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JOHN G. REID

Viola Barnes, the Gender of History and the North Atlantic Mind

VIOLA FLORENCE BARNES VISITED THE Maritime Provinces only once. Retired for 16 years from the History Department of Mount Holyoke College (in South Hadley, Massachusetts), she toured Quebec and the Maritimes in the fall of 1968 with her friend and life partner Mildred Howard.[1] Barnes was not unduly impressed by what she saw. In Quebec, she enjoyed visiting colonial battlefields but was disappointed by the absence of "luxurious French cooking" even at the Chateau Frontenac. In New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, her main impression was of "great stretches of bare looking country and little poor houses". When she and Howard took the Yarmouth-Bar Harbor ferry a few days earlier than planned, Barnes reported to her brother, "we felt we had had enough". She did not elaborate on whether her own weariness sprang from the alleged banality of the Nova Scotian scenery or from the fact that she had just driven 2,300 miles in a Dodge Dart at the age of 83.[2] If Viola Barnes drew any connections between the Maritimes of the 1960s and the 18th-century Nova Scotia about which she had written during the 1930s, she left them unrecorded. No doubt the intervening thirty years had taken the sharp edges off the vigour with which she had challenged John Bartlet Brebner's interpretation of the role of Nova Scotia in the American Revolution, and it is doubtful whether she was sufficiently versed in later Canadian historiography to realize the extent to which, despite her efforts, Brebner's portrayal had come to be sanctified as the reigning orthodoxy of the day. Nevertheless, Barnes's critique of Brebner had been incisive and pungent. Its significance has become more rather than less evident as the historiographical concerns of the 20th century have given way to those of the 21st century, and as the nature of early modern empires has re-emerged as a matter of central concern for historians of the Atlantic northeast of North America.

Brebner published *The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia* in 1937.[3] According to his own account, the book had its origins in comments pointing out the abruptness with

1 This essay was originally delivered as the W. Stewart MacNutt Lecture at the University of New Brunswick in October 2002. I thank all who provided hospitality, and comments on the lecture, in Fredericton and Saint John. I am grateful also to Frances Early and Richard Twomey for their valuable advice on the larger biographical project from which this essay is partly drawn, and to three *Acadiensis* readers.

2 Viola F. Barnes to Donald G. Barnes, 8 October 1968, Mount Holyoke College Archives and Special Collections, Viola Florence Barnes Papers [VBP], VIII: 14. Mildred Howard, who has only a small role in this essay but took a much larger part in Barnes's life as a whole, had a long career as a professor of Physical Education at Mount Holyoke. She and Barnes shared a house from 1935 until 1952, and then built retirement homes on adjoining properties. Their close friendship continued until Barnes's death in 1979.

3 John Bartlet Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia: A Marginal Colony During the Revolutionary Years* (New York, 1937).

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which his earlier study of colonial Acadia/Nova Scotia, *New England's Outpost*, had come to an end just before the era of the American Revolution.[4] Why did Nova Scotia fail to join the rebelling colonies? Brebner managed to give the impression in his preface that he was unsure whether this question really merited the investment of time and energy he had given to it: "It seems debatable", he wrote, "whether this book should not have been much briefer than it is, considering the relative colonial insignificance of Nova Scotia".[5] Yet *The Neutral Yankees* ended up being a considerably longer study than *New England's Outpost*, despite its covering a much shorter period of time. Brebner identified the "sincere, if naïve, desire of Nova Scotians to be neutral and at the same time to maintain a life line of trade between the contestants [in the Revolution]", but also attributed the "apathy" of the many New England settlers in Nova Scotia to economic weakness. "To use a generalization so broad as to be almost meaningless without corroborative detail", he concluded – an odd qualification to come at the end of a 353-page book – "Nova Scotia had insulated and neutralized the New England migrants so thoroughly that as Nova Scotians they had henceforth to look eastward to London for direction and help rather than south-westward to Boston as they had done in the past".[6]

The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia was received cordially if not altogether uncritically by Canadian historians. It received major reviews in *Canadian Historical Review* and *Dalhousie Review*, and was also reviewed in the *New England Quarterly* by the Canadian historian A.R.M. Lower. Chester Martin, in *Canadian Historical Review*, praised Brebner's "prodigious amount of enthusiastic research from the widest variety of sources", but was sceptical of the book's favourable treatment of Nova Scotia Governor Francis Legge.[7] Whereas Brebner had portrayed the political struggle that had led to Legge's recall in 1776 as pitting the "simple, sincere" governor against an unscrupulous group of local merchants and office-holders, Martin took a more conventional view by seeing the dispute as embroiling two "miserable factions" between which there was little to choose except that Legge's group excelled in arrogance and vindictiveness.[8] In *Dalhousie Review*, J.S. Martell had some critical comments for Brebner's treatment of the resettlement of Nova Scotia following the Deportation of the Acadians, and especially for his underestimating the ethnic diversity of the settlers. For the book as a whole, however, Martell had effusive praise, and most of all for Brebner's analysis of the imperial connections of the merchants who opposed Legge as components of "the chain that held Nova Scotia within the Empire".[9] Lower was also laudatory, especially regarding Brebner's portrayal of the Maritime region as essentially isolated from the major centres of power and population on both sides of the Atlantic. "The area has always been marginal", Lower

