

NEW YORK HISTORY

THE NEW YORK STATE
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
AND THE
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK—
COLLEGE AT ONEONTA

WINTER
2016

97/1

THE NEW YORK STATE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

OFFICERS

Jeffrey H. Pressman
CHAIRMAN

Thomas O. Putnam
VICE CHAIRMAN

Richard C. Vanison
TREASURER

Alexander Charlton
SECRETARY

Stephen M. Duff
ASSISTANT TREASURER

NON-TRUSTEE OFFICERS AND SENIOR STAFF

Paul S. D'Ambrosio
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Joseph Siracusa
VICE PRESIDENT FOR OPERATIONS

Barbara Fischer
SENIOR DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Erin Richardson
DIRECTOR OF COLLECTIONS

Michelle Murdock
DIRECTOR OF EXHIBITIONS

Danielle Henrici
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

Todd Kenyon
DIRECTOR OF MARKETING

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Kathleen Flanagan
Nellie Gipson
Shelley Graham
Doris Fischer Malesardi
Erna Morgan McReynolds
Jeffrey H. Pressman
Thomas O. Putnam
John B. Stetson
Ellen Tillapaugh
Richard C. Vanison
Craig Steven Wilder

EX-OFFICIO

The Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo

HONORARY TRUSTEE

Eugene V. Thaw

SEPTEMBER 2016


NYSHA

NEW YORK HISTORY

QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF
THE NEW YORK STATE
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
AND THE
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK—
COLLEGE AT ONEONTA

COOPERSTOWN, NEW YORK

WINTER
2016

97/1

EDITORIAL BOARD

PAULA BAKER
STUART M. BLUMIN
PATRICIA U. BONOMI
LESLIE E. FISHBEIN
TIMOTHY J. GILFOYLE
KENNETH T. JACKSON
LISA KELLER
TIMOTHY J. SHANNON
ROBERT W. SNYDER
CRAIG S. WILDER

MICHELLE MURDOCK, ACTING DIRECTOR
OF PUBLICATIONS
CAITLIN MIOSEK, PUBLICATIONS ASSISTANT

EDITORS

Thomas D. Beal
D.L. Noorlander
Susan Goodier

New York History (ISSN 0146-437x) is a peer reviewed journal published four times a year by the New York State Historical Association in partnership with State University of New York, College at Oneonta. Submitted articles should deal in an original fashion with the history of the state. Articles that deal with the history of other areas, or with general American history must have a bearing on New York State history. It is assumed that the article will have some new, previously unexploited material to offer or will present new insights or new interpretations. Suggested length is 4500 words.

We ask that authors submit articles electronically. Submissions as well as footnotes should be double-spaced. Provision and costs of images for articles are the responsibility of the author. *New York History* employs, with some modification, note forms suggested in the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Submissions can be sent directly to NYSHA's Publications Department publications@nysha.org

The journal will process submissions as quickly as possible, but three to six months should be allowed for a thorough reading. *New York History* does not pay for author's articles.

CONTENTS

- 5** Editors' Introduction
THOMAS D. BEAL, D.L. NOORLANDER, SUSAN GOODIER
- 8** In Memoriam:
Dr. Gary S. Dunbar
- 9** Taking Sides in the "Bloodless Croton War":
The Coverage of the Croton Aqueduct Strike and
Labor's Relationship with the Penny Press
MARK BERNHARDT
- 34** The Travelers' Aid Society:
Moral Reform and Social Work in New York City, 1907–1916
ERIC C. CIMINO
- 55** Republicanism and the Public Good:
A Re-examination of the DeLanceys, c. 1768–1769
CHRISTOPHER F. MINTY
- 83** New York History: Historians Tell Tales
Lunch with Robert Moses; or, Hope Springs Eternal
JAMESON W. DOIG
- 87** Review Essay:
The Long Fight for Equal Rights: The Civil War and the
Black Community
*Weible and Lemak • An Irrepressible Conflict: The Empire State in the Civil War,
and Wellman. Brooklyn's Promised Land: The Free Black Community of Weeksville.*
REVIEWED BY SUSAN GOODIER
- 93** Book Reviews:
New Books on New York
- 93** Soll • *Empire of Water: Environmental and Political History of the
New York City Water Supply.*
REVIEWED BY GREGORY J. DEHLER
- 96** Abel • *The Inevitable Hour: A History of Caring for Dying Patients in America.*
REVIEWED BY DENNIS L. DURST
- 99** Foner, Rath, Duyvendak, Van Reekum • *New York and Amsterdam:
Immigration and the New Urban Landscape.*
REVIEWED BY FATMIR HASKAJ

CONTENTS

- 103** | McDade • *Thieves of Book Row: New York's Most Notorious Rare Book Ring and the Man Who Stopped It.*
REVIEWED BY THOMAS D. BEAL
- 106** | Bowman • *The Urban Pulpit: New York City and the Fate of Liberal Evangelicalism.*
REVIEWED BY DEVIN C. MANZULLO
- 110** | Wahlgren • *The Ordeal of the Reunion: A New History of Reconstruction.*
REVIEWED BY EVAN C. ROTHERA
- 113** | Oberg • *Professional Indian: The American Odyssey of Eleazer Williams.*
REVIEWED BY KARIM M. TIRO

