

THE  
PENNSYLVANIA  
MAGAZINE  
OF HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY

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VOLUME CXXXVII

*April 2013*

NO. 2

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THE PENNSYLVANIA MAGAZINE OF HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY (ISSN 0031-4587, print; ISSN 2169-8546, online) is published each quarter in January, April, July, and October by THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA, 1300 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107-5699. Periodicals postage paid at Philadelphia, PA and additional mailing offices. **Postmaster:** send address changes to PMHB, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1300 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107-5699. **Authorization for academic photocopying:** For permission to reuse material, please access <http://www.copyright.com> or contact the Copyright Clearance Center, Inc. (CCC), 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923, 978-750-8400. CCC is a nonprofit organization that provides licenses and registration for a variety of uses. **Submissions:** All communications should be addressed to the editor. E-mail may be sent to [pmhb@hsp.org](mailto:pmhb@hsp.org). Manuscripts should conform to *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Electronic submissions are welcome. For submission guidelines, visit the PMHB web page (<http://hsp.org/publications/pennsylvania-magazine-of-history-biography>). The editor does not assume responsibility for statements of fact or of opinion made by the contributors.

## Contributors

NICHOLAS P. CIOTOLA is curator of cultural history at the New Jersey State Museum in Trenton, New Jersey. In 2011, he documented Hine's work in the state's glass mills and cranberry bogs in the State Museum exhibition *Glass Boys and Cranberry Girls: New Jersey through the Lens of Lewis W. Hine*.

DAVID L. CROSBY is an independent researcher currently working on an annotated critical edition of Anthony Benezet's antislavery publications. He is also researching and writing an essay on Benezet's peace testimony and its relation to his antislavery campaign for delivery at a conference, "The Atlantic World of Anthony Benezet," in Paris, May 2013.

CANDICE L. HARRISON is an assistant professor of history at the University of San Francisco. She is currently working on her book manuscript, "Democratizing the Market: Place, Power and Politics in Early Philadelphia," which explores the social and political dynamics of exchange in the public markets of early Philadelphia.

The full run of the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* is available in electronic format on JSTOR (<http://www.jstor.org>). Information on both print and electronic subscriptions can be found at <http://shop.hsp.org/catalog/publications/pmhb/subscription>. Both sites can also be accessed from the journal's website at <http://www.hsp.org/node/2876>.



*The Surgeon and the Abolitionist:  
William Chancellor and Anthony  
Benezet*

ANTHONY BENEZET AND WILLIAM CHANCELLOR might, at first, seem strange collaborators. They both arrived in Philadelphia at about the same time: Chancellor by birth in 1730, the eldest son of an Anglican father who was a politically connected sailmaker; Benezet by ship in 1731, the eighteen-year-old son of a French Huguenot émigré. From that coincidental starting point, Benezet's and Chancellor's lives diverged in significant ways. Benezet renounced the life of business after an unsuccessful early trial and became a pioneering schoolteacher, first in Germantown and then, more famously, at Penn Charter School in Philadelphia. He went on to establish and teach in a school for girls and a school for blacks, both among the first of their kind in America. Partly

Work for this article was supported in part by a short-term Albert M. Greenfield Foundation Fellowship in African American History from the Library Company of Philadelphia in the summer of 2011. I am grateful to James Green, Connie King, and Phillip Lapsansky of the Library Company for their help, encouragement, and suggestions. My Philadelphia friends John Overbeck, Peg McCormick, and Abby Cooper encouraged my work with their extraordinary hospitality and, in Abby's case, with timely and generous research help. The Historical Society of Pennsylvania provided access to crucial manuscripts from its collections relating to John Woolman and the Pemberton family. Thanks to my daughters, Emilye Crosby and Sarah C. Campbell, for reading and making helpful suggestions. As always I am indebted to my wife, Patty, for her unfailing support and understanding, as well as her keen eye as a proofreader and good sense as a critic.

THE PENNSYLVANIA MAGAZINE OF HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY  
Vol. CXXXVII, No. 2 (April 2013)

through his adopted Quaker faith, partly through his native humane disposition, and partly through his acquaintance with enslaved and free blacks in Philadelphia, he became a staunch campaigner against slavery and the slave trade, writing and publishing some of the most influential abolitionist tracts to appear before the American Revolution. Chancellor, by contrast, became a doctor of physic, selling medicines that he imported from London at his apothecary shop on Philadelphia's Market Street. As a young man he sailed out of New York on a slave ship, using his medical skills to evaluate the health of potential slaves, either captured or purchased, and to keep them alive and healthy at sea so they could be sold at a profit in New York on the ship's return.

It seems unlikely that the paths of these two would cross, or that the ardent abolitionist Benezet would choose to collaborate with a doctor who abetted the slave trade through his practice. Yet evidence suggests strongly that the two did work together, in a way—that Benezet used the slave physician's testimony to powerful effect as he composed his first antislavery tract for public dissemination in 1759. In order to ascertain the probable nature of the relationship between the two men, how Chancellor came to share his experiences with the abolitionist, and what the consequences were of their collaboration, we must look first at Benezet to see what he might have desired from Chancellor, then follow the course of Chancellor's background and life to evaluate the experiences that might have led him to aid Benezet. In the process we get a snapshot of Philadelphia mercantile society in the decades leading up to the separation from England and of the forces that shaped disparate responses to the institution of African slavery in America.

One of Anthony Benezet's great contributions to the eighteenth-century campaign against slavery and the slave trade was his use of eyewitness testimony to correct "misconceptions" held by slave owners.<sup>1</sup> In his first tract against the slave trade, *Observations on the Enslaving*,

<sup>1</sup> For a recent and comprehensive overview of Benezet's career as an antislavery campaigner and his influence on both sides of the Atlantic, see Maurice Jackson, *Let This Voice Be Heard: Anthony Benezet, Father of Atlantic Abolitionism* (Philadelphia, 2009). For Benezet's involvement with the world of Quaker publishing and petitioning, see Jonathan D. Sassi, "With a Little Help from the Friends: The Quaker and Tactical Contexts of Anthony Benezet's Abolitionist Publishing," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 135 (2011): 33–71. For his adoption of fact-based rhetorical strategies based on Enlightenment models, see David L. Crosby, "Anthony Benezet's Transformation of Anti-Slavery Rhetoric," *Slavery and Abolition* 23, no. 3 (2002): 39–58. For a judicious earlier treatment of his life and work that remains useful, especially on his relationship to American Revolutionary rhetoric, see Nancy S. Hornick, "Anthony Benezet: Eighteenth Century

*Importing, and Purchasing of Negroes* (1759), he addressed his fellow colonists who routinely purchased African slaves for use in their homes, farms, and businesses, assuring them that every purchaser, “as he encourages the trade, becomes partaker in the guilt of it.” “[A]nd that they may see what a deep dye the guilt is of,” he “beg[ged] leave to quote some extracts from the writings of persons of note, who have long been employed in the African trade, and whose situation and office in the factories will not admit any to question the truth of what they relate.” Benezet believed that if he opened the eyes of these purchasers to the evils created or encouraged by the transatlantic slave trade, he could prevent them “from being, in any degree, defiled with a gain so full of horrors, and so palpably inconsistent with the gospel of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”<sup>2</sup>

To achieve this end, Benezet carefully assembled a small selection of printed narratives detailing European encounters with Africa. The majority of these sources consisted of widely disseminated accounts of explorers and merchants such as Willem Bosman and Jean Barbot or the compilations of anthologists such as Joseph Randall and Thomas Astley. But tucked in among them was an unpublished account by an individual Benezet identifies only as “a person of candour and undoubted credit now living in *Philadelphia*, who was on a trading voyage, on the coast of *Guinea*, about seven years ago.” Claiming that this person was an eyewitness to atrocities, Benezet quotes the author’s manuscript journal to demonstrate “the misery and desolation which the purchase of slaves occasions in that country.” Here is the quotation in full:

Being on that coast, at a place called *Basalia*, the commander of the vessel according to custom sent a person on shore with a present to the king of the country, acquainting him with their arrival, and letting him know that they wanted a cargo of slaves: the king promised to furnish them with slaves, and in order to do it, set out to go to war against his enemies, designing also to surprise some town and take all the people prisoners. Sometime after, the king sent them word he had not yet met with the desired success, having been twice repulsed in attempting to break up two

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Social Critic, Educator, and Abolitionist” (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 1974). The groundbreaking biography by George S. Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet* (Philadelphia, 1937), also remains useful, especially for its collection of letters by, to, and about Benezet.

<sup>2</sup> Anthony Benezet, *Observations on the Enslaving, Importing, and Purchasing of Negroes* (Germantown, PA, 1759), 3, 8. Spelling and capitalization modernized throughout.

towns, but that he still hoped to procure a number of slaves for them; and in this design he persisted till he met his enemies in the field, where a battle was fought which lasted three days, during which time the engagement was so bloody that 4,500 were slain on the spot. Think, says the author, what a pitiable sight it was to see the widows weeping over their lost husbands, and orphans deploring the loss of their fathers, etc.<sup>3</sup>

This report served Benezet's purposes well. It alleged that the Europeans' request for slaves directly caused an African king to make war on his neighbors, at the expense of 4,500 lives, and, in its emotional description of the weeping of widows and orphans, it made clear the slave trade's human cost to an entire society. Benezet felt the power of the quote to express his own revulsion against war and violence and to reach out to those who owned or contemplated owning slaves. He used this quotation twice more in the next twelve years, in *A Caution and Warning to Great Britain and Her Colonies* (1766) and *Some Historical Account of Guinea* (1771), as he expanded his attacks on the slave system.

The author of the manuscript from which Benezet quoted this passage has remained unidentified for over 250 years, but several pieces of information, some of which have not become available until quite recently, now allow me to suggest that he is William Chancellor.<sup>4</sup> First of all,

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 5. This description of slaving in Barsally is consistent with a summary offered by Martin A. Klein, "Servitude among the Wolof and Sereer of Senegambia," in *Slavery in Africa: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives*, ed. Suzanne Miers and Igor Kopytoff (Madison, WI, 1977), 335–63. He writes, "The state controlled the trade and profited from it. The rulers made war, took prisoners, sentenced wrongdoers to enslavement, or sent warriors to attack dissident villages. Similarly, the same rulers and those who served them received most of the benefits from the trade" (341). Trade slaves were a distinct group, acquired through war, kidnapping, or purchase, and they had no value in the area where they were enslaved. Two other groups of slaves were domestic slaves, who were assimilated into new social units, mainly families; and the *tyeddo*, slaves usually attached to the ruler and his lineage, living in the capital city or nearby villages, and employed in most of the fighting and administration. These were the warrior slaves who would participate in raids on other towns and villages to capture trade slaves. Estimates of the number of *tyeddo* in the Barsally region run to about a third of the population, perhaps as many as 15,000 men. In the 1730s the King of Barsally had a reputation for raiding the towns of his enemies or even his own numerous towns in order to capture trade slaves. A pitched battle that killed 4,500 would have been exceptional, but perhaps not impossible.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Wolf, who edited *Observations on the Enslaving, Importing, and Purchasing of Negroes* for the anthology *Early American Abolitionists: A Collection of Anti-Slavery Writings, 1760–1820*, ed. James G. Basker (New York, 2005), states that the author is "possibly William Fentum" (23n16). Benezet does quote an entirely different passage from another manuscript journal in later publications, this one by an author who sailed to Africa in 1749 from Liverpool; Benezet identifies him once by the initials "W. F." (*A Short Account of that Part of Africa Inhabited by the Negroes*, 2nd ed. [1762], 54). Nowhere in his published writings does Benezet identify W. F. as

Benezet supplies more information about his source in later publications. In *A Caution and Warning*, he describes his anonymous eyewitness as a “surgeon” who sailed “from New York to the coast of Guinea, about eighteen years past,” and in *Some Historical Account of Guinea*, he repeats this information but changes the time reference to “about twenty years past.”<sup>5</sup> So we know the author lived in Philadelphia in 1759 but sailed as a surgeon from New York on a slave ship to Guinea about the year 1752, 1748, or 1751 (subtracting the number of years past from the dates of publication of the three works). A search of the website Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, compiled by David Eltis and his colleagues, reveals records of twelve slave ships that sailed to Africa from New York Harbor and returned slaves to America in the five-year stretch from 1748 to 1752. For one of them, the sloop *Wolf*, the database provides a reference to an article by Darold D. Wax titled “A Philadelphia Surgeon on a Slaving Voyage to Africa, 1749–1751.” This article leads us to William Chancellor.<sup>6</sup>

### *William Chancellor and His Journal*

Wax had come across a newly deposited manuscript at the Maryland Historical Society: “Continuation of a Voyage from New York to the Coast of Africa in the Sloop *Wolf* Gurnay Wall Commandr. in the Years 1749–50 & 51,” by William Chancellor of Philadelphia.<sup>7</sup> The dates and

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William Fentum, nor do his sources. I have not been able to find Fentum’s name in any published sources on the slave trade, and Wolf provides no further identification. Even if W. F. is some otherwise unknown William Fentum, there is nothing to connect him to the author of this quotation in *Observations* other than Benezet’s referring to one as “a person whose candor may be depended upon” and the other as “a person of candor and undoubted credit.” Although Wolf’s transcription of Benezet’s texts appears to be impeccable, his notes are not consistently reliable. For example, he fails to identify Basalia with the ancient kingdom of Barsally (or Bur-Salum or Salum) just north of the Gambia River (he places it in present-day Sudan), and he fails to recognize that most of *Notes on the Slave Trade* (1780), which he also edited, consists of a long quotation from John Wesley’s *Thoughts Upon Slavery* (he appears also to attribute the quote from Wesley to the same William Fentum [29n1]).

<sup>5</sup> Anthony Benezet, *A Caution and Warning to Great Britain and Her Colonies* (Philadelphia, 1766), 18; Anthony Benezet, *Some Historical Account of Guinea* (Philadelphia, 1771), 119.

<sup>6</sup> Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1751&yearTo=1754&ptdepimp=20600>, accessed May 3, 2012; Darold D. Wax, “A Philadelphia Surgeon on a Slaving Voyage to Africa, 1749–1751,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 92 (1968): 465–93.

<sup>7</sup> Diary of William Chancellor, 1749–51, E. A. Williams Papers, MS 899, Maryland Historical Society. The collection was donated to the society in 1962 by E. A. Williams III.

places fit what Benezet reveals about his anonymous source, but the question remains: is there more evidence that would link this William Chancellor to Benezet's "person of candour and undoubted credit"?

The best evidence would be to find the passage Benezet quotes in the text of Chancellor's manuscript, but that, unfortunately, is not possible. The manuscript described by Wax represents only the second volume of Chancellor's journal, beginning with the entry for May 18, 1750. The first volume appears to have been lost or possibly destroyed. The second volume does not cover the period of time Chancellor spent in the area of the Gambia River, where the Kingdom of Barsally (the author's "Basalia") was located. We do know, from a list of slave purchases near the end of the journal, that the *Wolf* was slaving off the coast near the Gambia for two months between mid-November 1749 and mid-January 1750 and that the captain purchased twenty-nine enslaved Africans from there. This means that Chancellor would have had opportunity to witness the results of the pitched battle described in Benezet's passage. That he was familiar with the natives of the Gambia region is clear from a comparison he made on July 3, 1750: "The negroes in these parts [the Gold Coast] tho' they are very ingenious, yet have not half that honesty and good nature, that the Gambia men are endowed with neither will you receive half that civility from them."<sup>8</sup> Although Chancellor's primary duties were to see to the health of the slave cargo, from inspecting those offered for sale to treating the purchased slaves in the confines of holding pens and on board ship, we must not imagine him confined aboard ship. He would have had many duties that took him to shore and brought him into contact with Africans on their own soil, so he would have had ample opportunity to witness and comment on the actions of people like the "King of Basalia."

Other passages found in Chancellor's journal, when he describes the sufferings and deaths of slaves he had to care for aboard ship, are consistent in style and sentiments to the passage quoted by Benezet:

*Wednesday, May 30 [1750]:* This morning early going down among the Slaves, I found a boy dead, at noon another, and in the afternoon, another. Oh Reader, whoever thou art, it is impossible for you to conceive or me to describe the Torture I sustain at the loss of these Slaves we have committed to a watry grave. . . .

<sup>8</sup> Quoted in Wax, "Philadelphia Surgeon," 473. Wax's capitalization, spelling, and punctuation followed throughout. There is no complete published transcript of Chancellor's manuscript, but Wax offers extensive quotations in his article.

*Saturday, June 2:* . . . [T]o see 29 come on deck and hardly able to crawl must be affecting to one who has the care of them. . . .

*Sunday, July 1:* . . . [I]t is [a] very affecting thing that I who have the Sole care of the Slaves and know [what] is proper must see them suffer & even die.<sup>9</sup>

From passages such as these we can get a glimpse of the kind of man this surgeon was. Wax describes him, based solely on the entries in his journal, as having “an alert and curious mind, and one which had received more than a mere smattering of what the century had to offer in the way of a medical education.” Chancellor knew Latin, dabbled in poetry (Alexander Pope was his idol), and experimented, sometimes successfully, with “recipes” for treating illnesses such as dysentery. Other than this, Wax says, “very little is known,” and he calls Chancellor’s family connections in Philadelphia “all rather obscure.”<sup>10</sup>

That was then; this is now. Digitized public records now allow us to bring three generations of the Chancellor family out of the shadows of history so we can consider and speculate about the forces that might have converged to send this Philadelphia lad on a slaving voyage to Africa as a surgeon and, later, to share his revealing journal of this excursion with Anthony Benezet.

Chancellor’s father, also named William Chancellor, was a sailmaker, minor politician, landlord, warehouseman, and property speculator. A man of his times, he employed both enslaved and indentured laborers in his businesses and his home, and had some trouble keeping them.<sup>11</sup> In a city where many of the businessmen and merchants were Quakers, he was an Anglican, serving as a vestryman at Christ Church for eleven years between 1721 and 1742. The year 1730 saw the birth of Chancellor’s first son, William. The elder William Chancellor’s business affairs and his life ended abruptly in February 1742/43. His wife apparently died before him, as no mention is made of her in his will. His children are listed as two sons, William and Samuel, and three daughters, Elizabeth, Lethea,

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 487.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 466. The family history was obscure enough that Wax confused William Chancellor, the surgeon and author of the journal, with his father, William Chancellor, the sailmaker. Wax asserts that the surgeon was a friend of Governor William Keith, but Keith left the colony in 1727, three years before the surgeon was born. He also asserts that the surgeon’s son, William Jr., married Salome Wister, but, in fact, it was the surgeon himself who was William Jr., and it was he who married Salome. Compare Wax, “Philadelphia Surgeon,” 466, with my account herein.

<sup>11</sup> Between 1721 and 1723 he placed advertisements for two runaway white male servants and one “Negro woman named Nan.” *American Weekly Mercury*, June 22, 1721, Nov. 28, 1723.

and Mary. Young William had probably not yet reached his thirteenth birthday when the will was written and proved, yet he and his sister Elizabeth are listed as executors.<sup>12</sup> For the next several years Elizabeth fought to salvage something from an estate that was clearly having difficulty paying its debts. On May 5 she offered for sale “Three Negro men sail-makers, and a new chair for one horse, with harness,” while imploring those who owed the estate money “to make speedy payment.” By July 28 it appears that the three “Negro” men, not having sold earlier, had been seized and were to be offered at auction on August 10. Two years later the house and sail loft on Second Street were liquidated “by order of the trustees of the Loan Office.”<sup>13</sup>

We can only speculate where young William was and what he was doing in the years between his father’s death in 1743 and his 1749 voyage. We can tell from William’s journal that he received a liberal education in Latin and English and trained as a doctor, learning both medicine and surgery. Thanks to William Penn’s charters, grammar schools teaching Latin, English, mathematics, and other useful subjects were widely available to the children of Philadelphia, and young Chancellor could have attended one of these schools or studied with one of the dozens of private tutors who taught pupils in their homes or in makeshift classrooms. Printers and booksellers abounded, and, if you knew the right people, private libraries that were as good as any on the continent could be tapped.<sup>14</sup>

As for Chancellor’s medical training, Henry Burnell Shafer has written: “At that time, becoming a doctor involved one of two procedures: apprenticeship to a practicing physician for an indefinite number of years, or study abroad.”<sup>15</sup> Of the two, apprenticeship is by far the more likely for Chancellor. In 1743 he turned thirteen, a common age for young men to

<sup>12</sup>Abstracts of Wills, 1724–1747, Philadelphia, Pa., Book G, Mar. 2, 1742: 35, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

<sup>13</sup> *Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 5, 1743, July 28, 1743, July 4, 1745.

<sup>14</sup> For the interpenetration of classical learning with Philadelphia’s civic and commercial culture, see Richard Mott Gummere, “Apollo on Locust Street,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 56 (1932): 68–92. On the public schools see Jean S. Straub, “Quaker School Life in Philadelphia before 1800,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 89 (1965): 447–58, and “Teaching in the Friends’ Latin School of Philadelphia in the Eighteenth Century,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 91 (1967): 434–56. On private tutors see Robert Francis Seybolt, “Schoolmasters of Colonial Philadelphia,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 52 (1928): 361–71.

<sup>15</sup> Henry Burnell Shafer, “Medicine in Old Philadelphia,” *Pennsylvania History* 4 (1937): 21.

become apprentices, and with his father's estate in debt he did not have the resources to head off to London or Edinburgh for medical school. If William had been apprenticed to a doctor at age thirteen, as seems likely, he could have acquired the skills he needed to serve as surgeon aboard a slaving ship at the tender age of nineteen. We can get an idea of those skills from his journal.

