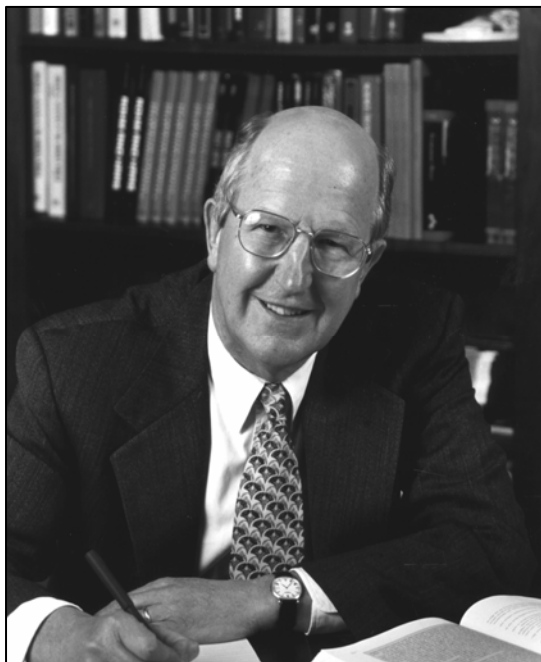


Arnold Thackray (1939–



Arnold Thackray was born in northwest England on July 30, 1939. Following eight years as a Foundation Scholar at Manchester Grammar School, he won an industrial fellowship to Bristol University. In 1960, he received his B.Sc. in Chemistry with First Class Honors. Before turning his interests to the history of science he worked as a chemical engineer for Robert Dempster and Sons, Ltd., one of the sponsors of the fellowship, in Elland, Yorkshire. In 1962 Thackray began to turn his energies towards studying the history of science, enrolling as a part-time research student in history and philosophy of science at Leeds University. Thackray remarked that "since childhood days, I have been fascinated by the human stories and the endless, changing complexity of history. Initially, practical realities drove me toward a scientific career, in order to earn a living. The opportunities to take advanced training in history and to become an historian of science were too good to resist".

In the fall of 1963 he became a full-time research student in history and philosophy of science at Cambridge, where he was the pupil of Mary Hesse as well as being the first student of Churchill College to be elected to its fellowship. He took both his M.A. (1965) and Ph.D. degrees at Cambridge (1966) in history of science.

Thackray has held faculty appointments at Oxford (visiting fellow, All Souls College (1977–1978)), Cambridge and at the London School of Economics (1971–1972), (Harvard, the Institute for Advanced Study (1980), the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences (Stanford) (1983) and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (1978). He was founding chairman of, and Joseph Priestley Professor in, the Department of History and Sociology of Science at the University of Pennsylvania, while serving on the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania for more than a quarter of a century.

Thackray moved to the United States in 1967 and became a citizen in 1981. He has been active in the public life of scholarship, serving on a number of boards, including that of the American Council on Education (1986–1987). He is a former president of the Society for Social Studies of Science (1982–1983), and was the treasurer of the American Council of Learned Societies for over a decade (1985–1995). He is a Chartered Chemist and Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry, a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He has variously served as editor of *Isis* (1978–1985) and *Osiris* (1985–1994), as a member of the editorial boards of *Historical Studies in the Physical Sciences* (1968–80) and *History of Science* (1972–1988), and as advisory editor for *Minerva* (1978–1988), *Victorian Studies* (1978–1988), *History and Technology* (1982–1992), *Scientometrics* (1980–1990), *Science* (1984–1986), and *The Scientist* (1986–1996). Thackray is the Joseph Priestley Professor Emeritus at the University of Pennsylvania and founding president of the Center for the History of Chemistry (1982) (renamed the Chemical Heritage Foundation in 1992).

His interests lie in the historiography of science, and in understanding technology, medicine, and science as elements of modern culture. His interests in European intellectual history, the American chemical and chemical engineering community within the a context of quantitative history and political concerns, and the development of the history and sociology of science as a field of scholarly endeavor, have resulted in over 45 articles and book chapters, over 50 book reviews, and eleven books, including: *Atoms and Powers; An Essay on Newtonian Matter-Theory and the Development of Chemistry* (1970); *John Dalton: Critical Assessments of His Life and Science* (1972); *Science and Values: Patterns of Tradition and Change* (with Everett Mendelsohn) (1974); *Gentlemen of Science: Early Years of the British Association for the Advancement of Science* (with Jack Morrell) (1981); *Chemistry in America, 1876-1976: Historical Indicators* (with J. L. Sturchio, P. T. Carroll, and R. F. Bud) (1985); *Contemporary Classics in Engineering and Applied Sciences* (1986); *Contemporary Classics in Physical, Chemical, and Earth Sciences* (1986); *Private Science: Biotechnology and the Rise of the Molecular Sciences* (1998); and *Arnold O. Beckman: 100 Years of Excellence (Chemical Heritage Foundation Series in Innovation and Entrepreneurship)* (with Minor Myers and James D. Watson) (2000).

His many awards and honors include: the Postgraduate Essay Prize from Churchill College, Cambridge (1963–1964); the Gladstone Essay Prize from Churchill College, Cambridge (1964–1965); the Public Speaking Prize from Churchill College, Cambridge (1964–1965); John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellow (at the London School of Economics) (1971–1972); National Lecturer, Sigma Xi (1976–1977, 1978–1980); George Sarton Memorial Lecturer Award from the American Association for the Advancement of Science (1984); and a second John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship(1985–1986). In 1983, Arnold Thackray received the Dexter Award for his research, service and outstanding contributions in the history of science and technology.

Thackray “sees his main contributions to the history of science as lying at the intersection of intellectual and institutional innovation. Its fruits have been the creation of the Department of History and Sociology of Science at the University of Pennsylvania (the first academic department with a focus on modern science, technology and medicine in a social context), the re-invigoration and expansion of the History of Science Society, including the re-establishment of its second journal (*Osiris*), and the development of the idea of a Center for History of Chemistry into a viable and widely recognized institution with major historical and scholarly resources [now the Chemical Heritage Foundation].”

Sources

Autobiographical information provided by Arnold Thackray

Anon., “Arnold Thackray,” *Bulletin for the History of Chemistry*, 4 (1989): 25.

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