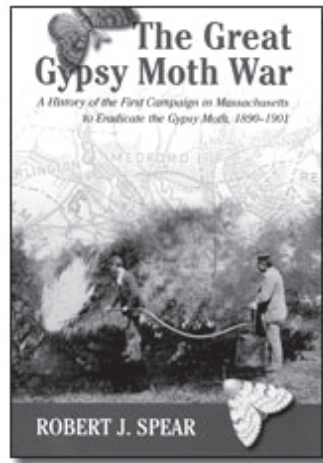


BOOK REVIEWS

The Great Gypsy Moth War: The History of the First Campaign in Massachusetts to Eradicate the Gypsy Moth, 1890-1901. By Robert J. Spear. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005. 308 pages. \$37.50 (hardcover).

Contemporary entomologists discover a handful of new species in the United States each year. Most turn out to be harmless. A select few, like the Asian longhorned beetle that arrived in Worcester County just a few years ago, can wreak havoc on native trees and on indigenous ecosystems without the threat of natural predators. Robert Spear's book reminds us that this new instance is not the first insect infestation with which the Commonwealth and its residents have had to deal. For one of the worst examples, we need to look back more than a century to analyze the first public fight against the gypsy moth.



Few introductions of alien invaders can be documented as exactly as that of the gypsy moth (now known as *Lymantria dispar*, Linn.). Frenchman Etienne Leopold Trouvelet (1827-1895) emigrated to the U.S. in the 1850s and settled with his family in Medford, Massachusetts. Like many other men of the nineteenth century, Trouvelet was a self-taught scientist who conducted his own experiments at home. One of his interests lay with silkworms and their ability to make a byproduct useful to man. Trouvelet theorized that the European gypsy moth caterpillar (which produced similar fibers, albeit inferior ones) could be bred to offer a commercial alternative to Southern cotton. He acquired specimens and began to work on the project. Sometime in 1869 or 1870, a few moths escaped from the makeshift barricade of netting that surrounded the Trouvelet property. An immigrant of another kind had officially arrived in New England.

In 1882, some Medford residents began to notice strange-looking caterpillars devouring the leaves of their fruit and ornamental trees. By that time, E. Leopold Trouvelet had returned to France, leaving behind a mess

for others to try to fix. A mild winter four years later resulted in a town literally swarming with bugs. As with other environmental challenges of both the past and the present, what began as a scientific issue eventually moved into the political arena.

The state legislature approved the organization and funding of the first gypsy moth commission on March 14, 1890. Its goal was complete extermination of the species. To combat the foe, the lay committee relied on recommendations from economic entomologists like Charles Henry Fernald (1838-1921), who staffed the experiment station of the Massachusetts Agricultural College in Amherst. The following year, naturalist Edward Howe Forbush (1858-1929) of Worcester was named the director of the field work. Collecting egg masses, banding tree trunks, burning vegetation, and spraying toxic concoctions soon became the everyday tasks of his team.

Imagine houses so covered with caterpillars that even the color of the siding was obscured. Imagine taking an umbrella along on every walk to avoid being hit by larvae falling from branches. Imagine wagons being stopped and inspected at every town line. Imagine the workers of a state commission being able to enter one's property at will and spraying trees, fences, and buildings until they were soaked with a mix of arsenic and copper or, in later years, with lead. The men could even cut down trees if they thought the whole organism was doomed.

Yet their techniques and their diligence, repeated year after year, did not prevent the insect from spreading to other towns in eastern Massachusetts. It did not take long for the moth to invade the fertile and fragile ecosystem of the Middlesex Fells. The scientists demanded more money from the legislature even while the politicians questioned the potential success of the program. Complete extermination seemed unlikely.

Independent scholar Spear offers here a detailed chronicle of history, politics, and science that often reads like a horror story. Some of his descriptions of infestation are not for the squeamish. Even non-scientists will cringe at the methods adopted for eradicating the insect. Readers of all backgrounds can shake their heads at the short-sightedness of both the experts and the governmental officials. Massachusetts was left to fend for herself in this challenge, as the federal authorities initially maintained a hands-off position toward involvement with the insect. In those first ten years, the Bay State dedicated more than one million dollars to the effort. Anyone who has banded trees or doused caterpillars in cans of kerosene knows that this narrative is not a mystery story with a last-page revelation.

The gypsy moth remains a periodic pest throughout portions of the United States.

The Great Gypsy Moth War is a disturbing and engrossing cautionary tale with multidisciplinary applications. It is recommended as supplementary reading to coursework in environmental studies, political science, and public administration.

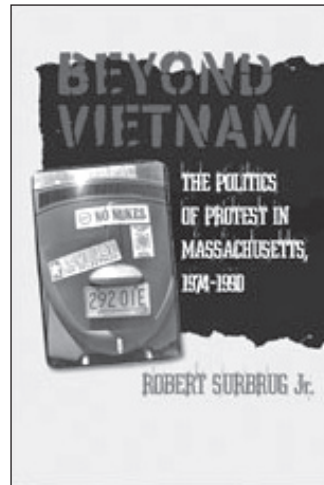
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Beyond Vietnam: The Politics of Protest in Massachusetts, 1974-1990.

By Robert Surbrug Jr. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009. 259 pp. + xi, notes, index. \$29.95 (paperback).

Historians now routinely speak of the “Long Sixties” when they discuss post-World War II social, political, and cultural upheaval, but debate remains over where to locate the era’s parameters. If protest is a measure of what defines the Sixties, Robert Surbrug adds hearty grist to the discussion.

Ask Americans to identify the largest protest rallies in American history and most are likely to reference events from the mid-1960s: antiwar gatherings, civil rights demonstrations, the conflagration at the 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago. All of these examples were dwarfed by the 1982 New York City nuclear freeze rally that took place when Ronald Reagan was supposedly dismantling the protest ethos of the 1960s. He did not. That is one of the points Surbrug expertly illustrates. His second major theme is that the flames fueled by the 1960s New Left remained intense because they were fanned by unrepentant Massachusetts activists. Scratch the surface of major post-1970 social movements — the nuclear freeze campaign, anti-nuclear power protests, peace demonstrations, gay rights, the public outcry against Central American policy — and Bay Staters were at the fore.



In fact, Surbrug argues, Massachusetts often led the nation. Most famously, Massachusetts was the only state not to vote for Nixon in 1972, but that was only the tip of the political iceberg. In Surbrug's telling, the tradition began when Sam Lovejoy, a commune dweller, felled a mountaintop weather tower that was phase one of a planned nuclear power plant in the western Massachusetts village of Montague. Lovejoy's case was dismissed before he employed the necessity defense, but in 1987, anti-CIA protesters who occupied a University of Massachusetts administration building successfully used that legal tactic.