The maladies Chancellor treated aboard ship included measles; dropsy (edema); pleurisy; white, green, and bloody flux (dysentery); worms; kidney stones; imposthumes (abscesses); and one small cancer. The medicines he relied on included astringents (drying or drawing agents), cathartics (purges), sudorifics (sweat producers), and anodynes (painkillers). In August 1750 he complained bitterly about his difficulty in obtaining medicines, which he had run out of in May. He also regretted not knowing beforehand that the ship would be purchasing children, because, he lamented, "my medicines are very harsh for them." Most of the surgical procedures he performed seem to have been autopsies. In one case he found an otherwise healthy girl dead in the steerage and, finding blood in her right ear, decided to investigate. He reported, "[I] got my instruments and open'd the part where I found the Temporal Bone fractur'd, on an inquiry among the Slaves found one of the women had beat her in the night." When a three-year-old girl died of flux and measles, he "opened immediately and found in her Intestines 7 Worms some of the[m] 12 & 13 Inches roll'd up together in a bundle." A week later another girl died of worms, and he "found the Pylorus or neck of the Stomach chock'd full of them."<sup>16</sup>

In addition to treating illnesses and injuries, Chancellor was constantly concerned for alleviating the *Wolf's* poor accommodations for handling slaves. He complained in his journal about the waves that washed over the ship "into the very hold and steerage where the sick are which must make it not dangerous to the sick only but the well also, being obliged to be to the ankles in water." He lamented that there was "no quarter deck[,] no platform . . . for Children which we have of 3 & 4 years old," and that the cramped quarters led to a "want of exercise which they cannot have on board so vile a Vessel as this."<sup>17</sup> He was fearful that contagious diseases would be brought on board by the errors of others. On July 18, 1750,

<sup>16</sup> Wax, "Philadelphia Surgeon," 483–90 (Wax mistranscribes "sudorifick" as "sudonsick"), quotations 488, 484, and 487.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 467–68.

when they had been off the African coast for nine months, he fretted that some of the slaves they had lost to the flux “would not have been sick had not the Capt. gone on board a Vessel where the infection was” and expressed his “dread of having the Small Pox among them which is now in the Rhode and on board which Vessel the Capt very often is.”<sup>18</sup> The *Wolf* would continue to languish on the coast yet another six months and lose many more slaves until late September. On November 23 Chancellor reported, with some satisfaction, “great Success with the Slaves having not lost one this 2 months, I have discover’d a Recipe for that Vile Disorder the Flux.”<sup>19</sup>

Given Chancellor’s youth and apparently sincere compassion for his charges, it is not surprising that seeing so many of them die might cause him to question his own competence. The loss of so many slaves had, Chancellor wrote, “thrown me into a melancholy out of [which] I shall not easily recover[.] An Account of their disorders & medicines apply’d I am now writing in order to present to the owners at my arrival in America.” Whether this accounting was designed merely to justify the merits of his own work or, perhaps, to try to rectify some of the wretched conditions he found on board the *Wolf* is difficult to say. What is clear is that Chancellor had felt a great personal loss in the twenty months he had spent aboard a slave ship. On the last page of his journal, he looks back at the voyage and regrets, “in the very best of my years, in the time of hopes, prospects and advantages [I should] be so wretched as to be debarr’d the Capacity of making use of them, and in a sense buried alive.”<sup>20</sup>

Chancellor’s experience did not lead him to condemn slavery or even the slave trade, at least at the time he wrote his journal. He accepted the opinion that certain Africans were cannibals who would eat not only their African and European enemies but their own children.<sup>21</sup> Luckily for the

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 487. Chancellor frequently uses the word “Rhode” in the nautical sense of a “roadstead,” a place offshore a port where vessels can lie at anchor in relative safety. In this case, however, he seems to be referring to an actual vessel on board which his captain, Gurnay Wall, had been spending time. This would be the *Rhode Island*, a sister ship of the *Wolf*, captained by Peter James, owned by the same Livingston brothers who owned the *Wolf*, and known to be in African waters at the same time in 1750. Cf. Wax, who says that Chancellor refers to the *Rhode Island* and another sister ship, the *Stork*, in his journal (ibid., 467). The *Rhode Island* returned to New York with its cargo of sixty-nine slaves on May 27, 1751, just seventeen days after the arrival of the *Wolf*. See Voyages, <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1866&shipname=rhode+island>, accessed July 17, 2012.

<sup>19</sup> Wax, “Philadelphia Surgeon,” 489.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 489, 492–93.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 472–73.

slave traders, not all Africans were so savage. Some “were formerly as ravenous as those mentioned off of Cape Laho, but by the English Vessels being constantly here [at the Gold Coast] they are in some measure become naturalized, which has been very much to [their] advantage.”<sup>22</sup> In the ethnocentric ideology of the young surgeon, Africans could only be helped by their contacts with Europeans, especially the English. It is not remarkable, then, that Chancellor would express an opinion, a few months before the end of his stay in Africa, that the slave trade was not “in the least” vile, because “tis redeeming an unhappy people from inconceivable misery under which they continually labour, and from those miseries of life into which they are every day precipitated.” He found particularly offensive the power Africa’s autocratic monarchs and chieftains wielded over the lives and deaths of their subjects, explaining, “A king very often takes it into his head to kill any body[. W]hen he dies numberless poor unhappy creatures are sacrificed to him, out of whose skulls they drink Rum as soon as clean’d . . . I say they are better in being servants to the English than in this continuall dread of Death.”<sup>23</sup> It should not be overlooked that Chancellor also had a financial interest in the survival of the slave cargo. As the surgeon he was entitled to some unspecified number of slaves to keep or sell for his own benefit. As he mourned the loss of three boys to illness in one day, he mentions, “one of [them] was to have been my own.”<sup>24</sup>

### *Chancellor’s Return and His Associates in Philadelphia*

For the twenty-five months following the *Wolf*’s return on May 10, 1751, Chancellor is missing from the public record. But on June 7, 1753, he returned to public notice in Philadelphia when he placed this advertisement in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*: “Imported in the *Myrtilla*, Capt. Budden, from London, and to be sold cheap, by William Chancellor . . . a neat assortment of chemical and galenical [i.e., herbal] medicines.”<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 476. Chancellor was aware that Africans who sent their sons to England did not always get them back as they expected, as in the case of William Sessarakoo, the son of John Corantie of Animabo, who was sent to England for education but instead was sold into slavery in Barbados by the ship’s captain. When his father discovered the treachery, he discontinued all trading with the English until his son was redeemed and sent to London.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 490–91.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 487.

<sup>25</sup> *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 7, 1753.

Captain Richard Budden had been sailing out of Philadelphia since 1733, and many Philadelphia merchants depended on him to supply them with imported goods, especially cloth.<sup>26</sup> In that same issue of the *Gazette*, no fewer than seven other merchants mention that their stock had arrived on the *Myrtilla*. Of these, the most interesting is John Smith, because of his connection to Anthony Benezet.

Smith was precisely the kind of man the neophyte Chancellor might look to for friendship and guidance. Only eight years older, he too had gone to sea as a young man, though only as a passenger on one of his father's ships to Barbados; while there he got a good look at plantation slavery, which he detested. He was a hugely prosperous merchant who nonetheless cultivated his taste for literature and fine writing and was active in civic affairs: elected for three consecutive years to the Pennsylvania Assembly, helping to found one of the first insurance companies in North America and the first hospital, and serving on the board of overseers for the public schools. He was an elder in his Quaker meeting and was allied by marriage to one of the foremost families in the province. In fact, he was just what an ambitious young man like Chancellor might hope to become in eight years.<sup>27</sup> He was also a close personal friend and collaborator of Anthony Benezet. The year Smith and Chancellor were dealing in merchandise imported on Captain Budden's ship, Smith acted for the overseers of the Quaker public schools to review and approve Benezet's spending accounts as schoolmaster. In his diary Smith mentions meeting, working, and socializing with Benezet and his wife almost forty times in the years 1746–51, often in the company of dignitaries such as James Logan, Israel Pemberton, James Pemberton, and Benjamin Franklin. Anthony and Joyce Benezet were intimate participants in the wedding between Smith and Logan's daughter Hannah.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>26</sup> The shipping news from Philadelphia for July 26, 1733, records that Hamilton and Budden left Philadelphia for Madeira (*New England Weekly Journal*, Aug. 6, 1733); for March 12, 1733/34 the shipping news records that R. Budden was entered outward for Jamaica, captaining the brig *Hampshire* (*American Weekly Mercury*, Mar. 12, 1733/34). For the next twenty-five years, Budden averaged over two voyages per year, most of them round trips from Philadelphia to London or Portugal.

<sup>27</sup> For a review of Smith's career see Frederick B. Tolles, "A Literary Quaker: John Smith of Burlington and Philadelphia," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 65 (1941): 300–33, esp. 303.

<sup>28</sup> For the relationship between Smith and Benezet, see Sassi, "With a Little Help from the Friends," 37–44. For Smith's diary, see *Hannah Logan's Courtship*, ed. Albert Cook Myers (Philadelphia, 1904), 85–305. For Benezet's account, see Philadelphia Overseers of the Public School, "Miscellaneous Manuscripts" (1754), Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania.

Anthony Benezet's three brothers—James, Philip, and Daniel—were also part of the close-knit and competitive circle of merchants who sold imported goods along Front, Second, and Market Streets. James had done business with Captain Budden, advertising in 1749 an extraordinary list of items “just imported from London in the ship *Myrtilla*” that included scythes, pewter, steel, and over seventy-five named kinds of cloth and thread, plus “a variety of goods too tedious to mention.”<sup>29</sup> It is a virtual certainty that Chancellor would have known Smith and the Benezet brothers in the normal course of his business as it grew from this beginning in 1753.

In September 1753 William Chancellor married Salome Wister, the daughter of John Wister, a German immigrant who had become one of the richest landowners and merchants in the province.<sup>30</sup> Wister was also an intimate friend of Anthony Benezet's father, John Stephen Benezet. Both men lived and kept stores on Market Street, but Benezet's father gave up his business in 1743, became a member of the Moravian Church, and moved his residence to Germantown. Wister also had a summer residence in Germantown (which still stands) just north of Christopher Sower's printing shop, where Anthony Benezet is believed to have worked as a proofreader in 1739 and where the first two editions of his *Observations on the Enslaving, Importing, and Purchasing of Negroes* were printed. After Benezet's father died in 1750, Wister acted as agent in several advertisements offering the late Benezet's home and property for rent.<sup>31</sup> Given Chancellor's possible business connections to John Smith and the Benezet brothers and his son-in-law relationship to John Wister, there is a strong likelihood that he and Benezet came to know each other, if not intimately, then at least as fellow citizens.

Immediately after his marriage, Chancellor's business appears to have prospered. In November 1753 he advertised that he had set up shop on Market Street across from the Presbyterian church “at the sign of the Pestle and Mortar.” At the end he offered to supply “masters of vessels not carrying surgeons” with a medicine box and proper directions.<sup>32</sup> This advertisement was repeated at frequent intervals until the end of the year.

<sup>29</sup> *Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 25, 1749.

<sup>30</sup> “1753, Sept. 29, Chancelor [sic], William, and Salome Wistar [a variant spelling of the name, more commonly used for the family of John's older brother Caspar],” Marriage Record of Swede's Church (Gloria Dei), 1750–1810, in *Pennsylvania Archives*, ed. Samuel Hazard et al. (Philadelphia and Harrisburg, PA, 1852–1935), 2nd ser., 8:327.

<sup>31</sup> *Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 21, 1752, June 4, 1752, Mar. 6, 1753.

<sup>32</sup> *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Nov. 22, 1753, Sept. 5, 1754.

Then he appears to have ceased advertising. This may be a sign that his importing business was doing poorly. The advertising of imported goods in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* decreased sharply in 1755 as the rumors of war with the French and reports of privateers preying on shipping depressed commerce. It could be, however, that Chancellor was devoting more of his time to the practice of medicine than to his importing business. He was also starting a family, fathering a son, William, and a daughter, Salome.

There is one document from the 1750s that links Chancellor's name with Anthony Benezet's: they both appear on a list that appeared in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* on May 29, 1755, of several hundred early contributors toward establishing the Pennsylvania Hospital for the Relief of the Sick Poor. As a physician, Chancellor would undoubtedly have become acquainted with the chief organizer of the hospital, Israel Pemberton, who was also an intimate friend of Benezet.

By 1759 Anthony Benezet had written or was engaged in writing *Observations on the Enslaving, Importing, and Purchasing of Negroes*, and, if my identification is correct, he had seen and copied a part of William Chancellor's manuscript. How would he have gotten it? The two men had many possibilities of contact: through Benezet's brothers; through Chancellor's marriage to Salome Wister, whose father was a coreligionist, neighbor, and ally of Benezet's father; and, most importantly, through John Smith, whom Chancellor probably met early and often in his first years of doing business on the waterfront. Smith and Benezet had been appointed to the Friends' Overseers of the Press in 1752 and had worked together in editing and arranging the printing of the Friends' 1754 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's *Epistle of Caution and Advice Concerning the Keeping of Slaves* and John Woolman's *Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes* (1754). Even though Smith retired from his business and returned to Burlington, New Jersey, in 1756, he and Benezet continued to collaborate. Letters from Benezet to Smith in late 1757 and early 1759 mention "a small work . . . treating of Negroes" that probably refers to a manuscript version of *Observations* that Benezet was sharing with him before its publication.<sup>33</sup> So Smith knew that Benezet was planning a tract that would address the evils of the slave trade by citing the narratives of slave traders and other travelers to

<sup>33</sup> Sassi, "With a Little Help from the Friends," 39–40, 44; Anthony Benezet to John Smith, Dec. 30, 1757, and Feb. 20, 1759, in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet*, 225, 234.

Africa. It is easy to imagine Chancellor sharing his journal with Smith, a man whom I believe he would have expected to feel some empathy for his experiences; and Smith could have told Benezet about a source that could contribute powerfully to his rhetorical purpose. Let us speculate that Benezet met with Chancellor, asked to publish a short extract from his journal, and agreed to keep Chancellor's identity hidden to spare the young man any personal embarrassment or discomfort. His experience aboard ship had been physically and mentally traumatic, and Benezet might have wanted to mitigate any pain that revelations about his past might cause.

*William Travels to London*

In March 1761 the following advertisement appeared in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*: "William Chancellor, intending for England in three months, desires all persons indebted to him to make speedy payment; and those that have any demands against him to bring in their accounts that they may be settled. All sorts of drugs, chemical and galenical medicines, will continue to be sold at the lowest rates at his house, sign of the Pestle and Mortar."<sup>34</sup> This settling of debts was a fairly common practice among colonists who were preparing for a sea voyage; it was good manners to let your creditors know you were not sneaking out of town to avoid paying your notes. Chancellor most likely sailed with the veteran captain Richard Budden, now commanding the *Philadelphia Packet*, which cleared the Philadelphia Custom House on July 23 as it headed for London. A standard six-week passage would have put him there on or about September 3, just in time for him to write the following note to Benezet's good friends Israel and James Pemberton on September 6:

Much Esteemed friends/

The Civilities I have received from Doctor Fothergill, tho' arrived but a few days, demand from me the utmost return of thanks, as they could have proceeded, from nothing but your warm recommendation of me, to him. It will be my constant study, to prove worthy your Esteem, and acknowledge how much I am—

Your obliged Friend—

Wm Chancellor.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Mar. 26, 1761.

<sup>35</sup> William Chancellor to Israel and James Pemberton, Sept. 6, 1761, vol. 15, p. 44, Pemberton Family Papers (Collection 0484A), Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

This letter—the only other manuscript document by Chancellor known still to exist—raises many questions. Did Chancellor approach the Pembertons for a letter of introduction to John Fothergill, a devout Friend and one of the richest and most respected medical practitioners in England, or did the Pembertons send Chancellor to London on an errand for them? What business did Chancellor have in London, and did it involve Fothergill in a major way, or was Chancellor merely paying his respects to a renowned surgeon and physician? Fortunately, a letter written by Fothergill to James Pemberton some seven months later and carried back to Philadelphia by James Logan's son William helps to answer some of the questions. Pemberton appears to have sent Fothergill some books along with a request that he help raise money for the newly proposed Pennsylvania Hospital for the Sick Poor. Fothergill responded that the request “came at an unlucky juncture,” since “money is wanted here for many purposes, and men part with fifty pounds with reluctance.” Instead of immediate support, Fothergill promised to send a present of some anatomical drawings that would be useful in courses in anatomy, which is “of exceedingly great use to practitioners in Physic and Surgery.”<sup>36</sup> He further proposed that Dr. William Shippen the younger, with whom he would be sending his gift, be permitted to use the drawings in offering private courses in anatomy “to students who may attend the new hospital.”<sup>37</sup> Fothergill even looked forward to the day that Shippen and John Morgan, who would receive his MD from Edinburgh in 1763, “will be able to erect a school of Physick amongst you that may draw many students from various parts of America and the West Indies.”<sup>38</sup> Fothergill then offered his opinion on the thirty-two-year-old William Chancellor: “though perhaps not qualified to take any considerable share in an undertaking of this nature, yet [he] has spent his time here to considerable advantage. I esteem him much, and have no doubt but his diligence and

<sup>36</sup> John Fothergill to James Pemberton, Apr. 7, 1762, in *Chain of Friendship: Selected Letters of Dr. John Fothergill of London, 1735–1780*, ed. Betsy C. Corner and Christopher C. Booth (Cambridge, MA, 1971), 225.

<sup>37</sup> William Shippen the younger was the son of Dr. William Shippen of Philadelphia. He had graduated from the College of New Jersey, then studied medicine briefly with his father before studying under Fothergill and Dr. William Hunter in London. He took his MD degree from Edinburgh in 1761 (*ibid.*, 227n).

<sup>38</sup> John Morgan, another young Philadelphian, was a member of the first graduating class of the College of Philadelphia and, later, a student of Fothergill and Hunter in London before proceeding to the University of Edinburgh (*ibid.*, 225 and 228n).

care, improved by the opportunities of seeing a great deal of practice, will render him a very useful member of society.”<sup>39</sup>

Another purpose of Chancellor’s visit was to purchase supplies in London to restock his shop on Market Street. In this he succeeded, announcing in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* for June 10, 1762, that he had new merchandise “imported from the original warehouses in London on the *Philadelphia Packet*” and another ship. The *Packet* had made entry to Philadelphia two weeks earlier, and it is likely that Chancellor arrived on it as well, perhaps along with William Logan and the letter he was carrying from John Fothergill to James Pemberton.<sup>40</sup>

### *William’s Death and Its Aftermath*

Four months later, William Chancellor was dead. His death notice is silent as to the cause, offering only the most conventional boilerplate to describe the event and his character: “On the 11th instant departed this life, in the 32nd year of his age, Doctor William Chancellor, to the great loss of his family: a gentleman of a most amiable character. He had an extensive acquaintance, and wherever he was known, was beloved and esteemed, both for his public and private virtues, as well as an eminent physician.”<sup>41</sup> Whatever the cause, it seems Chancellor’s death was unexpected and probably left his wife and two children without much in the way of an estate. His apothecary business changed hands by January 1763, bought by John Shippen, druggist, another medical son of William Shippen the elder.<sup>42</sup> In 1769, seven years after Chancellor’s death, his wife, Salome, was listed in the proprietary tax rolls along with two Wister relatives, Cathrine and Sarah, with whom she undoubtedly lived. Cathrine was assessed over £115; Sarah exactly £43; Salome was assessed only £1/10s.<sup>43</sup> Her two young children, William and Salome, probably

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 225.

<sup>40</sup> *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 10, 1762, May 27, 1762.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., Oct. 21, 1762.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., Jan. 13, 1763. In Shippen’s advertisement in the *Gazette*, no reference is made to the name of the shop, the Pestle and Mortar, only “the house and shop lately kept by Dr. William Chancellor, in Market Street.” Shippen says he has “bought the shop furniture, and a valuable parcel of drugs and medicines,” but whether he bought the house itself is not clear.

<sup>43</sup> Proprietary Tax, County of Philadelphia, 1769, in *Pennsylvania Archives*, ser. 3, 14:160. The two women listed with Salome are probably Catharine Jansen Wistar, the widow of John Wistar’s elder brother Caspar Wistar, who died in 1752, and Sarah Wistar, the unmarried daughter of Caspar and Catharine. They were, respectively, Salome’s aunt and first cousin. Catharine is listed as

were assimilated by the Wister family; twenty years later, both William and Salome Carpenter Chancellor were legatees in their maternal grandfather's will, and William was appointed one of the executors. Soon after that, each of them married into the prominent Wharton family.<sup>44</sup>

### *Conclusions*

To summarize the case for identifying William Chancellor as the "person of candour" that Benezet quotes in *Observations* and in two later works, we know he is first mentioned in Philadelphia's records in 1743 as the son of the sailmaker William Chancellor and one of the executors of his estate, though he was not yet thirteen years old. We know the nineteen-year-old Chancellor was serving as a surgeon on board the *Wolf* off the coast of Africa in the time frame Benezet specified for his author and that he kept a two-volume journal of his experiences. We know from the second volume that twenty-nine enslaved Africans were purchased for the *Wolf* in the vicinity of the Kingdom of Barsally near the Gambia River in November–December 1749. We know that Chancellor made visits to the African shore and had contact with traders and kings. This kind of contact would have given him the opportunity to witness the events described in the quotation Benezet chose for his tract. We also know that Chancellor reemerged in Philadelphia within two years of the *Wolf*'s return to New York. We know that he immediately set up business as an apothecary and physician. He obviously had training in medicine before, and may have had more after, his voyage on the *Wolf*. We know that he moved in circles that would necessarily have acquainted him with persons very close to Anthony Benezet, including Benezet's three merchant brothers, his father, and his close friend John Smith, who served with Benezet as an overseer of the Quaker press and read his books in manuscript. We also know that Chancellor, two years after Benezet published *Observations* and shortly before his own untimely death, secured a recommendation to the famous London doctor John Fothergill from two of Benezet's closest friends in the Quaker meeting leadership, James and

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"Cathrine" in the tax rolls. For purposes of comparison, the same tax roll assessed Anthony Benezet £18, Benjamin Franklin £228, John Wister £239, Dr. William Shippen £505, and Israel Pemberton £898. William Chancellor's brother, Samuel, the ship captain, is listed as owing no tax. See page 158 for Benezet and Franklin; 189 for Wister and Shippen; 183 for Pemberton; 178 for Chancellor.

<sup>44</sup> Abstracts of Wills, 1789, Philadelphia, Pa., Book U, Feb. 6, 1789: 35, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Israel Pemberton. From these associations, it is hard not to conclude that Benezet would have known, or at least known of, William Chancellor, would have esteemed him as a man of “undoubted credit,” and would have had a chance to copy the passage in question from the first volume of his journal. And although all of this evidence is circumstantial, it is difficult to believe there was another Philadelphia surgeon who fits the known facts about the “person of candour” as well as William Chancellor.

As we have seen, Chancellor grew up in a family that owned and used slaves at home and in business. He and his sister tried to sell the slaves they had inherited from their father in an attempt to liquidate his estate. He himself signed on to a slave ship in the hope of reaping some of the profit of the voyage by selling whatever number of slaves would be assigned to him. In his journal, he expressed a belief in the brutal and primitive character of African societies and the benefits of forcing them to submit to European domination and tutelage. Though he felt repugnance at the brutal and negligent treatment of slave cargoes, this seemed to him a necessary price for the continued progress of British colonial society.

In spite of these conventional judgments, Chancellor was deeply affected by the sufferings of the Africans he cared for aboard ship. Witness the passages quoted earlier and these:

*Thursday, August 9:* . . . I now have the one [slave] which is choak'd with worms, but I have not that to give her, to kill them, my case is hard to see Young Creatures suffering in this manner in short it renders my life a misery to me.

*Monday, August 27:* I did not imagine that it was in the power to alter so very much as the deaths of the Slaves I mentioned have, in short their loss has thrown me into a melancholy out of [which] I shall not easily recover.<sup>45</sup>

For a young man of twenty, just learning to make his way in the world of men, it must have been particularly troubling to be faced every day with the reality of the suffering caused by the slave trade while trying to maintain the ideological framework that allowed him to assert that this was a way to bring the blessings of civilization to Africa and its people. The psychic tension may have reached its peak in an incident he witnessed during a revolt of the slaves on board the *Wolf*, a revolt he helped to put

<sup>45</sup> Wax, “Philadelphia Surgeon,” 488, 489.

down with great courage after being wounded in the leg. He recalls, “nor can I mention without being affected how one of our Slaves that jump’d over board drowned himself, for finding that in spite of himself he swam he pull’d his frock over his head, & there held it while he had strength, which effectually finished him, & this unhappy affair.”<sup>46</sup> The irony inherent in these two acts of bravery—one by an American fighting to save lives in the service of the civilizing slave trade, and the other by an African fighting to die rather than be enslaved—perfectly captures the contradiction that Anthony Benezet sought to confront in his campaign against slavery: how could enlightened men who valued personal liberty and sought it for themselves at the cost of great political and economic struggle participate in the use of slave labor as a means to that end? We do not know how Chancellor finally resolved that contradiction in his own life, but if he offered a passage from his journal to Benezet nine years after the events it recorded, he might have known how the antislavery campaigner would use it. A further hint to Chancellor’s mature state of mind may be that when he sought additional training as a physician two years later, he applied for help not to slave-trading merchants but to Benezet’s antislavery friends James and Israel Pemberton and John Fothergill.

