

FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the Fall 2023 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.

Looking back at last spring's note, the world's social problems continued without resolution providing fodder for increasing discord and conflict in the realms of power in nations such as America and Israel. Did the fissures in our two governments create a space for the explosion of Hamas on Saturday, October 7th? The discord in our own American government grew from this past spring to the position of acephaly in the House of Representatives after a first-ever voting out of Speaker Kevin McCarthy. While a new Speaker of the House was eventually elected, our legislative branch continues to feel unstable. Did Israel's recent protests over the further "right" nature of their leadership and potential changes to the judicial system create distractions that optimized a surprise attack? How does America's dismal distract-edness create opportunities for calamitous situations in our future? The war in Ukraine continues, and real, fragile people are pushed hundreds and thousands of miles away from homes, schools and workplaces around the world. Determined to pursue personal objectives, civilian displacements are intended to satisfy the demands of a powerful few who appear unconcerned about our fleeting existence.

Historians must be strong and persist in sharing accurate knowledge of events while disallowing falsehoods and exaggerations of events. Let us demonstrate civil discourse during disagreements. We have a responsibility to the world to use our expertise and knowledge to reduce violence and extremism by actively participating. The rise of threats and violence towards the Jewish population, the rejection of including indigenous populations in the Australian constitution

and the sorrowful movement of members of our human family around the world will only increase the likelihood of future violence and conflict. Jumping in to reject violence, threats and marginalization may increase humanity's chances of achieving our greatest potential as a world community. May our efforts straighten our bend in the road.

From the Archives, "Social Sciences in the Changing Pattern of Foreign Policy" by R. Grann Lloyd and K. W. Green echoes my themes of responsibility for social studies educators and advisors. In reading through the reasons for the social sciences, I am pondering posting these in my classroom. The growth of STEM/STEAM is at best ignoring or, at worst, negating the necessity of knowing and establishing the purposes for humanity's need for science and art. The social sciences reveal our cultures to each other, creating parameters for human interaction and a purpose to our existence. As much as we believe we are uniquely establishing our personalities and cultures, we do create ourselves and our communities by contrasting our actions and beliefs to others, emphasizing the importance of accurate knowledge, cooperation and tolerance of the world's peoples.

The Pulse this fall follows the foreign policy events of President Obama's administration. Written by Professor Joseph Harrington, former chief editor of this journal and his grandson Samuel Booth, this study begins with the formation of Obama's beliefs as influenced by his mother's career, his efforts to solve some of Chicago's community problems, and his evolution in the legal profession. As Obama shifted into the political process, he increasingly engaged in America's foreign affairs, visiting Iraq and Afghanistan. After becoming president, Obama chose the highly experienced and patriotic Hillary Clinton to become his Secretary of State. Despite competing for the office of the president against Barack Obama, Clinton decided to serve. The challenges, strategies, and successes of Clinton's work as Secretary of State are examined, with special focus, by country, as events unfolded. Secretary of State John Kerry is also examined as he fulfilled the work of President Obama's second term in office. Providing an in-depth review of recent history, Harrington & Booth's article would be useful in the US History or AP classroom for its focused and structured presentation of Obama's presidency. Harrington's defined categories would allow students to address a section and create presentations that evaluate contemporary history.

Exploring the challenges found in the early political career of Senator Margaret Chase Smith, Jeannette W. Cockcroft shares her article, “Equality, Difference or Something Else: The Early Senate Career of Margaret Chase Smith.” Cockcroft demonstrates that Smith’s election and participation in the Senate revealed the inherent conflict of first wave feminist beliefs, the dominant thoughts about a woman’s role in American society, and the usefulness of female candidates to demonstrate inclusiveness by a political party. However, given Smith’s lack of access to male-dominated communal facilities, her politically junior position, and the rise of Senator Joseph McCarthy, she faced stereotypical gendered pressure after she spoke against the actions of McCarthy that further alienated her from her Senatorial colleagues. Cockcroft further examines the impact of the Eisenhower presidential candidacy on Margaret Chase Smith’s political career and shares archival material challenging previously-held viewpoints regarding Smith’s possible candidacy as vice-president under Eisenhower. Disillusioned and yet politically savvy, Margaret Chase Smith retained her integrity and belief in fair treatment and transparency despite her challenges with the Eisenhower administration.

“Third Century of Liberty”? Thomas Wilson Dorr and the Debate over the Gag Rule in Rhode Island, 1835–1836” reminds us of the challenges of being active in democracy. Authors Erik Chaput and Russell DeSimone show that Dorr’s actions in the Rhode Island legislature demonstrate how interwoven our states are and how restrictions established in one state may lead to unintended actions that reject these restrictions in other states. The actions of southern states to forbid discussion of anti-slavery petitions not only in the House, but in all state legislatures, led Dorr to speak and record viewpoints against the Gag Rule and further the tensions between the North and South prior to the Civil War. For a time, Rhode Island played a significant role in the debate on slavery with many key abolitionists sent to the state’s General Assembly to speak. Given our contemporary divides on policies in America today, it is critical to remember that the acts of one individual ripple into the future.

For our fall journal, William Leeman reviews *Civil War by Other Means: America’s Long and Unfinished Fight for Democracy* by Jeremi Suri, showing that America still struggles with achieving true democracy. Tying past violence such as the assassination of President

Abraham Lincoln to the recent insurrection such as the January 6th events, Suri details the Republican shift away from civil rights which leaves us still struggling today with a partial democracy.

Reflecting on the use of armed resistance and radical politics during the antebellum abolition movement, William Morgan reviews *Force and Freedom: Black Abolitionists and the Politics of Violence* by Kellie Carter Jackson. Using the ideology of the American Revolution in combination with the power of the Haitian Revolution, Carter Jackson demonstrates how Black abolitionists called on America to strive for its founding ideals and led the way to the Civil War.

Jumping to a more recent battlefield, Erin Redihan reviews *Cold War Olympics: A New Battlefield in Psychological Warfare, 1948–1956* by Harry Blutstein. Focusing on the 1956 Melbourne Summer Olympics, Blutstein shares enchanting anecdotal material of the lives of the athletes and makes enjoyable reading for anyone interested in sports history.

The Heartland: An American History offers a nuanced image that disturbs the myth many Americans espouse about the central region of America. Written by Kristin L. Hoganson, *Heartland* reveals the international connections found in the region, the work of economic collaboration that rejects isolationism and the significance of military installations that continue to connect the heartland to the world today. Reviewed by Evan Rothera, *The Heartland* challenges us to create a new vision of the heartland of America.

Examining the threat to hierarchy that Anne Hutchinson created in *The Passion of Anne Hutchinson: An Extraordinary Woman, the Puritan Patriarchs, and the World They Made and Lost*, Marilyn Westerkamp argues that Hutchinson's offense was her rejection of male authority. Paul Teed's review of *Anne Hutchinson* shares with us that while one individual's acts may capture significant attention, Westerkamp demonstrates that nearly 100 other women suffered a worse fate for similar acts.

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. 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
November 2023