

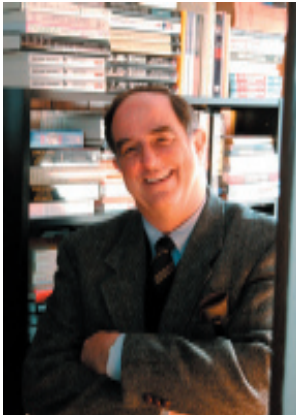
Concord Review Society

Newsletter and Forum

To Promote Varsity Academics® in High Schools

"Blue Sky"

A Letter from the Founder



I am inspired by the number of alums who have joined the Concord Review Society since we started last year. Of course, I am also impressed by so many of your exemplary achievements, all of which can be traced back to publication in *The Concord Review*, I will claim to any potential funders.

Speaking of potential funders, as you know, the rule of six, or the Kevin Bacon rule, as it is sometimes called, means that most of you can be connected to Donald Trump, Bill Gates, or Warren Buffet, with the appropriate intervening steps. Now, assuming you can be in touch with someone who knows someone who knows someone, what could you tell them that might incline them to contribute to our endowment campaign?

You could let them know that we are working on the only academic journal in the world for the research papers of high school students, the only independent assessment service for the history papers of high school students [National Writing Board], the premier history prize [Emerson Prizes], and the National History Club, with chapters in 29 states and more than 2,100 members, but what could we do if we had a substantial endowment [e.g. \$20 million] and the resulting income?

For a start, we could hire someone to train as my replacement [I will be 70 in two years], and we could offer them a decent salary and benefits and some job security. We could also train 100 new Readers for the National Writing Board, which is now endorsed by 31 colleges and universities. With these Readers we could begin to think about starting a Web Mentoring Service, for those high school students who want to read history and write a serious research paper, but who do not have the teachers with the time or inclination to guide them through it. We could work more on our CD and DVD versions of all the essays so far, with indexes and a Teacher's Guide, etc. We could offer \$1,000 scholarships to each author and increase the Emerson

Prizes to \$5,000 each. We could hold the first convention of the National History Club and start encouraging the organization of history clubs in other countries to join us. We could construct a better, more useful website...

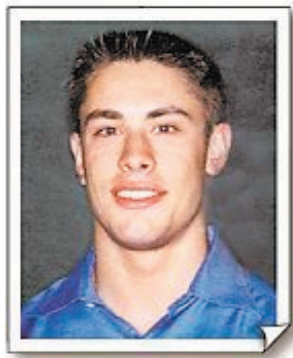
In addition, we could begin to think about *The Walden Review* for serious high school essays on literature, and offer prizes and scholarships for that work, and one day we might start *The Franklin Journal*, to publish the kind of brilliant work in science and technology that the Intel and Siemens-Westinghouse programs discover each year. We could do more to help teachers offer students greater enjoyment of history and a chance to write a serious academic paper at least once before they graduate. And we could think of new ways to encourage Varsity Academics® in the schools.

To keep going, to thrive, and to take on some of these challenges, I believe we need that endowment. So please think of your six and let us know who to contact next. Best wishes,

Will Fitzhugh
Founder & President

An Evaluation of our Progress

A Letter from the Executive Director



When I last penned this column in September, the Concord Review Society was just four months old and some fifty members strong. I now write to you six months later to report CRS's growth.

As of 24 March 2004, the Concord Review Society is proud to include one-hundred and fifty-three former *Concord Review*

authors as members. We are also proud to include many of our members' families, friends, and teachers on our mailing list as supporters of The Concord Review, Inc.

CRS members have written to us from thirty-eight states, the District of Columbia, and eight other countries (Australia, Canada, England, India, New Zealand, Norway, Thailand, and Vietnam). Some of our members have written to report news of their high school or college graduations. Other members have written to inform of marriages, children, or career changes.

Among its members, CRS includes numerous doctors, lawyers, scientists, editors, historians, current students, Rhodes Scholars, professors, teachers, and a U.S. Army Officer. CRS members have attended and graduated from Harvard and Yale, Cal Berkeley and Stanford, and Amherst and Williams, amongst others.

I know that TCR's founder and president, Will Fitzhugh, is impressed by the breadth and depth of your interests and achievements, and is inspired by the large number of you who, as CRS members, help to spread the Varsity Academics® message.