Benezet wanted his fellow citizens to experience the contradiction between freedom and slavery not merely in an intellectual way, but through their emotions; not simply as a result of reasoning from premises of religion or philosophy, but from feeling the suffering of fellow human beings. The testimony of William Chancellor, who walked the streets of Philadelphia and yet had experienced firsthand the horrors of the slave trade, not just for the enslaved but for the agents of their slavery, helped give urgency to Benezet’s contention that the slave trade involved acts of violence against individual men, women, and children, committed by citizens of British America. He wanted citizens to feel the suffering caused by that violence with the same immediacy as they felt the suffering caused, say, by the violence of Indians against the English and German citizens of Pennsylvania during the French and Indian War, then still in progress.

Benezet’s success, and that of his associates and allies in the campaign against slavery, can perhaps be measured by this: in 1789, when “The Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and for the Relief of Free-Negroes Unlawfully Held in Bondage, and for Improving

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 485.

the Conditions of the African Race” was reorganized and granted a state charter, one of the registered members was the grandson of a Philadelphia sailmaker who had owned slaves and the son of a surgeon who had participated in a slaving voyage to Africa.<sup>47</sup> His name was William Chancellor.

*Alcorn State University, Emeritus*

DAVID L. CROSBY

<sup>47</sup> The act, dated Dec. 8, 1789, was published in the *The Freeman's Journal*; or, *The North-American Intelligencer*, Apr. 14, 1790.

*“Free Trade and  
Hucksters’ Rights!”  
Envisioning Economic Democracy  
in the Early Republic*

**A**MID THE CLINKING GLASSES of nationalist toasts and the smoldering fireworks of independence celebrations, Americans began to sort through the most pressing political and economic issues facing a young republic. By the late 1780s, the men who held the reins of power in the nation’s new state and federal governments had already overcome steep differences to master seemingly impossible feats. They had crafted a declaration of their own independence so provocative and powerful that it would soon inspire revolutions throughout the Atlantic world. They had waged and won a war against a formidable empire by mustering and arming undisciplined men and corralling enough servants and slaves to support them through battle. And they had drafted and ratified a frame of government that toppled hereditary monarchies and stitched together the disparate elements of their population into a central nation-state. Yet for all their success in designing a new republic, the men who sat around the green-cloaked tables of the national and state legislatures had yet to reach a genuine consensus regarding the shape of their political and economic future. Instead, as the dust of the federal constitution debates settled, they would enter into equally intense intellectual disputes over how far to extend the tenets of democracy and whether to embrace an economic system governed more by trade regulations or the principles of *laissez-faire*.<sup>1</sup> Out of these negotiations would arise wildly different political and economic visions that competed for supremacy in the era of the early republic.

<sup>1</sup> Although sharp ideological differences existed regarding the potential shape of the market economy, most early American legislators did not draw a strict dichotomy between a “free market” and a regulated market. For a full discussion of the persistence of government regulation in the economy throughout the nineteenth century, see William J. Novak, *The People’s Welfare: Law and Regulation in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1996).

The members of this elite legislative cadre would not be the only ones to espouse grand visions for the nation's political economy, however. In Philadelphia, as in other cities and rural towns across the country, those on the bottom rungs of society would craft their own ideals for the future of their nation—ideals that stemmed neither from the political rhetoric embedded in classical republican texts nor from theories of the market economy contained within modern treatises. Instead, their visions for the republic would be informed by their lived experiences in the markets they knew best: the open-air structures that stretched through the streets of Philadelphia. As these “lower sorts” voiced their concerns and frustration over the administration of public markets, they forced the elite debates over democracy and laissez-faire principles out of the legislative chambers and into the streets. As a result, in the early republic the city's sites of exchange became sites of conflict, characterized by a constant and unending negotiation between various branches of state and municipal authorities, market vendors, and urban residents about the contours of the political economy in the new nation.

Among those who emerged from the basest tiers of society to shape this negotiation would be a predominantly indigent, female class of laborers known as hucksters, who retailed small quantities of food in urban streets. As excellent studies of the free and enslaved working poor and of women's roles in complex economic networks have shown, these small-scale retailers were more significant to the larger commercial economy than scholars had previously imagined. Rather than merely existing on the economic margins, female hucksters operated as part of a larger group of savvy and resourceful women who struggled through, capitalized on, and expanded early American commerce.<sup>2</sup> For an increasing number of women, in fact, huckstering became a viable avenue to earn a reliable income and achieve financial and social independence in the early republic. Yet, as part of a larger municipal program to regulate the economic

<sup>2</sup> On women's centrality to the early national commercial economy see Ellen Hartigan-O'Connor, *The Ties That Buy: Women and Commerce in Revolutionary America* (Philadelphia, 2009); Serena R. Zabin, *Dangerous Economies: Status and Commerce in Imperial New York* (Philadelphia, 2009); and Sheryllynne Haggerty, *The British-Atlantic Trading Community, 1760–1810: Men, Women, and the Distribution of Goods* (Leiden, 2006). For specific discussions of female hucksters in this period, see Helen Tangires, *Public Markets and Civic Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (Baltimore, 2003), 17–23; Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789–1860* (Urbana, IL, 1987), 13–14; and Seth Rockman, *Scraping By: Wage Labor, Slavery, and Survival in Early Baltimore* (Baltimore, 2009), 100–101, 127–29.

and social order of Philadelphia's markets, city legislators had begun to gradually erode the customary privileges of these vendors, forcing them out of the marketplace. Hucksters, in turn, took advantage of the larger political debates of the era by testing the limits of political egalitarianism and laissez-faire philosophy and staking claim to the markets through daily acts of resistance, legal petitions, and litigation.

A close analysis of huckster women's varied forms of resistance to their expulsion from the marketplace reveals the ways in which one ordinary body of working women not only fought for their livelihoods but also articulated a larger vision of the nation's political economy. Indeed, the ideology they crafted during the era of the early republic would become so pronounced that by 1813, Philadelphia's satiric newspaper the *Tickler* would label it as "Free Trade and Hucksters' Rights." The editor of the *Tickler*, George Hemboldt, had used the phrase sarcastically as a headline to introduce a fictitious story about a "respectable meeting" of huckster women who had gathered to discuss how legislators had violated their rights—"the sacred rights of the most ancient and honorable society the world ever produced." In response, as the satiric piece continued, the women passed a series of dubious political resolutions, which were signed with the mark of the illiterate society secretary.<sup>3</sup> Hemboldt's story obviously intended to mock the huckster women. Yet, by invoking the popular phrase, "Free Trade and Sailors' Rights," used by sailors to link plebeian political claims with patrician ideals of free trade, he simultaneously acknowledged the political consciousness of huckster women that had been developing over the previous two decades.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, as this article argues, Hemboldt accurately defined that consciousness and the principles of political and economic egalitarianism that undergirded it. Through both individual and collective acts of resistance, Philadelphia's hucksters articulated a unique vision of economic democracy that would significantly impact elite debates over the contours of democratic republicanism and free trade as well as the role of working poor women in both these realms.

<sup>3</sup> "Free Trade and Huckster's Rights," *Tickler*, Oct. 20, 1813. Similar references to "Free Trade and Huckster's Rights" and Philadelphia's hucksters appear in New York's *Evening Post*, Oct. 26, 1813, and Boston's *Repertory*, Nov. 2, 1813. Tellingly, the latter source misprinted the phrase as "Free Trade and sailor's rights," a common slogan from the War of 1812.

<sup>4</sup> Paul A. Gilje, "Free Trade and Sailors' Rights': The Rhetoric of the War of 1812," *Journal of the Early Republic* 30 (2010): 1–23.

*The Promise of Huckstering in Early Philadelphia*

Throughout Philadelphia's colonial history, elderly, infirm, disabled, and widowed women had relied on huckstering as a means to obtain a meager income. Colonial ordinances never restricted the trade to such women, but custom did reserve petty retailing for those who could find no other "useful" employment.<sup>5</sup> Allowing poor women to vend in the streets and markets deterred them from crowding into the few available spaces of the city's almshouses or applying for public and private charity. Accordingly, when the clerk rang a bell two hours after the market had opened, huckster women were permitted to file into the city's markets to buy provisions and set up their tables or overturned tubs on which to sell the small quantities of fruit, vegetables, nuts, and fish they had acquired from farmers or other dealers.<sup>6</sup>

In the aftermath of independence, an increasing number of diverse men and women turned to huckstering, believing that the trade might promise a reliable source of income. In no small way, the changes reflected the shifting demographics of the city itself. Nearly seventy thousand people resided in the city by 1800, almost three times the number of inhabitants prior to the Revolution. Contributing to this growth was a steady influx of low- and unskilled white rural and Atlantic migrants and newly freed African Americans from Philadelphia's hinterlands and the upper South who sought employment.<sup>7</sup> As these new residents swelled the ranks of eligible laborers, job competition likely drove many to huckstering—an option facilitated by the legislature's dramatic expansion of market space in the decade following independence. By 1789, authorities had not only built additional market sheds throughout the city in order to accommodate its growing population but had also legally allowed exchanges to stretch into nearby streets and alleyways.<sup>8</sup> With the expansion of market space came greater opportunities for both urban and rural residents to act as market brokers. As a result of these changes, a new, diverse class of hucksters emerged in the city by the early 1790s. A brief

<sup>5</sup> *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 17, 1789.

<sup>6</sup> *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, from the Organization to the Termination of the Proprietary Government*, in *Colonial Records of Pennsylvania*, ed. Samuel Hazard, vol. 1 (Philadelphia, 1852), 391–92, 582.

<sup>7</sup> Billy G. Smith, *The "Lower Sort": Philadelphia's Laboring People, 1750–1800* (Ithaca, NY, 1990), 59–62.

<sup>8</sup> *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 17, 1789.

walk through the streets and multiple markets at the time would have revealed men and women—white and black, young and old, able-bodied and infirm, single, married, and widowed—vending vegetables, nuts, poultry, fish, fruits, seeds, and other goods. This heterogeneous group of men and women traveled from widely different locales across the region to sell their provisions. Some walked only a few blocks from home to set up their market baskets, while others journeyed miles by horseback or in crude wagons through Pennsylvania's countryside. Still others boarded small boats or ferries in order to cross the Delaware River from New Jersey. Overall, they may have performed the same labor, but their race, gender, age, marital status, and even motives for retailing varied tremendously.

Men increasingly made up a significant fraction of this new huckster pool, yet women still dominated its ranks. Despite their bias in only naming the occupations of household heads, city directories overwhelmingly identified hucksters as female.<sup>9</sup> So too did contemporaries, whose observations stemmed from their everyday experiences in the early republican city. The sheer volume of women and young girls who sat on makeshift benches surrounding the market sheds or at the foot of the river with fish piled high in straw baskets led most to characterize huckstering as women's work. So many women sold limes, squashes, melons, and other fruits, in fact, that the market appeared to at least one contemporary as "a seminary for initiating votaries for the temples of the Cytherean goddess."<sup>10</sup>

As a trade that required no formal training and faced few restrictions, huckstering offered meaningful opportunities for women to earn an income, particularly during moments of economic and social instability. Unlike itinerant peddlers of manufactured goods, for example, who faced new regulations in the early republic, hucksters were never required to obtain formal licenses from the state or municipal government. Nor were

<sup>9</sup> Owing to the transient nature of their work and the socioeconomic makeup of those engaged in the trade, any precise estimation of the population of hucksters is impossible to calculate. Relying on city directories and tax lists over a fourteen-year period (1791–1805), I have identified approximately 440 huckster men and women. Of these, nearly two-thirds are women. Such a figure decidedly underestimates the actual number of hucksters and the number of female participants, however, as the directories omitted dependent women and young girls who featured prominently in the trade, as well as those who turned to huckstering on a temporary basis.

<sup>10</sup> *Pennsylvania Evening Herald*, Aug. 13, 1785; *Daily Advertiser*, Aug. 2, 1786; *Gazette of the United States*, Sept. 15, 1795; Benjamin Davies, *Some Account of the City of Philadelphia, the Capital of Pennsylvania, and Seat of the Federal Congress* (Philadelphia, 1794), 25–26.

they forced to obtain letters of recommendation from “respectable” persons, as were applicants for poor relief.<sup>11</sup> Consequently, young, single migrants from the countryside could easily turn to retailing provisions when opportunities for domestic service dwindled. So too could married women whose husbands could not find stable employment. Likewise, widows who may have lost their husbands to yellow fever or at sea could also find temporary economic relief in the trade.

Huckstering could be fleeting, unreliable work; it could, however, also offer long-term economic stability for women who acquired a certain business savvy. After all, like their larger-scale retail counterparts—merchants—hucksters had to penetrate the commercial networks of the city and surrounding regions in order to practice their trade. Women such as Catherine Hornergrout who became adept at negotiating prices for food-stuffs with farmers and consumers could find lasting economic security by retailing small quantities of food. Following the death of her husband, Hornergrout supported herself and her four children as a huckster for over fifteen years. Living just off Front Street, a convenient block south of the High Street market, she watched neighbors move in and out of the huckster business, perhaps offering tips of the trade to James Stewart next door, or to Andrew Boyd, who moved into the same building and also took up huckstering.<sup>12</sup>

Two of Hornergrout’s other neighbors, Barthena and Caesar Cranchell, not only achieved financial stability through huckstering but found a pathway to upward socioeconomic mobility as well. Indeed, the pair became one of the more successful free black couples in the city. Together, they rose from the ranks of hucksters to become established fruiterers, operating their business either out of their cellar or a storefront. Along the way, they funneled their profits into ensuring the survival of other free blacks in Philadelphia. Caesar, a freemason, became a founding member of the Free African Society, investing a portion of the couple’s money in the first black mutual aid organization in the nation. He would lose his

<sup>11</sup> John K. Alexander, *Render Them Submissive: Responses to Poverty in Philadelphia, 1760–1800* (Amherst, MA, 1980), 22–23.

<sup>12</sup> The information provided about Catherine Hornergrout and her neighbors is adopted from a compilation of the following sources: Clement Biddle, *The Philadelphia Directory* (Philadelphia, 1791); Thomas Stephens, *Stephens’s Philadelphia Directory for 1796* (Philadelphia, 1796); Edmund Hogan, *The Prospect of Philadelphia, and Check on the Next Directory* (Philadelphia, 1796); James Robinson, *The Philadelphia Directory for 1803* (Philadelphia, 1803); US Bureau of the Census, *Heads of Families of the First Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1790: Pennsylvania* (Washington, DC, 1908).

life in the course of helping others, dying in the yellow fever epidemic as he worked to care for the sick. Barthena, however, carried on their trade after his death and later passed the business onto their son, Bartholomew.<sup>13</sup>

Retailing provisions or selling prepared soups, cakes, and other foods as a means to both economic and political independence became a common pattern among Philadelphia's free black population.<sup>14</sup> Particularly in the years following Pennsylvania's Gradual Emancipation Act in 1780, huckstering promised a "fragile freedom" as women and men struggled to establish themselves and build a portfolio of new black institutions that included churches, libraries, schools, relief societies, restaurants, and other businesses.<sup>15</sup> Phillis Morris, for example, huckstered provisions while her husband, John, gradually worked his way toward becoming a master chimney sweep. By pooling their resources, the couple became the owners of a single-story frame house on the outer edge of the city, and Phillis opened her own huckster shop—a step that spoke to the stability of her position in the commercial networks of the local economy. As the two grew more financially successful, they also grew more politically and socially active. By the mid-1790s, John had signed off on a collective petition to Congress and had been selected by Richard Allen as one of the original trustees of Bethel A.M.E. Church. When John died after the turn of the century, Phillis continued to operate independently as a huckster for the next decade.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> William H. Grimshaw, *Official History of Freemasonry among the Colored People in North America* (1903; repr., 1994), 112; William Douglass, *Annals of the First African Church, in the United States of America* (Philadelphia, 1862), 17; Richard Allen and Absalom Jones, *A Narrative of the Proceedings of the Black People, during the Late Awful Calamity in Philadelphia, in the Year 1793* (Philadelphia, 1794), 12; Biddle, *Philadelphia Directory* (1791); James Hardie, *Philadelphia Directory and Register* (Philadelphia, 1793); James Hardie, *Philadelphia Directory and Register* (Philadelphia, 1794); Hogan, *Prospect of Philadelphia*; Cornelius Stafford, ed., *The Philadelphia Directory for 1798* (Philadelphia, 1798); James Robinson, *The Philadelphia Directory for 1804* (Philadelphia, 1804); James Robinson, *The Philadelphia Directory for 1810* (Philadelphia, 1810).

<sup>14</sup> Gary Nash, *Forging Freedom: The Formation of Philadelphia's Black Community, 1720–1840* (Cambridge, 1988), 150–52.

<sup>15</sup> Erica Armstrong Dunbar, *A Fragile Freedom: African American Women and Emancipation in the Antebellum City* (New Haven, CT, 2008). On the development of black institutions in Philadelphia, see Nash, *Forging Freedom*; Julie Winch, *Philadelphia's Black Elite: Activism, Accommodation, and the Struggle for Autonomy, 1787–1848* (Philadelphia, 1988); and W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899; repr., New York, 2007), 10–13.

<sup>16</sup> Douglass, *Annals of the First African Church*, 47; Stephens, *Stephens's Philadelphia Directory* (1796); *Articles of Association of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, of the City of Philadelphia in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (1799; repr., Philadelphia, 1969); Richard S.

Overall, then, an incredible array of women and men had turned to huckstering in the early republic because of the different promises the trade might offer. Whether they sat on makeshift benches in the marketplace, retailed provisions through the streets, or stood behind shop counters selling produce, dry goods, and liquor, all shared the hope that small-scale retailing could provide either long-term or temporary economic relief. Those who had not risen from the ranks of market hucksters to owners of shops, however, would soon share the fear of impending poverty as municipal leaders and hostile residents attempted to expel them from the city's marketplaces.

*"Nuisances of the First Magnitude"*

Few Philadelphians applauded the resourcefulness of the diverse men and women who stepped into the huckstering trade in the decades following independence. Rather, most had developed a deep distrust of market middlemen and middlewomen as a result of the recent War of Independence. The proximity of warfare and the British occupation of the city had disrupted local trade patterns, causing food scarcities and staggering rates of inflation. When residents looked for someone to blame for the exorbitant cost of their daily provisions that left many hungry and clamoring in the streets, they pointed to the city's wealthiest market brokers: merchants and large-scale vendors who forestalled the market by buying produce, meat, and poultry from farmers before they arrived in the city.<sup>17</sup> Although hucksters dealt in substantially smaller quantities of foodstuffs and many were likely facing starvation themselves, they did not

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Newman, Roy E. Finkenbine, and Douglass Mooney, "Philadelphia Emigrationist Petition, Circa 1792: An Introduction," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 64 (2007): 165; Hardie, *Philadelphia Directory* (1793); 1810 US Census, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, South Mulberry Ward; *Kite's Philadelphia Directory for 1814* (Philadelphia, 1814); James Robinson, *The Philadelphia Directory for 1816* (Philadelphia, 1816).

<sup>17</sup> *Pennsylvania Packet*, Dec. 10, 1778, Jan. 19, 1779; *In Council, Philadelphia, July 8, 1779*, broadside (Philadelphia, 1779); *Proceedings of the General Town-Meeting, Held in the State-House Yard, in the City of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1779). For scholars' accounts, see Anne Bezanson, "Inflation and Controls, Pennsylvania, 1774-1779," *Journal of Economic History* 8 (1948): 1-20; Steven Rosswurm, *Arms, Country and Class: The Philadelphia Militia and "Lower Sort" during the American Revolution, 1775-1783* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1987), 177-81; Steven Rosswurm, "Equality and Justice: Documents from Philadelphia's Popular Revolution, 1775-1780," in *Life in Early Philadelphia: Documents from the Revolutionary and Early National Periods*, ed. Billy G. Smith (University Park, PA, 1995), 254-68; Barbara Clark Smith, "Food Rioters and the American Revolution," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 51 (1994): 24-25; Eric Foner, *Tom Paine and Revolutionary America* (New York, 1976), 162-70.

escape the wrath of the populace. According to a wide range of Philadelphians, the vendors were nothing more than "nuisances of the first magnitude," intent on driving up food prices and injuring the poor and middling classes.<sup>18</sup>

Based on the widespread discontent among urban residents, Pennsylvania's new Supreme Executive Council began the process of restoring order to Philadelphia's domestic markets in 1779. While the men who held the reins of power disagreed about the need for broad price controls, all had witnessed the disruptions to the local economy and resultant crowd actions. All thus saw the pressing need to exert some measure of control over the marketplaces, and they began by curtailing the practices that increased the prices of food. Under a new state statute, hoarders and forestallers faced stiff penalties for their actions. Hucksters, as a generally poor class of vendors, were still allowed to hawk their goods in the markets. Yet they too became targets under the new legislation. The retailers witnessed the first erosion of their rights as the law stipulated that they could no longer buy provisions outside the market that they intended to resell.<sup>19</sup>

Repeated complaints in popular newspapers and petitions to legislators, however, chastised the fledgling government and the market clerk for not taking more drastic action against the hucksters. In addition to the economic impact of the vendors, the changing demographics and numerical increase of the retailers incensed many residents. The interracial group of young women and men who took to the streets and markets retailing provisions seemed to flagrantly defy the traditions that had structured the earlier trade. The mildest critics insisted that such vending be restricted to members of the "deserving" poor—the widowed, elderly, and disabled.<sup>20</sup> The strongest critics demanded that the state act in its strictest paternal role and protect urban residents by expelling hucksters from the market altogether.<sup>21</sup>

When local politicians won the right to recharter Philadelphia's municipal government in 1789, they began to heed the demands of these critics, imposing far greater restrictions on hucksters. In an effort to reshape the city's markets into more orderly sites of exchange between producers and consumers, the newly chartered corporation crafted

<sup>18</sup> *Independent Gazetteer*, June 25, 1787, Apr. 9, 1791.

<sup>19</sup> *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Apr. 7, 1779.

<sup>20</sup> *Pennsylvania Evening Herald*, Aug. 13, 1785; *Daily Advertiser*, Aug. 7, 1786.

<sup>21</sup> *Pennsylvania Mercury*, Aug. 3, 1787.

lengthy and detailed ordinances that structured nearly every square inch of market space. While the legislation affected the activities of all vendors, no group faced more constraints than the city's hucksters. As small-scale retailers who produced nothing and raised prices through their secondhand dealings, legislators identified the growing pool of urban hucksters not only as insignificant to the market economy but as "an incumbrance and nuisance to the city at large." Accordingly, the corporation strengthened the existing restrictions on hucksters by more explicitly limiting when, where, and from whom they could buy and sell. Hucksters could still vend in the market after ten o'clock in the morning, but, as the law clarified, they could not sell any provisions that they had purchased from country vendors who were planning to offer the same articles for sale in market. In addition, hucksters could not sell foodstuffs anywhere but in the marketplace, on any day but official market days, or at any time other than during proper market hours.<sup>22</sup>

*Seeking Sympathy: Early Strategies of Resistance*

Much to the chagrin of market clerks, municipal authorities, and a vocal population of residents, Philadelphia's hucksters refused to comply with the new legislation. The vast majority chose informal means of resistance, such as shoving their baskets of herbs, turnips, and other goods under the stalls when the market clerk passed by or simply paying their weekly fines when apprehended.<sup>23</sup> These tactics would not be the only methods hucksters relied on after the city barred them from the marketplace, however. The small-scale retailers also began to resist, both individually and collectively, through more formal political channels. By turning to petitioning as their main strategy, the hucksters framed themselves not as nuisances but as members of the "industrious poor."

