To begin with my best Warren Harding imitation: this is not the time for recrimination nor regurgitation, for neither cacophany nor circumlocution, but rather for bibliographic bloviolation. My thesis is quite simple: Pennsylvania history was at the forefront of early American historical studies in 1934 when the eponymous journal was founded, and has remained so ever since. Impressions to the contrary derive from an overemphasis on intellectual history in which scholars of New England and Puritanism clearly have precedence given the accomplishments of that region. But when it comes to the history of religious and ethnic diversity, Native Americans, economic development, urban history, the frontier and the American Revolution, and even community studies, the unmatched diversity of early Pennsylvania is ably represented by its historians. If I had the time or energy to write a second article of comparable length, it would be easy to show that studies of Pennsylvania's role in the Civil War, coal, steel, and oil industries, industrial leaders, workers and strikes,
environmental history, immigrant communities, and deindustrialization would also be among the most important in the field of United States history.

It says something about the confidence of Pennsylvania’s historians that they would launch a second state journal and first state-wide historical association in the depths of the nation’s greatest economic depression. If the state’s seemingly infinite natural resources were finally running out, its passion for history had only begun to be tapped. We may start with two of the principal founders of the Pennsylvania Historical Association: Roy Nichols of the University of Pennsylvania and Lawrence Henry Gipson of Lehigh. Nichols was his generation’s leading expert on the national Democratic party in the decade before the Civil War, but his students and other scholars produced the most detailed and useful series of any state’s political history from the mid-eighteenth century to the end of Reconstruction. Most of these volumes were published by the State Historical and Museum Commission in one of that organization’s many essential contributions to the state’s history. Published by the Historical and Museum Commission are Theodore Thayer, *Pennsylvania Politics and the Growth of Democracy, 1740–1776* (PHMC 1953); Robert L. Brunhouse, *The Counter-Revolution in Pennsylvania, 1776–1790* (PHMC 1942); Harry M. Tinkcom, *The Republicans and Federalists in Pennsylvania, 1790–1801* (PHMC 1950); Sanford B. Higginbotham, *The Keystone in the Democratic Arch: Pennsylvania Politics, 1800–1816* (PHMC 1952); Charles M. Snyder, *The Jacksonian Heritage, Pennsylvania Politics, 1833–1848* (PHMC 1958); John F. Coleman, *The Disruption of the Pennsylvania Democracy, 1848–1860* (PHMC 1975); and Frank B. Evans, *Pennsylvania Politics, 1872–1877: A Study in Political Leadership* (PHMC 1966). Completing the series are Philip S. Klein, *Pennsylvania Politics: A Game Without Rules, 1816–1832* (Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1940) and Erwin S. Bradley, *The Triumph of Militant Republicanism: A Study of Pennsylvania and Presidential Politics, 1860–1872* (Penn 1964). Gipson never wrote a book on Pennsylvania, but it would not be hard to cull two or three substantial volumes on the province from his fifteen-volume *British Empire before the American Revolution* (New York: Knopf, 1956–1970).

While Gipson the “imperial historian” maintained that Britain tried to show how North American colonies had revolted against a benevolent empire, early twentieth-century Progressive history, the idea that conflict of the upper class against the middle and lower, also made sense in the tempestuous history of Pennsylvania in the revolutionary era. Scholars still

Between the late 1950s and early 1960s, work on early Pennsylvania stood out prominently. Carl Bridenbaugh, wrote *Rebels and Gentleman: Philadelphia in the Age of Franklin* (Oxford 1942) which like his other works, while primarily descriptive, was beautifully written and based on huge quantities of archival work. Worthy supplements were written by Frederick B. Tolles, *Meeting House and Counting House: The Quaker Merchants of Colonial Philadelphia, 1682–1763* (UNC 1948) and James Logan and the *Culture of Provincial America* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1957) and Sydney V. James, *A People Among Peoples—Quaker Benevolence in Eighteenth-Century America* (Harvard 1963). Quaker history, already one of the most developed fields for Pennsylvania in the early twentieth Century, has continued to attract scholars.


Accompanying a huge increase in the number of Ph.D.s and a national crisis that spurred interest in the histories of African-Americans, women, ethnic minorities, and the working class, Pennsylvania historical studies expanded dramatically in the mid-1960s. If Pennsylvania produced few studies in the these areas previously, outside of those dealing with Native Americans, neither had the profession in general.