I last wrote to you in February to update you on the progress of *The Concord Review*, the National History Club, the National Writing Board, and the Concord Review Society, and to ask for your help.

You have responded. As of 24 March 2004, we have received \$2,370 in donations from CRS members and their families and friends. We realize this sum is nowhere near the \$20 million dollar endowment we seek in order to ensure the survival of TCR, Inc.'s services, but we are pleased by the number of CRS members who have offered

their help. Twenty-one percent of CRS members and their families have contributed to our fundraising efforts, and we are greatly appreciative.

We are using the money that we have raised thus far from CRS members and their families to spread the Varsity Academics® message. The money has gone towards mailings to teachers, history department chairs, college admissions officers, members of the media, education foundations, and potential donors.

Although we have not been able to reach all of the nearly twenty-two thousand high schools in the United States, and others in the English speaking world, we have had some recent success in spreading our message, that secondary students are up to the challenge of doing serious academic work.

Will Fitzhugh wrote an article in the February edition of the National Council for History Education's newsletter *History Matters!* entitled "History is Fun!" which is featured on page ten and eleven of this newsletter. In March, Michael Winerip, the education columnist for *The New York Times* wrote a column praising *The Concord Review's* efforts to improve writing and historical knowledge at the secondary school level.

Just recently, Kathleen Kennedy Manzo wrote a supportive column about the financial struggles of The Concord Review, Inc. in *Education Week*, the newspaper of record for K-12 education.

We have also been busy applying for grants, and are pleased to report having recently received a \$15,000 matching grant from the Gilder-Lehrman Institute. Unfortunately, we also had grant proposals rejected by the Bradley Foundation, who has shown an interest in history education, the Albert Shanker Institute, and the Ford Foundation.

Nevertheless, we will continue our fight to raise money, increase publicity, and demonstrate that secondary students, when allowed the opportunity, are capable of producing scholarly work of the highest standard. I thank you again for your continued support of Varsity Academics®.

Chris Nasson
Executive Director

Author Notes

Volume 1 ('88-'89)

Hadley Davis graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1993, with a B.A. in English. In 1999 her book *Development Girl* was published by Doubleday. Hadley has also been published in *The New York Times* and *Teen Vogue* and has written for the popular television shows "Dawson's Creek" and "Spin City." She is currently writing a screenplay for Walt Disney Pictures set in the world of girls' figure skating.

Jerome Reiter, who received a B.S. from Duke in 1992 and a Ph.D. from Harvard in 1999, reports that he is currently employed as an assistant professor of statistics at his alma mater, Duke University.

Volume 2 ('89-'90)

After receiving her B.S. in Biology from Yale in 1994, **Valerie Wright** attended law school at New York University. She currently resides in Portland, Maine where she is an attorney at Verrill & Dana, LLP.

Kate (Ruben) Roth received her B.A. from Dartmouth in 1994 and her M.A. from Columbia University's Teachers College in 1995. After teaching first grade, kindergarten, and reading recovery in several urban districts, Kate has returned to graduate school at Harvard to get her doctorate in education. Her focus is early literacy teaching practices.

Lauren Richey is currently working at the University of Georgia Athens Diagnostic Lab as an Assistant Professor. She is a veterinary pathologist with both research and service duties. Lauren received her B.S. in Animal Health in 1993 and her Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine in 1996, both from the University of

Georgia. Lauren then attended the University of Florida and earned her Ph.D. in Pathobiology in 2001.

Volume 3 ('90-'91)

Robert Wetenhall Jr. is currently employed at Lehman Brothers doing high yield research. He resides in New York.

Sarah Light received her A.B. in Social Studies from Harvard in 1995, and then attended Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar. After graduating from Oxford with a M.Phil. in Politics, Sarah attended Yale Law School, where she received her J.D. in 2000. Last we heard from Sarah she was representing the United States and its agencies in federal courts as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Southern District of New York.

Volume 4 ('92-'93)

Dory VanDonzel, who is currently a Junior Partner at BKDI Architects, writes, "After graduating from the Carleton University School of Architecture, my husband and I traveled to England for a year. He studied at Cambridge University while I worked. We moved to New York for three years and loved it. Two years ago we moved back to Calgary and it has been our best decision ever. I'm currently seven months pregnant and plan to take a year off."

