

**NEW
YORK
HISTORY**

WINTER 2023-2024

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Submitted articles should address, in an original fashion, some aspect of New York State history. Articles that deal with the history of other areas or with general American history must have a direct 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. Editorial communications, including article submissions, should be sent to the Editorial Board via email (NYHJ@nysed.gov) Suggested length is 20-30 double spaced pages (or between 6,000 and 9,000 words), including footnotes. All submitted articles must include a 100-word abstract summarizing the article and providing keywords (no more than 10). Authors must submit articles electronically, with all text in Word and all tables, figures, and images in formats supported by Microsoft Windows. Provision of images in proper resolution (no less than 300 dpi at 5" x 7"), securing requisite permissions, and the payment of any fees associated with images for articles are all the responsibility of the author. *New York History* employs, with some modification, footnote forms suggested in the *Chicago Manual of Style*. More detailed submissions guidelines are to be found on the research and collections page of the New York State Museum: <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/research-collections/state-history/resources/new-york-history-journal>

Cover art: *Front*: Prospect House, Blue Mountain Lake, Seneca Ray Stoddard, c. 1885 New York State Museum Collection, H-1972.84.004 *Back*: Mirror Lake, from Allen House, Adirondacks, Seneca Ray Stoddard, c. 1885, New York State Museum Collection, H-1972.84.041.1. Seneca Ray Stoddard (1844–1917) helped to popularize the Adirondacks with his photographs. He was born in Wilton, NY and died in Glens Falls, NY.



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JENNIFER LEMAK

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Robert Chiles, Devin R. Lander, Jennifer Lemak, and Aaron Noble

Dear Readers,

Before this issue went to print, we were saddened to hear of the passing of Dr. Wendell Tripp. Dr. Tripp was a legend within the New York State history community and was an accomplished educator, researcher, and author. He was also the prolific editor of this journal for decades, having served in that capacity for an amazing 148 issues. Our thoughts are with his family and with all the historians and authors who worked with him over the years.

Among the treasures of state-level histories is the fact that they often uncover the idiosyncratic experiences and particular agendas of communities and individuals. These idiosyncrasies often complicate and humanize well-known historical events while providing new interpretations of old historical themes. This issue of *New York History* offers a panoply of studies in how regional scholarship adds nuance to well-known stories while also furnishing revised interpretations of the past.

Articles by Amy M. Cools and Chris Fobare each reveal the relationship between activist strategies among African Americans in nineteenth-century New York and broader national controversies and trends. In "Association of Ladies," Cools explores the essential roles of Emeline Bastien and Fanny Tompkins among New York City activists to reveal the forms of community leadership available to African American women.

In "A Full Measure of Citizenship," Fobare charts the evolving strategies of African Americans in Gilded Age Oneida County, analyzing how initial hopes for collaborative work toward social and political equality were replaced by an inward-facing pragmatism emphasizing economic uplift and social respectability once white Republicans abandoned the promises of Reconstruction.

The contributions by Michael Haggerty, Mark A. Smith, and Colin Williams all demonstrate that exploring how individual motivations interfaced with broad national trends provides a space for revisionist interpretations of major historical problems. In "The Blackwell's Island Candidate," Haggerty engages the rhetoric and experiences of New York congressman Mike Walsh to argue that frustration with the sprawling carceral state was an essential component of northern working-class politics in the antebellum period. In "The Curious Case of Clancy Collins," Smith uses the Civil War service record of one Irish-immigrant New Yorker to explore the complex mix of financial and ideological concerns motivating both enlistments in and desertion from the Union army. In "Persuasion Politics," Williams reassesses the career of Governor George Clinton, portraying New York's first and longest-serving chief executive less as a factional partisan than as a builder of stability and prosperity.

Meanwhile, exciting revisionist articles complicate our views of famous pieces of Empire State History such as the 1918 influenza pandemic, the rise of Coney Island, and the status of New York State as nineteenth-century America's immigrant destination par excellence. In "The Supervisors Are Carrying the Bag," Eric C. Cimino provides an insightful microhistory of New York City's Nurses' Emergency Council (NEC)—an umbrella group of settlement houses and municipal organizations formed in response to the 1918 flu—to show how the institutional experiences of key figures like NEC chair Lillian Wald allowed the city to keep death rates among the lowest in the eastern United States. In "Coney Island Babies," Meggie Crnic and John Parascandola tell the story of Gilded Age Children's Aid Society health homes at Coney Island—elevating the perspectives of the largely impoverished and immigrant mothers, who preferred these institutions to hospitals, while adding a new dimension to memories of Coney Island as a site not only of spectacle and play but also of recuperation and rest. In "French-Canadian Settlement and Community Formation in Pre-Civil War New York State," Patrick Lacroix systematically demonstrates how mass-emigration from Quebec spurred significant institution-building and

cultural development and shaped the economies of many upstate cities and towns. Lacroix's essay simultaneously reorients the story of immigrant New York northward from Gotham and that of French-Canadian America westward from New England.

This issue is also an opportunity to announce both beginnings and endings. This volume is the last produced with our intern Zachary Deibel. Zac, who is pursuing his PhD at Binghamton, has been an invaluable contributor to the past five issues of *New York History*, and we are grateful for his unflagging commitment to the journal and his cheerful professionalism along the way. Looking ahead, we are pleased to share that in June 2024, the New York History Conference will be held at the State Museum in Albany. Our journal is pleased to be a part of this exciting event!

The new conference is one more manifestation of the ongoing vibrancy of historical work across the Empire State—and we look forward enthusiastically to continuing to publish the fruits of this exciting research.

