cambridge volumes contain the most important modern scholarship. Independent studies follow similar themes, and are cited sparingly here (not least because of the present author’s lack of expertise in this field). On the medieval period, when the English universities followed European patterns, the focus is inevitably on relations with the church and on philosophy and theology. Independently, Alan Cobban has written on the history of the two universities together17, and there has also been work on graduation and clerical careers18, and on the early years of Cambridge19. On Oxford, there have been studies of students from particular regions20.

Collegiate life developed in the late middle ages, and the permanent establishment of the colleges is a major theme for the sixteenth century, along with the rise of humanist teaching, the impact of the Reformation and the religious divisions which followed it, and the active role of the Tudor monarchy21. In the seventeenth century, relations with the monarchy, and the effects of the civil war and the politico-religious struggles of the period, remain central themes22. An older view that the “scientific revolution” was centred on London rather than the universities has been revised, and the strength of university scholarship and teaching is now emphasized23. This

revisionism has extended to the eighteenth century. For Oxford, contrary to the traditional picture of intellectual stagnation, it has been shown that college teaching was serious and effective. For Cambridge, scholars have stressed the early roots of the university’s modern strength in mathematics and physics. 

Scotland

The first Scottish universities were founded in the fifteenth century. After the Reformation they were seen as part of a national educational system in close connection with schools, and having an urban setting which distinguished them from England. This has made it easier to tell a national story. The present author tried to do this for the nineteenth century in a book influenced by the new social history, and discussion of selected themes can be found in two collections of essays. The history of individual universities has been less dominant, and when Aberdeen planned in the 1980s to commemorate its quincentenary, it did not follow the Oxford or Cambridge pattern, but commissioned a series of short specialist studies. The series eventually ran to eleven volumes, noted below in their contexts. Of the other Scottish universities, Glasgow has been the best served, though most fully for the modern period. Recent scholarly work has looked especially at the universities’ foundation and early years.

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On the Reformation period and its aftermath, Aberdeen has attracted broader study\(^{30}\), but specialist interest has centred on the Presbyterian reformer Andrew Melville\(^ {31}\). For the eighteenth century, there has been much research on the Scottish Enlightenment. This was a period of vitality for the universities, and many of the Enlightenment writers were professors, but attention has focused on their ideas, and the social and institutional history of the universities has been relatively neglected. There are important exceptions, however, which relate the Enlightenment universities to their international, political, urban, and ecclesiastical contexts\(^ {32}\).

In Scotland the universities taught both law and medicine, the latter developing strongly from the eighteenth century. John Cairns has written prolifically on law teaching\(^ {33}\), and there have been studies of medical education in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen\(^ {34}\). The homogeneous nature of the Scottish universities has also made possible nation-wide studies of the professorate and its professionalization\(^ {35}\).


The expansion of universities in the nineteenth century

This period saw both the foundation of new universities in England and Wales, and the reform of existing universities in England and Scotland. In many countries, the action of the state provides a core narrative for national university history. In Britain, the nineteenth century saw significant university legislation, especially between the 1850s and 1880s, accompanied by official inquiries and parliamentary debates which provide valuable historical evidence. One quirk of the system was that in Britain universities had their own members of parliament elected by graduates. But until the twentieth century, it is difficult to speak of governments having a university policy. Nevertheless, historians have recently emphasized – contrary to older views – the growing role of the state before 1914. This was most apparent in the financial aid given to Scottish universities and to the new universities in England and Wales.

Sheldon Rothblatt’s work has been fundamental to the study of the nineteenth century, and some of his important essays have been republished. The multi-volume histories of Oxford and Cambridge remain essential...
for their coverage of the major reforms of the Victorian period, and are the starting-point for other specialized studies. One aspect of the reforms, especially at Oxford, was their relation to the religious movements of the early nineteenth century, but laicization was to turn clerical college fellows into professional teachers and researchers. The modernization of the curriculum, the development of a new examination system, and the opening of the universities to the upper middle classes consolidated a new national elite, a process which brought the universities into close connection with the new “public schools.”

A specifically English ideal of liberal education developed as part of these reforms and later spread to other universities. The most famous exponent of this ideal was John Henry Newman, but his direct educational work was mainly in Dublin. His ideas continue to be discussed in the broader context of Victorian thought.

Modernizing reforms meant that the ancient universities retained their dominance in England even when there were new foundations. These began in London, with the creation of new colleges for teaching, and of the University of London in 1836 for examining and awarding degrees. There have been some useful histories for the general public, and the university’s complex administrative history, leading to its reconstitution as a teaching

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university in 1900, has been studied in some detail\textsuperscript{45}. But the history of the individual colleges has been surprisingly neglected – the standard histories of University College and King’s College both date from 1929, at the time of their centenaries – and we still know little about London students’ origins and careers, or about relations between the university, its colleges, and the urban society of the capital city. Two major institutions were founded around 1900, partly with private money\textsuperscript{46}. The London School of Economics (1895) has a history written by a previous director, valuable as a record of his experiences, and the Imperial College of Science and Technology (1907) has received a standard history\textsuperscript{47}. The University of London also became England’s main centre of medical education, with the growth of schools based on teaching hospitals, but here too there has been only limited research\textsuperscript{48}.