4 John Bartlet Brebner, *New England's Outpost: Acadia Before the Conquest of Canada* (New York, 1927).
5 Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia*, pp. vii-viii.
6 Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia*, pp. 314, 353.
7 Chester Martin, Review of Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia,* in *Canadian Historical Review*, 18 (1937), pp. 437-40.
8 Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia*, pp. 275, 282; Martin, Review, pp. 438-9.
9 J.S. Martell, Review of Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia*, in *Dalhousie Review*, 17 (1937-8), pp. 248-50.

observed agreeably.[10]

Viola Barnes's review of *The Neutral Yankees* was published in *American Historical Review*. It contrasted with those of Martin, Martell and Lower in key respects, not least in that it offered a severe, even scathing, appraisal of the quality of Brebner's work. Whereas Martin had praised the diversity of Brebner's sources, Barnes found his research inadequate, notably in his failure in her view to mine thoroughly the resources of the Public Record Office in London. Whereas Martell thought highly of Brebner's ability to explain the relationship of Nova Scotia to the empire, this was for Barnes an area in which *The Neutral Yankees* was confused, equivocal and unconvincing. And Lower's endorsement of the notion of Nova Scotia's marginality was fundamentally at variance with Barnes's imperial perspective, which identified the region as anything but peripheral in either geographical position or historical importance. Barnes did find words of commendation, even though they were far from resounding, for Brebner's treatment of the New England settlers. It was, she said, "an interesting account of a little-known subject". The book's central problem for Barnes was that it consisted of two separate studies coexisting uneasily in a single volume, and that Brebner's modest but worthwhile treatment of the Yankee settlers themselves became lost in the pastiche of muddled and misguided arguments that passed for an interpretation of Nova Scotia's imperial role in the revolutionary era. In Nova Scotia's Loyalism, she asked, was the neutrality of the New Englanders the determining cause? Or did the New Englanders have no realistic choice but to acquiesce in the face of the overwhelming economic arguments for Loyalism that predominated among the mercantile and office-holding elite in Halifax? "The reviewer", Barnes commented sharply, "finds it difficult to understand whether Nova Scotia neutralized the Yankees, or whether the Yankees neutralized the province". Barnes also questioned the originality of Brebner's assertions in this area, such as they were, and for good measure she quoted back at Brebner certain passages from his preface in which he had given expression to self-doubt. Brebner thought that "some parts of . . . [the book] might repay deeper study". Barnes wholeheartedly agreed. Brebner hoped self-deprecatingly that his work could be "regarded as a fabric of hypotheses which interested readers will modify in the light of their own knowledge and ideas". These were the words, in quotation, with which Barnes chose to conclude her review.[11]

If Brebner was taken aback by the robustness of Barnes's critique, he did not show it. He wrote in early 1938 to thank her for her "crisp evaluation of my laborious book", and the two corresponded briefly with suggestions for additional sources and commiserations over the dearth of solid evidence of the patterns of Nova Scotian commerce.[12] But there it ended. As far as the historiography of 18th-century Nova Scotia was concerned, Barnes's strictures had little perceptible effect. When W.S. MacNutt wrote the "Introduction" to the second (and posthumous) edition of *The Neutral Yankees* in 1969, he noted that Brebner had "worked the period of the

10 A.R.M. Lower, Review of Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia*, in *New England Quarterly*, 10 (1937), pp. 798-9.

11 Viola F. Barnes, Review of Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia*, in *American Historical Review*, 43 (1937-8), pp. 411-12; Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia*, p. viii.

12 Brebner to Barnes, 14 January, 2 February 1938, VBP, IV: 7.

American Revolution so intensively and so carefully that his book has since brooked no important challenge". Brebner's answers "to the question on which the book turns, why the neutral Yankees did not join their revolting cousins to the south", MacNutt continued, "have been accepted as classic and satisfactory".[13] MacNutt, characteristically, was not entirely uncritical. He remarked, as had other Canadian scholars of the 1960s, on what he saw as Brebner's continentalist approach to Canadian history. More specifically, MacNutt's discussion of the shortcomings of Brebner's evaluation of the military and strategic significance of 18th- century Nova Scotia reflected that mastery of the art of combining absolute courtesy with absolute trenchancy to which all his graduate students could feelingly attest. Yet, in regard to 18th-century Maritime regional history, MacNutt left no doubt of the crucial historiographical importance of *The Neutral Yankees*.[14] G.A. Rawlyk, a generation later, also attributed a striking historiographical durability to both of Brebner's Nova Scotian studies, but especially to *The Neutral Yankees*. Rawlyk wrote about his own efforts to "escape the long shadow cast by Brebner",[15] and in 1988 he noted with regret that "Brebner's widely-perceived 'classic' *The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia*, discouraged, for half a century, other scholars from reassessing, in a significant manner, the historical development of Nova Scotia during the 1760 to 1783 period".[16] Rawlyk identified a number of new areas of enquiry, especially those connected with the Planter Studies initiative at Acadia University, beginning in the mid-1980s, that promised to put Brebner's legacy in a healthier perspective, but he left no doubt that *The Neutral Yankees* had been historiographically inescapable for several decades.