Laura Wood is presently living in New York and working as a law clerk to the Honorable Julio Fuentes, a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. Laura graduated from Brown in 1996, where she majored in Political Science. Laura then attended law

school at Northwestern, where she was awarded her J.D. in 2002.

Volume 5 ('93-'94)

Francesco Checchi, a graduate of Georgia Tech and Johns Hopkins Medical School, has been living in Thailand since 2000, working as an infectious disease epidemiologist for the Doctors Without Borders program. In addition to Thailand, Francesco has gone on field missions to Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Uganda, Burundi, and Angola, to assist with malaria control programs. As for the future, Francesco indicates that he will be working towards his Ph.D. in Epidemiology at the London School of Tropical Medicine.

Congratulations to **Michelle Clayton** who recently earned her Ph.D. in Spanish from Princeton University, after receiving a B.A. in 1996 from Oxford University. Michelle wrote to tell us that she is an Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature and Spanish and Portuguese at the University of California, at Los Angeles. She has been published several times and has delivered lectures on Latin American Literature. Michelle intends to establish a career in academia.

This past fall, **Julie Rusczek** began her legal career as an Associate in the health care law practice at Michael Best & Friedrich, located in Milwaukee. She reports that she is keeping busy with "lots of legal research and writing." Julie received her B.A. from Williams College, where she captained the women's ice hockey team during the 1998-1999 season and then attended the University of Michigan Law School, from which she graduated magna cum laude. Julie remains interested in maritime history, the subject of her paper in *The Concord Review*.

Author Notes

Volume 6 ('94-'95)

Matthew Eisenberg is attending Harvard Medical School and expects to graduate in 2006. Before attending Harvard, Matthew earned his B.A. from Yale.

After being published in *The Concord Review*, **Richard Bennett** went to Trent University in Ontario, where he majored in Politics and History. Upon graduating from Trent in 1997, Richard remained in Ontario, attending Carleton University from which he received his M.A. in Public Policy and Administration. Richard currently works for the Canadian federal government as an Analyst in the Canadian International Development Agency. His responsibilities include strategic planning, budgeting, reporting, and performance management. Richard also tells us, "I am married with two young children. Family, work, and continuing my M.A. keeps me pretty busy. My resume still includes my publication in *The Concord Review*."

Volume 7 ('96-'97)

After earning her B.A. in Government from Dartmouth, **Lea Sevcik** attended Harvard Law School. Lea tells us, "At Harvard I was involved in various student groups, such as being a reporter for Harvard Law's newspaper *The Record*, and being editor of the *Journal of Law & Public Policy*. I co-founded a women's group called the Alliance of Independent Feminists, whose purpose is to refocus the women's movement towards issues that are truly of concern to today's young woman, such as the work and family balance. I wrote my thesis on the International Criminal Court under the guidance of Professor Mary Ann

Glendon." After graduating from law school, Lea was hired by the New York law firm, Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft, where she is an Associate in the Financial Restructuring Department.

After graduating from Amherst College Phi Beta Kappa and magna cum laude in 2000, **Tamara Venit** spent two years in Boston working at a consulting firm. She is currently at Stanford University, where she recently completed her M.A. in History and is pursuing her Ph.D.

Pierre Azzi will be graduating from Columbia Law School this Spring, taking the Bar Exam in July, and beginning full-time employment as an attorney at Ropes & Gray in New York City. We wish Pierre the best of luck.

Volume 8 ('97-'98)

Michael Gottesman is currently living in Boston and working as an Associate Consultant at the Bridgespan Group, a Boston firm specializing in strategic management consulting for non-profit organizations. Michael, who received his B.A. in History from Yale before attending Cambridge, is engaged in a steady dialogue with Will Fitzhugh regarding fundraising strategies to be used here at The Concord Review, Inc. We thank Michael for his support.

Hannah Weiss, who graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Harvard in 2000, writes to tell us, "I am an Admissions Officer at Harvard College and serve as a proctor in one of the freshman dormitories. I am also the Associate Director for the Harvard Summer Institute on College Admissions." As for her future plans, Hannah is thinking about pursuing a doctoral degree in History.

