

## Introduction: Empire, Society, and Labor: Essays in Honor of Richard S. Dunn

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When these essays were initially delivered as papers in May 1996, each speaker had his or her own story to tell about Richard Dunn, a fond and often funny prelude to the historical study which followed. No one attending the conference honoring Dunn seemed surprised that it should proceed in this unplanned but regular manner. Rather, it was tacitly agreed that this was a man loved as well as respected, and that these feelings would be expressed anecdotally as well as professionally.

Each of Dunn's students had an idiosyncratic perspective, yet comments about his qualities as a teacher had much in common. Everyone concurred that he was demanding. His high standards stimulated students not only because they believed in the goals but also because he gave so much of himself to their work. He returned every paper (and every exam) with a thorough and thoughtful commentary, which might even match the length of the original submission.

Though he never hid a lighter side, Dunn was a serious teacher who expected his students to hunt down the available sources of information, weigh them carefully as to reliability, and use them—as well as the English language—skillfully while developing a cogent argument. Beyond these requirements, it was up to the student, whose research subject and career would be of his or her own choice. Dunn neither dictated topics nor expected discipleship. He was willing to consider the most far-flung seminar papers and dissertation projects. But he did expect quality, and his students came to expect no less of themselves than he did.

In his description of “The Work of Richard Dunn,” the lead essay in this volume, Gary B. Nash perceives “three interlocking categories: imperial politics, religion in its political and social contexts, and labor systems.” Despite Dunn's *laissez-faire* research policy, his scholarship influenced his students, fifteen of whose essays honoring his stewardship are included here. Many of these essays bear the marks of Dunn's lifelong commitment to transatlantic connections. Nicholas Canny '71 (University College, Galway, Ireland), author of “Fashioning ‘British’ Worlds in the Seventeenth Century,” points to the concern of the Winthrop family members, one of whom was the subject of Dunn's *Puritans and Yankees* (1962), for English colonization and the establishment of Protestantism, aims ambitious enough to demand “the human resources of Scotland and Ireland as well as of England.” Canny's focus is on “the role of Ireland as a testing ground for British colonization in America.”

In "The English Atlantic World: A View from London," Alison Games '92 (Georgetown) also adopts an imperial perspective, depicting the capital and center of the system as a place which "functioned as a filter for population moving into the city from all over England, and out of the city on ships for the Continent or any one of a range of English commercial or colonial ventures." Concentrating on migration, Games demonstrates how this phenomenon played a role in transforming England into an empire while transporting a largely youthful population to America.

Rosalind Beiler '94 (University of Central Florida) also tells a story of international movement, though from a different angle, in "Distributing Aid to Believers in Need: The Religious Foundations of Transatlantic Migration." Her subjects, Mennonites in continental Europe, were developing communication networks at the very time that English and Dutch Quakers were sending missionaries into the region. She sees religious activities overlapping commercial ventures as radical Protestant leaders in Europe "laid the foundations for the transatlantic transportation system." Furthermore, the immigrants who reached Pennsylvania maintained contact with their European brethren.

The themes of movement and continuing ties are elaborated upon by Marion Nelson Winship (doctoral candidate, University of Pennsylvania) in "The Land of Connected Men: A New Migration Story from the Early American Republic." Although the field of activity of Winship's protagonist, John Breckinridge, is transappalachian rather than transatlantic—he was a Virginian who speculated successfully in Kentucky land through his travels west and his connections to the east—the pattern is familiar.

Lynn Westerkamp '84 (University of California, Santa Cruz) also finds important an across-the-seas comparison in "Engendering Puritan Religious Culture in Old and New England." English common law and custom buttressed the Puritan biblical patriarchy, a social system which collided with the sexuality of Puritan religiosity: "God as male naturally promoted a sexualized piety more accessible to women than men."

In a more secular approach to the matter of gender, Ann M. Little '96 (University of Dayton) in "Men on Top? The Farmer, the Minister, and Marriage in New Haven Colony" details "the very tangible material and social benefits marriage bestowed on men." Little shows how two males, one totally self-focused and the other simply neglectful of the contributions of those around him, dominated their families' lives.

