

FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the fall 2024 edition of the New England Journal of History. Our mission is to publish historical inquiries that inform readers from novice to scholar. This goal will be met with articles that encompass the world's events, and analyses that share reflections on pedagogical strategies. Our timely book reviews examine works that expand our knowledge base. First published in 1944 as the *New England Social Studies Bulletin*, this well-rounded journal will continue to provide historical analysis for educators who seek to bring history to life for future generations through thought-provoking interpretations and the best offerings of pedagogy.

As we moved into November and the last painful days of the presidential election, my morning readings in *The Daily Stoic: 366 Meditations on Wisdom, Perseverance, and The Art of Living* by Ryan Holiday and Stephen Hanselman shifted to the theme of “acceptance/ amor fati.” Serrendipitously on November 6th, the day after the presidential election, Seneca in *Thyestes*, 613 says:

No one should put too much trust in triumph,
No one should give up hope of trials improving.
Clotho mixes one with the other and stops
Fortune from resting, spinning every fate around.

Clotho, a Greek goddess of fate, reminds us that we are not in control and that nothing is forever. I learned about this lack of control on a personal level by being caught in the changing rhythms of education; my previously secure position as a productive and effective educator no longer granted me the dignity I require, so I left the field of education this fall.

I had been reading daily about acceptance since November 1st, so I felt primed to adapt to the election results. I had already practiced leaving behind my teaching persona and renewing my secretarial persona as I adjusted to my new part-time job as a legal secretary. I am telling this story because a critical part of acceptance has to do with shaping—how do we shape our attitude and our responses to events we did not choose and do not want? Acceptance does not mean passivity, nor does it mean establishing a victim's stance. “When you are

distressed by an external thing, it's not the thing itself that troubles you, but only your judgment of it. And you can wipe this out at a moment's notice." Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, 8.47. The *Daily Stoic* contains quotes from the stoics as well as a discussion about the textual quote. The authors point out familiar people who experienced tremendous hardship, accepted what happened and built their lives *through* the situation. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Malcolm X, Fannie Lou Hamer, Dwight Eisenhower—so many people who accepted what life handed them and directed their lives to focus on their values and control their perceptions of events to the benefit of us all.

Historians have enormous work to do in this time of “alternative facts” and misinformation. I recently learned of Darryl Cooper who does podcast interviews on historical topics that are controversial at best. We have blatantly unqualified people being nominated for cabinet positions. Misinformation from Russia and other nations determined to sway the American election or to broadly increase distrust of the American people towards their government has become a daily occurrence. American adolescents are the guinea pigs of Manipulation and Control (much as are Ignorance and Want in *A Christmas Carol*) under the auspices of social media. While I have accepted the end of my career in education and the current political situation, it does not mean that I will be passive or victimized. Stoics focus on working for the common good while maintaining their values. It is through reading the stoics that we can incorporate their insights into the long arc of historical justice and determine how we can make our piece of America better. If you are reading this, you have gifts to offer the world. We must use our education and talents to envision an America that encourages all voices to be respected while exposing the truth of the past. Educating about the past and how it relates to the future is our superpower.

What are “our responsibilities and obligations” as social studies teachers? This presidential address by Dr. Burr W. Phillips from March of 1947 is our choice for From the Archives. It is simultaneously comforting and frustrating to learn that the concerns of today may be easily concerns of the past. Living in a postwar world, Phillips recognized that students felt discouraged about humanity. He believed it was the teacher's responsibility to uplift, connect the past to the present, and help students interpret the power of public opinion. Phillips' final note of keeping “our view long” reminds educators of our ideals.