Volume 9 ('98-'99)

Sarah Willeman writes to us from Stanford where she is in the process of completing her B.A. in Psychology. Sarah, who is a U.S.A. Junior Olympics Equestrian team gold medalist, informs us, "While attending Stanford, I have continued to pursue my interest in Sport Psychology, and I have become an avid swing and salsa dancer. I am currently recovering from a series of riding injuries. Whenever possible, I have been teaching riding lessons both in the Boston area and for Stanford's equestrian team."

Gil Barndollar is in his final year at Bowdoin College, where he plays football and is a History major. Gil spent a semester abroad, studying at Cambridge University and intends to return to Cambridge to acquire a Master's degree. He envisions a future in politics and defense policy.

Congratulations to **Lauren Matzen** who graduated this past May from Rice University with a degree in Linguistics and Cognitive Sciences. Lauren, who plans to be married this August to fellow Rice graduate Drake Warren, is currently in the first year of the Ph.D. program in Cognitive Psychology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Lauren's future goal is to become a university professor.

Volume 10 ('99-'00)

Joseph Goldstein will be graduating from Harvard this Spring with a B.A. in Intellectual History. While at Harvard, Joseph played a season of rugby and spent a summer

Author Notes

as a commercial fisherman on a gill-netter in Bristol Bay, Arkansas.

A National Merit Finalist, **Andrew Gianelli** attended Ursinus College on a full merit scholarship. After graduating summa cum laude in 2003 with a B.A. in Philosophy, Andrew spent the summer reading and is now attending Dickinson School of Law on a full scholarship.

We recently heard from **Erin Silverman** who informs us, "I am a Woodrow Wilson Fellow at Johns Hopkins. Fellows receive between \$7,500 and \$10,000 in research stipends that can be used for research in any discipline. I recently used my funding to present a paper on 'Career Development for Female Faculty at Competitive Research Universities' at a conference in Hawaii. This past summer I was an intern at Credit Suisse First Boston in the Equity Research Department." Erin is majoring in History.

Stephanie Swanson is a double major in Political Science and Spanish at Williams College. Stephanie spent the Summer of 2003 working as an intern in Minnesota Senator Mark Dayton's office. After graduating from Williams in 2005, Stephanie plans to attend law school.

Volume 11 ('00-'01)

Jyoti Gupta is a junior at Swarthmore College, where she is majoring in Sociology and Public Policy. In the Summer of 2003, Jyoti received a Eugene Lang Grant in the Social Sciences at Swarthmore to do Sociology research. She hopes to pursue a career in public health and urban planning.

Jason Glick attends Stanford University where he is in the Honors Program, majoring in

Humanities, Contemporary Literature, and Philosophy. He spent his Fall term studying at the University of Havana.

Former Emerson Prize recipient **Sarah Weiss** writes to tell us, "I'm a junior at Yale, a History major concentrating in the history of race and education in the United States as well as premodern Asian history...I am planning on writing a senior essay on the history of court cases related to desegregation in American cities. I'm also planning on teaching and law school, specifically to pursue family and school related law." Sarah spent her Summer working for the D.C. political consulting firm Ginsberg Lahey.

Ethan Ris reports, "The news in my life is that I am a junior at Brown University, where I am majoring in History, with a focus on Early America (pre-1800). I am just now starting on my thesis under the direction of Professor Gordon Wood—my anticipated topic is the decline of Newport, Rhode Island, in the late 18th century. I am also serving my second one-year term as the president of the Brown College Democrats."

Volume 12 ('01-'02)

David Herbert, who attended Poly Prep County Day School in New York, is in his first year at Stanford University where he is continuing his study of History.

Writing from the University of Maryland, College Park, **Rachel Hines** informs us that she is working towards her B.S. in Anthropology and Neurobiology and Physiology.

After having her essay on *The Jungle* published in the Spring 2002

issue of *The Concord Review*, **Catherine Roche** headed to Harvard College, where she is studying History and plans to graduate in 2006.

Eric Suh is in the midst of his first year at Harvard, and has not yet declared a major. Eric informs us, "Although I will not abandon writing or reading, especially with regards to philosophy and history, I will most likely pursue a major in the Sciences. My other recent forays into the intellectual world include artificial intelligence, investing, mathematics, and an Asian board game called *Go*."