More immediately Lovejoy's action so galvanized locals that the plant was never built, and it resuscitated what had been a stillborn anti-nuclear power movement. In a pattern Surbrug follows throughout, he moves from the local scene to regional and national activism. For example, New Hampshire's Clamshell Alliance, formed in opposition to building a nuclear power station in Seabrook, was inspired and partly staffed by Bay State "anti-nuke" veterans.

In similar fashion, as communities across the Bay State adopted nuclear-weapons freeze referenda, Massachusetts politicians such as State Senator John Olver, Governor Michael Dukakis, U.S. Representative Silvio Conte, Senator Edward Kennedy and Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill climbed aboard the successful 1982 effort to pass a statewide freeze referendum. At the federal level, the House of Representatives passed a similar bill, though the Senate refused to follow suit. Congress would, however, hamstring President Reagan in Latin America, courtesy of Bay State politicians such as Edward Boland and Gerry Studds.

Surbrug's deft ability to navigate between local, state, and national currents is one of this book's many joys. An even greater one is the insight he gives into the lives, personalities and passions of activists who are not household names but whose impact was enormous: Lovejoy, Randy Kehler, Lois Ahrens, staffers at the Traprock Peace Center, and the incomparable Frances Crowe. Picture an all-purpose Mother Jones and one still comes up short in describing Crowe, a diminutive, white-haired Northampton grandmother who continues to put principles and body on the line for the cause of peace.

A final joy is the well-crafted wrapper from which Surbrug's meticulous research springs: the grace and flow of the prose. Those seeking to quibble will find cause. One wishes for more on Bay State feminism, for example, and some critics will accuse Surbrug of valorizing the actions of the left while underestimating right-leaning campaigns such as anti-busing boycotts, anti-tax initiatives and Bay State culture war battles. (One of the

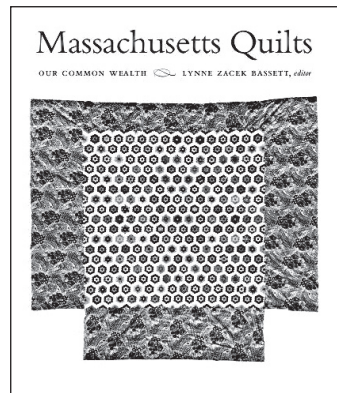
many ironies of the Sixties is that the New Left trained the New Right in tactics!) No scholar can cover all bases, however, and Surbrug more than accomplishes his task of extending the calendar of New Left-style left activism. He is aware that his 1990 cutoff date is less an “end of an era” (256) than a “redefining” (259) moment. Whatever else one might say about the 1960s, it transformed Massachusetts in ways that will reverberate for many decades into the future.

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Massachusetts Quilts: Our Common Wealth. Edited by Lynne Zacek Bassett. Hanover: University Press of New England, 2009. 336 pages \$60.00 (hardcover).

Lynne Bassett, with ten other contributors, offers a fascinating study of Massachusetts quilts in the context of history, genealogy, local industry, and textile production in the handsomely presented *Massachusetts Quilts: Our Common Wealth*. Including only a small percentage of the nearly 6,000 Massachusetts quilts they (and the many members of the Massachusetts Quilt Documentation Project) have studied since 1994, a wide range of techniques, fabrics and designs are represented in a thorough and carefully documented historical context.

The research findings are divided into three major thematic sections: History, Community, and Memory. Approached much like an exhibition catalogue, introductory essays provide an overview of each of the three divisions and are followed by illustrated examples discussed in detail. Geographical distinctions create the divisions under History and include some of the first extant quilted objects known in Massachusetts: pieced cloth-covered hand screens and petticoats, as well as whole cloth quilts and a quilted palampore dating 1825 to 1850. Quilting gatherings, agricultural fairs, and immigrant and ethnic communities are a few of the themes that



organize the section under Community; and Friendship and Signature Quilts provide two of the themes designated Memory.

Bassett and her major contributors (each a textile curator, quilt historian, or independent historian) emphasize the historical context for each quilted object (documenting genealogy, researching family stories, referencing dying and textile history, citing relevant economic and industrial circumstances) with their visual description of the textiles, the patchwork or appliqué pattern and the quilting design of the works. The attentive descriptions of the quilts encourage careful looking on the part of the reader and the contextual history keep these works firmly planted in the history of Massachusetts.

The volume's "coffee table book" format provides room for photographs of the entire quilted object that beautifully illustrate the textural surface of many of the works. Portrait photographs, contemporary images of relevant historic sites, details of some quilts, and line drawings articulating the quilted designs also provide welcome information. However, any non-scholarly connotations associated with the term 'coffee table book' do not apply to *Massachusetts Quilts*. Family oral histories are challenged and documented as factual or dispelled, references to current quilt history research appears throughout, provenance is carefully documented, collateral objects (e.g. merchants' sample swatch books and family memorabilia) shed greater light on the context of the quilt's creation, and diary entries documenting contemporary quilting activities reveal how quilts and quilting fit into the daily life of eighteenth and nineteenth century women. Additionally, careful reading of one diary provides primary evidence to dispel quilt myths associated with the women and marriage.

Diaries also reveal that quilts were most often the product of more than one woman in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and that quilting a top was usually completed in a few days. While diaries provide entry into women's lives, the quilts included in *Massachusetts Quilts* transcend women's history. The investigation into the context of the Susan Florence Kinnear and Esther Edna Kinnear Quilt, illuminates the history of a family, "the industrial vision of the two brothers, and the history of a town" (156) destroyed by the construction of a dam required at the town's site to supply water to Boston. While not a breathtaking visual object, the identity of the quilt makers does allow us a broader knowledge of eighteenth and nineteenth century life.

Perhaps the most striking quilt in the book is the Eliza Sumner Quilt created in 1848. The pieced, appliquéed and reverse appliquéed geometric shapes in vivid yellow, blue and white look at first like a table game board

or a catalogue of mysterious Masonic symbols. Eliza Sumner's quilt is beyond our expectations partly because she used "'cambric' lining fabrics found in women's dresses in this period" (287). Text printed on the fabrics and the addition of porcelain buttons and brass studs truly make this graphic quilt unique.