Editors' Introduction

Thomas D. Beal, D.L. Noorlander, Susan Goodier

Almost one hundred years ago, Dixon Ryan Fox penned his influential study, *The Decline of Aristocracy in the Politics of New York*.¹ Both the volume and its author represent a crossroads in the study of New York history. Born in Potsdam, Fox graduated from New York University and completed his graduate work at Columbia University. At the time, most scholarly history had a political focus, reflecting the commonly held view that “History is past politics.” At Columbia, James Harvey Robinson influenced Fox’s approach to the study of history. Robinson argued that a new century called for a new approach to history—one that, in the words of Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., “would move beyond politics, diplomacy and war to embrace all aspects of the human experience.”² In *The Decline of Aristocracy in the Politics of New York*, Fox adopted his mentor’s approach to the study of history and grappled with the “social and economic causes” that gave rise to political “events and personalities.”³ We live in a politically charged historical moment. And, it is far easier to focus on superficial political issues and personalities than to research and analyze their origins. But, as historians, we must try.

In an effort to honor Dixon Ryan Fox’s contributions to the reinterpretation of New York’s history, the Editors offer these essays that focus on social, political and cultural issues. In “Taking Sides in the ‘Bloodless Croton War’: The Coverage of the Croton Aqueduct Strike and Labor’s Relationship with the Penny Press,” Mark Bernhardt examines how two newspaper editors—Moses Yale Beach of the *New York Sun* and James Gordon Bennett of the *New York Herald*—portrayed the strike, the workers and their employers. At first, newspapers sided with labor, but as the

1. Dixon Ryan Fox, *The Decline of Aristocracy in the Politics of New York, 1801–1840* (1919, reprint; New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1965).

2. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., “Dixon Ryan Fox,” *New York History: A Quarterly Journal* 79:1 (1998): 57–60.

3. Fox, *The Decline of Aristocracy in the Politics of New York*, xxxiv.

strike continued both Beach and Bennett were forced to take a less radical position. This shift, Bernhardt argues, was largely a product of the business model that the two editors helped develop. For a penny paper to be successful, it needed to attract readers from the laboring classes and advertisers from the city's emerging entrepreneurial class. Bernhardt does not applaud these two men for their ability to succeed in newsprint's competitive marketplace, but rather, he details the social and economic forces that dictated what news they deemed fit to print. In the early twentieth century, middle class reformers worked to end what they termed "white slavery" (coerced prostitution) in the United States. Reformers in New York City were at the forefront of this movement. With financial support from the philanthropist Grace Hoadley Dodge, one group founded the Travelers' Aid Society in New York City to combat those who would lure innocent and trusting female travelers into a world of crime and degradation. In "The Travelers' Aid Society: Moral Reform and Social Work in New York City, 1907–1916," Eric C. Cimino examines the TAS's origins and its activities. In doing so, Cimino demonstrates how a small band of committed, reform-minded men and women protected the "social capital" of thousands of female travelers who passed through the city.

Two essays in this issue focus on the relationship between politicians, government and the New York State residents that both serve. In "Republicanism and the Public Good: A Re-examination of the DeLanceys, c.1768–1769," Christopher F. Minty explores the electoral politics of Revolutionary-era New York. Rejecting an older, superficial view of the DeLancey family as self-interested and opportunistic, he shows instead how they utilized newspapers and tavern meetings to rally popular support and foster an image of virtue and impartiality during their successful bids for the New York Assembly. Once in office, they championed commercial improvements and other policies that they believed would benefit all New Yorkers. Finally, the issue includes the inaugural essay in our New York History: Historians Tell Tales department. In "Lunch with Robert Moses; or, Hope Springs Eternal," the prominent historian, Jameson W. Doig recalls a 1978 interview with Moses, who by then was a very beleaguered power broker. The topic of their conversation was the proposal to build a bridge across Long Island Sound, connecting Long Island to Westchester. Doig's essay provides readers a window onto a project that is once again

a topic of political debate and onto how historians practice their craft. The Editors plan to regularly publish similar essays on what Milton Klein described as “the historian’s business.”⁴

For this issue we offer seven book reviews and one book review essay covering a fascinating range of topics. One is a review of the biography of a nineteenth-century Mohawk, the Reverend Eleazer Williams. Two are revisionist histories: one on the history of the Protestant religion in the Progressive Era while the other is on the history of Reconstruction. Another author reviews a collection of essays that compares migration in the two global cities of New York and Amsterdam. One review looks at a book on water, the essence of life, while still another contemplates end of life care. In addition to book reviews, the issue offers an extended review essay, which examines two books that illuminate the struggle of black New Yorkers for equality and freedom. Each year, publishing houses and academic presses produce several hundred volumes on New York. The Editors devote a good deal of attention and pages to book reviews, which offer readers and buyers of history books insight into the latest trends in the field.

Producing each issue of *New York History* is a privilege and a challenge. The Editors have come to rely on colleagues, friends and especially a hardworking and committed group of Research Assistants. Budding historians, Kyle Bennett, Meagan Edwards, Kaitlin Hair, Scott Huber, John Sica and Kim Lien-Trotta helped us produce this issue. During their time as Research Assistants, they shared out commitment to expanding the reach, influence and quality of each issue of *New York History*. We thank readers who have sent words of criticism or encouragement; they help us produce a better product. If you have questions or comments about the journal’s contents, we encourage you to contact us by electronic mail at publications@nysha.org.

4. Milton M. Klein, “The Historian’s Business,” *New York History* 64:1 (1983):51–63.