Irma Gunadi writes from Australia to update us on her recent activities, "In November 2003 I finished my second year of a five year Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Law degree [at the University of New South Wales], and received 'The Thomson Legal and Regulatory Prize in Contract Law' for coming first in the grade in the subject 'Contracts.' Then in January and February 2004 I spent six amazing weeks in Barcelona, Spain, attending a language school to brush up my language skills (Spanish is my major for my Arts degree) and living with a family. I absolutely fell in love with the city, people, and culture, and hope to return soon...In my spare time I am volunteering as a mentor for first-year law students, as well as learning French at a community college and playing basketball." Last Summer, Irma completed an internship in Jakarta, Indonesia with the multinational company Unilever.

A Music major at Harvard, **Maira Hill** has participated in several historical organ academies and has been involved in musicological research. After graduating from Harvard this Spring, Maira hopes to study historical organ performance

Author Notes

Volume 13 ('02-'03)

Congratulations to **Daniel Fisher** who was recently accepted to Johns Hopkins University. Daniel, a senior at Ridgewood High School in New Jersey, works part-time as an intern at the New Jersey Historical Society. His job entails answering reference questions from the public, cataloguing historical items, and describing historical items in the possession of the N.J.H.S.

Jessica Fleitman graduated in 2003 from the Williston-Northampton School, in Easthampton, MA, where she was the class valedictorian. A National Merit Scholarship recipient, Jessica is in her first year at Princeton University.

After spending her summer working at the Wells Fargo Mortgage corporate branch, **Breanna Lull** enrolled at Northeastern University, in Boston, Massachusetts. Breanna received the Walt Davis Memorial

Scholarship for graduating in the top ten of her class at Elk Grove High School in California.

Jan Michal Zapendowski, a recipient of the 2004 Emerson Prize, began his first year at Brown University this Fall. Jan is pursuing his B.A. in Political Science, then hopes to continue his education at the London School of Economics, before eventually landing a job working for the European Union.

Elizabeth Campbell is an undergraduate at Emory University and has not yet declared her major. Emily is a member of Phi Eta Sigma and the National Society of Collegiate Scholars at Emory, and also is involved at a summer camp for children with Type 1 Diabetes called Camp Hopewell. Emily has worked part-time at the First Alliance Bank, both as a teller and as an employee in the operations department.

After graduating from Great Neck North High School (NY) in 2003, with awards in Art, French, and

Social Studies, **Kimberly Salomé Greenberg** spent the summer working at Barnes & Noble and traveling to France to visit family. This past Fall, Kimberly enrolled at Wesleyan University where her "plans are to study everything because I have so many academic interests. Some of them include French, international relations, writing, English literature, and statistics." Kimberly, who has not yet declared a major, is a 2004 Ralph Waldo Emerson Prize recipient.

Reed Schuler is currently a freshman at Pomona College. Reed wrote to tell us, "I'm doing debate and getting involved with politics. I'm the Pomona John Kerry Coordinator, and I'll be working furiously over the next eight months...I hope everything is going well with *The Concord Review* and thanks for giving me the opportunity and incentive to publish a piece of historical work!"

AUTHORS—We want to hear from you!

The Concord Review, Inc. would like to thank all our authors who have taken time from their busy schedules to keep us informed of the important news and events in their lives. We only had space for a sample of the comments we received. If you haven't already provided the Concord Review Society with your contact information and news, or if this information has changed, please contact us. Furthermore, if you have done something exciting or noteworthy since our last contact, please let us know. We also ask that you send pictures, if they are easily accessible to you. We would love to add some visual images to the newsletter. We would like to make our newsletter as informative and interesting as possible. The more you tell us, the more we can tell you!

Please email your updates to chrisn@tcr.org or mail them to Concord Review Society, 730 Boston Post Road, Suite 24, Sudbury, MA, 01776. You can also call us at 800-331-5007.

Services of The Concord Review, Inc.

