

NEW YORK HISTORY

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STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK—
COLLEGE AT ONEONTA

WINTER
2015

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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.

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Editors' Introduction

Thomas D. Beal, William S. Walker

With the publication of this issue, *New York History: A Quarterly Journal* enters into a new era. The distinguished historian and leader of our editorial team, F. Daniel Larkin, passed away in October 2015.¹ A well-known scholar of New York State history, Larkin considered serving as an Editor for *New York History* one of the significant achievements of his career. After over three years of service, William S. Walker is stepping down from his position as Editor. For the next few issues, Walker will serve as Outgoing Editor; afterwards, he plans to continue working to expand the Journal's twentieth-century content. At staff meetings and around the Editors' table, Dr. Larkin and Dr. Walker were models of professionalism. Both lent their talent and prodigious historical knowledge to *New York History*, and they will be missed.

The loss of Dr. Larkin and Dr. Walker will impact the Journal, but two historians and highly regarded scholars have agreed to serve as Editors. Dr. Danny Noorlander, a historian of the Dutch Atlantic world who specializes in the history of religion, has agreed to serve as an Editor. Readers may be familiar with Noorlander's work because he is a regular book reviewer and he organized *New York History*'s first intellectual roundtable, "The Past, Present and Future of New Netherland Studies."² Also, Dr. Susan Goodier, a New York State historian who specializes in women's history, has joined *New York History*. While helping to expand the Journal's content on gender and women's history, Goodier will serve as its first Book Review Editor. Although the Journal is in the middle of an editorial transition, both Noorlander and Goodier share Larkin and Walker's commitment to publishing quality scholarship.

1. For additional information on F. Daniel Larkin and his contributions to the study of New York state history, see "In Memoriam: F. Daniel Larkin" in this issue of *New York History*.

2. Dennis J. Maika, Mark Meuwese, Andrea C. Mosterman, Susanah Shaw Romney, D.L. Noorlander, Anne-Marie Cantwell and Ziana Dizerega Wall, "Roundtable: The Past, Present and Future of New Netherland Studies," *New York History: A Quarterly Journal* 95.3 (Summer 2014): 446–490.

This issue offers readers an eclectic collection of essays. Timothy Messer-Kruse grapples with an 1808 bastardy case from New York City's Mayor's Court. In "Humor and the Policing of the Boundaries of Racial Science" Messer-Kruse demonstrates that the case brought against Alexander Whistelo to financially support a child he allegedly fathered with an African American woman, Lucy Williams, quickly became entangled in cultural debates about racial science and the meaning of color in New York City. In "An 'effort to bring this little handicapped army in personal touch with beauty': Democratizing Art for Crippled Children at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1919–1934," Nicole Belolan melds disability history and material culture analysis to unpack how the Metropolitan Museum of Art crafted story-hour programs for children with mobility impairments in the early twentieth century. She situates the museum's efforts in the context of progressive attempts to serve children with disabilities and transform education for all. As museums continue to struggle with problems of accessibility, Belolan's essay provides a useful reminder that contemporary projects aimed at opening museums to broader audiences, including people with disabilities, have a longer history than many people recognize and that the intertwined issues of financial resources, infrastructure, and appropriate content have been persistent stumbling blocks.

This issue also sheds light on a historically overlooked community and explores how the actions of one group of New York State residents helped define civil liberties for all Americans. Manhattan Island's Jewish population has been the subject of many scholarly studies; however, few historians have researched the everyday lives and experiences of those Jews who settled in or established communities on Staten Island. In "Communal Reflections: The Jewish Historical Society of Staten Island's Oral History Project," Amy F. Stempler uses dozens of heretofore overlooked interviews with some of the island's long-time Jewish residents. Stempler's work highlights the resiliency of the small Jewish communities who faced and weathered many of the twentieth century's transitional moments. In "The Right to Sit: Symbolic Expression and the Pledge of Allegiance in New York Public Schools, 1969–1973," Aaron G. Fountain Jr. explores the critical role controversies and court cases concerning the Pledge of Allegiance in New York State schools played in defining civil liberties in the late 1960s

and early 1970s. Student resistance to school-imposed regulations on reciting the Pledge of Allegiance became a significant battleground in the rights revolution of this period, with students ultimately prevailing in legal battles with school authorities and local and state officials.

This issue's Documents and Interpretations essay takes readers into Manhattan Island's streets and graveyards. In their essay "Quest of Audubon," Roberta J. M. Olson and Matthew Spady use documents, artifacts and a shovel or two to uncover the mystery behind where the well-known naturalist, John James Audubon, is buried in Trinity Cemetery. Our twelve book reviews include new and important studies of loyalists during the American Revolution, black Episcopalians in antebellum New York City, leisure activities on Coney Island, organized crime at the horse races, and the competition to host the United Nations in the city that never sleeps. Clearly the complex history of New York continues to motivate a great deal of scholarship.

Producing an issue of *New York History* is a challenging intellectual endeavor, and the Editors do not work alone. Scholars from Europe and across the United States of America have made a number of contributions to this issue. Although our work keeps us close to home and office, there is ample evidence that our efforts are generating dividends. Every quarter, more students, teachers, and scholars are lending support to the Journal by becoming subscribers. New and long-time subscribers recognize that the amount and quality of material published in the Journal has expanded drastically. For example, volume ninety-five included well over six hundred pages of essays and reviews. Recently, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of essays submitted for consideration, indicating that a growing number of historians want the results of their research to appear in these pages. The Editors remain committed to crafting quarterly issues that reflect *New York History's* long-standing commitment to scholarship. Student-scholars continue to play a crucial role in the Journal's production and this issue benefitted from the hard work of our Research Assistant, Mr. Luke Murphy, and our Intern, Mr. Jerrad P. Pecatte. We thank readers who have sent words of criticism or encouragement; they help us produce a better journal. If you have questions or comments about content, we encourage you to contact us by electronic mail at publications@nysha.org.

In Memoriam:

F. Daniel Larkin (October 27, 1938 to October 1, 2015).



N*ew York History: A Quarterly Journal*, the New York State Historical Association, and the State University of New York at Oneonta have lost a colleague. It is with regret that we inform readers that F. Daniel Larkin, one of *New York History*'s Editors since 2012, died on October 1, 2015. In August 2015, after fifty years of teaching and service, Dr. Larkin retired from SUNY Oneonta, where he was Distinguished Service Professor and Provost for Academic Affairs (2002–2011). Larkin's teaching and research focused on New York State history; he authored three monographs, served as co-author on a textbook and as co-editor of a volume on the Erie Canal, and he shared his research at conferences and historical societies around New York. His most recent scholarly contribution was a biography of the engineer Benjamin Wright (Syracuse University Press, forthcoming). Larkin helped guide *New York History* during an important period of transition and revival, sharing his extensive knowledge with the New York State Historical Association's staff and the journal's other Editors. F. Daniel Larkin's vision and career will continue to inspire all of us as we move forward in the same scholarly, educational tradition.