As one of the few political devices available to the masses, petitions became the most common tool hucksters employed to elicit sympathy from urban legislators, despite the likelihood that most could neither read nor write.<sup>24</sup> Initially, when hucksters utilized the petition, they did so as

<sup>22</sup> *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 17, 1789.

<sup>23</sup> *Daily Advertiser*, Aug. 7, 1786; *Philadelphia Gazette*, July 24, 1799.

<sup>24</sup> Gregory A. Mark, "The Vestigial Constitution: The History and Significance of the Right to Petition," *Fordham Law Review* 66 (1998): 2,153–85; Marcia Schmidt Blaine, "The Power of Petitions: Women and the New Hampshire Provincial Government, 1695–1700," *International Review of Social History* 46, sup. 9 (2001): 57–77; Stephen A. Higginson, "A Short History of the Right to Petition Government for the Redress of Grievances," *Yale Law Journal* 96 (1986): 142–66.

individuals who requested that the municipal government allow them to retail produce in the market based on their good character.<sup>25</sup> Prominent men of standing occasionally vouched for their integrity and worthiness by submitting their own petitions to the councils. In 1790, for example, Edward and William Shippen of the influential Pennsylvania family, the Episcopal bishop of Pennsylvania, William White, and many other esteemed Philadelphians followed a hucksters' petition with one of their own that recommended the hucksters as "proper persons" to participate in the trade.<sup>26</sup>

In 1791, as more hucksters felt the sting of the new restrictions, they banded together to submit a collective petition to the city and state legislatures that also played upon the sympathy of authorities while seeking to overturn the ordinances that restricted their trade. Unlike the individual petitions that maintained that only certain retailers deserved to buy and sell as they pleased, the collective plea emphasized the good character of all hucksters. By claiming that the restrictions on huckstering had a particularly detrimental effect on the city's industrious poor, the petitioners challenged the negative labels that hostile residents had placed upon them and refashioned themselves as a deserving class of laborers, worthy of unrestricted participation in the marketplace.<sup>27</sup>

The hucksters' framing of themselves as members of the "industrious poor" was more than a humble attempt to display deference to the elite; it also represented a two-fold political strategy. On the one hand, by classifying themselves as an impoverished but hardworking group, the hucksters evoked the previous social customs that had entitled generations of the city's elderly, infirm, and destitute to retail provisions in the city's markets. On the other hand, the strategy also carried a particularly significant cultural and political weight in the context of the early republic. An emphasis on "industrious labor" had already become a hallmark of the new national character, as a multitude of Americans made clear in their public writings. Those considered "industrious" wore "a badge of moral goodness" that not only aided them in gaining sympathy from the middling and wealthy classes but also helped them bend the ears of urban

<sup>25</sup> For individual petitions of hucksters, see Philadelphia City Council Minute Book, 1789–1793, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. (Photocopy also available at the Philadelphia City Archives, Common Council Minutes, RG-120.)

<sup>26</sup> "Hucksters, Petition to sell fruit and vegetables," 1790, box 142, folder 34, Simon Gratz Autograph Collection (Collection 250B), Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

<sup>27</sup> *Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser*, Nov. 23, 1791; *Claypoole's Daily Advertiser*, Jan. 16, 1792.

legislators.<sup>28</sup> Petitioners and newspaper contributors, for example, commonly signed their letters “A Poor Man,” or “One of the Poor,” not merely to request protection from the state, but to demand political rights under Pennsylvania’s democratic constitution.<sup>29</sup> When the hucksters addressed the legislature as members of the deserving poor, then, they hoped that they too would be seen as part and parcel of the larger body politic that deserved the state’s attention.

The hucksters’ petition did, in fact, convince some members of the highest legislative bodies of Pennsylvania to view the vendors as hard-working members of the poor. Shortly after the plea reached the House of Representatives in 1792, a “huckster bill” was introduced to the state legislature, sparking four months of debate in the House and Senate. The proposed statute promised to directly override Philadelphia’s market ordinance based on the inconvenience it created for the city’s “poor and industrious persons” and restore the privileges of the hucksters to buy and resell provisions in the city’s markets.<sup>30</sup>

Despite the apparent receptiveness of state legislators, however, the “huckster bill” never passed. Amid the ongoing debate over the bill, municipal leaders countered the hucksters’ petitions with their own and sent their counsel to argue before the House. In the end, the city’s attorneys convinced the representatives to protect the legal rights of the corporation, despite whatever injury might occur to the city’s small-scale retailers.<sup>31</sup> For the city, the defeat of the bill proved to be a meaningful victory, which it celebrated by passing a new market ordinance. Just a few months after the bill failed, the corporation took unprecedented action against hucksters by banning them from vending in the market altogether.<sup>32</sup>

In the aftermath of the failed bill and the new legislation, hucksters were forced to swallow some difficult lessons. For one, the previous social customs that had allowed poor women and men to huckster had become

<sup>28</sup> Alexander, *Render Them Submissive*, 53–60. In reading a political strategy of the poor here, my argument differs from Alexander’s, which stresses the middle and elite classes’ emphasis on the “industrious poor” as a method of social control.

<sup>29</sup> For examples see Ruth Bogin, “Petitioning and the New Moral Economy of Post-Revolutionary America,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 45 (1988): 391–425; A Poor Man, “For the Gazette of the United States,” *Gazette of the United States*, Aug. 8, 1803.

<sup>30</sup> *Claypoole’s Daily Advertiser*, Jan. 16, 1792; *General Advertiser*, Jan. 30, 1792.

<sup>31</sup> Pennsylvania General Assembly House of Representatives, *Journal of the First Session of the Second House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1792), 91–92, 108; *General Advertiser*, Jan. 27, 1792.

<sup>32</sup> *General Advertiser*, Dec. 8, 1792.

obsolete. Secondly, this new class of hucksters did not fit the new mold of the nation's "industrious poor" according to most Philadelphians; thus, seeking sympathy and compassion was ineffective.<sup>33</sup> If the vendors were ever to find their way back into the markets of Philadelphia, they would have to devise more potent political strategies.

### *Crafting a Politics of Resistance*

As Americans dug deeper into the project of creating a new republic, economic and political concerns threatened to divide them all. As the seat of the nation's capital, Philadelphia, in particular, became enmeshed by the mid-1790s in the new fabric of party politics, which pitted the Federalist John Adams against the Republican Thomas Jefferson. As debates raged over the future shape of the nation, disputes regarding the proper contours of the political economy took center stage. Legislators as well as residents grappled with laissez-faire economics and "democracy" in fierce debates that set Federalists against their Democratic-Republican rivals, split party loyalists among themselves, and pitted worker against employer, rich against poor, and merchant against consumer.<sup>34</sup>

This muddled yet vibrant political milieu provided hucksters with an ideal context in which to resume their struggle against market expulsion. Altering their strategy, they took advantage of broader ideological debates concerning the role of the government in the economy and the meaning of democracy in the republic. As they framed their own work as middle-women and middlemen in the context of these discussions and embraced the language of democratic rights, they would find both new allies and new enemies. Municipal authorities, on the other hand, would find the hucksters to be a more persistent and obnoxious nuisance than ever before.

Catherine de Willer became one of the first of Philadelphia's hucksters to eschew the old framework of the industrious poor and pose a more effective argument based on the political debates of the day. In 1795, three

<sup>33</sup> *Dunlap's Daily Advertiser*, Mar. 21, 1793; *Gazette of the United States*, Sept. 15, 1795; *Philadelphia Gazette*, Aug. 18, 1797; *Porcupine's Gazette*, Sept. 6, 1797.

<sup>34</sup> A number of scholars have detailed the extent of these debates in the early national period. See for instance, Drew R. McCoy, *The Elusive Republic: Political Economy in Jeffersonian America* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1980); Ronald Schultz, *The Republic of Labor: Philadelphia Artisans and the Politics of Class, 1720–1830* (New York, 1993); Andrew Shankman, *Crucible of American Democracy: The Struggle to Fuse Egalitarianism and Capitalism in Jeffersonian Pennsylvania* (Lawrence, KS, 2004); and Seth Cotlar, *Tom Paine's America: The Rise and Fall of Transatlantic Radicalism in the Early Republic* (Charlottesville, VA, 2011).

years after the city passed its ban on huckstering, de Willer was fined by the market clerk for retailing provisions in the High Street market. Rather than quietly paying her fee to the mayor, however, de Willer appealed the judgment before the most important judicial body in the state: the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. Her argument, as delivered by the two young attorneys who represented her, radically altered the usual discourse surrounding huckstering. Joseph McKean (whose father, Thomas McKean, sat on the bench as chief justice) did not suggest de Willer receive sympathetic treatment as a poor working woman. Rather, he and his cocounsel intertwined the language of democratic rights with that of free market principles to assert that the municipal ban on huckstering was unconstitutional and violated de Willer's political rights.<sup>35</sup>

The justices never issued a decision in Catherine de Willer's case, yet her suit did set important precedents that would shape the discourse surrounding the huckstering trade and the subsequent actions of the small-scale vendors. McKean's argument forced legislators to consider hucksters not as vulnerable charity cases but as legitimate actors in the market economy and as citizens, entitled to the same breadth of political rights as consumers and other vendors. More significantly, de Willer's appearance before the supreme court emboldened other small-scale retailers who would follow in her footsteps and shaped both their political strategies and the rhetoric on which they relied. As the new century unfolded, the city's hucksters began to craft a new politics of resistance by capitalizing on the contingent debates surrounding the political economy and the tenets of democracy.

The ascendancy of Thomas Jefferson and the Democratic-Republican Party offered hucksters a particularly promising new political discourse within which to frame their arguments against market expulsion. The city itself was still governed by politically conservative elites who largely supported the Federalist Party. On the state level, however, the power of Federalist leaders was waning. The moderate Jeffersonian Thomas McKean had assumed the office of governor in 1799, and the balance in the state legislature shifted toward Republicans just two years later.<sup>36</sup> Even as more

<sup>35</sup> *De Willer v. Smith* (1795), in *Reports of the Cases Ruled and Adjudged in the Courts of Pennsylvania, Before and Since the Revolution*, ed. Alexander J. Dallas, 4 vols. (Philadelphia, 1790–1808), 2:236–37.

<sup>36</sup> "Pennsylvania Election Statistics, 1682–2006," Wilkes University Election Statistics Project, <http://staffweb.wilkes.edu/harold.cox/legis/indexlegis.html>, accessed Mar. 10, 2012.

Pennsylvanians moved away from conservative Federalist policies and began to advocate more egalitarian Jeffersonian ideals, however, debates continued to rage. While all agreed on the centrality of "democracy" to the nation, no consensus yet existed on the precise principles that ought to comprise that democracy. Nor had anyone yet agreed on who ought to be an active democratic participant. Similarly, if most advocated a more limited government role in the economy than their predecessors, just how liberal the domestic and international market economies should be had yet to be determined.<sup>37</sup> Nonetheless, while the new state legislators had not yet decided among themselves how far they were willing to stretch the parameters of "democracy" or "free trade," they did advance a far more socially and politically egalitarian view than their predecessors—a view that many hucksters and their allies hoped was broad enough to encompass their rights as well.

On the heels of the Republican state victories, hucksters, taking advantage of the resurgence of democratic rhetoric, began circulating a petition to repeal the ordinance that banned them from Philadelphia's markets. In this new political context, residents of the city and the surrounding counties began to seriously contend with the possible connections between huckstering and democracy rather than merely dismissing the vendors as nuisances. Although critics of the retailers continued to complain about the prices of hucksters' provisions, a few began to concede that the hucksters' arguments were growing more convincing and that the municipal ban might be an infringement on their rights.<sup>38</sup> For some of the city's most strident democrats, there was no question that the hucksters ought to be left to "do what seemeth good in their own eyes."<sup>39</sup> The particular brand of egalitarianism that undergirded radical democratic ideology led one resident, writing under the pseudonym "Pro Bono Publico Jr.," to view the restrictions on huckstering as an exacerbation of both class and political inequality. The ordinance, after all, targeted a predominantly poor population of vendors. Denying the right of people "to earn a living by honest industry" by vending in the market, he

<sup>37</sup> Shankman, *Crucible of American Democracy*, 2–10, 58–73; Louis Hartz, *Economic Policy and Democratic Thought: Pennsylvania, 1776–1860* (Cambridge, MA, 1948), 3–9.

<sup>38</sup> Pro Bono Publico, "To the Select and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia," *Aurora*, Nov. 12, 1801; *Gazette of the United States*, Nov. 13, 1801, Nov. 14, 1801; *Aurora*, Sept. 9, 1795.

<sup>39</sup> A Poor Man, "For the Gazette of the United States," *Gazette of the United States*, Aug. 6, 1803.

argued, was antithetical to the principles of democracy and “repugnant to the constitution of [the] commonwealth.”<sup>40</sup>

This same republican rhetoric of egalitarianism also buttressed new discussions of hucksters’ roles in the broader market economy. The vendors’ petition attracted the attention of Philadelphians who embraced both political equality and laissez-faire economic policies. As one city councilman argued, hucksters were no different than larger-scale merchants who were allowed to trade freely without government intervention. Borrowing from the economically liberal rhetoric contained within Thomas Jefferson’s first address to Congress, G. A. attempted to sway his colleagues accordingly:

Sir, I am not for restraining the Hucksters; I am for leaving them at their entire liberty; and I have an authority upon this subject, on which I very much rely; an authority which I believe no gentleman in this Council will be disposed to dispute: the authority of the President of the United States: he says, in his speech, that agriculture, commerce and navigation, never thrive so well as when left free to the efforts of individual exertion. Now, Sir, what is *commerce*? why, nothing more than *huckstering* upon a very large scale: and what is *huckstering*? why, nothing more than commerce upon a very small scale. Sir, if we snap off this huckstering *twig* (if I may express it so) we shall be in danger of wounding and killing the *great tree* under which we all sit.<sup>41</sup>

By situating hucksters within this larger web of commerce, the councilman stretched the theoretical boundaries of laissez-faire philosophy to include the streets and markets of the city while simultaneously diminishing the class divisions between the wealthy and the poor. His speech proved to be particularly persuasive to those who had neither imagined hucksters as significant agents in the larger commercial economy nor considered that the theory of “free trade” might apply to more than commercial transactions across international waters. G. A. found the argument so novel and convincing that he penned a letter discussing the council meeting for the *Gazette of the United States*. Even more demonstrative of the legislator’s persuasiveness, the newspaper’s Federalist editor actually

<sup>40</sup> Shankman, *Crucible of American Democracy*, 114–15; Pro Bono Publico Jr., “For the Aurora,” *Aurora*, Nov. 14, 1801.

<sup>41</sup> G. A., “For the Gazette of the United States,” *Gazette of the United States*, Jan. 20, 1802; Paul Leicester Ford, ed., *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, 10 vols. (New York, 1892–99), 8:123.

reprinted the letter for his traditionally antihuckster subscribers to consider.

Those Philadelphians with capitalist inclinations added yet another layer to the economic defense of hucksters by redefining the concept of "fair competition" as it related to the market economy. Most residents were unversed in the theories of Adam Smith and other moral philosophers; when they spoke of "fair competition," they were not referring to the unrestricted trade promoted by Smith. Rather, like "Pro Bono Publico," they understood the phrase to mean "just" competition and believed that government regulation was critical to guaranteeing fair market dealings. Legislators needed to restrict the activities of hucksters in order to prevent the "oppressive confederacy" from gaining a monopoly within the market and driving prices to whatever exorbitant level they desired.<sup>42</sup> "Pro Bono Publico Jr.," on the other hand, challenged his opponent's definition of fair competition in a heated debate in the *Aurora*. Taking his cue from modern economic theorists, he insisted that the only "fair" competition was "unrestricted." And only unrestricted competition among vendors would regulate the prices of daily provisions and produce a free and abundant market.<sup>43</sup>

Collectively, these arguments regarding the hucksters' significance within the larger commercial economy and their political rights within a democratic society persuaded over five hundred people to sign the vendors' petition before it was passed on to the city and state legislatures.<sup>44</sup> While the city remained unconvinced, the points raised by the hucksters and their allies did sway state legislators. In 1802 the Pennsylvania legislature took a decided stand and reversed the city's ordinance with a statute that not only restored but enhanced previous freedoms of hucksters. In a decision that interwove democratic principles with free-market advocacy, legislators echoed the sentiment that every man should "do what seemeth to him good in his own eyes" and added that his actions ought to "be unembarrassed by too much regulation or restriction."<sup>45</sup> Accordingly, the new act abolished time constraints that hucksters previously labored

<sup>42</sup> Pro Bono Publico, "To the Select and Common Councils," *Aurora*, Nov. 12, 1801.

<sup>43</sup> Pro Bono Publico Jr., "For the Aurora," *Aurora*, Nov. 14, 1801.

<sup>44</sup> Pennsylvania General Assembly House of Representatives, *Journal of the First Session of the Second House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1792), 281–82.

<sup>45</sup> A Poor Man, "For the Gazette of the United States," *Gazette of the United States*, Aug. 6, 1803.

under and gave them full rein to vend provisions in the markets, so long as they did not purchase their goods within the limits of the city.<sup>46</sup>

This massive victory for hucksters fostered even bolder action among regional small-scale retailers. In the immediate wake of the new legislation, several hucksters, many of whom resided in nearby Germantown, followed in the footsteps of Catherine de Willer after being fined by the mayor. Elizabeth Mason, Elizabeth and John Nell, and eleven other vendors brought their suits before the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. Once again, Joseph McKean, now the attorney general, would represent them. In light of the new statute, his arguments proved successful this time around. Nearly three years after their initial appearance, Mason and the Nells won their case on the grounds that Philadelphia's mayor may have overstepped his jurisdictional authority because he had no proof that they purchased their provisions within city limits.<sup>47</sup> The municipal corporation, in turn, had to reimburse all the retailers for a total of \$150 in fines they had previously paid.<sup>48</sup>

By capitalizing on the political and economic debates of the period, then, hucksters had secured a significant legislative victory. They had managed to use the Jeffersonian language of democracy and laissez-faire economics to craft more potent political arguments that drew them into the theoretical realm of free trade and back into the literal realm of the marketplace. And, despite the indignation of the majority of city councilmen, they had prompted the state's most powerful legislators to establish an "inseparable connection between huckstering and democracy."<sup>49</sup>

Importantly, the state's law did not safeguard the rights of all small-scale vendors. Because the legislation only allowed hucksters to retail their goods if they had first purchased them outside the city limits, it primarily benefited the residents of the surrounding counties who traveled into

<sup>46</sup> John C. Lowber and C. S. Miller, *A Digest of the Ordinances of the Corporation of the City of Philadelphia; and of the Acts of Assembly Relating Thereto* (Philadelphia, 1822), 111.

<sup>47</sup> The Mayor, Aldermen, and Citizens of Philadelphia against John Nell, in *Reports of Cases Adjudged in the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania: With Some Select Cases at Nisi Prius, and in the Circuit Courts*, ed. Jasper Yeates, vol. 3 (Philadelphia, 1889), 475–78; The Mayor, &c. v. Mason, in Dallas, *Reports*, 4:266–67; Continuance Docket, Records of the Supreme Court, Eastern District, Sept. Term 1800–Dec. Term 1804, RG 33, Pennsylvania State Archives.

<sup>48</sup> Philadelphia, Common Council Minutes, RG 120, Apr. 16, 1803, Feb. 8, 1804, Philadelphia City Archives.

<sup>49</sup> A Housekeeper, "For the United States Gazette," *United States Gazette*, Jan. 23, 1805.

Philadelphia.<sup>50</sup> The poor, female hucksters who resided in the city and had no resources to travel miles outside the municipal boundaries experienced no meaningful material change in their lives. As the century wore on, they would have to fight their own battle for market space, a battle that grew more complicated and difficult than ever before.

### A "GROWING EVIL"

Only a few years after the Pennsylvania legislature provisionally allowed hucksters to reenter Philadelphia's markets, the municipal corporation began to rigorously enforce the remaining restrictions contained within its own ordinances, convicting all those suspected of selling provisions they had purchased within the city limits. As the mayor and councilmen made clear in their private discussions and public prosecutions, their primary target was the largely indigent pool of female vendors residing in Philadelphia.<sup>51</sup> Despite the democratic political leanings of most Philadelphians, only a few expressed sympathy for these women. The vast majority increasingly referred to the hucksters as filthy, indolent, insolent, and dissolute as the century unfolded—adjectives explicitly tied to their gender makeup.

Hucksters' previous political and legal arguments may have persuaded state legislators to consider hucksters legitimate market vendors, but many Philadelphians had not been convinced. Indeed, the new legislation only incensed the vendors' opponents, who complained more than ever about the hucksters' economic practices. In the three years following the state legislation, newspaper editors received a steady influx of letters from urban residents complaining of the hucksters' high prices and calling upon the municipal corporation to enforce traditional notions of just prices by driving them from the markets.<sup>52</sup>

Residents were also reluctant to accept that hucksters had legitimate political rights to vend in the city's markets—especially when it seemed those privileges trumped their own. Allowing retailers to intercept goods before they reached the marketplace violated the rights of residents to buy

<sup>50</sup> While no precise data exists on market stall vendors, Germantown hucksters seem to have been particularly numerous in the aftermath of the statute. See *Tickler*, July 5, 1809.

<sup>51</sup> In 1804, the councils established a joint committee to draft a memorial to the state legislature "praying that the jurisdiction of the markets be vested in the city councils" and that no huckster residing within the city be allowed to resell any provisions within the limits of the market. See *Journal of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (1804), 187–88.

<sup>52</sup> "The Mayor," *Gazette of the United States*, July 28, 1803; A. Householder, "Regulation of the Publick Market," *United States Gazette*, Nov. 4, 1805.

the same goods directly from farmers and at lower prices, according to one "Citizen."<sup>53</sup> If hucksters did have vested political rights, the only solution to driving them out of the market, according to "Another Citizen," was to develop a formal political association to boycott their stands and provisions.<sup>54</sup> "A Housekeeper," in turn, argued that such a tactic would be futile until the theoretical connections drawn between huckstering and democracy were severed.<sup>55</sup> Reflecting the political party tensions of the era, "Quiz" suggested that one potent method of severing those ties and ensuring their certain removal would be to identify the "*marchandes des poulets*" as Federalists.<sup>56</sup>

The most vocal opponents of hucksters blended these political and economic arguments with gender-specific criticisms that targeted the predominantly female group of retailers. Particularly as new ideals of domesticity and republican womanhood were beginning to take hold, allowing women to engage in the public economy seemed immoral at best, and dangerous at worst, in the eyes of middling and elite Philadelphians. Republican ideals, after all, stressed the private home as woman's proper place, while men were encouraged to navigate the precarious public terrain.<sup>57</sup> Poor women who socialized in the streets, worked in public, or actively engaged in economic or political matters threatened the republican definition of femininity.<sup>58</sup> Rather than swapping stories and selling provisions in the public markets, lower-class women should have found "employment in families, more suited to their sex."<sup>59</sup>

<sup>53</sup> A Citizen, *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*, Jan. 21, 1805.