Those more interested in quilts than history may be disappointed in the ample attention given to historical context. Favored quilt top patterns or quilting designs that are distinctive to a geographical location are not the goal as in some of the early state studies on quilt history. Rather, in *Massachusetts Quilts*, the quilts are integrated into the regional history of their place. The quilts included act as a catalyst for a well-documented elaboration of the quilt maker's life, family, town and historical circumstances rather than an art historical discussion of the textile object. Perhaps this historical emphasis is an indicator of the state of quilt research. The foundations of quilt history have been established since the 1970's when serious quilt research rose to a national scale. The fundamental histories of textile production and imports, the early influence of the sewing machine, quilting's relationship to the fine and applied arts, the cataloguing of block names (as varied as they may be) and state by state studies of extant quilts largely have been accomplished. What the reader will find in *Massachusetts Quilts* is a fascinating immersion into what we can know and research with the documented identity of the quilt maker.

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Boston Women's Heritage Trail: Seven Self-Guided Walks Through Four Centuries of Boston's Women's History. By Polly Welts Kaufman, Jean Gibran, Sylvia McDowell, and Mary Howland Smoyer. Revised 3rd Edition. Boston: Boston Women's Heritage Trail, 2006. 107 pages. \$12.95 (paperback).

In the third revised edition of the pioneer guidebook *Boston Women's Heritage Trail*, Polly Welts Kaufman, Jean Gibran, Sylvia McDowell and Mary Howland Smoyer provide a treasure trove of information about the women who have made history in Boston. The project began in 1989, when teachers, librarians, and students in the Boston Public Schools began to discuss ways to honor the city's legacy of female achievement. The original project has expanded over the past two decades to include seven

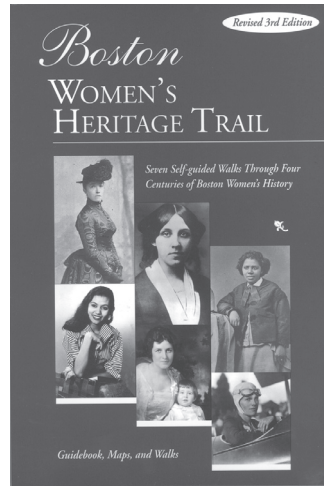
self-guided walks, gathered in this volume. They are arranged by geographic area: Downtown, the North End, Beacon Hill, South Cove and Chinatown, Back Bay East, Back Bay West, and the South End.

The book is well organized and easy to navigate. Each section opens with a map and a brief introduction of the roles women played in the area and ascribes a general theme to the walk. The Back Bay West guide, for instance, carries the subtitle “Educators, Artists, and Reform.” There are clear directions throughout each trek, allowing even those unfamiliar with Boston to navigate the tours. The book is thoroughly illustrated with images appearing on every page. Although brief, entries are packed with information about the history of the physical locations and the lives and accomplishments of the women associated with them.

Reading about the various sites is eye-opening, unveiling the multitude of ways women have shaped Boston’s landscape. A wide variety of sites are mapped, including monuments, businesses, hospitals, homes, religious and cultural institutions, organizations named after women, museums including works by female artists, halls where women spoke, and locations where protests occurred. In just a few pages of the Beacon Hill walk, for instance, one learns about a childhood home of Louisa May Alcott, the Museum of African American History, the Vilna Shul, and the studio of the artist Anne Whitney (35-40).

Of course, the women who spring to mind when thinking of Boston history are here, such as Anne Hutchinson, Phillis Wheatley, Abigail Adams, Isabella Stewart Gardner, and Rose Kennedy. Even with these familiar names, the authors manage, in a remarkably short space, to provide a richer context for their work and contributions than is often seen. Although the volume opens with Adams’ famed “remember the ladies” quote, a later profile also explains she “became well known as a critical thinker and correspondent with her husband, who was away from the farm for much of the next ten years. She managed the farm, their large family, and their financial affairs” (17). Gardner, readers learn, was “considered an eccentric by some and a genius by others” (59).

The most important contribution of the work is in its documentation of lesser-known women. Even readers steeped in women’s history and the



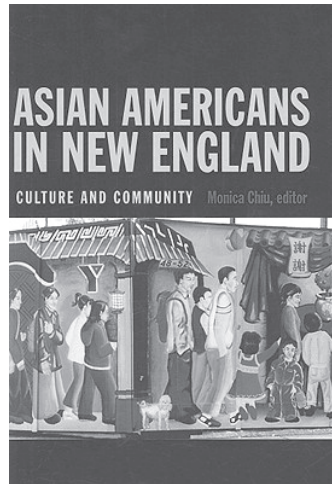
history of Boston are sure to learn something new. Among the thirty-two entries for the South End walk alone, for instance, are profiles of funeral home director Cora Reid McKerrow, dancer and philanthropist Mildred Davenport, art teacher Labeebee Hanna Saquet, and actress and activist Myrna Vasquez (76, 79, 87, 89). These profiles not only serve as a valuable resource about these specific women but, taken together, they provide a complex view of the history of a neighborhood and its inhabitants over time.

The strongest endorsement of *Boston Women's Heritage Trail* is that one does not need to be in Boston to enjoy it. The guidebook is best used, of course, while strolling the streets of the city. It is so informative, and written with such wit and intelligence, however, that it is a worthwhile read at a desk or in an armchair far from Massachusetts.

Kate Culkin is an associate professor of history at Bronx Community College and author of Harriet Hosmer: A Woman of Her Time, forthcoming from the University of Massachusetts Press.

Asian Americans in New England: Culture and Community. Edited by Monica Chiu. Durham: University of New Hampshire Press, 2009. 252 pages. \$50.00 (hardcover).

Monica Chiu has compiled an overdue collection of scholarly articles on the Asian American diaspora in New England. Chiu, an associate professor of English at the University of New Hampshire, sheds considerable light on long standing relationships among Euro New Englanders, Asians, and New Englanders of Asian descent. Provocative essays in the collection border on the polemical as the work confronts the reification of race and racism within the context of the history and culture of New England. *Asian Americans in New England: Culture and Community* attempts



to rectify the paucity of Asian American scholarship within the rich tapestry of New England history.

Chiu documents New Englanders' relationship with Asia, Asians and Asian Americans from the cusp of the nineteenth to the first decade of the twenty-first century, exhibiting a confluence of complex themes revolving around ethnicity, religiosity, sexuality and gender. In her essay "Copying Conversion: An 1824 Friendship Album from a Chinese Youth," Karen Sanchez-Eppler reminds us that the missionary ethos of New England (often in symbiotic relationships with trading companies) fostered the first interaction between Euro North Americans and Asians. Indeed, domestic objects made in China conveyed "elegance, civility and refinement" (21). The positive objectification of Chinese wares, however, was not transferred to Asians themselves.