In England outside London, Manchester received its first university institution, Owens College, in 1851, but further developments awaited the 1870s and 1880s. The civic universities have been studied as a group\textsuperscript{49}. There are also histories of individual establishments, but coverage is patchy - Manchester is a conspicuous gap. But modern scholarly histories include those of Liverpool, Birmingham, Sheffield, and Reading\textsuperscript{50}. Recent histories

\textsuperscript{45} F. M. G. Willson, \textit{Our Minerva: the men and politics of the University of London, 1836-1858} (London: Athlone, 1995); Id., \textit{The University of London, 1858-1900: the politics of Senate and Convocation} (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2004).


\textsuperscript{50} Thomas Kelly, \textit{For advancement of learning: the University of Liverpool, 1881-1981} (Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 1981); Eric Ives \textit{et al.}, \textit{The first civic university: Birmingham, 1880-1980. An introductory history} (Birmingham: Birmingham UP, 2000); Helen Mathers, \textit{Steel city scholars: the centenary history of the University of Sheffield} (London: James and James, 2005); James C. Holt, \textit{The University of Reading: the first fifty years} (Reading: Reading UP, 1977).
give more space than older ones to the university as a community – of students as well as professors – and to the urban context of the universities and their relations with local elites.

While historians of the civic universities have generally seen them as expressing a distinct non-metropolitan identity, the University of Wales (1893) and its constituent colleges were linked to a growing cultural nationalism, and became a marker of national identity, as universities had long been in Scotland\textsuperscript{51}. The university has its own three-volume history\textsuperscript{52}, and the best served of the colleges is Bangor\textsuperscript{53}.

In the 1960s and 1970s, debate on the relative decline of the British economy often blamed the anti-entrepreneurial attitudes supposedly instilled by education. Historians who have investigated the question have been reluctant to endorse this thesis, notably Michael Sanderson in his pioneering Universities and British industry of 1972, which covered all universities, new and old\textsuperscript{54}. The general picture is that the ancient universities resisted purely technical subjects, and while Cambridge became noted for its research and education in pure science, Oxford admittedly lagged behind until the twentieth century\textsuperscript{55}. The civic universities, however, and some of those in Scotland, were much more open to vocational training, research directed to local industries, and relations with the business world, though some critics have argued that in the twentieth century they allowed themselves to be diverted from this mission\textsuperscript{56}. A further distinctive activity of British universities, in-


\textsuperscript{52} A history of the University of Wales (Cardiff: University of Wales Press). I. J. Gwynn Williams, The university movement in Wales (1993); II. J. Gwynn Williams, The University of Wales, 1893-1939 (1997); III. Prys Morgan, The University of Wales, 1939-1993 (1997).

\textsuperscript{53} J. Gwynn Williams, The University College of North Wales: foundations, 1884-1927 (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1985).


\textsuperscript{56} Elizabeth J. Morse, “English civic universities and the myth of decline,” HU 11 (1992): 177-204; Paul L. Robertson, “Scottish universities and Scottish industry, 1860-1914,” Scottish
cluding Oxford and Cambridge, was the provision of “extension” lectures to outside audiences, both middle and working class\textsuperscript{57}.

\textit{Women and universities}

One development associated with the growth of new universities was the admission of women to higher education, for which the key decade was the 1870s, being part of the wider nineteenth-century movement for women’s emancipation\textsuperscript{58}. A new interest in the subject reflected the establishment of women’s history itself, and contemporary challenges to male dominance of the academic world. One aim of research has been to trace the growth of institutions and numbers\textsuperscript{59}. At Oxford and Cambridge, separate women’s colleges were founded, which gave rise to college histories typical of the genre, as did the women’s colleges which became part of the University of London\textsuperscript{60}.

Two innovatory lines of research have also developed. One is to study the daily experience of women students, whether in residential colleges which sought to recreate a domestic setting, or within male-dominated student communities\textsuperscript{61}. A second, possible because women graduates had a nar-


\textsuperscript{61} Rita McWilliams Tullberg, \textit{Women at Cambridge} (2nd edn, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998); Joyce S. Pedersen, “Enchanting modernity: the invention of tradition at two women’s
rower range of opportunities than men, is investigation of career patterns, especially in medicine, for which Glasgow has provided case studies. Oral history has provided evidence for some work on this subject. Women also entered the academic profession, and here one may include the biographies of two women who had an important role in shaping their disciplines.