The Concord Review

Varsity Academics®

Since 1987, *The Concord Review*, a quarterly journal, has published 58 issues with 638 high school history papers by students from 43 states and 33 other countries. Essays average 5,500 words, with (Turabian) endnotes and bibliography, and may address any historical topic (ancient or modern, domestic or foreign). We publish approximately 8% of the essays we receive. **David McCullough** wrote: "I very much like and support what you're doing with *The Concord Review*. It's original, important, and greatly needed." **Arthur Schlesinger Jr.** said: "*The Concord Review* offers young people a unique incentive to think and write carefully and well...*The Concord Review* inspires and honors historical literacy. It should be in every high school in the land." **William R. Fitzsimmons**, Dean of Admissions at Harvard College, has said: "We have been very happy to have reprints of essays published in *The Concord Review*, submitted by a number of our applicants over the years, to add to the information we consider in making admission decisions...All of us here in the Admissions Office are big fans of *The Concord Review*." We seek to recognize those students who are working hard in their study of history and to motivate their peers with examples of good historical writing.

National History Club

The National History Club, founded in 2002, now has more than 2,100 members in secondary school history club chapters in twenty-nine states. There is no fee for a high school to be granted a charter by the National History Club. Our goal is to have a Club that is able to connect students of diverse backgrounds and varying abilities from high schools across the country.

High school history clubs which join the NHC may be of several different kinds. Some may already be established. Others may be newly formed. Some will emphasize local history and site visits, others may focus on reading history books together and writing serious history papers. History Clubs may choose to invest their time into History Day or History Fair projects of various kinds. History Clubs from the same region may even coordinate activities with each other.

We provide members with a biannual newsletter (available at www.tcr.org), sharing information about Club activities in member chapters throughout the country. Our goal is the promotion of the reading, writing, discussion, and pleasures of history among secondary school students and teachers of history.

National Writing Board

The National Writing Board, founded in 1998, has now given an independent, unbiased assessment of high school history papers from 28 states. Each author receives a three-page report, with scores and comments, which she/he has asked us to send to college admissions officers (at 69 colleges so far), or simply could use as feedback on one of her/his best history research papers. History research papers of two lengths—around 2,000 words, or around 5,000 words—with (Turabian) endnotes and bibliography, may be submitted, with a notarized Submission Form and a check for \$100 to the National Writing Board. Deadlines for submission are November 1 and June 1 each year. The following colleges and universities now endorse this independent assessment service for academic writing: Amherst, Bowdoin, Carnegie Mellon, Claremont McKenna, Colgate, Connecticut College, Dartmouth, Duke, Eckerd, Emory, Georgetown, Hamilton, Harvard, Illinois Wesleyan, Lafayette, Lehigh, Michigan, Middlebury, Northwestern, Notre Dame, Pitzer, Princeton, Richmond, Sarah Lawrence, Spelman, Trinity (CT), Tufts, the University of Virginia, Washington and Lee, Williams, and Yale.



Ralph Waldo Emerson Prizes



The tenth annual Ralph Waldo Emerson Prizes for student work of outstanding academic promise in History at the secondary level will be awarded this Spring to **Jacob C. Goldberg**, a Senior at the Horace Mann School in New York, **Kimberly Salomé Greenberg** of Great Neck North High School in New York (now at Wesleyan), **Jennifer Hsiao** of Hall High School in Hartford, Connecticut (now at Princeton), **Michael Korzinstone** of Upper Canada College in Toronto, Ontario (now at the Wharton School), and **Jan Michal Zapendowski** of St. Mark's School of Dallas, Texas (now at Brown). The awards will be hosted by the History Department of The Horace Mann School in the Bronx, New York, in the afternoon on Saturday, 17 April 2004.

Each Emerson Prize laureate will receive a check for \$3,000 and a copy of David McCullough's Pulitzer Prize-winning biography *Truman*, along with the letter of award. Past Emerson awards have gone to thirty high school students, from Czechoslovakia, Colorado, Florida, California, Louisiana, Tennessee, Vermont, New Zealand, Maryland, Utah, Massachusetts, Russia, Washington State, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Illinois, Japan, and New York.

Founded in 1987, *The Concord Review*, the first and only quarterly journal in the world for the academic work of secondary students, has published 58 issues with 638 essays (average 5,500 words, with Turabian endnotes and bibliography) by students of history in forty-three states and thirty-three other countries. These exemplary essays have been distributed to subscribers throughout the United States and in thirty-two other countries.