At this time New England missionary schools educated Chinese "heathen youth[s]" in order to promote Christianity and civilization" (2). In an essay by Sanchez-Eppler, Chinese youth were forced to reinvent their ethnic self-identities while dependant on Euro Americans' paternalism and largesse for their education in 1820's Connecticut. Ultimately the voices of these young men were heard in the form of "friendship albums" used in schools as methods of rote learning and the inculcation of New England religious and cultural values. In a different vein, the culture of masculinity at Yale (women were not accepted as undergraduates until the late 1960's) proved problematic for the first Yale graduate of Chinese descent, Yung Wing.

A highlight of the collection is the article "The New Englandization of Yung Wing: Family, Nation, Region," in which Amy Bangerter posits that Yung was "forced to battle stereotypes of Chinese men as emasculated coolies" (53) because he had to work at Yale fraternities due to his poverty while a Yale student. After graduation Yung determined that he would not "sacrifice [his] manhood" (54) to earn money in a position that was deemed "servile," a comment redolent with racial self-loathing and self-emasculatation. In the end, Yung's United States citizenship (attained while at Yale in the 1850s) was revoked in 1898 because he was now deemed non-white and racialized as Chinese; therefore, non-American and not a New Englander. Yung was now considered a desexualized eunuch by the country of his choice.

The Asian ethnic group that was considered closest to being the equals of Euro New Englanders in the ethnic hierarchical scale of the 1800's were the Japanese. Krystyn R. Moon analyzed newspapers documenting touring Japanese acrobats in mid-nineteenth century New England where

opinions of the Japanese ran the continuum from comparing the acrobats to their European counterparts to generalities that the Japanese were “awkward and uncouth” (83). “Japs” was a common epithet. That said, most Euro New England missionaries, according to Moon, believed that “cultural attributes” (70) such as religion were the main cause of inferior or superior characteristics. In the late nineteenth century, Japan was the Asian nation that was most open to western influence technologically, politically, and culturally, which accounted for the relatively benevolent view of the Japanese.

According to Constance J. S. Chen, upper and middle-class Euro New Englanders came to view Japanese artifacts and perceived cultural aesthetics as exemplars in reviving a subjective way of life vanishing in New England due to mechanization, industrialization, and immigration. As such, the championing of cultural institutions such as museums and the collecting of Japanese artifacts by Boston’s patrician elites were to “instill shared social values and standards” (96) that were being diluted by the rising immigration of the Irish, among others, in New England.

The intersection of ethnicity, sexuality and religion reaches its nadir in Purkayastha’s and Narayan’s chapter about the Indian spiritual leader, Vivekenanda, who in the 1890’s traveled throughout New England challenging the exclusivity and universality of Christianity which at the time denigrated the world’s many religions. Part of Vivekenanda’s religious and philosophical outreach included debunking missionaries’ charges that Indian religions served as a religious framework for perceived effeminate, and yet sexually predatory, Indian men and subordinated though sexually deprived Indian women. Similar to the previous chapters, although racism is acknowledged implicitly among the working class, it is the members of academia and more progressive New England families that were more open to a diversity of cultures and ideas.

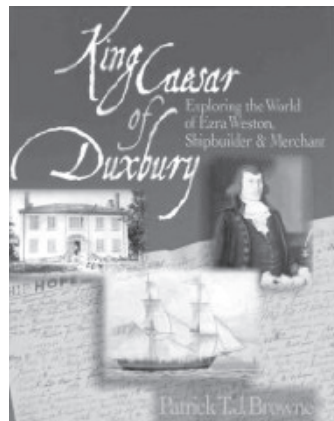
The subsequent three concluding chapters cover the last two decades of the twentieth and the first decade of the twenty-first century. Lucy Mae Son Pablo Burns’ highly personal essay about the archiving of the works of Asian American women playwrights’ materials is an attack on traditional archival methods from a “text-based paradigm” (152) toward a more inclusive process that is more “community” centered and that represents the viewpoint of under-represented women of color. The final two articles in the volume analyze the challenges of working-class Vietnamese and Lao American communities in Boston and in small town New Hampshire – the only essays that looked specifically from the perspective of the working class of either New Englanders of European or Asian descent.

This diverse collection of essays by Chiu is a good starting point for the study of Asian Americans in New England in spite of the gap in scholarship looking at Asians and Asian Americans between 1900 and the 1960s. To be sure, it is a challenging task to compile works that cover two centuries while at the same time trying to be inclusive of various ethnic groups that constitute the Asian American story in New England. Implicit throughout the volume is the conclusion that the benevolence and paternalism of Euro New Englanders in the nineteenth century was the purview of cultural, political, and social elites while racism was the monopoly of working class Euro New Englanders. Implied also is the assumption that such progressive views may not have been as widespread if there were as many Asians in New England as there were on the west coast. And though not particularly historical in nature, the last three essays provide a sampling of the recent challenges of Asian Americans in New England. Nevertheless, Monica Chiu's compilation is a worthy contribution to the *Revisiting New England: The New Regionalism* series published by the University of New Hampshire Press.

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King Caesar of Duxbury — Exploring the World of Ezra Weston, Shipbuilder and Merchant. By Patrick T.J. Browne. Duxbury, MA: Duxbury Rural and Historical Society, 2005. \$29.95 (paperback).

Ezra Weston was born in Duxbury in 1743, the son of a modestly successful shipwright. Deprived of his father at nineteen, he entered adult life a trained carpenter selling his labour and then building ships himself, opening the way to a mercantile life that ended in 1822 with a fortune that placed him comfortably among the wealthiest men of New England. His son, Ezra Weston II (1772-1842) continued to build the family fortune, laying claim towards the end of his life to being “one of the largest ship-owners in the world,” controlling dozens of ships



trading with every corner of the globe. Between 1800 and 1824, this father and son accounted for 7% of all the ships built in Plymouth County by tonnage. It was a remarkable ascent, but was not to be sustained.

The Westons never established themselves within the ante-bellum Brahmin aristocracy.¹ The family is absent from Dalzell's *Enterprising Elite* and Thornton's *Cultivating Gentlemen*. After the Civil War, the family experienced a dissipation of wealth and influence. In the popular imagination, it is the heroic enterprise of great men or the dismal behaviour of dissipated heirs which accounts for such fluctuation. The truth is more complicated.

In spite of the first Ezra Weston's undeniable business acumen, success depended as much, if not more, on the circumstances which reduced the risks that Weston was willing to take than it did on his risk-taking behaviour itself. Weston was born into a large seafaring family with Duxbury ties dating back to 1635. In a world defined by unpredictability and risk, Weston was well placed to build risk-mitigating alliances. It was his Maine-based brother, Arunah, who supplied the young shipbuilder with cargoes of timber and older brothers who had already established themselves as sea captains who supported his early move from ship's carpenter to builder to owner of a small fleet of fishing vessels. As family fortunes grew, the Westons cultivated the loyalty of a dozen reliable, trustworthy captains who, in a world of sharply fluctuating political alliances, piracy and dynamic markets, provided a base of predictable and reliable behaviour allowing the merchant to pick profitable paths through uncertain seas.