<sup>54</sup> Another Citizen, *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*, Jan. 23, 1805.

<sup>55</sup> A Housekeeper, "For the United States Gazette," *United States Gazette*, Jan. 23, 1805.

<sup>56</sup> Quiz, *United States Gazette*, Jan. 28, 1805. The description of the hucksters as "*marchandes des poulets*" was a clear reference to the French Revolution as well as a nod to the sympathies of Democratic Republicans with the French. For a similar reference, see "Reign of Terror," *United States Gazette*, Oct. 31, 1805.

<sup>57</sup> The literature on republican womanhood is extensive. Two significant studies treat the subject fully: Linda Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1980); and Mary Beth Norton, *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750–1800* (Boston, 1980).

<sup>58</sup> This is not to suggest that women, particularly elite women, did not actively participate in a public, political culture. On this point, see Susan Branson, *These Fiery Frenchified Dames: Women and Political Culture in Early National Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 2001). On the challenges workingwomen faced under this ideology, see Jeanne Boydston, "The Woman Who Wasn't There: Women's Market Labor and the Transition to Capitalism in the United States," *Journal of the Early Republic* 16 (1996): 183–206; and Stansell, *City of Women*.

<sup>59</sup> Davies, *Some Account of the City of Philadelphia*, 25–26; *Gazette of the United States*, Sept. 15, 1795.

Middling and elite Philadelphians who subscribed to these domestic ideals viewed all working women whose daily lives did not fit this new middle-class mold with disdain. They viewed huckster women, however, with outright scorn and disgust. Regardless of their actual behavior, background, or appearance, female hucksters' visible and independent presence in the city's markets had translated into a badge of dangerous, aggressive, and unfeminine traits by the opening years of the nineteenth century. Contemporary accounts typically painted country market women—the daughters and wives of rural farmers, for example—as wholesome and just providers.<sup>60</sup> Similar accounts and news reports that focused on urban female hucksters, however, often painted them as among the most uncouth of the population. By fabricating stories about retailers like "horney Poll" or "bristley Poll," or detailing events such as that of "an old woman huckster" who used a long butcher's knife to stab a man in a market squabble, the female vendors were often cast as devoid of morality and utterly profane.<sup>61</sup>

The visible participation of huckster women in the public economy also drew them into the company of another increasingly stigmatized group of women in the eyes of middling and upper-class critics: prostitutes. The occupations of both groups certainly shared similarities. Both trades involved economic exchanges, bartering, a high degree of independence, and a visible presence in the city's public spaces. Yet contemporaries did not simply draw parallels between prostitutes and female vendors. One concerned resident suggested that selling provisions could easily lead to selling sex, especially for the young girls engaged in the trade. Huckstering fruits and other foodstuffs through the city streets deprived girls of their modesty and exposed them to vice. Accordingly, "they were viewed as girls who were training for, and would one day become, tenants of houses of ill-fame."<sup>62</sup> Others openly accused hucksters of engaging in prostitution. One resident warned Philadelphians of the "large tribe of young girls" of "all ages, and . . . all colours," who rose at dusk and traveled to the city's wharves, taverns, and incoming

<sup>60</sup> A Citizen, "Hear Both Sides: Or, a word in favor of the Hucksters," *Aurora General Advertiser*, Feb. 9, 1805.

<sup>61</sup> "Scratch'em's Law Reports," *Tickler*, Nov. 16, 1808; *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*, Aug. 9, 1805; *United States Gazette*, Aug. 9, 1805; Davies, *Some Account of the City of Philadelphia*, 26.

<sup>62</sup> *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*, Sept. 9, 1801.

roads to purchase foodstuffs from men “at a price which must not be named.”<sup>63</sup>

Whether or not women did exchange sex for provisions to resell, the barrage of gender-specific criticisms and the linkages drawn between prostitution and huckstering illustrated the emergence of a new image of the city’s small-scale retailers. Female hucksters had become far removed from the minor label of “nuisance” and the caricature of feeble and elderly women that they previously bore. Like prostitutes and other working-women who earned their wages in the public streets, they had become designated as part of an interracial “rabble”—perverse individuals who threatened to destroy the precarious public morality and order.<sup>64</sup> It was this fear—the fear of morally depraved huckster women violating newly forming class-based gender norms and contaminating the economic culture of the early republican city—that underlay a rising chorus of antihuckster sentiment. By 1805, in one resident’s estimation, public opinion promoted a unanimous view of the “GROWING EVIL” posed by the “GANG OF HUCKSTERS.”<sup>65</sup> The duty to correct that evil and rid the city of “this worst of oppressions,” according to that “public opinion,” lay solely in the hands of the city legislature.<sup>66</sup>

When the former mayor Federalist John Inskeep returned to office in 1805, he quickly began granting the wishes of Philadelphia’s most vocal opponents of hucksters. Inskeep hardly needed prodding; he had stood as the defendant in several of the earlier huckster cases for vigilantly prosecuting petty secondhand vendors during his previous mayoral tenure. Irritated by the successful suits and the continued presence of hucksters, he called upon the police to make a dramatic statement of the city’s new anti-huckster stance under his leadership. On the morning of October 30, constables gathered in the long stretch of market sheds that ran through the center of High Street, charged with the task of apprehending as many hucksters as “they could lay their hands on.”<sup>67</sup> Over the course of the

<sup>63</sup> A Poor Man, “For the Gazette of the United States,” *Gazette of the United States*, Aug. 6, 1803.

<sup>64</sup> On the changing attitudes toward sexuality and the characterizations of prostitutes, see Clare Lyons, *Sex among the Rabble: An Intimate History of Gender and Power in the Age of Revolution, Philadelphia, 1730–1830* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2006).

<sup>65</sup> R, “Communication,” *Poulson’s American Daily Advertiser*, Jan. 26, 1805.

<sup>66</sup> A Householder, “For the United States Gazette,” *United States Gazette*, Nov. 2, 1805.

<sup>67</sup> Thomas F. Devoe, Clippings, 1791–1890, BV Philadelphia Markets, folder 7, New York Historical Society; *New-England Palladium*, Nov. 12, 1805; *New York Gazette and General Advertiser*, Nov. 2, 1805.

morning, they arrested twenty-two hucksters in all, confiscated their goods, and escorted them to the Mayor's Court to be convicted and fined.<sup>68</sup>

### *Envisioning Economic Democracy*

As poor huckster women such as Hannah Elmore faced this increasingly hostile climate, they began to panic. Elmore had given birth to her son, George, late in life, and at the age of fifty-three she was struggling to support him alone after the death of her husband. Her constant battle with illness made matters worse. Too weak for the physically demanding work of domestic service or other forms of manual labor open to women at the time, Hannah had turned to huckstering in order to make ends meet. At least two days per week, she sat in the High Street market, retailing nuts and fruit and swapping stories with other women who faced similar circumstances. Over the years, she had developed not only solid friendships with her fellow hucksters but also a steady clientele that allowed her to continue feeding and clothing her eleven-year-old son. Yet the mounting criticism and municipal crackdown had forced her out of the marketplace. Widowed, infirm, illiterate, and equipped with few other employable skills, she was left with little hope for her or her son's future.<sup>69</sup>

Privately, Hannah Elmore surely envisioned the ominous figure of the almshouse. Publicly, however, she articulated a different vision—one in which she cast herself as a legitimate vendor within a genuinely free marketplace. In the company of eighteen other huckster women, all of whom, with the exception of Mary Swarts, left only their "marks," Elmore helped craft a rare petition to the city legislature that affords a brief, yet significant, reading of the economic and political ideals of the female working poor. At first glance, the petition appears as little more than a plea for charity from a group of destitute women. Set within its proper context, however, in the midst of the cultural construction of republican womanhood and the nation's contingent and complex debates about political democracy and free trade, the petition emerges as a far more potent political document. The women still sought the pity and compassion of their legislators, but they also sought the right of unen-

<sup>68</sup> *Commercial Advertiser*, Nov. 2, 1805.

<sup>69</sup> Register of Relief Recipients, vol. 2, 1828–32, Guardians of the Poor, RG 35, Philadelphia City Archives.

cumbered access to the domestic marketplace. A close reading of this public document reveals a novel vision of economic democracy that one group of poor workingwomen believed should structure the markets of the early republic.<sup>70</sup>

Through the calculated use of deferential language, the petition opened by returning to hucksters' previous strategy of seeking the sympathy of councilmen. This time around, however, the hucksters also had to work to challenge the host of negative stigmas that had enveloped the female vendors more recently. Rather than being young and able-bodied, for example, the women styled themselves as "rendered helpless by the infirmities of age," "enfeebled by sickness," or "oppressed by the cares of Widowhood." Rather than choosing to huckster because of the ease of quick profits, they were driven to the occupation due to their incapacity for hard labor. And rather than possessing malevolent or unfeminine natures, they were respectful, just, and obedient individuals and mothers. If they lost the privilege of huckstering, the women further warned the councils, they would have no choice but to call on the already "severely taxed" support of public and private charity.<sup>71</sup>

Midway into the three-page petition, however, the hucksters altered their tone and directly engaged the mounting public criticism and political debates surrounding their trade. Countering the longstanding complaints from residents concerning the markup in their prices, the hucksters claimed they dealt mainly in a few fruits and nuts that were "more in demand for the tables of the rich." Such a practice, they argued, could hardly be deemed injurious to the citizens at large, nor should it warrant strict legal oversight. Furthermore, even as they denied any direct questioning of the laws, the women boldly claimed that "many men of wisdom and information" had advised them that the ordinances were indeed questionable and should be relaxed.

The petitioners' arguments grew more brazen as they continued to plead their case. The ordinances were particularly dubious, according to

<sup>70</sup> Petition of the Hucksters, Dec. 18, 1805, box 1, folder 11, p. 31, Philadelphia City Council, Petitions to the Select and Common Councils (Collection 1002), Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

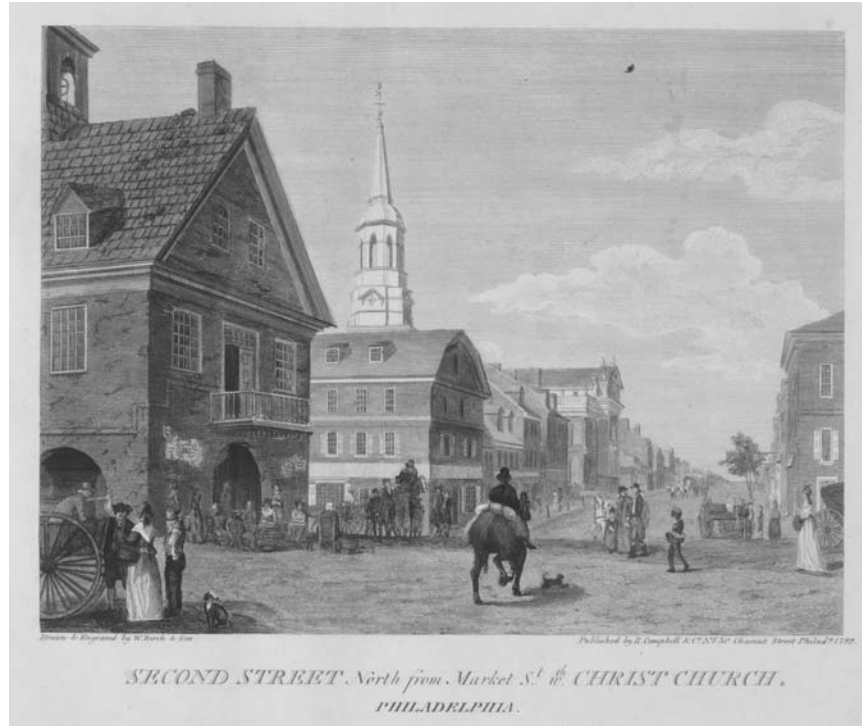
<sup>71</sup> Just how many of these women were actually helpless and enfeebled is impossible to judge, but at least four were listed as widows or as single heads of households in contemporary city directories. See Cornelius Stafford, *Philadelphia Directory of 1801* (Philadelphia, 1802) and *Philadelphia Directory of 1805* (Philadelphia, 1805). Seth Rockman has identified similar petitions in Baltimore in which hucksters even more pointedly discuss their views on trade and commerce. See Rockman, *Scraping By*, 100–101.

the hucksters, because they fostered inequality among market vendors. Wealthier hucksters evaded the city's regulations by selling foodstuffs from their cellars adjacent to the city markets. Even more affluent retailers practiced illegal hoarding of provisions in their homes or shops and yet were allowed to rent stalls in the market. By allowing such practices, the women claimed, city administrators created an unequal marketplace. Both groups performed the same acts of retailing provisions, yet the enforcement of the market ordinance targeted only the poorest of hucksters, setting the petitioners on a path to failure and a future in the almshouse. The wealthier vendors who evaded the ordinances, on the other hand, were allowed to pursue a path to economic success.

As the document came to a close, the huckster women posed a radical suggestion to their legislative audience, one that encapsulated their distinctive vision of an ideal republican marketplace. Their final plea was not merely the relaxation of the laws that restricted their trade but that the city designate certain stands for disabled, poor, and elderly hucksters like themselves. They did not ask that the stands be allotted charitably, but in exchange for a reasonable rent. Requesting space within the market was no small demand, for while no legal ordinance segregated the physical space of the city's markets, they had long been divided along the lines of class, gender, and race. Of the eighty-nine stalls rented in the Second Street market at the time, for example, only five were rented to women.<sup>72</sup> Both legal and illegal female vendors, white and black, clustered on the outskirts of the market on makeshift benches or chairs. Accordingly, the request to have a designated space within the city's marketplaces was much more than an attempt to secure a comfortable spot under the eaves of the market sheds; it was an attempt to occupy a formal, legitimate, and legally sanctioned space in the market economy.

Overall, the nineteen women who signed this petition never articulated a cohesive political or economic philosophy. Yet, through their criticisms and collective plea for market space, they did reveal a vision of a genuinely egalitarian market that many Americans would later recognize as "economic democracy." For the women, occupying legitimate stands was critical not only to their ability to earn a "slender subsistence" but

<sup>72</sup> Petitions, List of the Occupiers of Stalls in 2nd Street Market, 1802, box 1, folder 6, May-Dec., 1802, Philadelphia City Council, Petitions to the Select and Common Councils (Collection 1002).



Female hucksters cluster outside the marketplace at High (Market) and Second Streets. William Birch & Son, *The City of Philadelphia, in the State of Pennsylvania, North America; as it appeared in the Year 1800* (Philadelphia, 1800), Historical Society of Pennsylvania. [http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/object\\_id/798](http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/object_id/798)

also to eradicating inequality in the marketplace.<sup>73</sup> The poor, the sick, the elderly, and the female, in their estimation, ought to be given the opportunity to participate in the market alongside the wealthier, overwhelmingly male, retailers. Their ultimate vision, then, was neither one of unbridled capitalist competition nor paternalist state protection. Instead, they envisioned a market culture in which the state ensured that the weakest members of society had an equal opportunity to compete, earn a living, and perhaps accrue a savings that would carry them through old age.

<sup>73</sup> Petition of the Hucksters, 1805.

The women did find a few vocal allies who supported their vision of an egalitarian market and criticized Mayor Inskeep's practices of fining hucksters as unjust and cruel. A former farmer wrote one particularly supportive letter for the Democratic *Aurora*, begging the public to "hear both sides" of the debate. He echoed earlier economic arguments that middlemen and middlewomen contributed to more abundant and cheaper markets, while also addressing the issues of poverty and inequality raised by the huckster women. Borrowing from the book of Proverbs, he explicitly attributed the antagonism toward the vendors to their class status: "The rich man has many friends, but the poor is hated by his neighbor." Although he steered away from a class-based argument in the body of his letter, he did draw attention to the inequities among market retailers by pointing out that butchers and meat vendors also worked as middlemen and yet were allowed to rent market stalls.<sup>74</sup>

Ultimately, the hucksters' plea for market space evoked no legal changes. While advocates of a laissez-faire market continued to surface in Philadelphia, no chorus emerged to argue specifically that the "free market" ought to be an egalitarian one. Few residents clearly articulated the connections between political and economic democracy that undergirded the marketplace, and even fewer demanded that those on the bottom rungs of society—the female, the poor, or the black—ought to be granted an equal opportunity to participate in that market. Accordingly, municipal legislators remained opposed to the hucksters' pleas and to their larger vision of an egalitarian marketplace. Just one month after the petition reached the tables of the legislature, the committee appointed to consider it simply "reported unfavorably," and the matter was dismissed.<sup>75</sup> Together, the increasing stigma attached to the character of female petty vendors, the lack of specifically gender- and class-based advocacy, and the hostility of the municipal legislature continued to push the city's poorest hucksters outside the physical and philosophical boundaries of the market in the early republic.

As the century wore on, however, the vendors would continue to frustrate local legislators and police by defying the laws that restricted their trade. Some positioned themselves at the edges of the markets and in nearby alleyways retailing fruits, nuts, and vegetables, while others took

<sup>74</sup> "Hear Both Sides: Or, a word in favor of the Hucksters," *Aurora General Advertiser*, Feb. 9, 1805; *Gazette of the United States*, July 28, 1803.

<sup>75</sup> Philadelphia, Common Council Minutes, RG 120, Jan. 15, 1806, Philadelphia City Archives.

to the streets, physically stretching the boundaries of the market and carrying provisions to their neighbors' doors. Their persistence, in fact, would eventually make them a staple of antebellum urban iconography, some of which cast them in the positive light of the industrious poor and helped shape the continuing discussions over their moral character. The growing genre of street cry literature that surfaced in the nation during the early republic, for example, celebrated the ethical work of market and street vendors and praised young, female sellers in particular. The small chapbooks containing engravings and descriptions of urban street "characters" had a long tradition of publication across the European continent, and their introduction into the United States coincided with and supported the emergence of republican ideals. Philadelphians published several editions of street cry books in the early nineteenth century, while numerous others emerged in New York and Boston. Geared toward middling classes of white children, the small books emphasized the moral character of African American "bake pear" girls and other fruit and vegetable retailers by highlighting their honesty, industriousness, and determination to stay off public charity.<sup>76</sup>

Yet, outside the realm of print, the legal and social marginalization of the city's poorest hucksters made many of their actual lives more precarious than ever. Few would realize the promise of lasting economic and social independence that huckstering might have held for them had it become a legalized aspect of the market economy. Phillis Morris, the African American huckster who alongside her husband had helped build lasting black institutions in the city, gave up the trade and turned to washing clothes by 1818.<sup>77</sup> Hannah Elmore, one of the 1805 petitioners, on the other hand, continued to sit on the outskirts of the market selling provisions. She never achieved the slender subsistence she had hoped for,

<sup>76</sup> *The Cries of Philadelphia: Ornamental with Elegant Wood Cuts* (Philadelphia, 1810), 14, 17. From the sixteenth century onward, images of dumpling women, gingerbread men, coal men, and other street peddlers wound their way through popular European and Latin American print culture through the genre of juvenile street cry literature. Originally printed for adults or young apprentices as instructions on trades and occupations, illustrated street cries became increasingly geared toward children in mid-eighteenth-century England. Coinciding with a newfound interest in practical childhood education for the middling and lower white classes, the end of the eighteenth century witnessed a flourishing of small chapbooks and more expensive picture books that packaged the sights and sounds of both English and American street characters. For brief histories of street cry literature, see Linda F. Lapidés, *The Cries of London; The Cries of New York* (New York, 1977), v–xxi; and Leonard S. Marcus, introduction to *New York Street Cries in Rhyme* (New York, 1977), v–viii.

<sup>77</sup> John Adams Paxton, *Philadelphia Directory and Register, for 1818* (Philadelphia, 1818).



"The Huckster," *City Characters; or, Familiar Scenes in Town* (Philadelphia, 1851), 56, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. [http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/object\\_id/10353](http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/object_id/10353)

however. Twenty years after pleading for a designated space to vend in the market, she wound up on the public dole, receiving 37.5 cents per week from the Guardians of the Poor.<sup>78</sup>

Huckster women would also never recover from the multitude of attacks on their character that painted them as dangerous, perverse, and immoral women. Indeed, as Philadelphians were forced to accept their presence in their streets and on the outskirts of their markets, they created even more damning characterizations. An early utopian novel published in 1836 and based in Philadelphia, for example, happily predicted the demise of “that coarse, vulgar, noisy, ill dressed tribe, one half of whom appeared before their dirty baskets and crazy fixtures with tawdry finery, and the other half in sluttish, uncouth clothes, with their hair hanging about their face, or stuck up behind with a greasy horn comb.”<sup>79</sup> Even the characterizations of hucksters in children’s street cry books, such as *City Characters*, took a negative turn over time. Although the antebellum edition noted the shrewd business skills of huckster women and visually placed them at the center of the city’s market activity, both the image and textual description of the women cast them as obese, unfeminine women “not dressed very neatly.”<sup>80</sup>

In the end, hucksters tested but were unable to extend the limits of laissez-faire economics and democracy in the early republic. Despite the different strategies hucksters had employed to lay claim to specific rights within the market economy, they were never ultimately viewed as legitimate economic and political actors. Instead, as Hemboldt’s satirical story “Free Trade and Hucksters’ Rights” made clear, they, their trade, and their politics became seen as little more than comedic material.<sup>81</sup> Political satire aside, however, for a brief moment amid the flurry of debate over the economic and political course of the nation, hucksters had forced the state’s most powerful men to wrestle with the meaning of a “free market” and the definition of democracy. They had forced those same men to consider whether hucksters held legitimate economic and political rights to buy and sell as they pleased. They had challenged the broad public to reckon

<sup>78</sup> Register of Relief Recipients, vol. 2, 1828–32, Guardians of the Poor, RG 35, Philadelphia City Archives.

<sup>79</sup> Mary Griffith, *Three Hundred Years Hence, in Camperdown; or, News from Our Neighbourhood: Being Sketches by the Author of “Our Neighbourhood” &c.* (Philadelphia, 1836), 43.

<sup>80</sup> *City Characters; or, Familiar Scenes in Town* (Philadelphia, 1851), 1, 54–56.

<sup>81</sup> “Free Trade and Huckster’s Rights,” *Tickler*, Oct. 20, 1813.

with the active, visible participation of women in the market economy. And the city's poorest vendors had stepped out of the silence of the margins to offer up an unparalleled vision of genuine economic democracy that, if embraced, might have dramatically changed the shape of the marketplace and expanded the participation of poor women within the larger market economy.