In keeping with the state’s national historical importance, Pennsylvania has been in the forefront of scholarly trends in several areas. Colonial politics


The Pennsylvania frontier has become one of the most popular areas in all of early American studies in recent years, much as Puritans studies were from the 1930s to the 1960s: essays by a dozen scholars (mostly young) have appeared in William Pencak and Daniel Richter, eds., *Friends and Enemies in Penn's Woods* (PSU 2004). Several of them have since published important books: Paul Moyer, *Wild Yankees: The Struggle for Independence Along Pennsylvania's Revolutionary Frontier* (Cornell 2007); Amy C. Schutt, *Peoples of the River Valleys: The Odyssey of the Delaware Indians* (Penn 2007); Gregory T. Knouff, *The Soldiers' Revolution: Pennsylvanians in Arms and the Forging of Early*


For the colonial period, historians know well the “New England town studies” based on the French Annales school that set the American historical world on its ear in the late sixties and seventies. However, the work of


The story of New Sweden, which endured from 1638 to 1655 as a Swedish colony before being taken over by the Dutch then the English in 1664, is well told by C. A. Wesselager in New Sweden on the Delaware: 1638–1655 (Mid-Atlantic Press, 1988) and Carol E. Hoffecker, New Sweden in America (Del 1995). A good recent comparative study by Gunlög Maria Fur, Colonialism in the Margins: Cultural Encounters in New Sweden and Lapland (Leiden: Brill, 2006) stresses (as does Lehmann’s study of the Germans mentioned below) that more migration occurred eastward, out of Sweden and Germany, than westward in the early modern world.

Pennsylvania German studies are a whole academic industry, supported by the Pennsylvania German Society that publishes a Yearbook. The Max Kade Institute at the Pennsylvania State University, directed by A. G. Roeber, publishes books on German Americans with a heavy Pennsylvania emphasis. Roeber, in Palatines, Liberty, and Property: German Lutherans in Colonial British America (JHU 1993) reminds us that over ninety percent of all the immigrants to Pennsylvania were Lutheran or Reformed Protestants. Other works on these groups include Charles Glatfelter, Pastors and People: German Lutheran and Reformed Churches in the Pennsylvania Field, 1717–1793 (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania German Society, 1980–81); Marianne Wokeck, Trade in Strangers: The Beginnings of Mass Migration to North America (PSU 1999); Susan E. Klepp, Farley Grubb, and Anne Pfaelzer de Ortiz, eds., Souls for Sale: Two German Redemptioners Come to Revolutionary America (PSU 2006); Hartmut Lehmann et al., eds. In Search of Peace and Prosperity: New German Settlements in Eighteenth-Century Europe and America (PSU 2000); Otto Reinherr, ed., Quest for Faith, Quest for Freedom: Aspects of Pennsylvania’s Religious Experience (Sus 1987), and a notable series of articles by John B. Frantz, “The Religious Development of the Early German Settlers in ‘Greater


Publications on Pennsylvania women and family life is a rich and growing field. Major works include Karin Wulf, Not All Wives: Women of Colonial Philadelphia (Cornell 2000), Renate Wilson, Pious Traders in Medicine: A German Pharmaceutical Network in Eighteenth-Century North America (PSU 2000), who explains how women were the principal providers of medical care.


There is, unfortunately, no full-length biography of Rebecca Lukens, the foremost woman industrialist in early America who made Lukens Steel which remained a going concern into the twenty-first century, although Judith Scheffler, "...there was difficulty and danger on every side": The Family and Business Leadership of Rebecca Lukens Pennsylvania History. Volume 66 Number 3 (Summer 1999): 276–310 goes a long way toward filling the gap. Elaine Forman Crane’s edition of The Diary of Elizabeth Drinker (3 vols. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1982–86); Philadelphia Quaker, is the most informative diary yet published of an early American woman; Crane also edited a special issue of Pennsylvania History (vol. 68, 2001) of articles where the Drinker diary was the principal source.


The Commonwealth was also the scene of two tax revolts against U. S. government levies, dubbed rebellions to discredit them by the Federalists. They occurred in part because Pennsylvanians had not been used to paying state taxes (the state raised most of its money from customs duties and the sale of lands) as will be explained in Anthony M. Joseph’s forthcoming book based on his Princeton dissertation, “The Pennsylvania Legislature: 1776–1820” (1999). Two


Three religions, as well as the first African-American churches recognized by major denominations in the United States, became important during the early republic. They are discussed in Dale Light, Rome and New Republic: Conflict and Compromise in Philadelphia Catholicism Between the Revolution and the Civil War (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1996), Elizabeth Geffen, Philadelphia Unitarianism, 1796–1861 (Penn 1961), and Dee Andrews The Methodists and Revolutionary America, 1760–1800: The Shaping of an Evangelical Culture (Princeton 2000). My forthcoming biography of Episcopal Bishop William White discusses how the bishop's rational and ritualistic approach led to the decline of Philadelphia's most popular religion on the eve of the Revolution.


The large number of first-class publications on early Pennsylvania history is due in part to an institutional structure. Pennsylvania boasts Pennsylvania History and the Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, two scholarly state historical journals, an important regional periodical,
Western Pennsylvania History or Pittsburgh History to use its two names, and seven university presses (Pennsylvania, Penn State, Pittsburgh, Temple, Lehigh, Bucknell, and Susquehanna). Three Philadelphia-area institutions—the McNeil Center for Early American Studies, the Library Company of Philadelphia, and the American Philosophical Society—host numerous seminars, offer funding for publication projects, and publish the journals Early American Studies and the Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society. Pittsburgh’s Western Pennsylvania Historical Society is also very active.