Mitigation of risk also motivated struggles within Duxbury town politics to secure public resource to finance infrastructural developments of transparent benefit to the town's growing commercial elite. Ezra Weston gained the nickname King Caesar – and it is hard to think of more a disparaging term in Federalist New England with its evident associations with the Napoleonic autocracy – after a protracted struggle in 1803 that led, amid considerable ill-feeling and claims of dishonest manipulation, to a town-funded bridge over the Bluefish River.

¹ Boston Brahmins, also referred to as the "First Families of Boston," are the New England families who claim hereditary and cultural descent from the English Protestants who founded Boston and settled New England. They consider themselves the historic core of the East Coast establishment. Many Brahmin families trace their ancestry back to the original founders of Boston while others entered into the New England aristocratic society during the nineteenth century with their profits from commerce and trade or by marrying into established Brahmin families such as the Adams, Cabots, Emersons, Gardners, Peabodys, and Winthrops.

Although extending its interests into Boston during the ante-bellum era, the family remained rooted in Duxbury, developing an industrial base with ropewalk, shipyard and fish processing facilities overseen from a large Federal mansion overlooking the harbour. Why then when comparable merchant families entrenched themselves within the Brahmin upper-class did the Westons fail to secure their fortune? Evidence is scarce of the family participating in the web of industrial, financial and philanthropic ventures which underpinned Brahmin dominance. The Westons played little part in Waltham-Lowell textile manufacturing, early railroads or early Brahmin financial institutions, most notably the Massachusetts Hospital Life Insurance Company, which secured trust fund fortunes beyond the Civil War.

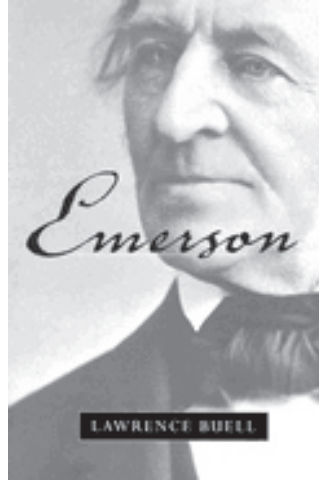
Equally, the family barely engaged in the plethora of privately incorporated cultural and philanthropic institutions (the Massachusetts Historical Society, Massachusetts General Hospital, Massachusetts Society for Promoting Agriculture) which provided the social contours of Brahmin Society. Only one Weston graduated from Harvard College before the Civil War. The family's rise drew upon the cultural and familial bonds which built a trusted network to mitigate the risk of overseas trade; the family's fall stemmed from a failure to integrate into a new social elite which was peculiarly well placed to secure joint-stock fortunes from the vicissitudes of unreliable heirs.

Patrick Browne's richly illustrated work is evidently a labour of love for the Duxbury Rural & Historical Society (www.duxburyhistory.org) of which Browne is long-standing director. The association is strong: since 1965, the Society has owned the first Ezra Weston's 1809 Federal residence, renovating the mansion in the style of the 1820's. While a work of hagiography would have been tempting, the author has resisted such an approach. If rooted in a slender historiography (Samuel Eliot Morison is heavily referenced), the work is based on careful archival research and provides a rich picture of both a family and a commercial world over a century of change.

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Emerson. By Lawrence Buell. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003. 416 pages. \$20.50 (paperback).

Lawrence Buell's *Emerson* makes a strong case for the ongoing relevance of the Concord sage to American life and culture. Pointing to Emerson's abandonment of the ministry for an unlikely career as a popular lyceum lecturer, professional essayist and occasional philosopher, he argues that Emerson should be remembered as the nation's first "public intellectual." Breaking through the restraints that the clerical vocation inevitably placed upon the substance and the style of his writing, Emerson worked toward more democratic modes of address and, in the process, widened the reach and impact of his thought.



Buell is careful to note, however, that even as Emerson recognized the opportunities that bigger audiences and new communication techniques offered, his deep commitment to the discipline of self-reliance ensured the independence and originality of his thought. His measure of success in using popular media to convey complex and unsettling ideas can be found in the size of the crowds that flocked to hear him on the lecture podium.

Buell is especially successful in dispelling overly-simplified views of Emerson's significance. In response to works that portray the writer as essentially a cultural nationalist, Buell sees Emerson as a far more cosmopolitan figure who was immersed in the transatlantic, even global flow of ideas. English romanticism and continental philosophy inspired his religious revolt against Unitarian rationalism, but Emerson's lifelong search for idealist metaphysics also took him to the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavad Gita*. Buell is certainly correct to point out that Emerson's interest in Asian thought was reciprocated. Hindu thinkers, especially the reform-minded leaders of India's Brahmo Samajes, used Emerson's mystical concept of the Over-Soul as a theological bridge between East and West. Although Emerson was not entirely above the "orientalist" stereotypes that pervaded western thought in the nineteenth century, Buell praises his serious engagement with Asian traditions as an early example of global cosmopolitanism. Listing Protap Chandra Mazumdar, D.T. Suzuki, and Lafcadio Hearn as admirers of Emerson, Buell challenges those who

see Emerson as an exclusively American figure to explain the breadth of his cross-cultural appeal.

A second major goal of Buell's work is to delineate the complex meanings of "self-reliance," which most scholars have identified as Emerson's core philosophy. While acknowledging the radical individualism inherent in the concept, Buell goes to great lengths to soften its antinomian or anarchic implications. Few nineteenth century figures exceeded Emerson in counseling resistance to conformity and none were as eloquent in equating the expressions of the "aboriginal self" with divine duty. But at the same time, Emerson had "no use for shallow impulsiveness" or what he regarded as "aggressive or passive excess" (72-73).

Was there, as some scholars have contended, a contradiction here? Buell thinks not. Instead, he describes Emersonian self-reliance as a personal discipline, an austere and sustained moral commitment that yielded its results sporadically, sometimes in fragmented ways reflected best in the chanting prose style of his essays. Transcendence of the essential unreality of so much of daily experience, a painful process that Emerson explored brilliantly in his essay "Experience," required disciplined attention to the voice of conscience and the workings of the universal spirit in the individual soul. Inspiration could be found within but it did not come easily and it required both personal sacrifice and an embrace of emotional solitude.

