



Editorial

THE *New England Quarterly* is pleased to present the winning essay of the 2016 Walter Muir Whitehill Prize for Early American History, “The Bishop Controversy, the Imperial Crisis, and Religious Radicalism in New England, 1763-1774” by Peter W. Walker. Like all good scholarship, Walker expertly builds upon the growing body of scholarship on the Revolution that reflects a more complicated, differentiated empire. Described by the Whitehill Prize Committee as a “sober-sided, coherent argument sustained by strong research in archival sources; well-written to boot,” Walker’s essay on the New England Anglican bishop controversy stands Carl Bridenbaugh’s interpretation, in the words of one of the prize judges, “on its head and makes it comprehensible and significant.”

For this issue, *The Quarterly* has been equally fortunate to have two additional, complementary essays, “A Loyalist Who Loved His Country too Much: Thomas Hutchinson Historian of Colonial New England” by Liam Riordan and “Connecticut Confronts the Guillotine: The French Revolution and the Land of Steady Habits” by Robert J. Imholt, that further complicate our understanding of the social milieu before and after the Revolution. By tracing the places, including London, where Hutchinson wrote, Riordan helps us see the poignancy of his narrative and deepens the analysis particularly of the third volume of *The History of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts Bay*. Analyzing Hutchinson’s writing of *The History*, Riordan reveals not only the complexities of Hutchinson as historian—one that shows his adherence to strikingly contemporary standards of scholarly disinterest—but provides a richer appreciation of the tragic difficulties of his inner conflicts, of

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remaining true to his allegiances and oath of office in the face of coercive violence. Riordan's essay is another in the rapidly growing body of scholarship that illustrates a revolution born in conflict, division, and violence, some of whose victims opposed new imperial taxes, loved liberty no less than their opponents, yet remained loyal to Britain. Robert J. Imholt shows us the unfinished nature of revolution. He demonstrates how transatlantic events contributed to the redefinition of Connecticut's post-revolutionary sense of identity through the debates over the meaning of French Revolution among different local factions.

Our two remaining essays, Joanne van der Woude's "Indians and Antiquity: Subversive Classicism and Early New England Poetry" and Tim Sommer's "'Always as a Means, Never as an Ends': Orestes Brownson's 'Transcendentalist' Criticism" explore the ways in which poetry and literary criticism reached beyond customary tropes to understand cultural change and interaction. Both essays point to writers' sensibilities that literature serves specific social purpose, in the case of van der Woude, to find a language to explain the cultural interaction of European and indigenous peoples and the brutality of war in New England and, in Sommer's, to see the way in which Orestes Brownson intended scholarship to serve as means and not as an aesthetic outcome. Van der Woude asks us to consider why colonial poets insisted upon using classical metaphors. Taking the poetry of two seventeenth century writers, Thomas Morton, of Merrymount fame, and Benjamin Tompson, she finds classicism as a perspective that needed a "new kind of culturally flexible, satirical mode" because conventional literary language lacked the capacity to articulate a more nuanced and sophisticated understanding of intercultural contact and conflict between Europeans and Native Americans. Similarly, Simmons argues that Orestes Brownson should be distinguished from the Transcendentalist colleagues with whom he is usually linked. Simmons's Brownson pushes to include in aesthetic literature religious and political forms that were directed at more purposeful, functional ends. In this regard, Simmons helps to provide a richer understanding of Brownson's intellectual

evolution while distancing him from the Transcendentalism of Emerson and Fuller.

Our essays also reflect the importance of regional scholarship in illustrating the pervasive connections of local communities to transatlantic political and cultural developments and its role in enriching Atlantic Studies. While Imholt takes a more customary approach, of looking at the French Revolution through Connecticut eyes, Walker's study of the Bishop Controversy and Simmons's of Brownson use, in part, of an Atlantic perspective that looks westward, not from America, but from Europe to create more nuanced understandings of their respective subjects.

September marks transitions in our editorial office. Gabrielle Garneau having managed the website and undertaken the many tasks associated with keeping us on schedule has completed her graduate work and departs for new challenges. Sarah Black becomes our senior graduate assistant, and Eduardo Souza, our new graduate assistant from the English Department begins his appointment with this issue.

—Jonathan M. Chu