**Curricula and disciplines**

How far does university history include the history of individual disciplines? The nineteenth century was marked by the professionalization of science and scholarship, and the widening of university curricula as subjects were brought within the academic fold. Much history of disciplines is of an “internalist” kind emphasizing intellectual development and discovery, and neglecting (or taking for granted) institutional contexts. Some branches, like the history of science and history of medicine, have become subdisciplines with their own traditions and methodologies. Biographical approaches are also common, and scientists and scholars were increasingly university professors, committed to teaching as well as research. To make the subject manageable, this survey generally omits biographical work, and selects research which relates a discipline directly to its teaching. Certain subjects, notably

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classics, mathematics, and history were seen as central to the universities’ mission of forming a national elite.

The study of classical teaching has been renewed by Christopher Stray, and of history by Reba Soffer. Soffer, whose work has mainly been on Oxford, has particularly stressed the political role of the subject as a training for the political class. It is perhaps natural that historians of universities have a special interest in their own subject, and there have been other studies of the teaching of history in both England and Scotland.

At Cambridge mathematics was long at the heart of liberal education. Much history of mathematics is of a specialized kind, but the work of Andrew Warwick on mathematics and mathematical physics in nineteenth-century Cambridge is notable in showing how the development of the subject interacted with teaching and examining practices.

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Philosophy was central to education at Oxford (more than at Cambridge) but little seems to have been written about its teaching. In Scotland, the work of George Davie, which tied a general history of university development to the fate of philosophy teaching, has influenced Scottish culture and politics, but has not won a following among historians\textsuperscript{72}.

The teaching of social sciences grew out of philosophy and history, and was expressed in early forms of economics and political science\textsuperscript{73}. Intellectual historians have done much work on social and political thought, and the role of university-educated intellectuals, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but without a direct focus on universities. We lack a general account of the growth of the social sciences in British universities, especially under American influence after 1945, though there is work on Oxford\textsuperscript{74}. Some other subjects, including English literature and modern languages, also seem neglected. Apart from the study of individual disciplines, there have been a few collections of essays which bring such studies together, and address more general questions of higher education pedagogy\textsuperscript{75}. The history of examinations and their relation with teaching has attracted specific attention; examining universities on the London model have been a distinctive British phenomenon\textsuperscript{76}.


It is a traditional view that the development of British universities in the nineteenth century was increasingly influenced by the German or Humboldtian model of the research university. Research now shows that the reception of this model was late and partial\textsuperscript{77}. One example was the belated introduction of the PhD degree\textsuperscript{78}. Nevertheless, Germany provided the only significant outside influence down to 1914, and there have been several studies looking at influences and parallels between the two countries\textsuperscript{79}. In the twentieth century the United States became the main model, but this interaction has not yet been studied in the same way.

Selected themes

This section looks at some of the other themes which have interested university historians recently, mostly for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. One is student life. At Oxford and Cambridge, this was centred on the colleges, but in the non-residential universities it was more closely connected with the patterns of urban middle-class society\textsuperscript{80}. The same applies to an important aspect of British student life, sport. At Oxford and Cambridge, the cult of athleticism was used to reinforce the college system, but also reflected the influence of the English public schools from which they drew most...
of their students, and has been linked with the values of masculinity, militarism, and imperial leadership. The creation of masculinity, as an aspect of gender history, has been emphasized in recent work on students.

The broader links between imperialism and universities have also been explored by several researchers. Universities both attracted students from the empire (and other overseas countries), and sent many of their graduates to work there. The Rhodes scholarships at Oxford were a well-known institution. More generally, the British model was the basis of university development in imperial and colonial territories, and university links held together the English-speaking world. New research on this reflects global and transnational approaches to history. Apart from imperial links, several studies cluster around the crisis of the First World War, which made the traditional admiration of German universities problematic, and disrupted existing educational relations.

Sociological studies of the student body of the type popular in the 1970s have become less common. Today they rely on the digitization of student records, which demands collective effort and significant resources.

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The construction of prosopographical databases, taken up by university historians in several European countries, has hardly got off the ground in Britain. Attention has also switched from the origins of students to their destinations - the relation between universities and national elites and professions. Most of these studies emphasize the dominance of Oxford and Cambridge, a matter of continuing contemporary concern, but W. D. Rubinstein’s research has questioned the standard view of this.

Recent writing reflects the historiographical turn from social to cultural approaches, and some themes may loosely be grouped as cultural. These include the rituals, ceremonies and dramatic performances which were characteristic of early modern Oxford and Cambridge, the award of honorary degrees, and university jubilee celebrations, a Scottish speciality. University architecture has also proved a fruitful subject, as the spatial expression of changing needs and values; there has been a special interest in the large building programmes of the nineteenth century.