Unlike Puritan society, the Moravian social order was not patriarchal. And in the spiritual realm, Moravians "emphasized feminine themes that were especially appropriate to women, and they developed a religious practice that was separate and distinct from the practice of men," according to Beverly Prior Smaby '86 (Clarion University) in "Female Piety Among Eighteenth

Century Moravians.” Policy, however, was created in Germany by males, and with the changing of the guard came the undermining of female piety by the late eighteenth century.

Ned Landsman ‘79 (SUNY, Stony Brook) discusses the centrality of a moderate Presbyterian piety—situated midway between formal, hierarchical Anglicanism and decentralized Sectarians—to the colonial experience. Examining closely the correspondence of Esther Burr and Sarah Prince, he shows how two Presbyterian women reconciled their faith with an appreciation of Enlightenment ideals, much like the many influential men of their faith who attended John Witherspoon’s College of New Jersey.

Religious development among African Americans has presented historians not with a gender issue but, observes Rosanne Adderley ‘96 (Tulane) in “Orisha Worship and ‘Jesus Time’: Rethinking African Religious Conversion in the Americas,” a dichotomy between African-derived religions and African-American Christianity, with scholars implying that “African-influenced Christianity marked a greater European victory in the admittedly two-way acculturation process.” Examining two liberated African communities, one in the Bahamas and the other in Trinidad, Adderley disputes this assumption.

Those free African Americans who became Christians and sought to establish independent congregations could expect not only ridicule but resistance, according to Liam Riordan ‘96 (University of Maine) in “Passing as Black/Passing as Christian: Race and Religion in Northern Delaware During the Early Republic.” White leaders denounced the evangelistic style and feared its appeal to lower-class whites. Whites were also apprehensive about the threat of black independence: “Free blacks made Christianity their main vehicle for challenging public authority in the early republic.”

As Dee Andrews ‘86 (California State University, Hayward) points out in “Reconsidering the First Emancipation: Evidence from the Pennsylvania Abolition Society Correspondence, 1785-1810,” the Delaware region was also “a hotbed of Methodist as well as Quaker abolitionism.” The first abolitionist, stirred by the natural rights ideology of the Revolution, meant to enforce state manumission and emancipation laws, no easy task—and especially difficult on the border of slave territory.

The state was particularly sensitive to the property rights of slaveholders, as Alan L. Karras ‘88 (University of California, Berkeley) makes clear in “Caribbean Contraband, Slave Property, and the State, 1767-1792.” Mercantilist policy was only laxly enforced except in cases involving slaves “because *all* classes of white colonists understood the value of Africans to their societies and knew that without slave labor, their own livelihoods would be threatened.”

In “Slavery and the Disciplining of Free Labor in the Colonial Mid-Atlantic Iron Industry,” John Bezis-Selfa ‘95 (Wheaton College, Massachusetts)

lists the scarcity of labor, high wages, independent-minded workers, and industry competition as factors which “prompted northern ironmasters to turn increasingly to enslaved labor to increase their control over the pace and costs of production.” Bezis-Selfa notes the difficulty that enslaved ironworkers encountered in forming families or communities, although they preserved some degree of cultural autonomy.

A different labor system is the subject of “Girls and Boys: Poor Children and the Labor Market in Colonial Massachusetts” by Barry Levy ‘76 (University of Massachusetts, Amherst), who observes that the very men who spoke loudest in favor of liberty “felt no contradiction exploiting helpless children.” As New Englanders increasingly questioned slavery and family labor took years to develop, orphans filled the shortage of workers.

Attitudes toward children, however, were changing in the eighteenth century, according to Joseph E. Illick ‘63 (San Francisco State University), who looks at patterns of child rearing not only among European Americans but also Native Americans and African Americans, even suggesting that the history of the young “*may* give us important clues to the emotional lives of adults.”

Finally, Francis Jennings ‘66 (Newberry Library, emeritus) reminds us, whatever our focus, theme, milieu, era, or population group, that the handling of evidence and the detection of doctored documents is critical to historical analysis.

It is clear that Richard Dunn’s students have traveled in many scholarly directions. Yet the influence of the master is evident in the work of all of them.