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Editorial

The history of Pennsylvania is inextricably linked to the history of energy—from the forests and waters of Penn Woods, to the anthracite and bituminous coal fields of the northeast and southwest corners of the state, to the natural gas trapped in the state's Marcellus Shale formation. Today, Texas may be the nation's leading energy producer, but it was Pennsylvania energy that powered much of America's industrial revolution. In the twenty-first century, energy production and consumption remain central to the state's economy. Over the last few years, according to the US Energy Information Agency, Pennsylvania has been the second-largest producer of natural gas and nuclear energy in the nation and the fourth-largest producer of electricity and coal (as well as the only state that mines higher heat–producing anthracite). Nationally, Pennsylvania is ranked third in total energy production. It is also, unfortunately, ranked third in total carbon dioxide emissions.[1]

Energy—its production and consumption and its role in development and in devastation, both human and environmental—is central to Pennsylvania's history, present, and future. It is therefore appropriate that we dedicate this special issue to the history of energy in the commonwealth, in the hope that by better understanding this important past, we can make more informed decisions about our future.

[1] US Energy Information Administration, Independent Statistics & Analysis: Pennsylvania, http://www.eia.gov/state/overview.cfm?sid=PA, accessed Sept. 28, 2015.

Guest editors Brian Black and Donna Rilling bring their combined expertise to this issue. Brian Black is professor of history and environmental studies at Penn State, Altoona, and he has written extensively on the history of oil, gas, and the environment. Donna Rilling, professor of history at Stony Brook University, focuses on the history of early American work, business, and the economy; she is currently working on a project on early industrial pollution in the Delaware Valley. They have selected articles that comment on a wide range of Pennsylvania energy sources—from water and animal power to electricity and natural gas—and that examine these sources' creative as well as destructive potential. This issue does not, however, attempt to be comprehensive—and, as the essays make clear, there are many subjects in need of further study.

Beyond the importance of the topic, this issue of the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* is significant for other reasons. As regular readers of *PMHB* will have noticed, there was no July issue this summer. This year *PMHB* moved to a new production schedule, publishing three issues per year, in January, April, and October, with the October issue being a double issue on a special topic. Readers can expect future special issues on the history of immigration and ethnicity, education, and more.

Finally, this is my last issue as editor of *PMHB*. With this issue I finish thirteen years of editing this journal. With you, I have learned a lot of fascinating history through its pages. I leave the journal in the very capable hands of its new editor, Christina Larocco, and managing editor, Rachel Moloshok. Christina received her PhD from the Department of History at the University of Maryland, College Park, and her research has focused on the culture and thought of twentieth-century social movements. Rachel, who received her MA in history from Northeastern University, has been the assistant editor of *PMHB* for the past four years. I look forward to watching *PMHB* grow under their stewardship.

Tamara Gaskell
Editor

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