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The twentieth century and after

For the twentieth century, it becomes possible to write university history from records other than those of the universities themselves. These include state archives, but also those of bodies like the Association of University Teachers\(^{94}\), the National Union of Students, or the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals\(^ {95}\) - all these are at the Modern Records Centre of the University of Warwick\(^ {96}\).

There were few new foundations in the 1920s and 1930s, but state grants were increased and centralized under the University Grants Committee, whose foundation and early years have been examined\(^ {97}\). The period also saw the opening of higher education to broader social strata through state financial assistance, and the inclusion of universities in social welfare policies\(^ {98}\).

The Second World War led to more far-reaching expansion and political action. The 1960s were a key period, and some episodes have been studied in detail\(^ {99}\), though many others, such as the student movements of the period, remain under-researched\(^ {100}\). Treatment of government policy between then and the present day has attracted significant work within social


\(^{95}\) Keith Vernon, “‘We alone are passive’: the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals and the organization of British universities, c.1918–1939,” *HE* 43 (2014): 187-207.

\(^{96}\) www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/library/mrc/


science traditions, in sociology and political science, as well as polemical treatments (often powerful) which relate current policies to the past. Historians have also begun to construct source-based general accounts of these years. But general interpretations integrating university history with the history of post-war social change and with broader intellectual and cultural developments, with their implications for the nature of the university itself, as yet hardly exist.

The 1960s saw two new types of foundation. There were entirely new campus universities, which have been seen as an expression of “utopianist” ideals of urban and community planning. Though they attracted much attention at the time, only one of these universities, East Anglia, has a full-scale history. The second group consisted of new technological universities based on existing technical colleges, and less glamorous than the campus universities; these mostly still await their historians – as does the general relationship between universities, technology and industry in the twentieth century. Another important innovation of this period was the distance-learning Open University. In the 1990s, there was a further wave

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of promotions of existing technical and vocational colleges to university status, and many of these published short histories which asserted their older historical roots. But proper examination of university policy in the 1990s awaits the opening of the relevant archives.

One type of study which has been significant since the 1980s is of the impact of social change and government policies (especially financial cuts) on existing universities. Books of this kind exist for Oxford, Liverpool, Manchester, and Aberdeen.

**Conclusion: writing university history today**

About 290 books and articles are cited in this survey. Of these 8% were published in the 1970s or earlier, 21% in the 1980s, 26% in the 1990s, and 45% since 2000. University history therefore appears to be flourishing, though there is no current equivalent of the large collective enterprises of earlier years, and university history has not become an institutionalized subdiscipline. The journals *History of Education* and *History of Universities* continue to be the main outlet for research, but Britain has no national centre or institute for university history, nor are there regular conferences or postgraduate programmes. The universities themselves have not shown any collective commitment to their own history, though individual universities may sponsor an institutional history to commemorate an anniversary, or because it seems useful for publicity or fund-raising. This has its own drawbacks: public relations considerations may make histories blander as they approach the present, and there is at least one case of a history being censored by a university administration to eliminate critical or controversial material.

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The direction of academic research is influenced by the general development of the discipline, intellectual fashion, and the priorities of funding bodies. The latter tend to favour collaborative or interdisciplinary projects, and these require a critical mass of interested scholars. University history in Britain is producing distinguished work, but it is guided by the interests and enthusiasms of the individual scholars whose main contributions have been listed in this essay. They see their field as part of general history rather than a narrow specialism, and in this they are faithful to the pioneers of the 1960s and 1970s.

Surveys have been published from time to time of the current state of scholarship, including a special number in 1997 of the *Oxford Review of Education*\(^{112}\). *History of Universities* formerly included regular lists of new publications, though these have not appeared recently, and for Britain do not go beyond 2011. The best guides to current work are the annual “List of publications on the economic and social history of Great Britain and Ireland” in the *Economic History Review*, and the online “Bibliography of British and Irish History”, which may be searched by theme and author\(^{113}\).

It was only in the 1960s that university history went much beyond the history of individual institutions, and became part of the broader social history of Great Britain, though with distinct approaches in England and Scotland. Since then scholarship has followed the general evolution of historical science, with a growing emphasis on cultural themes, and with greater awareness of transnational comparisons. Institutional histories have continued to be written, though with greater sophistication than in the past. The 1980s and 1990s were marked by large collective projects, at Oxford, Cambridge and Aberdeen. These have not been repeated, and the history of universities has not become a formal subdiscipline in Britain, or one which attracts research funding on a large scale. In this respect, Britain may contrast with other countries, but the work which is done by individual scholars, reflected in publication in flourishing specialized journals, is of high quality.

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\(^{113}\) [http://www.history.ac.uk/projects/bbih](http://www.history.ac.uk/projects/bbih) (accessible on subscription).