*University of San Francisco*

CANDICE L. HARRISON

## PHOTO ESSAY

### *From Philadelphia to the Pinelands: The New Jersey Photographs of Lewis W. Hine*

A WIDE VARIETY OF STUDIES have functioned to make Progressive-era photographer Lewis W. Hine a recognizable household name.<sup>1</sup> Despite the proliferation of these monographs, photo books, scholarly articles, and museum exhibitions, a large number of the artist's region-specific photographs still remain untouched by historical research. By locating and exploring Hine's photographic documentation of certain places, historians are beginning to unearth previously unknown aspects of state and local history, gaining a better understanding of the larger social, political, and cultural climate of specific locations at particular points in time.<sup>2</sup> This photographic essay uses selections from Hine's 1910 photographs documenting child labor on the cranberry bogs of New Jersey in order to introduce the reader to an underdocumented aspect of

<sup>1</sup> For critical works, see Kate Sampsell-Willmann, *Lewis Hine as Social Critic* (Jackson, MS, 2009); Sampsell-Willmann, "Lewis Hine, Ellis Island, and Pragmatism: Photographs as Lived Experience," *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 7 (2008): 221–52; Peter Seixas, "Lewis Hine: From 'Social' to 'Interpretive' Photographer," *American Quarterly* 39 (1987): 381–409; George Dimock, "Children of the Mills: Re-Reading Lewis Hine's Child-Labour Photographs," *Oxford Art Journal* 16, no. 2 (1993): 37–54. For pictorial works, see Karl Steinorth and Marianne Fulton, eds., *Lewis Hine: Passionate Journey, Photographs, 1905–1937* (New York, 1996); Walter Rosenblum, Alan Trachtenberg, and Naomi Rosenblum, *America and Lewis Hine: Photographs, 1904–1940* (New York, 1997); and Judith Mara Gutman, *Lewis W. Hine and the American Social Conscience* (New York, 1967). For a recent volume of Hine photographs that also contains a comprehensive listing of past museum exhibitions of Hine's work, see Alison Nordström and Elizabeth McCausland, *Lewis Hine* (New York, 2012).

<sup>2</sup> Some examples include Robert Macieski, "Before Their Time: Lewis W. Hine and the New Hampshire Crusade against Child Labor," *Historical New Hampshire* 55, no. 3/4 (2000): 90–107; Joseph D. Thomas, "Lewis Hine: Portrait of Two Cities, Fall River and New Bedford," in *Spinner: People and Culture in Southeastern Massachusetts*, vol. 3 (New Bedford, MA, 1984), 6–27; and Dennis O'Kain, "Lewis Hine in Georgia," *Georgia Review* 34 (1980): 535–43.

Garden State history and its connection to the Italian immigrant enclaves of nearby Philadelphia. In depicting the work of Italian laborers from Philadelphia who traveled to the New Jersey Pinelands for work, Hine's photographs draw attention to the ongoing issue of migrant labor—an important element of the history of the mid-Atlantic region. These images also add another dimension to the larger labor history of Italian immigrants in Philadelphia, one that has yet to be fully explored by historians of the Italian American experience.

Lewis W. Hine was born in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, in 1874. Following the untimely accidental death of his father, the teenaged Hine was forced to undertake a number of jobs in order to support his widowed mother and sisters. Aspiring to become an educator like his mother, Hine managed to save a portion of his earnings as the family breadwinner to pay for schooling at the University of Chicago, where he enrolled in 1900. While a student in Chicago, Hine met Frank Manny, a professor of education at the Normal School who was named superintendent of the Ethical Culture School in New York City in 1901. At Manny's invitation, Hine accepted a position as an assistant teacher and relocated to New York. The enthusiastic young educator soon became interested in the budding practice of photography. With meticulousness and passion, Hine learned to use a cumbersome, tripod-mounted five-by-seven view camera complete with heavy glass plates or negatives and a flash pan and powder. Self-taught in the field, Hine soon shared his newfound skills with his students and encouraged them to use the photographic medium to enhance their classroom learning. Between 1904 and 1909, Hine made repeated visits to Ellis Island, where he photographed arriving immigrants. He then brought the prints into the classroom in order to give students an appreciation and understanding of the immigrant experience. Hine personally took over two hundred photographs of immigrants at Ellis Island. This project was his first experience in what would become a lifetime dedicated to documenting the underprivileged in American society.

Hine's experiences at Ellis Island convinced him to leave the Ethical Culture School and pursue a career as a documentary photographer. In 1907, he traveled to the industrial center of Pittsburgh in order to compile photographic illustrations for the monumental Pittsburgh Survey, the first all-encompassing analysis of the social structure of an American industrial city. Around the same time, Hine began to work as a freelance photographer for the National Child Labor Committee (NCLC).

Founded in 1904 with the mission of eradicating child labor in the United States, the organization believed that the American people would enthusiastically join their crusade to end child labor if only they were provided with enough evidence of the ills it fostered. Photographs, they reasoned, would provide that evidence. By 1908, Hine had become a full-time photographer for the NCLC. Over the next ten years, Hine travelled around the continental United States with his view camera in a herculean effort that resulted in the compilation of more than five thousand photographs of children at work.

Hine's monumental body of child labor photographs includes a small, yet noteworthy, set of images taken in New Jersey. His earliest New Jersey photographs, shot in 1909, chronicled the plight of child laborers in the glass mills of southern New Jersey. Hine later visited the northern New Jersey cities of Newark and Paterson in order to photograph newsboys, bootblacks, night messengers, vendors, and others involved in the so-called street trades. The artist's most substantial body of work in the Garden State, however, came from the cranberry bogs of the central and southern New Jersey Pinelands. Over a five-year period from 1910 through 1915, Hine made periodic trips to the cranberry bogs as part of the National Child Labor Committee's ongoing investigation of working conditions among Italian immigrants from Philadelphia who came to the Garden State in search of employment. Hine served as the principal photographer for this effort, and his photographs were reproduced in various exhibitions, photomontages, and popular publications protesting the evils of child labor on the bogs.

Original silver gelatin prints of Hine's New Jersey photographs are found in two major repositories of his collective body of work: the George Eastman House in Rochester, New York, and the Albin O. Kuhn Library and Gallery at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. A small, state-specific collection of Hine's New Jersey photographs is also housed at the New Jersey State Museum in Trenton. The most comprehensive collection of Hine's New Jersey images, however, can be found in the records of the National Child Labor Committee at the Library of Congress.<sup>3</sup> Received in two groupings in 1947 and 1954, this collection

<sup>3</sup> National Child Labor Committee (US) Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC. Lewis Hine photographs associated with the collection are accessible online through the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division (<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collections/nclc>).

contains nearly seven thousand archival documents addressing aspects of the work of the National Child Labor Committee from its founding in 1904. Among these materials are scrapbooks, correspondence, proceedings of annual meetings, pamphlets, financial statements, minute books, and investigative reports by field operatives. The collection also contains more than one hundred of Hine's most compelling photographs of life and work on the New Jersey cranberry bogs as well as original NCLC reports that Hine illustrated with his photographs and, in some cases, coauthored. These images, samples of which follow, provide an excellent visual framework for exploring a long-overlooked aspect of Garden State agriculture and immigration in the greater Philadelphia region.

*New Jersey State Museum*

NICHOLAS P. CIOTOLA



Rose Bido, Ten Years Old, Carries Berries Two Pecks at a Time, Whitesbog, Browns Mills, New Jersey, 1910. Photograph by Lewis W. Hine. NCLC Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

When Lewis W. Hine visited the cranberry bogs of the central New Jersey Pinelands, the state was a leading national producer of cranberries, second only to Massachusetts. In the autumn of 1910, more than eight hundred children worked in the state's cranberry bogs. Six hundred of them, including Rose Bido, were ten years of age or younger. Their short statures and tiny hands were well suited for cranberry picking, a delicate job that was often done by hand from the sprawling vines that grew close to the ground. Although owners deemed the work to be "light," Progressive reformers found that strained muscles during immaturity resulted in debilitating, lifelong problems for the young laborers. More importantly, reformers argued that migrant work in the cranberry bogs took children away from school for weeks at a time.



Millie Cornaro, Ten Years Old, Whitesbog, Browns Mills, New Jersey, 1910. Photograph by Lewis W. Hine. NCLC Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

Although Hine's images of cranberry bogs may elicit feelings of pastoral peacefulness to the first-time viewer, his notes often chronicle the darker side of the industry. Cranberry pickers worked in uncomfortable positions close to the cold, soggy earth. The need to complete the harvest before the first frost meant a feverish pace and long hours. Laborers started early in the morning and stayed on the bogs until dusk, plagued by swarms of mosquitoes and unpredictable weather. Around the time of his visit to New Jersey cranberry bogs, Hine reflected on his work for the National Child Labor Committee in a note to his friend Frank Manny, the principal of the Ethical Culture School. "I am sure I am right in my choice of work. My child labor photos have already set the authorities to work to see if such things can be possible," Hine wrote.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Field note sent by Lewis W. Hine to Frank Manny, ca. 1910, Elizabeth McCausland Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.



Group of Children Carrying in Their Pecks to the “Bushel Man,” Theodore Budd’s Bog, near Pemberton, New Jersey, 1910. Photograph by Lewis W. Hine. NCLC Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

Many workers in the cranberry bogs of central New Jersey were migrant laborers from Philadelphia who traveled up and down the East Coast following the various fruit and vegetable harvests. According to surveys by the National Child Labor Committee, entire families left their tenement homes together, worked side-by-side in the fields, and pooled their earnings at the end of the harvest season. Hine often kept meticulous notes regarding his photograph subjects, including their names and exact streets of residence in Philadelphia. Based on this information, we know that many of the migrant laborers in the New Jersey cranberry bogs hailed from the Ninth Street—or Italian—Market section of South Philadelphia.



Lucy, Carrying Peck of Cranberries to the "Bushel Man," Forsythe's Bog, near Pemberton, New Jersey, 1910. Photograph by Lewis W. Hine. NCLC Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

Hine never claimed to be an unbiased photographer. This image depicts two young pickers next to a "padrone," an agent who recruited laborers to work for the bog owners in return for a monetary commission. In 1885, the federal government passed the Foran Act—a labor measure supported by unions that outlawed the practice of bringing inexpensive contract labor to the United States. As Hine's photographs and notes attest, however, a form of the practice was still in place on the New Jersey cranberry bogs in 1910. The contrast of two children lugging heavy loads, flanked by a grown "padrone" who appears aloof, empty-handed, and wearing a clean white shirt, captures the photographer's disdain for those responsible for putting children to work. The irony of the youngest child flashing a wry smile despite carrying a heavy load also evoked public sympathy for the anti-child labor cause.



Arnao Family, Whitesbog, Browns Mills, New Jersey, 1910. Photograph by Lewis W. Hine. NCLC Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

Hine developed relationships with some of his subjects, often encountering them in more than one locale. He documented the Arnao family working on a strawberry farm in Delaware in May of 1910, then found them the following autumn toiling on the cranberry bogs of New Jersey. During the summer months, the family worked on the tomato harvest for the South Jersey canning industry. As a lifelong educator, Hine came to believe that the great tragedy of child labor was that it kept children out of school. The cranberry industry, Hine argued, was one of the most egregious because it required child laborers to leave their homes and work full time over a five-to-seven-week harvest period in September and October—the exact time of year when more fortunate children had returned to school.



Tenjeta Calone, Ten Years Old, Been Picking Cranberries Four Years, Whitesbog, Browns Mills, New Jersey, 1910. Photograph by Lewis W. Hine. NCLC Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

Although Hine prided himself in being an “interpretive photographer,” interested in photographs as an avenue for societal change, many of his images have the same beauty as those of his contemporaries, such as Alfred Stieglitz, who advocated for the photograph as a fine art form. The soft light, carefully constructed composition, and rich tonality of this photograph taken on White’s Bog establish Hine’s abilities not just as a documentarian but as an artist. The White family, the leading pioneer of the New Jersey cranberry industry, took particular offense at the photos taken on their bogs. Led by Elizabeth White, the family publicly challenged the findings of the National Child Labor Committee in a targeted media campaign and argued that the conditions on their bogs were humane, decent, and fair.



Eight-Year-Old Jennie Camillo, Theodore Budd's Bog, near Pemberton, New Jersey, 1910. Photograph by Lewis W. Hine. NCLC Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

In a 1915 report on the cranberry bogs coauthored with M. Louise Boswell, Hine used the power of the pen to augment the photographic record. He wrote: "Of the 80 pickers, I counted 25 who were under 14 years. [They were] picking and carrying continuously all the time I was there. These ages were according to my judgment after watching the children closely and carefully. Some of these pickers were apparently only 8 and 9 years old [and] showed the effects of the work. They were much fatigued and terribly bitten up by mosquitoes. This was another frightfully hot day (on top of over a week of the same) and the workers all showed the result, working half-heartedly and apparently ready to drop with exhaustion."<sup>5</sup> The report, now housed in the NCLC records at the Library of Congress, was delivered to the Public Education and Child Labor Association of Philadelphia with the intent of demonstrating the deleterious impact of migrant labor on the schooling of America's inner-city youths.

<sup>5</sup> M. Louise Boswell and Lewis W. Hine, "Report on Child Labor on the Cranberry Bogs of New Jersey, September and October, 1915," National Child Labor Committee (US) Records.



Salvin Nocito, Five Years Old, Carries Two Pecks of Cranberries for Long Distances to the "Bushel Man," Whitesbog, Browns Mills, New Jersey, 1910. Photograph by Lewis W. Hine. NCLC Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

*Good Housekeeping* magazine used this photograph in a November 1913 article titled "Who Picked Your Cranberries," published just in time to reach American women preparing their Thanksgiving Day meals. Underneath the cut-out image of Salvin Nocito, a caption read: "If they can't pick, they can carry . . . children too little to keep the pace are not too little to carry the filled measures—your cranberries, coming to you."<sup>6</sup> Appealing to middle-class women became a common strategy of Progressive reformers hoping to end child labor. The persistent argument that the cranberry industry hindered a child's right to an education fell on deaf ears. Because many of the workers were officially Philadelphia city residents who came to New Jersey as migrant workers, officials argued that they were unable to enforce the state's compulsory education laws on them. The use of child labor in cranberry bogs declined only after the introduction of the wooden cranberry scoop, a device that allowed for faster, more efficient harvesting and eventually obviated the need for child labor.

<sup>6</sup> *Good Housekeeping*, Nov. 1913.

## NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

### *Newly Available and Processed Collections at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania*

**W**HAT FOLLOWS ARE DESCRIPTIONS of some of the collections at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania that have either been acquired within the past year or more fully processed and therefore are more available and accessible to researchers. Full finding aids or catalog records for these processed collections, and many others, can be found online at <http://hsp.org/collections/catalogs-research-tools/finding-aids> and <http://discover.hsp.org/>.

#### **Conrad Weiser Papers, 1741–1783**

2 boxes, 2 volumes

Collection 700

Conrad Weiser (1696–1760) was a German immigrant who settled in Pennsylvania and became an Indian affairs agent and lieutenant colonel for the British forces in the French and Indian War. When Weiser was sixteen years old, his father made an arrangement with a local Mohawk chief for the youth to live with the tribe in the upper Schoharie Valley, during which time he learned much about the language and customs of the Mohawks and the Six Nations. This knowledge would be invaluable to him during his career as an envoy to the tribes on behalf of the colonial government of Pennsylvania. Weiser acted as an interpreter, not only between the British colonial government and the Six Nations, but also as a negotiator between various southern tribes and the Iroquois. For all of these negotiations he traveled widely and frequently, often making the long and difficult journey to the Iroquois capital of Onondaga. Throughout his career, Weiser negotiated land deals that created the current boundaries of Pennsylvania. He also had a lasting impact on the United

States' policies toward Native Americans and shaped the future of the country by strengthening and preserving alliances. Weiser's papers consist of correspondence, financial records, muster rolls, legal documents, and a bound ledger. His letters mention many men who shaped colonial America, including Robert Hunter Morris (1700–64), deputy governor of Pennsylvania from 1754–56; William Johnson (ca. 1715–44), an important British commander and interpreter during the French and Indian War; Thomas Penn (1702–75), proprietor of Pennsylvania after the death of his father, William Penn; William Allen (1704–80), founder of Allentown, Pennsylvania, chief justice of Pennsylvania, and mayor of Philadelphia; Robert Dinwiddie (1693–1770), lieutenant governor of Virginia; William Gooch (1681–1751), also a lieutenant governor of Virginia; George Washington (1732–99); and fellow interpreter Andrew Montour (ca. 1720–72).

**James Gibson Papers, 1712–1849 (bulk 1770–1800)**

7 boxes, 1 volume, 1 flat file

Collection 236

The James Gibson papers relate to Pennsylvania's colonial and early national periods, with particular emphasis on the work of the Pennsylvania Population Company, which sought to settle lands in the western part of the state. James Gibson (1769–1856) was a lawyer from Philadelphia who was related to the prominent Shippen family. In addition to his work as a lawyer, Gibson worked with several companies that dealt with the speculation in and distribution of northern and western Pennsylvania lands, and he may have served as an agent for those interested in these lands. Among the companies for which he worked were the Asylum Company, which worked with lands in Luzerne, Northampton, and Northumberland Counties; the Holland Land Company, which had bought land in western New York State; and the Pennsylvania Population Company, which oversaw lands in far western Pennsylvania counties such as Erie, Crawford, and Allegheny. Though it is not clear exactly what role Gibson played for the Population Company, he presumably handled its legal affairs. The collection spans from the early 1700s to the mid-1800s and contains an assortment of papers such as family materials, correspondence, administrative papers, accounts, mortgages, powers of attorney, minutes, maps, and surveys.

**Historical Society of Pennsylvania Trade Cards Collection, ca.  
1800–2000 (bulk 1800–1900)**  
29 boxes, 2 volumes  
Collection 3138

Trade cards were the primary form for the advertisement of products and services in nineteenth-century America, particularly during the two decades prior to 1900. Trade cards feature colorful illustrations, sayings, humor (sometimes bordering on the insensitive by today's standards), poems, and religious aphorisms. Between 1870 and 1900 the use of trade cards by business establishments was widespread, and products advertised ranged from tobacco and medicines to clothes and restaurants. This collection is comprised of trade cards from Philadelphia and the surrounding region, most of which are arranged alphabetically by name. Except for a small group of business cards of restaurants and art galleries in Philadelphia's Center City that was acquired by the Historical Society between the 1990s and 2011, the majority of the cards are from the nineteenth century. Most of the cards are small and feature color images depicting people, scenes, animals, clowns, and landscapes. Some of the images feature stereotyped caricatures of African Americans, Chinese, and other ethnic groups. This collection has been put together by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania over time and is still open for additional accruals.

**Alfred H. Whitaker Spanish-American War Diary, 1898–1899, 1998,  
2010, undated**  
1 volume  
Collection 3705

Alfred H. Whitaker was from York, Pennsylvania. He served during the Spanish-American War (1898–99) and died in Manila, Philippines, on April 13, 1898. He is buried in Laurel Hill Cemetery with other members of the Whitaker family. Whitaker's diary entries date from May 31, 1898, to March 10, 1899. Most are very detailed and contain information on his whereabouts and duties. The entries, which range from a few lines to a few pages, occasionally reference military actions. The diary also contains a few pasted photographs and clippings pertaining to the war, as well as, at the back of the book, a letter from Lillian Bradley to the Kodak

Company and an instruction sheet on developing photographs. The diary also contains a few loose items: an undated photograph of Göteborg, Hammen, Nattstämning in Sweden; a card written from Alfred to his sister Mary H. Whitaker; a diagram showing the cemetery lots of the Whitaker family; and a photocopied 2010 article from the *Wine Enthusiast* titled “Fine Wine on a Civil War Battlefield.”

**Batcheler, Hartshorne, and Sahlin Families Papers, 1789–2007  
(bulk 1880–2007)**

124 boxes, 67 volumes, 13 flat files  
Collection 3173

This collection contains the papers of the Batcheler, Hartshorne, and Sahlin families, descended from Axel (1826–1909) and Axeline Sahlin (1834–1922), a Swedish couple whose children lived in Europe and the United States. The records of four generations of the family, with documentation centering around five families, are preserved in this collection. The contents are mostly correspondence and other personal papers, including diaries, artwork, school work, and genealogical research on all branches of the family. There are also several photographs depicting all four generations of the family and their relatives. The papers of Axel Sahlin are particularly interesting because they document the development of the early iron and steel industry in the United States and abroad, especially in India. His letters and his “Personal Impressions of India”—along with the correspondence and photographs of Robert Chandler Sahlin—offer a particularly detailed record of the construction and early days of the Tata Iron and Steel Company and its mill in Sakchi, Jamshedpur, India.

**Woodlands Cemetery Company Papers, 1798–1990**

50 boxes, 152 volumes, 1 flat file drawer  
Collection 3661

The Woodlands Cemetery, still functioning as of 2013, was founded in 1840 on the grounds of the Woodlands estate, which belonged to famed Philadelphia lawyer Andrew Hamilton (ca. 1676–1741) and heavily

renovated by his grandson, William Hamilton (1745–1813). Soon after its founding, the cemetery became a popular burial spot for prominent Philadelphia men and women. The historic mansion and carefully tended grounds also made it a frequently used public recreation spot. This collection documents the growth and activities of the cemetery from its founding in 1840 into the 1990s. It contains administrative materials, financial records, correspondence, burial records, deeds to land in West Philadelphia, deeds to burial lots, blueprints and maps of the cemetery grounds, and a small number of photographs. The heart of this collection is burial records and correspondence about burial lot maintenance, although it also contains much Woodlands Cemetery Company financial information and documentation of renovations and changes to the cemetery grounds and mansion.

**Herbert Welsh Collection, 1759–1935, undated (bulk 1898–1925)**

120 boxes, 14 flat files, 145 volumes

Collection 702

This collection contains the papers of Herbert Welsh, noted political reformer and activist. Welsh, born in Philadelphia in 1851, immersed himself in various reform and humanitarian causes. With fellow Philadelphians he founded the Indian Rights Association (IRA) in 1882, which soon established itself as the most important organization working on behalf of the American Indian. As part of Welsh's activism in matters affecting Native Americans, he developed a close relationship with Theodore Roosevelt. Welsh was also critical of the interventionist role played by the United States after the Spanish-American War and took a vocal stance against US intervention in the Philippine Islands, even writing a book about torture by American soldiers during the Philippine occupation. His anti-imperialist activism connected with his involvement in international arbitration and his participation in the League of Nations. The collection spans from 1759 to 1935, with the bulk of the materials dating from the years 1898–1925. The collection contains correspondence, financial and legal documents, essays, speeches, files related to Herbert Welsh's activism, journals and diaries, scrapbooks, broadsides, serials, brochures and pamphlets, as well as other printed materials, photographs, prints, some drawings by Welsh, and letters, papers, and printed

material from or about his father, John Welsh, a Philadelphia merchant, US diplomat, and chairman of the International Centennial Exhibition of 1876.

### **Philadelphia Girls' Rowing Club Records, 1938–2011**

35 cartons, 3 portfolios

Collection 3670

The Philadelphia Girls' Rowing Club (PGRC), founded in 1938 by seventeen women, is a self-governing, private club that is open to women and girls fifteen years of age or older. Its purpose is "to promote, stimulate, and support among women an interest in amateur rowing and other forms of athletics which are supplementary to this support." The club owns a boat-house on the Schuylkill River and is a member of the Schuylkill Navy, the association of all the rowing clubs of Boathouse Row. The PGRC hosts the Bill Braxton Memorial Regatta each November, is home to the Agnes Irwin Day School for Girls rowing program, and conducts a number of activities throughout the year. This collection documents the club's activities from its founding until close to the present. It includes constitutions and bylaws, meeting minutes and notes, correspondence, financial records, membership and dues records, boat logs, scrapbooks, photographs, property records, engineers' reports, architectural drawings, grant applications, newsletters, event programs, books, clippings, CDs/DVDs, artifacts, and other items. There is some documentation of other rowing organizations, especially the National Women's Rowing Association.