The result for Emerson in personal terms was a studied reserve or "serene detachment" that helps to explain his attenuated friendships and his intermittent, if not reluctant engagement with abolitionism, the great social movement of his day. Although Emerson was clearly disgusted by slavery, he was reluctant to sacrifice his hard won self-conception as an independent scholarly voice by joining a mass movement. Yet Buell is eager to defend Emerson against the charge of social irresponsibility. Returning near the end of the book to the concept of Emerson as a public intellectual, he argues that if Emerson lacked the antislavery zeal of William Lloyd Garrison or Wendell Phillips, he remains "the great diagnostician of the challenges of doing socially significant intellectual work in the face of social pressure and . . . self-division" (287).

In its self-conscious attention to Emerson's modern critics, Buell's book at times has a defensive quality. This is particularly evident in the chapter on Emerson's religious thought which seems almost to apologize for including a discussion of the very theological issues that launched his subject's public career in Massachusetts. Early in the chapter, he informs his readers that "[l]ike it or not, there is no getting rid of religion as a force in human affairs" and assumes that religious discourse seems "quaint

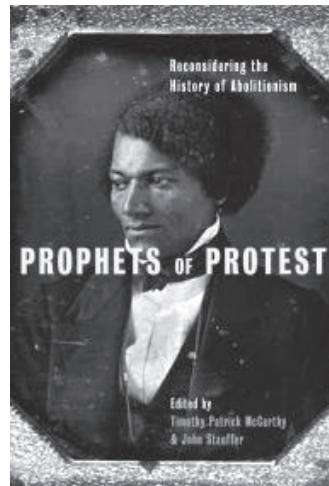
and off-putting today” (159-160). Yet despite this weakness, the book is a highly learned, beautifully written analysis by a leading scholar of American transcendentalism. If there is not a great deal of new historical material here, the author has used startlingly new contexts to demonstrate that his subject is well-worth the attention of scholars across a wide array of scholarly disciplines.

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Prophets of Protest: Reconsidering the History of American Abolitionism.

By Timothy Patrick McCarthy and John Stauffer. New York and London: The New Press, 2006. 382 pages. \$22.95 (paperback).

In the historiography of American abolitionism there are a number of important debates among scholars, perhaps none more important than the “origins” debate. One origin that is just beginning to receive its due is the rise of black protest during the revolutionary period. By stretching the temporal boundaries of abolitionist historiography and fully including the efforts of both women and African American abolitionists, the essays in *Prophets of Protest* reposition the movement as an interracial one in which blacks themselves first articulated the most prominent arguments that would comprise the radical abolition movement from the 1830s until the Civil War.



Beginning with a reassessment of abolitionist historiography, Manisha Sinha contends that “despite some prominent exceptions, the dominant picture of abolitionists in American history is that of bourgeois reformers burdened by racial paternalism and economic conservatism” (23). To counter this dominant picture of American abolitionists, Sinha argues that we must look to the efforts of both women and African Americans in

bringing down slavery. Indeed, blacks were themselves the progenitors of black abolitionist historiography.

William C. Nell's work anticipated modern scholarship on black abolition by documenting black activists and showing continuity in the efforts of African Americans from the revolutionary to antebellum periods. The work of William Wells Brown and Martin Delany similarly present an expansive sense of black abolitionism by highlighting the influence of the Haitian Revolution and the interracial nature of the movement. These early activists and scholars shaped both the course and interpretations of the movement for years to come. While white academics ignored their work, African American scholars from Carter Woodson to Dorothy Porter Wesley and Benjamin Quarles highlighted many of the same themes as these earlier historians of abolition, and modern scholars such as Gary Nash and Leslie Harris have continued to paint a broader picture of abolitionism than the traditional story would suggest exists.

Along with this historiographic assessment of black abolitionism, many of the essays in this collection present compelling arguments for the importance of black protest in the origins of the American antislavery movement. Richard Newman argues for the prominence of "black founders" in the movement, or "men and women who fought against racial oppression in some way, shape, or form, and thereby established models of protest for later activists" (62). These founders included individuals such as Prince Hall, Paul Cuffe and Phillis Wheatley of Massachusetts, Richard Allen and Absalom Jones of Philadelphia, and William Hamilton of New York City. Black founders helped to develop independent black institutions such as churches and self-help organizations, and they were instrumental in developing the earliest abolitionist strategies, including the use of print culture, which is the subject of Timothy Patrick McCarthy's essay. McCarthy posits that by arguing for racial equality and rejecting colonization, the black abolitionists who published and supported *Freedom's Journal* and David Walker's *Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World* actually represent the beginnings of American abolitionism. By starting their analyses of the antislavery movement with William Lloyd Garrison in 1831 most scholars have slighted the importance of both black abolitionists and those activists working prior to the advent of Garrisonian abolition, according to McCarthy.

Male activists were not the only ones who took advantage of the burgeoning print industry to fight slavery. Augusta Rohrbach's essay demonstrates that both Louisa May Alcott and Sojourner Truth were able to trade on conventions of race, class and gender to adapt themselves

and their messages “to a marketplace that originated in the evangelical consumerism of the abolitionist movement” (235). Both women were able to support themselves through the sale of their antislavery publications while adding a gendered dimension to the movement that appealed to the romantic sensibilities of the age.

Female abolitionists were similarly prominent in producing poetry that helped connect the movement to the middle class ideals of gentility and respectability, as Dickson D. Bruce Jr. argues in his chapter. And they played an important role in abolitionist commemorations, according to Julie Roy Jeffrey, who argues that we should broaden our definition of antislavery politics to include celebrations, parades, orations and street literature. This broadening allows for a more expansive definition of abolitionism and, like the work of Rorhbach and Bruce Jr., points to the importance of female activists in the movement. Women created banners that helped publicize the abolitionist message, raised funds, cooked food and wrote songs to help attract larger crowds. In most emancipation day celebrations, white women were often more prominent than black women, perhaps because black men tried to assert their manhood in a society that denied they were men or even human beings.

One of the primary strengths of this collection is the way in which it highlights the importance of African American activists while not glossing over debates and arguments within the movement about how to best achieve abolition. While many of the proponents of the movement believed in non-violence, the essays by Karl Gridley and Hannah Geffert demonstrate that both whites and blacks came to support John Brown and his use of violence in Kansas and Virginia as a means of toppling slavery. And while most black abolitionists from the 1820's on rejected colonization by whites as a matter of course, Sandra Sandiford Young's chapter on John Brown Russwurm shows that black abolitionism could be coupled with colonization, although not many chose to do so.