William Dorsey reminds us of another change of leadership in the Novice Corner's "The Glorious Revolution of 1688: English Politics and Dutch Ambitions." After reviewing the events of 1688, Dorsey moves on to discuss the various historiographical explanations as to why the revolution changed the leadership in England as it did. Exploring economic, international and internal intentions for King James II to be removed or at least denied absolutism regarding the English throne, Dorsey incorporates religious reasons for the overthrow of James II raised by the historian Julie Farguson. For example, while the Declaration of Indulgence desired by King James II sounds like a step forward to greater tolerance, on the other hand it was rejecting a law established by Parliament and that was threatening as well reinforcing the internal discord leading to the revolution. Perhaps all these issues reinforced each other, making the demise of King James II inevitable. Dorsey's article would be outstanding in a history classroom since he elucidates the complex nature of events, dispelling today's need for simple answers. Dorsey provides a scaffold for students to organize the layers of evidence that led to the Glorious Revolution of 1688.

A few generations before the Glorious Revolution of 1688, people risked their lives with sea travel to the North American coast. Imagining being a person on a tiny, wooden ship on such an enormous ocean sounds horrific, yet in this edition's *The Pulse*, Michael Keating finds just such a courageous person with his essay "A Grand Ambition: Bartholomew Gosnold's Voyage of 1602, the First Step in the English Settlement of North America." Connecting English barristers and explorers of North America surprised me, but of course where financial incentives are, so goes everyone. Middle Temple Hall's designation was to encourage the education and communing of lawyers. However, Keating notes that the organization supported exploration as well as a place of intellectual discourse. Describing Gosnold's trip to North America on *The Concord* in 1602, the challenges of interactions with the indigenous population, and his lack of knowledge about the coastline provides us with a lesser-known view of early explorers of the New England region. Students would find explanations of how our various islands and Cape Cod earned their names as well!

Our research article "The Congamucks: A Multi-racial and Multi-cultural Community of the Congamond Lake Region, Southwick, Massachusetts" by Joseph Carvalho, III provides insight into the ability of diverse peoples to create their own communities despite the pressures of white societies around them. The Algonquin name for lakes

evolved into Congamuck as English settlers and indigenous populations fought over the land. As the Agawam and others were forced into smaller spaces, other marginalized peoples joined them. The fluidity of racial designations in western Massachusetts and the ability of indigenous and mixed-race people to avoid the political machinations of the white community is exemplified by the Congamucks. The statements of white racial superiority and increased membership in the KKK during the 1920s thematically echo into the present. Carvalho mines a variety of resources to explain how the Congamucks thrived inside a self-created community, observing that they have gone unnoticed by historians for decades.

As interest grows in ancestral historical research, *The New England Journal of History* will provide a special genealogy feature entitled Ancestry Advocate. Launching this new feature, Robert P. Strange shares his ancestral research piece “The Eleventh Century Hereditary Stewards of the Archbishop of Dol, Brittany: Historical Impact of their Descendant Le Strange Family on Medieval England.” Combining research in local and national events of the Ancient Celts, Brittany in France, a variety of occupations, and political positions, Strange recreates the historical structures in which the Le Strange family lived and played critical roles. The depth of research and flexibility of vision in the incorporation of so many resources to establish a family thread moving through hundreds of years is incredible. Ancestors not only remind us of from where we have arisen, they also remind us of our ability to persevere despite the challenges of our times. We each have our turn to participate in life and make a difference.

Our book reviews begin with *Represented: The Black Imagemakers Who Reimagined African American Citizenship* by Brenna Wynn Greer, reviewed by Kathleen Daly. Reframing the concept of civil rights activism through the exploration of innovators and entrepreneurs whose actions redefine the images of Black Americans, Greer demonstrates the ability of capitalistic ventures to change deeply entrenched perceptions about Black Americans. Written by Kelly L. Marino, *Votes for College Women: Alumni, Students, and the Woman Suffrage Campaign* highlights the importance of women’s efforts on college campuses during the suffrage movement. Marino does not limit her analysis to solely exploring the impact of college students on the suffrage movement and reviewer Renee Dube appreciates the inclusion of the contributions of African American women and other grass-roots organizations during the fight for women’s suffrage.