### **The Plastic Club Records, 1888–2007**

52 boxes, 47 volumes, 11 flat files

Collection 3106

Seeing a need for an organization to promote women's art, Emily Sartain, an artist and the principal of the Philadelphia School of Design for Women, hosted the first organizational meeting of the Plastic Club, one of the oldest art organizations for women in the United States, in 1897. The founding members, who included talented artists such as Blanche Dillaye, May Fratz, Grace Martin, and Ann Pennock, agreed that the

club's mission would be "to promote a wider knowledge of art and to advance its interest by means of exhibitions and social intercourse among artists." The term "plastic" signifies the state of any unfinished piece of art. The club held exhibitions, offered art classes, and hosted social events such as its annual masquerade party, "the Rabbit." Many prominent and nationally recognized artists were members of the club, including Elenore Plaisted Abbott, Paula Himmelsbach Balano, Cecilia Beaux, Fern Isabel Coppedge, Elizabeth Shippen Green, Charlotte Harding, Frances Tipton Hunter, Violet Oakley, Emily and Harriet Sartain, Jessie Willcox Smith, Alice Barber Stephens, and Elizabeth Fisher Washington. The Plastic Club records span from 1888 to 2007 and include administrative records, correspondence, member records, annual reports, and exhibition catalogs. In addition, the collection contains scrapbooks, newspaper clippings, photographs, original artwork, and catalogs from Philadelphia and New York art galleries. The records of the Plastic Club were formally donated to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in 2012 after having been deposited in 2007.

**Shirley J. Vernon Family History Papers, ca. 1984–ca. 2006**

10 cartons, 5 framed items, several unframed oversized items

Collection 3669

Shirley J. Vernon (1930–2011) was an architect and educator in Philadelphia. She began her professional career as an architect in 1953 and established a solo practice in 1968. She taught at Drexel University from 1957 to 1987 and at Moore College of Art and Design from 1986 until her retirement in 1996. In retirement she devoted herself to researching her family history in England and France. The collection includes about ten linear feet of manuscript materials and fifteen cartons of books. The manuscript portion, which is mostly organized into three-ring binders, documents Ms. Vernon's family history research and related travel. It contains notes, genealogical charts, photocopies from books, correspondence, typescripts, photographs, maps, ephemera, a print, and a brass rubbing. Additional items include two accordion folders and one manila folder containing more of Vernon's research files, as well as a memoir titled "The Vernon Story."

**New Immigrants Initiative Collection, 1976–2004**

22 boxes

Collection 3442

The Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies operated from 1972 until 2002 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In January 2002, it merged with the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and its collections were integrated into the Historical Society's. The New Immigrants Initiative was a multiyear series of projects initiated by the Balch Institute and continued by the Historical Society that explored the history and experience of non-European immigrant communities in the Philadelphia area. The purpose of these projects was to document these communities for the historical record and to create interpretive exhibits, publications, and programs that educate various audiences about the recent immigrant experience. Five communities were initially part of the project, with four being fully finished: Indian, Arab, African, and Latino. A Korean project was started but not completed. The projects that are documented here include oral history audiocassettes and transcripts, photographs, video tapes, digital materials and computer disks, printed material, and ephemera.

**John Fryer Papers, 1876–2004 (bulk 1950–2000)**

217 boxes, 34 volumes, 9 flat files

Collection 3465

John Fryer was a groundbreaking gay psychiatrist best known for his appearance, in disguise as "Dr. Henry Anonymous," at the 1972 American Psychiatric Association (APA) convention. His speech is credited with convincing the organization to remove homosexuality from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders in 1973. As a psychiatrist, Fryer worked largely with gay men, lesbians, people who abused drugs and alcohol, and those who were coping with death. He was also a professor at Temple University School of Medicine and organist and choirmaster at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Germantown. This collection contains the personal and professional papers of John E. Fryer, spanning from his early teens to 2003, the year he died. The collection is divided into five series and includes correspondence; postcards; handwritten notes; concert programs; periodicals; subject files; patient records;

papers from his student years at Transylvania College, Vanderbilt University, and Ohio State University Hospital; appointment books; personal and travel diaries; diplomas and certificates; materials related to courses taught at Temple University; student records; reference materials; notebooks and manuscripts related to Fryer's research on the connections between religion and faith, on death, community mental health, cancer care, and persons living with AIDS/HIV; and a collection of old bulletins from St. Peter's. There are multiple church programs, music scores, sheet music, and promotional materials for church concerts and performances, as well as papers reflecting communication between Fryer and several companies dedicated to organ building and maintenance. The collection also includes audiocassettes, computer files, and many photographs and slides. Patient records, personal medical files, and student files are closed to researchers until 2078.

*Historical Society of Pennsylvania*

RACHEL MOLOSHOK  
AND HSP ARCHIVES STAFF

## BOOK REVIEWS

*The Republic of Nature: An Environmental History of the United States.* By MARK FIEGE. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012. 600 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95.)

One spring day in 1943, a group of women set up folding chairs amid a scenic expanse of pine trees. This was no ordinary gathering; these women sat directly in front of an Army Corps of Engineers bulldozer whose driver had been ordered to level the small forest in Los Alamos, New Mexico—the town where the first atomic bomb was built. Author Mark Fiege brings his readers to this moment—one that seems to belong in an environmentalist narrative of protest from the 1960s—to illustrate the crucial role nature played in the minds of the residents of Los Alamos and the creators of the atomic bomb. As these women defended their forested communal space, they demonstrated their connection to the natural world. Many of these women were employed at the nuclear laboratory in Los Alamos. Together with other nuclear scientists, they manipulated nature's building blocks to create a source of immense destructive power. Such physical power could—through fear of its use—guarantee world peace. Although to many people the bomb represented humanity's dominance over the natural world, its creators knew the bomb was incontrovertibly tied to nature's designs and limitations. The close reading of history Fiege employs here—uncovering humans' relationship with nature as a prime motivator for action—is replicated throughout his book.

Nature, Fiege argues, is “the omnipresent substance of reality” and “the final determinant of human history” (10, 11). To prove this, Fiege chooses nine moments in American history—the Salem Witch Trials, the American Revolution, antebellum cotton production and slavery, Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, the Battle of Gettysburg, the construction of the transcontinental railroads, the building of the atomic bomb, *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), and the 1973–74 oil crisis—for explication in each chapter. Each episode convincingly pulls back the curtain of human affairs to reveal nature's active role. For example, Fiege proposes in chapter 5 that the Union's ability to command and distribute its environmental resources, in contrast with the Confederate army's consistent lack of food and provisions, determined the outcome of the Battle of Gettysburg and, ultimately, the Civil War.

Critics may argue that Fiege could have chosen more important aspects of American history for his argument. Topics like conservation, environmentalism,

and resource use are absent. That absence, though, is intentional; nature is not just in trees and parks, but also in religious controversy, nuclear atoms, and human bodies. No matter where we look, nature is right there with us, shaping and supporting human life, culture, and history. *The Republic of Nature* dares us to think differently in the way the best history books do—by thoughtfully engaging readers in unexpected ways and in challenging our perception of the ways the world works.

Rutgers University

RAEHEL LUTZ

*The First Frontier: The Forgotten History of Struggle, Savagery, and Endurance in Early America.* By SCOTT WEIDENSAUL. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012. 496 pp. Maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$35.)

In *The First Frontier*, journalist and naturalist Scott Weidensaul offers readers an engaging, though certainly not original, narrative synthesis of eastern America's earliest frontiers and the violent clashes that shaped the lives of their Euro-American and Native American inhabitants. Characterizing the frontier as a place where real people, both Indian and white, struggled "to make sense of a new kind of world with which none of them had any experience" (xviii), Weidensaul analyzes the sometimes triumphant, but more often tragic, life stories of various frontier individuals as tools to recover what he sees as the lost story of "a wilder, darker history" of eastern America, one forgotten but still "hiding in plain sight" (xiv).

The book, which contains eleven chapters divided into three sections (the last focused almost exclusively on Pennsylvania and the Ohio Country), proceeds mostly chronologically, paying close attention to the various cultural clashes that contoured life along Britain's American frontiers from Maine to the Carolinas from roughly 1580 to 1780. Each chapter opens with a vignette highlighting a personal story or small event emblematic of some unique aspect of frontier experience. These sketches, as well as those discussed in the body of each chapter, come mostly from well-known, published sources such as the captivity narratives of Mary Rowlandson and John Gyles, the travel narrative of John Lawson, and the official correspondence of interpreter Conrad Weiser and trader George Croghan. Each chapter's narrative, analysis, and sometimes even the author's phrasing draws heavily from the works of the many early American historians who have been mining this rich field of research for decades.

Weidensaul is a good writer and an effective storyteller. He demonstrates a keen understanding of Euro-Americans and Native Americans. And his frontier is a diverse one, shaped not only by different cultures but by women as well as men. Consequently, this book is an engaging read. Readers should be aware,

however, that some key assumptions undergirding the author's narrative and his interpretations of the frontier are dated. The book's subtitle, referring to "the forgotten history," for instance, begs the question: forgotten to whom? As any reader of early American history knows (and as the voluminous literature Weidensaul cites in his fifteen-page bibliography suggests), this is certainly not a history forgotten by early American—or Pennsylvania—historians. Readers familiar with these fields will see quickly that Weidensaul treads mostly familiar ground here, offering little in the way of original research or analysis. Then there's the issue of perspective. Although Weidensaul certainly nods to the most recent scholarly treatments of the frontier as an interactive borderland populated by cultural hybrids, his repeated equation of the frontier with war—or at least with violence—tends to reconfirm older, Turnerian-like notions of the frontier as a place of stark political lines and cultural division, rather than as a site of borrowing and adaptation. In the end, his frontier ultimately faces west, rather than east, as native peoples would have done.

*Mississippi State University*

JUDITH RIDNER

*William and Sarah Biddle, 1633–1711: Planting a Seed of Democracy in America.* By C. MILLER BIDDLE. (Moorestown, NJ: C. Miller Biddle, 2011. 408 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, notes, appendix, index. \$38.)

Thorough research and lively, exciting history are often the result of someone's passion. And so it is with this volume, which begins with its author explaining that he is fascinated by the story he is about to relate and hopes his work will "let others understand it and enjoy it as well" (2). I believe he will not be disappointed; readers will understand and enjoy this narrative of hope and possibility, which recounts how William Biddle and his wife left Worcestershire, England, in the late seventeenth century to join several thousand land-starved Europeans who landed in the New World to "settle in a new territory . . . that would give them the ability to own land, to form a government and practice their religion . . . without fear of arrest or injury" (2).

In pursuit of this narrative of his forebears, C. Miller Biddle has not only read deeply into the voluminous papers of his own family who settled in West Jersey but has also given a nod to some of the collateral stories that shaped and were shaped by his ancestors: social, military, and economic turmoil in mid-seventeenth-century England; the transition from communal agriculture to individualistic urban capitalism; and the development of new ideas of land distribution, taxation, and self-government. The Biddles' religious beliefs, he reminds us, were "reflected in the judicial system, in land ownership . . . and in the freedom of conscience and religion" (320).

This volume is well worth reading, as long as the reader understands at the outset that this is a celebratory narrative rather than an analytical study of the early years of Quakerism in America. The “bibliography” is awkwardly designed, with primary sources, repositories, and secondary sources intermingled and alphabetization the only organizing principle. And readers are left on their own to discover modern scholars whose works add a wider context and discourse to the Biddle family’s experience (e.g., Andrew Bradstock, Jordan Penney, John Henry Ferguson, Paul Eddington, H. Larry Ingle, J. William Frost, Barry Levy, Sally Schwartz, and David Hackett Fischer). Nevertheless, Biddle’s narrative is meticulously footnoted. This work will be invaluable to students of family history and of community composition, as it provides easy access to information heretofore buried in numerous scattered archives: land transactions; Quaker meeting membership, attendees, and yearly meeting delegates; reproductions of letters and inventories; maps that document neighbors and neighborhoods; and wedding guest lists.

There is one more important piece of information to be drawn from this volume. *Planting a Seed of Democracy* is a marvelous example of how a heritage can be protected and reclaimed if donors give their “stuff” to archives and repositories that preserve and catalog it well and if researchers devote the time and commitment necessary to use what is in those repositories.

Haverford College

EMMA J. LAPSANSKY-WERNER

*Massacre of the Conestogas: On the Trail of the Paxton Boys in Lancaster County.* By JACK BRUBAKER. (Charleston, SC: History Press, 2010. 192 pp. Notes, bibliography, index. \$21.99.)

On December 14 and 27, 1763, a band of Lancaster County residents massacred Conestoga Indians in two distinct raids. The Conestogas had long inhabited a four-hundred-acre manor preserved for them by the colonial government. In the midst of Pontiac’s War, the rage, fear, and jealousy of the Conestogas’ white neighbors, most of whom resided in the nearby town of Paxton, erupted in violence. They first raided the Conestogas’ town, killing six Indians. The colonial government placed the survivors of the initial raid under the protection of local magistrates, who sequestered them in the Lancaster County jail. On December 27, the Paxton band invaded the jail and killed the remaining fourteen Indians. The massacre is one of the most brutal acts of violence in colonial American history. Jack Brubaker’s book shows us, however, that in spite of recent and intense scholarly attention paid to the massacre, we still know little about the actual raids.

Brubaker’s book has four parts. The first narrates the massacre of the Conestogas using primary sources. The second focuses on how others have dealt

with the Paxton Boys, from the debates that consumed the colony following the massacre through the most recent scholarship. His third section reexamines the raids in light of his evidence to draw attention to the culpability of a group of prominent residents of Lancaster County—Edward Shippen and Thomas Barton prominent among them—who have largely avoided such scrutiny. He ends with a chapter on the history of public commemorations within Lancaster County.

Historians of Pennsylvania, especially of the colonial era, would do well to consult Brubaker's section on the historiography of the Paxton Boys. Brubaker dedicates a chapter to Redmond Conyngham, a nineteenth-century journalist who forged a series of documents in an attempt to vindicate the Paxton Boys' actions. Brubaker demonstrates that these forgeries have influenced historical interpretation since their publication. Although those who were most likely to use them, such as Presbyterian historians, were already inclined to advance pro-Paxton arguments, Brubaker reveals the extent to which these false documents have subtly influenced more recent scholars' narrations of the event, even if Conyngham's pro-Paxton bias has not affected their overall interpretations.

Given the authors' dogged determination to get the story right and to show where others have gotten it wrong, the book's two major flaws are particularly glaring. First, the footnotes are scanty. Consequently, Brubaker's claims—while seemingly believable—are often unverifiable. The second flaw centers on Brubaker's desire to cast guilt on prominent figures in Lancaster. Brubaker makes some solid points about the complicity of men who could have stopped the violence, but he occasionally goes beyond what the direct evidence will allow. His treatment of Thomas Barton—the well-known and politically connected Anglican minister in Lancaster at the time of the massacre—is indicative of this problem. Brubaker speculates that Barton sent secret messages to the Paxton Rangers on the day of the second raid to alert them of the timing of his church services, which would have created an opportunity for the Paxton Boys to raid the jail. Brubaker's concluding sentence demonstrates the shaky ground upon which his hypothesis rests: "That Barton did yield to powerful figures—possibly in coordinating the massacre with his Christmas service and probably in his defense of the murderers in the anti-Franklin pamphlet—seems evident." How, I wonder, can something that is "possible" or "probable" become "evident"?

These two flaws, however, should not deter people from reading *Massacre of the Conestogas*. Brubaker's concentrated study is a welcome addition to the historiography on the Paxton Boys. Its shortcomings will limit its academic reach and usefulness, but any historian interested in the Paxton Boys should consult it. For its intended audience, residents of Lancaster County, it will serve as an excellent primer on the episode.

*John Woolman's Path to the Peaceable Kingdom: A Quaker in the British Empire.* By GEOFFREY PLANK. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012. 320 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$39.95.)

The descendents, sectarian historians, and amateurs who have written about the eighteenth-century Quaker reformer John Woolman may not have known that the movement against slavery had ancient roots and direct historical connections to the English Revolution and the rise of such radical groups as the Quakers and Baptists in the seventeenth century, or that Woolman was part of a reform movement. But academic historians do know these things, and all write from perspectives that take them into account. Still, there must be a reason for singling out Woolman. Otherwise, why would the author write yet another biography of this man?

Geoffrey Plank agrees that Woolman “helped pioneer a form of protest that has gained power and influence steadily to the present day” and recognizes that Woolman’s “behavior in some ways prefigured and anticipated the later actions of the American Patriots” as well as antebellum abolitionists and twentieth-century pacifists, war tax resisters, animal rights advocates, and labor organizers (8). Those readers interested in the man and the modern movements also well know that Woolman’s spirituality is situated not simply in the history of Quakerism but in a chain of prophets, dreamers, and mystics reaching back a millennium and forward into our own day. Woolman’s debts were as great as his legacies, and his contributions were both unique and exemplary, which is why historians focus on any figure from the past. Perhaps most significantly, though, academic historians study Woolman because we have the sources to do so and because others believed him unique, which has made his legacy distinctive.

The author’s topical approach is sensible, since other biographies have been organized chronologically. Plank eschews chronology at some sacrifice of coherence, because he does not always clarify the relationships of the parts to the whole or the order in which the topical treatments appear. He insists that Woolman was a product of his community, but Plank will get no argument here from any of the authors who have already written about this Quaker prophet. It makes sense to write about Woolman’s place in that community, especially because others have probed the inner Woolman and because the established histories of Quakerism and abolitionism provide strong foundations upon which to build.

The subtitle of the book is misleading. It is not an Atlantic or imperial history, and the British Empire is not a significant focus of the work. The author is not a theologian, nor does he have a deep knowledge of the Bible, so he makes no contribution to the ongoing discussion of Woolman’s journal. He is not deeply versed in Quaker history or the history of religion, but so many others who have written about Woolman are, so those are not unfilled holes that the author might have addressed. The book is not deeply researched in primary sources, and author

is not always generous in his acknowledgement of the secondary sources on which he relies, but he does build on much of the recent literature.

If I were to make a case for *John Woolman's Path to the Peaceable Kingdom*, a stronger case than the author himself makes, it would be that it is shorter and casts a wider net than other studies of Woolman. What Plank sacrifices in depth he makes up for in breadth, touching many of the historical contexts contemporaneous with Woolman's life. He puts the pieces together in his own way, and that is a contribution.

University of Rochester

THOMAS P. SLAUGHTER

*Among the Powers of the Earth: The American Revolution and the Making of a New World Empire.* By ELIGA H. GOULD. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012. 342 pp. Maps, illustrations, notes, index. \$45.)

This volume examines two topics in early American history: the transformation of eighteenth-century British North American colonies from their dependent status to their successful struggle for nationhood and a constitutionally based republic; and the republic's early expansion and dealings with overseas nations, which by the 1820s made it a world power. "Because Americans only partly controlled their own destiny, their bid to join the powers of the earth was a protracted, drawn-out process," Gould notes (5). Coupled with America's emergent success, however, was its callousness toward its own minorities.

Gould explores the changing status of Britain's North American colonists within the context of imperial wars and territorial acquisitions from France and Spain. These colonists were inevitably drawn into such conflicts and made significant contributions to them. British overseas expansion, meanwhile, allowed the slave trade to grow, remanding thousands of Africans to servility in America. After the Treaty of Paris in 1763, Britain tightened control over its empire, restricted colonial commerce, and reinforced its assumed right of sovereignty over the colonies. Parliament also adopted constraining decrees and committed troops to New England. Such actions sparked strong reaction from colonists who held countervailing views of sovereignty limitations, and their subsequent resistance led to revolution. The Declaration of Independence was drafted, followed by John Adams's Model Treaty, which expressed America's stance of noninvolvement toward Europe. Yet, despite visionary precepts propounded in the Declaration and the Constitution, the only federal action respecting minorities was to declare abolition of the slave trade in 1808, almost thirty-six years after Britain's *Somerset* case negated slavery in England.

Gould next discusses the solidifying of America's internal rule under George Washington, along with his declaration of nonpolitical involvement with

Europe. By the early nineteenth century, the republic was obliged to deal with foreign powers, signing treaties that greatly enlarged the nation's size. These years also saw America's success in conflict with the Barbary States and included another, apparently inconclusive, conflict with Britain that nonetheless led to favorable commercial and boundary agreements. Britain and America also joined together during this period to combat illegal slave traffic. Here Gould focuses on Paul Cuffe, a wealthy African American ship captain and abolitionist who worked with both nations to abolish the slave trade and to establish a sanctuary for former slaves in Sierra Leone. Within America, however, slavery increased and Native Americans suffered continuing exploitation, even as the United States' international influence expanded, reaching a self-determinative future with the 1823 Monroe Doctrine.

Professor Gould, a prize-winning historian, has written a masterful and insightful study of the emergent international power status that the United States attained from its colonial roots through the first quarter of the nineteenth century, when America "served as a check on the ability of Britain and other European powers to intervene in the Union's affairs" (218). His book, extremely well organized and well written, is augmented by relevant maps and illustrations as well as sixty-two pages of annotations with appropriate elaborations. My only suggestion (admittedly minor) is that the author might have used some additional primary sources: the papers of the Continental Congress and the edited *Papers of Robert Morris*. Nevertheless, this volume will surely receive the academic praise it deserves.

*Loyola University Chicago*

SHELDON S. COHEN

*Thomas Jefferson, Time, and History.* By HANNAH SPAHN. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011. 304 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.)

Hannah Spahn has written a brilliant and highly original book that will be read by generations of scholars interested in Thomas Jefferson and his thought and legacy. More importantly, *Thomas Jefferson, Time, and History* develops themes and ideas that transcend the life of the mind of America's third president and should inspire debate among historians interested in larger questions related to intellectual history and the human experience.

Jefferson's importance as a symbol of the fundamental paradoxes of the United States' culture is widely recognized. So is the fact that the third president has remained an impenetrable "sphinx" in spite of the thousands of volumes (and counting) dedicated to his ambiguous personality and multifaceted ideology. Spahn offers a new perspective that may help disentangle some of the most pro-

found Jefferson-related conundrums. By better understanding the nature of Jefferson's preoccupation with matters relating to temporality, she proposes an exciting new way to understand the man and his times (pun intended).

Spahn points out that by viewing Jefferson as an unswerving, forward-looking visionary of progress, as he has been commonly portrayed, we miss his deep ambivalence toward modernity. Her book sets out to unveil the fascinating ways in which Jefferson's unique temporalities, or his "approach to time as a personal, political, literary, scientific, artistic, economic, social, and philosophical problem," informed his private and public persona (19).

The book is divided into two sections, the first of which addresses Jefferson's general attitude toward time as constructed around Newtonian concepts. Jefferson wavered between the influence of two temporal categories, the first of which was a "rational" understanding of time, through which Jefferson acts as a consummate product of an Enlightened culture that understands time as an absolute and objective quality. Jefferson's meteorological record keeping, his calendars, and his various clocks are only a few ways in which he attempted to regulate and control time. Spahn demonstrates how those whom Jefferson deemed unable to do so, such as Old World aristocrats and black slaves, could not participate in the American march of progress. Another and opposed mode of experiencing time, a "sentimental" or subjective temporality, was the time of human perceptions and feelings. In yet another fascinating account, Spahn interprets Jefferson's famous "Head and Heart" letter as demonstrating this duality and internal conversation, with Head manifesting absolute understandings of time and Heart accepting a human temporal sensibility.