Here is a list of past Emerson Prize winners:

1995 **Aaron Einbond** (Harvard), **Pia Luedtke** (Yale)

1996 **Matthew Eisenberg** (Yale), **Sarah Valkenburg** (Dartmouth)

1997 **John Spencer Neumann** (Harvard), **Camilla Ann Richmond** (Yale), **Mako Sasaki** (Virginia)

1998 **Lisa Hopkins** (Yale), **Joelle Novey** (Harvard), **Lea Sevcik** (Dartmouth)

1999 **Tobias Berkman** (Harvard), **Kerry Carwile Masteller** (Wellesley), **Andrew Paquin** (Harvard)

2000 **Gilman Barndollar** (Bowdoin), **Natalya Kozyreva** (Barnard), **Jennifer Shingleton** (Princeton), **Sarah Willeman** (Stanford)

2001 **Patrick Bradley** (Harvard), **James Egelhofer** (Brown), **Rebecca Fleming** (Harvard), **Sara Newland** (Wellesley)

2002 **Emily Alter** (Carleton), **Jonas Doberman** (Harvard), **David Gopstein** (Princeton), **Tanya Sibai** (Tulane), **Sarah Weiss** (Yale)

2003 **Rachel Hines** (Maryland), **Jessica Leight** (Yale), **Chrystan Maria Skefos** (Rice), **Robert Vance Jr.** (Pennsylvania)

Help Us Spread the Word—Support Varsity Academics®

Do you have a relative, friend, colleague, etc., who you think may be interested in spreading the word or financially supporting The Concord Review, Inc.? If so, please email the address(es) to chrisn@tcr.org, so we may send them a presentation folder that describes the services offered by TCR, Inc. in our effort to create a Varsity Academics® epidemic.

Concord Review Society Member Column

Jennifer Shingleton

Every school has an infamous course that is best known for its “impossible” work load and grade deflation. Graduates of the course recount to their younger peers war stories about the class—with the requisite exaggerated tales of record-breaking “all-nighters.” At my high school alma-mater, this rite-of-passage course was American History. It was most notorious for the long, research paper where students were free to choose any topic relating to American history.

Having been petrified of this “monster” for my first two years of high school, I got a head start and began searching for a topic months before the due date. I was immediately overwhelmed. I spent long hours at the Boston Public Library where I paced the stacks looking for a possible topic. Each evening, I complained to my parents that my work was futile; I had no topic, no direction, and no idea where to begin. My mother responded, “Why don’t you write about Abigail Adams?” The suggestion seemed to come from nowhere, but I was grateful for any guidance, however arbitrary.

With a broad subject in mind, I returned to the library with renewed spirits. However, I was haunted by new fears. What could I, a mere high school student, say about Abigail Adams? Having been most intrigued by my class’s examination of the role of women throughout American History, I was most drawn to biographers’ descriptions of Abigail Adams as a feminist, colonial figure. Being a head-strong young woman, I refused to blindly accept the prevailing biographies of Mrs. Adams. Instead, I turned to the primary sources—letters between Abigail and John—and examined whether she, in fact, acted as a feminist during her time. I waded through spools of microfiche and even learned to decipher Abigail’s virtually illegible hand-writing. My hard work was worthwhile. My research revealed that the biographers had painted an inaccurate portrait of Abigail Adams. And I sought to prove them wrong.

What began as my most dreaded assignment turned out to be the most worthwhile and educationally significant achievement of my high school career. My Abigail Adams

paper was a success not only because it was published in *The Concord Review*, but also because it taught me how to design a research project, navigate archives, and, most importantly, question prominent academic thinking. While my familiarity with Abigail and her unreadable scroll have faded over time, the skills I developed became increasingly important throughout college.

During my senior year of college, I hit the same sort of “monster” project that I had faced in high school. This time, instead of a 20-page research paper, I wrote a 200-page senior thesis. While the magnitude of the assignment had changed, the process was strikingly similar to that of my Abigail Adams paper. Once again, my topic grew from my skepticism and stubborn refusal to accept what I had read in various law review and political articles. I developed a topic that no one (to my knowledge) had ever addressed: the political dynamic between feminist and conservative actors in the adoption of anti-pornography regulations during the 1980’s. With virtually no secondary sources to guide me, I flew to the cities that had adopted these feminist anti-pornography ordinances and interviewed the actors involved in the campaign. Despite the sometimes overwhelming challenges and seemingly insurmountable obstacles, my thesis stood as the culminating academic work of my collegiate career.