Excelsior,
THE EDITORS

CONTRIBUTORS



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Eric C. Cimino is Associate Professor and Chair of the History and Political Science Department at Molloy University in Rockville Centre, Long Island. He earned his doctorate from Stony Brook University (SUNY). He has written for *New York History*, *New York Archives*, and the *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*.



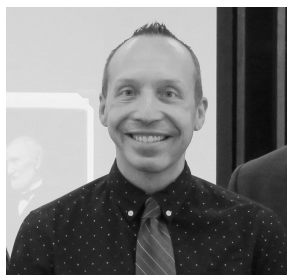
AMY M. COOLS

Amy M. Cools is a historian, educator, researcher, and author. She specializes in African American and U.S. history (especially the antebellum period), civil rights movements, biographical explorations of extraordinary people, the history of philosophy, and other topics in history, philosophy, and intellectual history. Cools holds a PhD in History and an MA in Intellectual History from the University of Edinburgh; and a BA in Philosophy: Ethics, Politics, and Law from California State University, Sacramento. She is currently working on a scholarly biography of McCune Smith, under contract with the University of Georgia Press.



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Chris Fobare is an adjunct lecturer of history at Worcester State University and Springfield College. He holds a PhD in American History from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Specializing in the political history of the Civil War and Reconstruction, the Gilded Age, and the Progressive Era, his research focuses on the intersection of race, class, and political ideology within the context of late nineteenth-century industrialization and westward expansion. He has a particular interest in the question of periodization and its impact on professional and popular historical narratives of Reconstruction, the Gilded Age, and the Progressive Era.



LAWRENCE S. FREUND

Lawrence S. Freund, a graduate of Queens College (City University of New York) and the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, is a former news correspondent and editor. He has written extensively on the American Civil War, among other subjects.



MICHAEL HAGGERTY

Michael Haggerty, Assistant Professor of History at Spartanburg Methodist College, received his PhD in History from the University of California, Davis. He is a specialist in the history of incarceration, with a particular focus on nineteenth-century New York. His current book project, "Bars to Freedom: Emancipation, Incarceration, and the Politics of Slavery in Nineteenth-Century America," centers the experiences of incarcerated peoples within antebellum debates about slavery and abolition. His work focuses on New York City, where the number of carceral institutions expanded dramatically just as lawmakers secured the passage of antislavery legislation. Previously, he has contributed to both "Ex Parte Milligan" *Reconsidered: Race and Civil Liberties from the Lincoln Administration to the War on Terror* (edited by Stewart L. Winger and Jonathan W. White) and the *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Constitutional Law*. His scholarship has been supported by fellowships from the Bilinski Educational Foundation, the New York Historical Society, the New York Public Library, and the George and Ann Richards Civil War Era Center.



PATRICK LACROIX

Patrick Lacroix is the author of *John F. Kennedy and the Politics of Faith* (2021) and *"Tout nous serait possible": Une histoire politique des Franco-Américains, 1874–1945* (2021). His work on French Canadian migrants and their descendants has appeared in numerous journals, including the *Catholic Historical Review*, *Vermont History*, and the *American Review of Canadian Studies*. Lacroix taught at liberal arts institutions in the United States and Canada before joining the University of Maine at Fort Kent as director of the Acadian Archives/Archives acadiennes in 2021. He is a graduate of the University of New Hampshire.



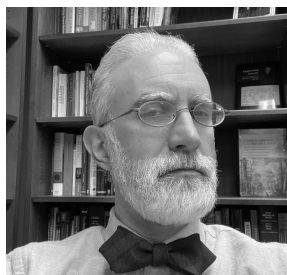
JOHN PARASCANDOLA

John Parascandola, an affiliate in the Department of History at the University of Maryland College Park, is a historian of medicine and pharmacy who served on the faculty at the University of Wisconsin–Madison from 1969 to 1983. He then served as a historian in the federal government for more than twenty years, first as Chief of the History of Medicine Division of the National Library of Medicine and then as Public Health Service Historian. He is the author of books on the history of American pharmacology, the history of arsenic, and the history of syphilis in America. He coedited (with his brother Louis) *A Coney Island Reader: Through Dizzy Gates of Illusion* (2015).



BARBARA M. RUSSELL

Barbara M. Russell is the Town of Brookhaven Historian. Brookhaven is a town of almost 500,000 residents and the largest town geographically in New York State. Its vast area stretches from the Long Island Sound on the north shore to the Atlantic Ocean on the south shore. Russell holds a bachelor's degree in Liberal Arts and a master's degree in Library Science. In addition, she is a certified archivist and NYS registered historian.



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Mark A. Smith is the Fuller E. Callaway Professor of History at Fort Valley State University in central Georgia. He has written extensively on the Corps of Engineers and the Civil War. His most recent book is the edited wartime journal titled *A Volunteer in the Regulars: The Civil War Journal and Memoir of Gilbert Thompson, US Engineer Battalion*. He is currently writing two books for the Corps of Engineers' Office of History: one examines the corps' role in coastal defense until 1950, and the other is a history of the engineers in the Civil War.



COLIN J. WILLIAMS

Colin Williams is the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) historian. His writing for DLA includes *Effectiveness and Efficiency*, an agency history, and "Combating the Coronavirus," a paper chronicling DLA's first months responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Williams previously worked for the U.S. Army Center of Military History, where he coauthored two official histories of America's military campaign in Afghanistan. In his free time, Williams is a historian of revolutionary New York. He has contributed articles to the edited volume *Key to the Northern Country: The Hudson River Valley in the American Revolution* (2013) and to *New York History*. Williams is working on a history of New York's political development during the American Revolution.