The New York Game: Baseball and the Rise of a New City by Kevin Baker offers an enjoyable and expansive description of New York City through the lens of baseball. Well-known characters connect to historical eras in both New York City and America while simultaneously explaining how racism led to Black baseball leagues. *The New York Game*, reviewed by Bob Maloy, reminds us of the frequent repetition of events throughout history yet that our choices mean we are not doomed to keep repeating the same mistakes. Carlos Eire's inspired book *They Flew: A History of the Impossible*, reviewed by Mallory Marlin enlightens modern sensibilities about the multi-dimensional contexts of living in a time when levitation and other spiritual occurrences were part of life. Other aspects of spiritual experience including bilocation, witches, evil forces and miracles demonstrate the humanity of our past while making for fascinating reading.

Running from Bondage: Enslaved Women and Their Remarkable Fight for Freedom in Revolutionary America reorients our perspectives to examine the meaning of freedom as revealed through the acts of Black women in the 18th century. What would the American Revolution mean to an enslaved woman? William Morgan's review observes that *Running from Bondage* demonstrates that enslaved women conceived of a freedom that white men never could.

Going further back in time, *Accidental Pluralism: America and the Religious Politics of English Expansion, 1497-1662* by Evan Haefeli reveals how religious policies, and the religious beliefs of England's leaders wound up creating a diversely rich religious society in the colonies. Connecting the instability of religion in the ever-changing monarchy as well as the diverse religious practices by the Scotch, Irish, Native Americans and Africans, no one religion could be compelled onto all. After Haefeli examines the different colonies and religions in America, Hunter Moyler's review observes that *Accidental Pluralism* demonstrates religious freedom was established through the actions and beliefs of many peoples during the early centuries of America. Meg Muckenhoupt writes about the "traditional" food consumed in New England in *The Truth about Baked Beans: An Edible History of New England*. Beginning with debunking the stereotype of the New Englander and moving into the history of nutrition scientists, Muckenhoupt reveals the efforts by Ellen Swallow Richards and Mary Hinman Abel to share with America how to cook New England's foods. Carrie T. Schultz's review suggests that *The Truth About Baked*

Beans demonstrates that immigration, wealth and gender are impactful forces on world societies and “local” food.

Wrapping up our book reviews for this fall is *The Puritans: A Transatlantic History* by David Hall. Describing Hall’s work as “magisterial,” Paul Teed notes that *The Puritans* explains the importance of covenants, the belief that no one is above being obedient to scriptural laws, and the impact of the Great Migration to Massachusetts Bay. Teed believes that *The Puritans* is a significant contribution to the study of Puritanism.

For details on submitting your articles and book reviews, please check our manuscript submission policy at www.nejh.org/general-guidelines. We welcome all historical topics, pedagogical articles on the teaching of history or social studies and reviews of books and permanent museum exhibits. In addition, we offer a local documentary film series entitled “History in Your Backyard.” This project allows those who love local history to create a video and submit it to our editors for potential publication. We have also just launched an open access primary source reader on our website called “Citizen Historian Sourcebook.” Students, under the guidance of faculty and with feedback from our editors, publish edited primary source excerpts for other students and teachers to use in the classroom. Also, please submit any comments you may have on our articles to editors@nejh.org.

As we continue to study the past, let us remember the importance of historians. Their research and analysis of events and persons inform the policy and decision-making of presidents and leaders around the world. Historians form think-tanks that influence public opinion, and encourage us to engage in discussions of ethics, morals and truth. Their indispensable contributions provide context for understanding current events and allow us to observe our common flaws, our universal strengths and our shared humanity. Historians have been, and continue to be, activists, shaping movements and writing books that changed society. We hope our publication will inspire readers to engage in their communities and to follow the timeless words of Abraham Lincoln and “strive on to finish the work we are in.”

Linda Morse
Chief Editor
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