Seven years after encountering my first academic “monster” in American History, I have not lost my appetite for academic challenges. While I am quite certain that neither my expertise on Abigail Adams nor my volumes of research on anti-pornography ordinances will help me in law school, I am confident that my research and writing skills will provide a base from which to learn new concepts. I eagerly await my next “monster.”

Jennifer Shingleton (Volume 9, Number 1, *Abigail Adams*) was a Ralph Waldo Emerson Prize recipient in 2000 and is in her first year at Harvard Law School. Jennifer graduated from Phillips Academy, Andover in 1998 before matriculating at Princeton University, where she was summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa, with a major in Politics.

We hope that the **Concord Review Society Member Column** will be a regular feature of the CRS newsletter. If any CRS members are interested in writing a short piece (between 500-1500 words) about their experience with history or being published by *The Concord Review*, please contact Chris Nasson by phone, at 800-331-5007, or by email, at chrism@tcr.org.

History is Fun!

by Will Fitzhugh

History Matters! February 2004

National Council for History Education

Editor's Note: In this piece Will Fitzhugh reminds us that there is great enjoyment for students in working hard at a challenging task and successfully accomplishing it. History can and should be as rewarding as the efforts that we see our students putting forth on the football practice fields, on the basketball practice courts, in the sweltering wrestling rooms, and on the long cross-country training routes. By sugarcoating the intellectual challenges of reading and writing history, by trying to "make history fun," we may be sucking the real fun right out of it. [Joe Ribar, Editor]

A large number of Social Studies educators experience difficulty, despite their many imaginative efforts, in "making history fun" for their students at all levels in our schools. One clue to the problem might be found in an analogy. Imagine what a hard time teachers would have in making movies enjoyable for young people if they began by preventing them from seeing any movies. They would have to show filmstrips about movies, take field trips to buildings where movies have been shown, have speakers come in who once saw a movie, etc. And none of it would work...

Aaron Einbond—who won a Ralph Waldo Emerson Prize from *The Concord Review* in 1995 for his history paper on John Maynard Keynes when he was a student at Hunter College High School in New York, has now graduated from Harvard, earned a master's degree on a Marshall Scholarship at Cambridge University, and is working for his Ph.D. at Berkeley—was invited in 1997 to speak to the 100th anniversary meeting of the New England History Teachers Association. He said, among other things, "History does not have to be made fun. It is fun."

Social Studies educators have set themselves two impossible tasks. First, they neither ask students to read a history book, which is the way most people get interested in history, or to write a history research paper, and second, for ideological reasons, they try to limit the range of student interest to current social problems in their immediate environments.

The Progressive argument that little kids can only care about their home and neighborhood cannot stand before the fact that lots of kids are fascinated by dinosaurs and superheroes, which are very rarely seen in contemporary communities, and that most kids love fantasies of faraway people and great adventures. Kieran Egan of Simon Fraser University has pointed out that if Piaget is right that youngsters are only capable of concrete operations, how can their enjoyment of Peter Rabbit (etc.) at an early age be explained?

When Harry Truman was competing with one of his classmates to be the first to read all the books in the school library in Independence while they were still in high school, no one had to try to convince him that reading was fun. He had found that out himself. One of his heroes, David McCullough says, was Gustavus Adolphus, who was not a resident of Independence, Missouri, at that time.

We have evidence that the majority of U.S. high school students now graduate without ever having written one history research paper, and it seems likely that most graduate without ever having read a single complete history book, unless they did it on their own. The historian Sheldon Stern, in a study of state history standards just done for the Fordham Institute, found that "The option of writing a serious history essay is not available in even the

History is Fun!

best state social studies and history standards.”

This constraining pedagogy is an excellent way to kill interest in any subject, and without interest, students will gain very little knowledge of anything, and our students’ ignorance of history at every level through college is now well documented by the ACTA study and the NAEP reports.

It is easy to imagine how interest in and knowledge of baseball would die out if young people were prevented from watching games or playing them. Naturally we take sports too seriously to attempt to develop interest in them in any such foolish way.

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