Spahn's ability to read familiar texts and cast them anew is demonstrated once more in her reading of Jefferson's best-known written text, the Declaration of Independence. Spahn interprets the Declaration's first words, "When in the course of human events," as a window through which to understand Jefferson's attitude toward history. The second part of the book is devoted to Jefferson's historical sensibilities and how he understood and quarreled with the problem of historical change. His attitude went through three major phases (corresponding to the revolutionary decade, the last two decades of the eighteenth century, and the Revolution of 1800 and after), each demonstrating shifting understanding of the dialectics of history and time.

It is futile to do justice to the nuances of such a rich thesis in a short review. However, readers should expect to find in *Thomas Jefferson, Time, and History* invaluable new ways to approach and better understand some of Jefferson's most glaring contradictions—most surprisingly, perhaps, regarding to his attitude toward slavery.

*Clothed in Robes of Sovereignty: The Continental Congress and the People Out of Doors.* By BENJAMIN H. IRVIN. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. 378 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$34.95.)

In *Clothed in Robes of Sovereignty*, Benjamin Irvin illuminates the ways in which the “Continental Congress fashioned an artful material and ceremonial culture for the Revolutionary United States” (5). Irvin focuses on how the Continental Congress sought to shape nascent American national identity “by crafting rituals, celebrations, and objets d’art” that would enhance its institutional authority and appeal to the general populace (5). The congress attempted to build national prestige through such means as commissioning monuments, swords, and medals, choreographing diplomatic and military receptions, holding balls, designing currency and flags, declaring holidays, regulating theater, and celebrating the Fourth of July. At the same time, Irvin explores how the “people out of doors” shaped these rituals of congressional authority, especially by criticizing or rejecting them. The authority and power of the Continental Congress had waned so far by the end of the Revolutionary War, Irvin claims, that continued efforts to build institutional authority through symbolic means were largely ineffectual, as other bodies—such as the Society of Cincinnati—claimed a greater measure of cultural authority.

Irvin’s interpretation is most successful when he keeps his lens tightly focused on Philadelphia. Some of his best evidence of political agency exercised by people outside Congress emerges from careful attention to the local dynamics that shaped the context in which the Continental Congress tried to build its power. Irvin convincingly portrays the class divisions over revolutionary politics that played out when Congress canceled a November 1775 ball in honor of Martha Washington because “some folks” in Philadelphia threatened to demolish the City Tavern, the ball’s venue, as a protest against such sumptuous display in the midst of stringent congressional efforts to enforce British boycotts (24). He also examines controversies over congressional evacuations of the city in response to war and mutiny and flaps over public funerals, most notably for Major General Richard Montgomery.

As with Montgomery’s funeral, several of the major examples of congressional ceremony—including Fourth of July celebrations, controversies over the Society of the Cincinnati, and theatrical restrictions—have been examined previously by other historians, but Irvin brings them together in an interesting way to reflect on the well-defined topic of congressional authority. Irvin incorporates good gender analysis, and he is particularly adept at including Loyalist criticism as a measure of public reaction. He might have done more with print culture and crowd actions as important means of popular expression. Irvin wants to contribute to what he calls the “newest political history,” which brings cultural insight to bear in considering historical events (291). Although he seems to

acknowledge that structural factors such as economics and civil-military relations ultimately sapped the power of Congress, he does provide a way to chart the decline through changing reactions to ceremonial culture. Irvin has written an informative and intelligent book, although we still await a political history that unpacks the causal relationship between culture and power.

*Grinnell College*

SARAH J. PURCELL

*1812: War and the Passions of Politics.* By NICOLE EUSTACE. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012. 352 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$34.95.)

Though the Republicans committed the United States to a war against Britain in 1812 that yielded little besides doubling the public debt, most Federalist opponents of the conflict chose to retire from politics after 1815. Historians usually explain this anomaly by dismissing the war as a mistake while attributing the demise of the Federalists to Andrew Jackson's triumph at New Orleans and the willingness of the Republicans to adopt Federalist programs, such as a national bank. Nicole Eustace takes a different tack. She argues the war was more a cultural than a military conflict, pitting an erotically fueled imperialism bent on westward expansion against Federalist opposition to the elimination of the American Indian. The Republicans triumphed because an amorous romp across the continent harnessed popular passions more effectively than Federalist criticism of unrestrained population growth could. The War of 1812 initiated a larger tragedy perpetrated by white men bent on subjecting a continent at the expense of Indians, Africans, and white women. Eustace apologizes for the complicity of white women in this imperialism by suggesting they were encouraged to see collaboration as an alternative to mass rape.

Eustace is best at showing how songs, poems, and popular novels complemented patriotic feelings stimulated by wartime rhetoric. But the only emotions she recognizes are those emanating from sexual ardor, to which patriotism and valor are ultimately reduced. Ideological and religious feeling find little place in this account. Nor is Eustace prepared to credit the influence revolutionary culture exerted over the emotional lives of early nineteenth-century Americans. Instead, the erotic is made the solvent by which the majority of white males overcame moral scruples that should have restrained the genocidal dispossession of the Indians from their lands. When viewed through this lens, Britain's trade restrictions become irrelevant, while impressments figure only marginally as a challenge to the reproductive potential of the American family.

Though the originality of Eustace's narrative is undeniable, her account is not without major problems. Her attempt to portray the conflict as a struggle

between Malthusian restraint and reckless procreation ignores the contemporary preoccupation with defending an imperiled republic. While she adopts the Federalist assumption of unqualified moral superiority in opposing the war, no notice is taken of Federalist shenanigans prior to the Hartford Convention—the political implications of which are conveniently ignored—nor of how those antics might have influenced either Republican behavior or the public's response to the Peace of Ghent.

The author's lopsided moralism does not vitiate the valuable insights, extracted from a prodigious variety of sources, her work provides into the popular culture to which the War of 1812 gave rise. But I would submit that the themes she develops occupied a peripheral space, analogous to the fantasies entertained by the revolutionaries in 1775 of retiring into the wilderness to escape British oppression. As such, they provide a better measure of a successor generation's desire to establish a measure of independence from their parents without repudiating the achievements of the revolution than of the War of 1812's causes and outcome (498).

*Wesleyan University*

RICHARD BUEL JR.

*Child Care in Black and White: Working Parents and the History of Orphanages.* By JESSIE B. RAMEY. (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2012. 296 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$55.)

For this study, Jessie B. Ramey examined two orphanages that provided child care in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, between 1878 and 1929. The United Presbyterian Orphan's Home (UPOH) housed white children, and the Home for Colored Children (HCC) served black children. Both "sister" orphanages—run by mostly white, middle-class women—had been founded in response to a demand for child care from working-class parents who were struggling to support young children after calamities befell their families.

Based on over 1,500 files containing information on these children and their families, parents' correspondence with the organizations, and institutional documents, Ramey refutes the benefactors' public claims of saving children who were neglected, abused, or abandoned. Instead, she shows that the surviving or struggling parents were often very much involved in their children's placement as well as their lives in the orphanages. Most, for example, paid toward their children's keep.

The children at UPOH and HCC ranged in age from toddlers (and sometimes infants) to teenagers. At the white orphanage, equal numbers of single fathers and single mothers placed and retrieved their young children when they were able to do so. While the fathers of the children at UPOH were more likely

to be part of their children's lives, the fathers of the children at HCC faced an uphill battle providing for their families; fewer black fathers placed, retrieved, paid fees for, or were involved in the demand for services for their children.

Ramey's work contributes to our understanding of the role of staff in child care institutions, the relationships between the Home for Colored Children's white board of trustees and Pittsburgh's black community, and the changes that occurred as a result of the latter's pressure on the board for representation and greater integration of black staff.

Both institutions' boards of trustees were subjected to criticism and scrutiny by Progressive-era reformers who objected to child care institutions in general and hoped to replace the volunteer women who worked in the orphanages with paid social workers. The boards responded gradually to demands for renovation of the buildings' physical structures and for improvements to the children's healthcare and entertainment, but they rejected—with the strong support of parents—requests to indenture or place the children out.

Ramey's research contributes to greater understanding of working-class families in the early twentieth century and the flexibility and adaptability of child care institutions in response to the communities they serve. Furthermore, this book adds to the scant research on black orphanages. By focusing on parents and the leadership of the orphanages, however, the children who lived in these institutions are somewhat obscured.

*Hamline University*

NURITH ZMORA

*The Art of Americanization at the Carlisle Indian School.* By HAYES PETER MAURO. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2011. 184 pp. Notes, bibliography, illustrations, index. \$45.)

This volume examines the role of visual imagery in the process of forced Americanization of American Indians during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Specifically, the author argues that images of the native body were manipulated to represent the transformation from savagery to civilization and uses the Carlisle Indian School, founded in Pennsylvania in 1879, as the prime example of this practice. Mauro analyzes the work of the school's founder, Richard H. Pratt, in orchestrating an "aesthetics of Americanization" in the interests of gaining political and financial support for the school (2). As an art historian, Mauro includes sixty-five pages of illustrations, each referenced in the text. It is an impressive marshaling of visual evidence that allows readers to evaluate his arguments.

Chapter 1 examines mid-nineteenth-century scientific classifications of race, particularly their emphasis on cranial measurements. Chapter 2 shows how that

science intersected with the pseudoscience of phrenology, which combined the study of head shapes with intelligence and emotion. From this perspective Mauro discusses the work of Clark Mills, who created for the Smithsonian Institution a series of life masks of American Indian prisoners of war under Pratt's charge, some of whom later became students.

Chapters 3 and 4 deal with photography, arguing that images must be understood not as faithful portrayals of reality—a nineteenth-century perspective—but as skillfully manipulated representations shaped by the photographer to satisfy political, moral, and other agendas. In particular, Mauro focuses on the before and after pictures of Carlisle students. When they first arrived from their reservation homes, wrapped in blankets, wearing native dress and ornaments, they were photographed in groups as well as individually. Later, after the children's hair was cut and they were dressed in the pseudo-military uniforms of the school, they were photographed again, the contrast assumed to represent the transformation to civilization. In-depth analyses of two pairs of these photos make the case forcefully for the artificiality of the images.

Chapter 5 moves on to the photographic record of Carlisle School itself and the ways in which Pratt used images to advertise the success of the school. Mauro discusses the work of the two photographers responsible for these images: John N. Choate, a local photographer, and the nationally known Frances Benjamin Johnston. Both produced images that emphasized the orderliness and control exerted by the school, showing students at work and at play. This chapter also describes the work of John Leslie, an American Indian photographer who was a student at the school, some of whose images contrast with those of the others, Mauro argues, in their less formal ordering.

It is always challenging to read a work about a familiar subject written from a distinctly different disciplinary viewpoint. Summoning a host of theorists in the critical armamentarium—including Barthes, Foucault, and Gramsci—may not make Mauro's arguments, but it does relate them to broader conversations. Still, I found myself wondering why, in some cases, simpler explanations might not prevail. Might not an image sometimes be just a representation of what happened to be before the camera? For example, the spatial separation of boys and girls in the photographs likely reflects the realities of school life as opposed to conscious choices by the photographer. But even if I was at times skeptical of a specific point, Mauro has made his case effectively. After reading this volume, it will be impossible to look at historical photos of American Indians uncritically.

A critical word might be offered from a purely historical point of view. There is no doubt that the author has not presented Pratt's agenda fairly in the context of the times or considered what the alternatives might have been. That is not his job as a critic. But throughout the book Mauro has made small errors of fact that are unfortunate slips, even though they do not affect his analysis. As random examples: the Navajos are not a part of the "Apache nation" (77); "white settle-

ment” had nothing to do with driving the Cheyennes “out of their ancestral homelands in the Great Lakes region” (85); and the author’s suggestion that it was “inappropriate” for a young Cheyenne man to be photographed with an arrow confounds the Cheyennes’ Sacred Arrow bundle with the weapon used for hunting and for war (87).

This is a provocative book that offers a new and a welcome perspective on Indian boarding schools and the nineteenth-century Americanization agenda in general.

*Indiana University*

RAYMOND J. DEMALLIE

*Medical Caregiving and Identity in Pennsylvania’s Anthracite Region, 1880–2000.* By KAROL K. WEAVER. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011. 200 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$64.95.)

The term “powwowing” will not be found in most medical dictionaries. It is a therapeutic approach to illness, practiced by Pennsylvania German medical caregivers in the anthracite coalmines of the state in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, that combines spiritual and natural healing. Powwowing was derived from German folk medical practices known as *braucher*, a traditional form of healing that included many Catholic prayers and rituals. In coal country, *braucher* became known as powwowing because of the respect the Germans had for Native American therapeutics. Pennsylvania German powwowers often used their skills to treat immigrant miners from southern or eastern Europe. At a time when allopathic medicine practiced by university-trained physicians was expensive and in short supply, powwowers brought hope, comfort, and, at times, healing to impoverished workers and their families.

Just as art, literature, music, and cuisine in the United States have been transformed by immigration, so too has the culture of medicine. Karol K. Weaver, associate professor of history at Susquehanna University, dips into an impressive bucket of sources, including oral histories, folk songs, interviews, jokes, and patent medicine advertisements, to render a fascinating portrait of domestic healing in the towns of Pennsylvania’s anthracite coal country.

The population of anthracite coal towns such as Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania, was heterogeneous ethnically and religiously. In one part of town was a Roman Catholic church for the Poles and another for the Italians, as well as a Ukrainian Orthodox church, a Russian Orthodox church, and a small Methodist church. In all, over twenty-one separate houses of worship lined the streets of Mount Carmel. Church attendance offered relief from the unrelenting schedule of labor—mine work for men and factory work for women—and its

related health hazards. Illnesses and injuries that prayer did not prevent were often addressed by physicians in private practice or by those employed by companies to keep the workforce—especially miners—healthy and productive. However, cultural suspicions of these physicians, the inadequate number of doctors, and the expense of medical care drove many in need of help, especially women and children, to consult alternative healthcare providers such as herbalists, midwives, powwowers, and passers (specialists in curing illnesses caused by the evil eye). Ritual cures included prayers, sprinkling of holy water, mixing of oil and water, and use of amulets. Healing was often a gendered and a local endeavor. Neighborhood women had acquired midwifery techniques from their mothers, and many were also passers, herbalists, or powwowers.

By the late twentieth century, the coal region was in decline, while hospitals and outpatient clinics were replacing powwowers' parlors. The need for emotionally supportive healthcare persisted, however. Those in need of care especially valued physicians who spoke European tongues, made housecalls, and did not disparage the domestic healers of an earlier era. Some women whose mothers or grandmothers had been passers now pursued college degrees and nursing careers. An era in the culture of medicine ended, but not without leaving a legacy of appreciation and respect for culturally sensitive medical care.

Karol Weaver's book is at times more descriptive than analytical, and her bibliography curiously omits some of the most important volumes written in the past two decades on immigrant healthcare. She has, nonetheless, made an undeniable contribution to the growing literature on American regional domestic medical practices and the care of the foreign born in the United States.

*American University*

ALAN M. KRAUT

*Howard Pyle: American Master Rediscovered.* Edited by HEATHER CAMPBELL COYLE. (Wilmington: Delaware Art Museum, 2011. 192 pp. Illustrations, notes, chronology, index. \$45.)

*Howard Pyle: American Master Rediscovered*, published in conjunction with the eponymous exhibition held at the Delaware Art Museum, is a welcome and necessary addition to the scholarship on this too-neglected American artist. A comprehensive exploration of both Pyle's work and influences, the edition includes high-quality image reproductions that allow the reader easy access to the material presented.

The book, clearly divided into various phases of Howard Pyle's life and work, begins with the editor's lucid introductory biography. The first essay, by James Gurney, details the development of Pyle's artistic style and the various strategies he developed in combining fine art and illustration. The piece by Alan Lupack

and Barbara Tapa Lupack discusses one of Pyle's most enduring legacies: his illustrated stories of King Arthur and his knights, written for children. The first of three studies on Pyle's major narrative themes, the Lupacks' essay is followed by two equally engaging chapters—"Gunpowder and Smoke and Buried Dubloons: Adventure and Lawlessness in Pyle's Piratical World," by Anne M. Loechle, and "Composing American History: Pyle's Illustrations for Henry Cabot Lodge's 'The Story of the Revolution,'" by Heather Campbell Coyle—both of which demonstrate Pyle's love of these particular narratives and their connection with interests and desires of late nineteenth-century America.

These essays are followed by three contributions that attempt to place Pyle's work within the social context of late nineteenth-century America and to interpret his art in light of the artist's own biography. The chapter by Margaretta S. Frederick traces Pyle's artistic influences to prominent artists of the period such as the English illustrator Walter Crane, the French Academician Jean-Léon Gérôme, and the American painter Winslow Homer. Although well-documented, the essay deals almost exclusively with compositional similarities. I would have welcomed a greater emphasis on contextual explorations of Pyle's indebtedness to these artists. A more successful essay is that by Mary F. Holahan, which investigates the clear connection between Pyle's Swedenborgian religious faith and some of his most moving stories for children. The third contextual study, by Eric J. Segal, is a noteworthy discussion of how contemporary notions of masculinity in the American psyche are imprinted on many of Pyle's illustrations.

The edition concludes with a series of essays on Pyle's legacy as a teacher and his influence on popular culture. "Teaching Storytelling," by Joyce K. Schiller, discusses Pyle's pioneering teaching of the art of illustration that he developed during his tenure at the Drexel Institute of Art. Virginia O'Hara's piece covers some of the same ground as Schiller's article while adding interesting biographical notes on Pyle's most successful students. The last two essays that discuss the more enduring influences of Pyle's work—Stephanie Haboush Plunkett's piece on Howard Pyle's influence on Norman Rockwell's art and David M. Lubin's article on Pyle's impact on Hollywood's pirate films—are not as effective, as they never go beyond the basic analysis of visual resemblances. All told, however, this exhibition catalog is a most valuable addition to the scholarship on this important artist.

*New York University*

JEANNE FOX-FRIEDMAN

*The Life of Pennsylvania Governor George M. Leader: Challenging Complacency.* By KENNETH C. WOLENSKY, with GOVERNOR GEORGE M. LEADER. (Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh University Press; Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2011. 196 pp. Photographs, appendices, index. \$60.)

"At 94, Former Governor George M. Leader Forgotten, Not Gone" reads the title of a recent article in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* (June 11, 2012) that discusses Leader's involvement in a bipartisan prison reform campaign. This new book, which combines transcripts of interviews between Pennsylvania historian Kenneth Wolensky and Governor Leader (and occasionally Leader's wife of more than seventy years, Mary Jane, who died in 2011) with historical and biographical narratives by Wolensky, probably will not do much to increase Leader's public visibility, but it is an important resource for historians of Pennsylvania politics and government, and it provides a glimpse into a long and interesting life.

Born in 1918 into a York County chicken farming family, Leader graduated early from high school and went on to Gettysburg College and graduate school in public administration at the University of Pennsylvania, married at twenty-one, enlisted in the navy, and worked on an aircraft carrier in the Pacific, during which time his wife gave birth to the first of their four children. After World War II, the Leaders set up their own chicken farm, the fate of which is left unclear in this book. Suffice it to say that during George Leader's thirties, politics and government appear to have eclipsed chickens; he was elected to the state senate in 1950, ran unsuccessfully for state treasurer in 1952, was elected governor in 1954, and ran unsuccessfully for the US Senate in 1958.

The chapter covering the gubernatorial career of Leader—the first Democrat to be elected to the office in twenty years—is the longest in the book and provides some interesting details of his major initiatives, including the establishment of the Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority and the Fair Employment Practices Commission, professionalization of the state's mental health hospitals, expansion of the state park system, and construction of Pennsylvania's portion of the interstate highway system. A later chapter on "Views, Philosophies, and Ideas about Contemporary Issues" provides some insight into how these various initiatives fit into Leader's more comprehensive political philosophy, the foundation for which was laid during his Depression-era childhood and his upbringing in a family of what he called populist "Farm Democrats" (138).

By the age of forty, Leader's political career was over; he declined all future opportunities and offers to run for office, as well as two potential appointments in US cabinet departments, the presidency of West Chester College, and chairmanship of the board of trustees of the bankrupt Penn Central Railroad. Instead, the former governor and his family moved to Gladwyne (outside of Philadelphia) so that Leader could get briefly into mortgage banking before he and a partner

established a long-term care company that operated three facilities in the Philadelphia suburbs. The Leaders sold that company and established another, Country Meadows, in 1982, for which one of Leader's sons now serves as CEO, another son serves as COO, a son-in-law serves as CFO, and the former governor serves as a board member. Bored in retirement, Leader founded another company, Providence Place Retirement Community, for which he now serves as chairman of the board.

*Drexel University*

RICHARDSON DILWORTH

*Pennsylvania in Public Memory: Reclaiming the Industrial Past.* By CAROLYN KITCH. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012. 272 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$59.95.)

Carolyn Kitch's delightful turn through the back roads and major arteries of Pennsylvania's industrial memory is a testament to the power of vigorous, hands-on, interdisciplinary scholarship. Kitch, who teaches journalism at Temple University, comes to her topic from outside the usual coterie of historians, curators, and memory pundits who have given us much of the scholarship that circulates in public history circles today. Although her study is firmly situated in the historiographies of those fields, her method is decidedly ethnographic: Kitch talks with people—*lots* of people—and visits hundreds of historic locations throughout the commonwealth. The result is a careful and compassionate assessment of the cultural forces that relegate Pennsylvania industry to memory, even in communities where it's very much alive today.

Kitch begins by pondering Pennsylvania's persistent image as the poster child for American postindustrialism. This fact of Pennsylvania's public face—think Joe Biden's Scranton or Billy Joel's Allentown—explains Kitch's concern with industrial memory. The importance of her book for readers elsewhere lies in the fact that industry has been purposefully remembered here for a very long time. As Kitch demonstrates, Pennsylvania is significant for pioneering "public history about industry" (17). We learn how, from the rise of industrial tourism in Victorian Mauch Chunk to the patriotic onslaught of the 1976 bicentennial celebration, tourism boosters crafted an inclusive, if counterintuitive, vision of the commonwealth's past by juxtaposing its industrial might with natural splendor, quaint folkways, and mass consumerism. These formative efforts to concoct a usable industrial heritage still shape how people understand the past in Pennsylvania and throughout the United States.

That it does, in Kitch's assessment, is not necessarily a good thing. Each chapter reveals how various vehicles of industrial memory—including heritage trails, agritourism, and factory tours—compel Pennsylvanians to understand history

through the vague platitudes of what she terms “cultural tourism.” This is the kind of tourism that mythologizes progress, depoliticizes labor, reduces ethnic difference to a matter of foodways, and somehow makes all history Civil War history. This is not to say that Pennsylvanians choose to ignore difficult pasts. On the contrary, the people we meet in Kitch’s book preserve in family memories a powerful sense of the hardships that lay behind—and, certainly, ahead. At the same time, radical declines in public funding for museums and cultural programming mean that more and more public history is paid for by private donors, for whom the myth of industrial progress is gospel. Consequently, Pennsylvanians lured by the economic promise of, say, natural gas extraction via hydraulic fracturing (a.k.a. “fracking”) are less and less likely to encounter the sort of critical social and environmental history that shows us that “progress” has rarely been what it’s cracked up to be.

*Pennsylvania in Public Memory* is a real boon for those of us who teach public history in the mid-Atlantic region. Its weaving together of local memory and top-shelf scholarship will make it a staple in graduate and undergraduate courses. Better yet, Kitch’s easy style will appeal to front-line historians too, particularly those who struggle to remind heritage tourists just how current the past really is.

*Temple University*

SETH C. BRUGGEMAN