

FROM THE EDITOR

Tamara Gaskell

Several years ago now, Bill Pencak and I sat down to talk about how we might, as editors of *Pennsylvania History* and the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, work together on a joint issue of our journals that would serve to introduce our respective members and subscribers to our sister state history journal and promote a fruitful partnership between the state's professional organization of historians with an interest in Pennsylvania history and the largest special collections research library housing the documentary record of our commonwealth and region. These two different but complementary organizations, it seemed to us, had much to offer one another—and to each other's members. As we began to discuss the focus of such a joint enterprise, Bill quickly suggested that we focus on the teaching of Pennsylvania history—a topic that both organizations are strongly committed to promoting and facilitating and that also defined Bill's daily life and to which he was devoted. This special issue is the result of that early conversation. Sadly, Bill did not live to see the fruits of our collaboration. This issue is dedicated to his memory.

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Different from our usual fare, this issue includes a selection of articles that provide suggestions for teaching specific subjects or for using nontraditional methodologies in teaching Pennsylvania history to undergraduates. Many of the ideas presented here can be adapted for other topics, courses, or levels, including secondary school. In an even greater departure, a couple of the articles include supplementary materials, which we have posted online at <http://www.pa-history.org/publications/pahistory.html> and <http://hsp.org/publications/pennsylvania-magazine-of-history-biography/pmhb-january-2015>. These materials include primary sources used in the lesson described, a sample syllabus, guidelines for conducting an oral history interview, and a grading rubric. Other articles include links to online resources either for use in the classroom or for further guidance. You can access these sites directly from the online editions of these journals on JSTOR or Project MUSE or go directly to the URLs provided.

If you are a member of both organizations, or subscribe to both journals, you will receive two copies. If you don't need both to complete your library collection, please share one with a colleague or friend.

For those of you who do not teach Pennsylvania history, or do not teach at all, we hope that you will still find value in these essays. Together, they remind us of why it is important to engage students—and others—with the past. Through the study and presentation of history, we learn to empathize as we come to better appreciate the motivations and actions of people in the past as well as of the audiences we serve in the present. We learn how to evaluate evidence, construct arguments, and think critically. Perhaps most importantly, through history, we connect with our families and our communities, and even ourselves.

I believe that Bill would have been proud to share this special issue with you.