Although none of the essays are devoted specifically to Massachusetts, it is clear from this collection that Massachusetts was of central importance in the antislavery movement from its eighteenth century inception until the Civil War. Some of the most prominent “black founders” that Newman discusses hailed from the Bay State, and the antislavery organization that was the first to work toward improving the condition of all blacks in America was begun by some of Boston's black residents, including David Walker and Thomas Paul. T. K. Hunter's essay similarly points to the prominence of England and Massachusetts as “geographies of liberty,” or places where slavery could not exist because those locales represented

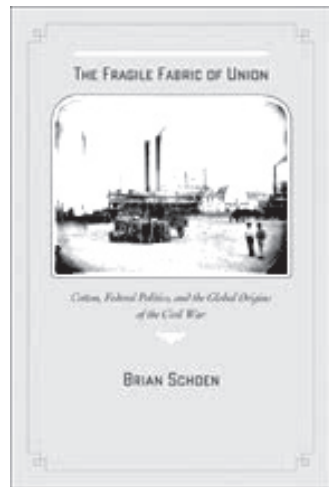
“free soil” (54). By examining the prominence of Massachusetts’s black activists and African Americans more broadly, divisions within the movement, the role of women, and the importance of print culture in its many forms, *Prophets of Protest* has successfully demonstrated the connections between eighteenth and nineteenth century abolitionism and the prominence of both blacks and whites, males and females in abolishing the institution of slavery.

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The Fragile Fabric of Union: Cotton, Federal Politics, and the Global Origins of the Civil War. By Brian Schoen. Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 2009. 369 pages. \$55.00 (hardcover).

The Fragile Fabric of Union examines the regional and global economic factors that eventually led to the Civil War. Brian Schoen makes a compelling argument that economic considerations driven by the global demand for cotton cloth were the primary factors separating the agrarian Deep South and the mercantile and manufacturing interests of the Northeast. Slavery was a factor in the debate, but initially not the central factor.

Eli Whitney’s dramatic improvement of the cotton gin enabled the rapid processing of cotton on a commercial scale. This in turn helped to rescue the shattered economy of the Deep South, destroyed by the ravages of the Revolutionary War. In addition to reviving the moribund agricultural economy of Georgia and the Carolinas, the advent of “King Cotton” also breathed new life into the “peculiar institution.” It had been widely supposed that slavery would die a slow natural death as market forces and international approbation gradually took their toll. The perceived requirements for a cheap captive work force to meet the accelerating demands of British textile mills put an end to that illusory hope and sowed the seeds of future disaster.



Schoen describes how the advent of the Napoleonic Wars and the resultant coercive British and French trade restrictions produced the Jeffersonian economic embargo in reply. This was an economic disaster for Southern agriculture and Northern shipping alike. Through most of the embargo years the South remained steadfast in their support of this policy which emphasized shared sacrifice and economic warfare in place of the real thing. The author emphasizes the undue trust the planters placed in the effects that an artificial cotton shortage would have on the British economy. They were confident that the British would eventually buckle under the weight of massive unemployment and declining profits, which never reached the level of pain necessary to bring Parliament into line. This same assumption was to help ruin the Southern economy during the Civil War, inadvertently hastening its end.

The mercantile and shipping interests of the Northeast were always reluctant partners in this quasi-war, and they became more averse to the conflict as fortunes were lost and ships rotted at their moorings. National economic distress eventually led enough Southern defections to join with John Quincy Adams and his northern political allies to help kill the embargo. This did nothing to alleviate the ongoing problems with Great Britain, which continued to restrict trade and impress sailors, resulting in the War of 1812.

After the war, sectional rivalries were fueled by Northern attempts to encourage its' nascent manufacturing sector by the imposition of tariffs on finished goods. Southern planters vehemently opposed tariffs and promoted free trade for sectional economic considerations. They felt it unfair to penalize many planters by increasing the cost of imported goods in order to help the bottom line of a few Northern industrialists. They also believed that the imposition of high tariffs would lead Great Britain to retaliate by encouraging cotton cultivation within their ever-growing satellite empire.

The author demonstrates that although slavery was always a subtext within the great tariff debates, economic considerations were the driving force. The lines of this debate were not always clearly drawn; however, famed senator, orator, and perennial Massachusetts presidential contender Daniel Webster became a Southern hero with an eloquent defense of free trade. He faced Southern vituperation and perhaps cost himself the presidency only a few years later with, in today's terms, a major "flip-flop" on the issue.

The first great nullification crisis was a precursor of things to come. South Carolina led the effort to declare states rights paramount over national

sovereignty, but eventually backed away from the brink. Although the abolitionist movement was beginning to make itself heard, the nullification conflict was primarily concerned with the economic issue of protectionism versus free trade and not with the eradication of slavery.

Brian Schoen illustrates that disputes over the expansion of slavery into new territories and states were driven by southern economic and political considerations. The Cotton South felt economically threatened by the North and looked to expand its influence in Congress by increasing the number of cotton growing slave states. The Missouri Compromise and the ill-fated Kansas-Nebraska Act were both attempts to bridge the ever growing chasm between these interests and the moral arguments arrayed against them. Schoen writes that, "The debate over slavery's expansion, along with concerns over its political and economic security in the Union, propelled the Cotton States to secession."

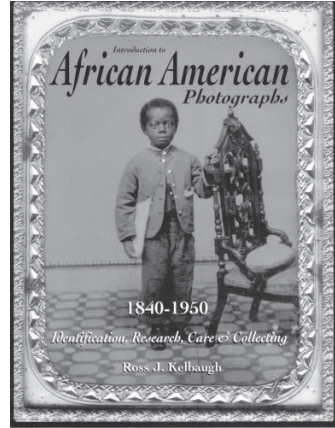
The book's final section, "An Unnatural Union," describes how almost every national issue had become sectionalized in the final years leading up to the Civil War. Trade, tariffs, internal improvements, homesteading, territorial expansion, international relations, even the route of the transcontinental railroad were all seen through the prism of perceived regional advantage in an implacable economic rivalry. Driven by fears of economic ruin and slave rebellion, an exaggerated sense of personal honor, and a mistaken belief in the subservience of the British economy to King Cotton, southern firebrands resolved upon the path of succession if Abraham Lincoln was elected. The phenomenal growth of the cotton economy had once been viewed as a means of tightening the bonds of union through trade, shipping, and prosperity. Instead, Schoen concludes that "without cotton and the international demand for it, there would not have been a succession or a civil war."

Students of the causes of the Civil War should read *The Fragile Fabric of Union*. It is well written and extensively documented. The book's relatively narrow focus enables it to avoid the pitfalls of many survey histories, which often read like textbooks. The author brings the issues to life by illustrating how economic self interest colored the views of the South to the point that it was willing to sunder the Union and go to war. Like many good histories, it illuminates the motivations and actions of past participants as seen through their eyes. Whether we learn from it is another story.

