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Alan Brinkley, Leading Historian of 20th-Century America, Dies at 70

By **Katharine Q. Seelye**

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Alan Brinkley, one of the pre-eminent historians of his generation, with a specialty in 20th-century American political history, died on Sunday night at his home in Manhattan. He was 70.

His wife, Evangeline Morphos, said the cause was complications of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, commonly known as Lou Gehrig's Disease. She said he had had the disease for three years.

Mr. Brinkley's work spanned the full spectrum of the last century's seminal events and influential characters, including the Great Depression and World War II, Franklin D. Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy.



Professor Brinkley's 2003 book won the National Book Award.

His “Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin, and the Great Depression” (1983) won the National Book Award, and history textbooks of which he was the senior author were widely used in universities and frequently updated.

He taught history at Harvard for seven years and Columbia University for more than two decades, where he also served as provost. He received Columbia’s Great Teacher Award in 2003, and also held the rare distinction for an American historian of teaching at both Oxford and Cambridge in England.

Mr. Brinkley grew up in Washington, a son of David Brinkley, the longtime NBC News anchor, who died in 2003. His brother, Joel Brinkley, was a reporter and editor for The New York Times and died in 2014.

In addition to his wife, Mr. Brinkley is survived by his daughter, Elly Brinkley.

A full obituary is forthcoming.