In Harrisburg, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has done more to support history than perhaps any other state in the nation. The staff of the State Historical and Museum Commission includes leading scholars such as Linda Shopes, past President of the American Oral History Association and editor of a special edition of Pennsylvania History, vol. 60 (1993) on the subject. Linda Ries ranks among the nation’s leading historians of photography, whose special issue of Pennsylvania History, vol. 64 (1997), won the Philip M. and Elizabeth Kegan Hamer Award of the Society of American Archivists for, as its website describes it, “the archivist, editor, group of individuals, or institution that has increased public awareness of a specific body of documents through compilation, transcription, exhibition, or public presentation of archives or manuscript materials for educational, instructional, or other public purpose in a given year.” Eric Ledell Smith is a leading historian of the state’s African-American history. The PHMC awards eight to ten fellowships a year for scholars to use its archives. Former PHMC director Brent Glass, the driving force behind Pennsylvania: A History of the Commonwealth—a new introduction to state history that includes five hundred images and nine sections on how to do history using different techniques—has been “promoted” for his work and is now the Director of the National Museum of American History in Washington, D. C. The State Museum in Harrisburg has recently been refurbished to incorporate the history of minorities, women, and working class people, while the artwork of the adjacent State Capitol offers an aesthetically spectacular introduction to Pennsylvania history. Some county historical societies, too, have fine collections and excellent publications (Westmoreland, Centre, Lycoming, Lancaster and Berks spring immediately to mind on both counts).

Public history is a major industry in Pennsylvania, where tourism ranks second only to agriculture as a producer of economic wealth. The National Park Service maintains a good deal of surviving colonial Philadelphia as part
of Independence National Park; adjacent is the United States Constitution Center, opened on July 4, 2003, funded by concerned citizens who fear that our Constitution needs to be studied by the general public. The PHMC owns fifty-three sites at last count. Additionally, there are private and city museums (notably the Heinz Center in Pittsburgh and the Philadelphia Museum of Art) that feature large sections devoted to Pennsylvania's history. Several of these rank among the best places in the nation to experience a major aspect of a bygone era. Those seeking to learn about the early history of American railroads head for the Altoona Railroaders Museum, early iron manufacturing to Hopewell Village or Curtin Furnace, the early auto industry (centered in Pennsylvania before it left for Michigan) to Boyertown, and the buggy industry to Mifflinburg. The greatest collection of industrial art in the United States, if not the world, remains the secret of the Steidle Museum at Penn State, which only has space to exhibit a dozen or so of over five hundred paintings. Specialized museums abound in the state: mining (Ashland and Eckley Miners' Village—the latter a replica village built for the film "The Molly Maguires"), agricultural (Landis Valley), steel (the former Homestead Works), French and Indian War (Fort Pitt, Bushy Run Battlefield, Fort Necessity), religious (Ephrata, Moravian Bethlehem), and military museums (Boalsburg for all wars, the Frigate Niagara on Lake Erie for the War of 1812). More than anywhere else, authentic early American buildings may be found in Philadelphia and along the Schuylkill River and up Germantown Avenue to Chestnut Hill. (Many of these are open to the public.)

Pennsylvania can also boast five outstanding public history publications and projects. Pennsylvania Heritage is the state equivalent of American Heritage, and reaches over 15,000 subscribers. Illustrated guides of up to fifty pages to the PHMCs historical sites are written by first-rate historians. Some of these, and other scholars, offer talks to groups throughout the state through the Pennsylvania Humanities Council. Arcadia Publishing's pictorial histories of communities and neighborhoods has many Pennsylvania entries. For the computer literate, there is the web project exploreahistory.com. It uses the thousand or so state highway markers as a base for treatments of the markers according to topics including sports, jazz, politics, the Civil War, the American Revolution, art, William Penn, the new nation, coal, and steel with other topics still being written.
Pennsylvania's history has thus been in the forefront of academic scholarship and public history for the past three-quarters of a century. In 2008, new natural gas reserves have been found under its surface: could Pennsylvania be poised for yet another era of economic greatness? If so, will it get it right this time and combine the best of the commonwealth's exploitative nineteenth century industrial heritage with those of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries where "the Best Poor Man's Country" was at the forefront of the world's struggles for religious freedom and political justice? Future historians will judge.

Abbreviations

Cambridge—New York, Cambridge University Press
Columbia—New York, Columbia University Press
Cornell—Ithaca, Cornell University Press
Del—Newark, University of Delaware Press
Harvard—Cambridge, Harvard University Press
JHU—Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press
Kent—Kent State University Press
Lehigh—Bethlehem, Lehigh University Press
Oxford—New York, Oxford University Press
PaHist—Pennsylvania History (journal)
Penn—Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press
PMHB—Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography
PHMC—Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
Pitt—Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press
Princeton—Princeton University Press
PSU—University Park, Pennsylvania State University Press
Sus—Selinsgrove, Susquehanna University Press
Syracuse—Syracuse University Press
Temple—Philadelphia, Temple University Press
UNC—Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press
WMQ—William and Mary Quarterly
Yale—New Haven, Yale University Press

(All publications followed by date—other presses have full citations.)