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Introduction to African American Photographs: Identification, Research, Care & Collecting, 1840-1950. By Ross J. Kelbaugh. Gettysburg, PA: Thomas Publications, 2005. 120 pages. \$14.95 (paperback).

In *Introduction to African American Photographs*, Ross J. Kelbaugh offers a practical guide to finding photographs of or taken by African Americans, collecting and maintaining them, and provides a gateway to the study of African American photographic history. It is an introductory text suitable for various audiences including non-scholars interested in the field, high school and college level students conducting research projects, and scholars looking for a concise history of African Americans and their photographic images and production.



The book's chronological structure helps readers with limited knowledge in the history of photography understand how the technology developed between 1840 and 1950. Kelbaugh follows the evolution of photography from the daguerreotype to the ambrotype, the tintype, and to gelatin silver prints with detailed explanations of their technical backgrounds. He also elaborates on photographic styles produced such as the carte de visite, the cabinet card, and the photo postcard. Each category has its focal points that reflect the period in which a specific production technology or style was popular. A famous picture of Wilcon Chinn with a slave collar, for example, is a representative photograph produced in the carte de visite. Some of the most popular images of Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, and other prominent African American figures were photographed in this style as well. The book's rich photographic examples effectively showcase the development of photography between the mid-nineteenth and the mid-twentieth centuries.

As a collector of African American photography, Kelbaugh shares his knowledge about the rarity of certain types of images based on more than their simple age or quality. Despite few variations between different photographic production types, photographs taken by African Americans tend to be less prevalent, particularly with regard to the nineteenth century. In general, outdoor pictures of African Americans are rare. Photographs of black female nurses and white children are also infrequent, as are

photographs showing an African American male with a white female. Examining these African American photographs sheds light on the lives of blacks in this time period. Photography by African Americans was scarce because not many were free in the mid-nineteenth century and few were able to afford the technology. Although the author only briefly discusses why certain images are scarce and what this rarity signifies in black history, his examination of photography addresses the uniqueness of African American lives.

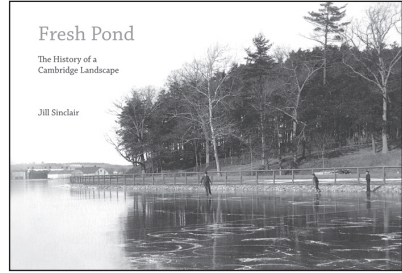
The value of Kelbaugh's work exists not only in the information he provides but also in the larger question of the double exploitation that he mentions in passing. Although he restricts the scope of his work to a practical guide to African American photography, his readers can use the book as a way to consider and discuss what it meant to be African American slaves traded as goods and exploited for their labor, and who continued to be exploited and traded as images, in some cases over a hundred years later. Additionally, African Americans whose images appeared as merchandise and objects in the collector's market were the ones who had been deprived of human dignity. Even though the author does not offer answers to these difficult questions, his study of objectified African Americans in traded photographs has the potential to stimulate intellectual discourse on this double exploitation.

The appendix may also appeal to wider audiences. It allows collectors to find out more about rare images and places to procure photographs. For researchers, Kelbaugh suggests different genealogic methods to identify both the photographer and his subjects. Collectors, students, and scholars with varied interests would find this book a useful resource for its rich images, practical information, and the important questions that it raises. When read with the scholarship on photography and visual identities in African American Studies, Kelbaugh's *Introduction to African American Photographs* clearly conveys the intricacy of visual politics in black history.

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Fresh Pond: The History of a Cambridge Landscape. By Jill Sinclair. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. 2009. 193 pgs. \$29.95 (hardcover).

Jill Sinclair's history of Fresh Pond from the colonial era to the modern day is a thorough, well-illustrated account of a loved urban landmark and its many incarnations: pastoral, industrial, holiday, institutional and recreational. Well-researched and drawing on a rich array of archives, Sinclair has built a portrait of the Pond



over time, and in doing so she has cast light on the wider cultural history of Cambridge, Massachusetts and beyond. Her book covers an absorbing and unexpectedly various range of topics such as providing glimpses into the fabulous wealth of the China merchants, the emergence of the uniquely New England yet wide-ranging Ice Trade, the aesthetic of the premier firm of American Landscape Architects, Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot, as well as offering insight into working class life and recreation.

And yet, with all this tempting material, Sinclair never loses her focus on Fresh Pond itself. Her prose is efficient and straightforward. She navigates her mass of information adroitly, moving her reader through all the many fascinating phases of Fresh Pond's history without letting any one overshadow another.

This well-illustrated volume, with its pronounced landscape format, can be enjoyed as a picture book until the reader is arrested by one of the many unlikely but fascinating accounts of American life as it touched Fresh Pond; here, perhaps, is the unexpected reward of Sinclair's effort. Cambridge has often taken a "back seat," serving as a subchapter devoted to the intellectual and eccentric aspect of Boston's history. By focusing on Fresh Pond, Sinclair has managed to write a history of Cambridge in which Harvard plays a distinctly minor role.

Even more interesting, the author offers a unique "micro-view" of an American democratized landscape spanning nearly four centuries. Sinclair describes how every generation attempts to fit Fresh Pond to the needs of its day, resulting in a pattern of ceaseless change and, as is inevitable when dealing with a landscape, unrealized objectives. Gardens are lost, trees cut down, shorelines altered, buildings demolished, roads built and then torn up, vistas planned and then abandoned. Public funds are allocated for a

purpose that, barely achieved, is replaced by other concerns. Exhausting, ceaseless change, and yet the Pond remains remarkably the same. Made by the receding glaciers, Fresh Pond will doubtless survive until the next Ice Age, buffeted by the Americans whose love for it remains fickle and yet demanding.

One slight cavil would be that Sinclair does not emphasize the seasonal nature of the uses of Fresh Pond. For example, the vast and thriving ice trade was a deep-winter event. Come summer, there was no evidence of that industrial enterprise save its warehouses. Equally, a hotel lawn filled with picnickers in August lay bare in March; a pond loaded with pleasure boats in July was a model of industrial enterprise in January. This seasonal variety is an aspect of New England life that, while diminished by the modern inventions with which man trumps nature, is still a key element of New England's charm or its liability, depending on one's point of view. Perhaps Sinclair missed an opportunity to link this annual evolution to the ceaseless adjustment of a democratized landscape. In any event, in conclusion she raises the question of whether Fresh Pond deserves to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Her book more than helps to make the case.

Carol Bundy is an independent scholar.