In the light of all this, why should Viola Barnes's apparently widely-ignored critique be worthy of the historian's attention some 65 years later? To this question there are two separate, though not unrelated, answers. One of them has to do with the career of Viola Barnes herself and its relationship to the more general history of academic women in the United States in the 20th century. The other has to do with the relationship of Nova Scotia to the imperial history of the early modern era.

Viola Barnes, as a woman and as a westerner, was a member of a double minority in the ranks of early American historians in the early and middle decades of the 20th century which were spanned by her long career. The daughter of a small-town miller and newspaper editor in Nebraska, when she arrived at Mount Holyoke College as a newly-qualified Ph.D. from Yale her departmental colleagues were Nellie Neilson and Bertha Putnam. Both were distinguished medievalists, and by personal origin they

13 W.S. MacNutt, "Introduction" to Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees*, 2nd ed. (Toronto, 1969), pp. xiii, xiv-xv.

14 MacNutt, "Introduction", pp. xv, xvii; see also Donald G. Creighton, "Introduction" to Brebner, *North Atlantic Triangle: The Interplay of Canada, the United States and Great Britain*, 2nd ed. (Toronto, 1966), pp. xiii-xxiii. For a useful re-evaluation of Brebner's "continentalism", see Rohit T. Aggarwala, "'Non-Resident Me': John Bartlet Brebner and the Canadian Historical Profession", *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, new series, 10 (Sherbrooke 1999), pp. 237-77.

15 G.A. Rawlyk, "J.B. Brebner and *The Writing of Canadian History*", J*ournal of Canadian Studies*, 13 (Fall 1978), p. 92.

16 G.A. Rawlyk, "J.B. Brebner and Some Recent Trends in Eighteenth-Century Maritime Historiography", in Margaret Conrad, ed., *They Planted Well: New England Planters in Maritime Canada* (Fredericton, 1988), pp. 97-8. A somewhat different version of this essay was published under the same title in Stephen J. Hornsby, Victor A. Konrad and James J. Herlan, eds., *The Northeastern Borderlands: Four Centuries of Interaction* (Orono, ME and Fredericton, 1989), pp. 32-63.

were far removed from Barnes both geographically and in terms of social class. Neilson was the daughter of the founder of Standard Steel in Philadelphia, while the Putnam family business was the prosperous publishing firm of that name.[17] Barnes found both of them intimidating at first, and her troubled relationship with Neilson was a grief to both of them for 25 years.[18] For Barnes, employment at a women's college did nothing to bring the freedom from distracting professional tensions that a predominantly female environment might otherwise have provided. Her personal origins – and, it has to be said, her sometimes-prickly temperament – militated against any such thing. Neilson's adeptness, in her capacity as permanent department head from 1905 to 1939, at what Patricia Palmieri has aptly defined as "the game of loving despotism", saw to the rest.[19]

In Viola Barnes's career of scholarship and publication, however, gender itself exerted a more pervasive influence than did her social and geographical origins. As a student at the University of Nebraska in the first decade of the 20th century, she had been an active suffragist. Mentored by the philologist, athlete and feminist Louise Pound, Barnes had also gained a healthy appreciation of the value of separate female organizations such as the YWCA, the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority and the senior women students' society known as the Black Masque. Not unusually in Arts programs at western universities in this era, Barnes was well accustomed to membership of classes in which women formed the majority. Her later recollection regarding the gender dynamics of the faculty, based both on her observation as a student and her experience as a junior instructor from 1910 to 1916, was that men and women enjoyed something close to equal status. "There were not too many women on the faculty", she acknowledged, "but this was chiefly due to the fact that there were not many trained women, that is through the Ph.D. degree".[20] The evidence suggests that her assessment was too magnanimous. In 1920, a report of the Lincoln, Nebraska branch of the Association of Collegiate Alumnae – with Louise Pound a prominent participant – identified discriminatory practices and noted a serious decline in the number of women faculty members over the preceding five years.[21] Yet Barnes's impression was significant, for it reflected the reality that nothing in her career at the University of Nebraska had prepared her for the outright gender discrimination she would find when she went to Yale to begin doctoral work in 1916.

For Barnes, the road to Yale had begun when she received her A.B. degree in 1909, at the age of 23. She received her A.M. a year later. Although both degrees were in English literature, she opted to accept an instructorship in the department of History

17 See Margaret Hastings and Elisabeth G. Kimball, "Two Distinguished Medievalists: Nellie Neilson and Bertha Putnam", *Journal of British Studies*, 18 (1979), pp. 142-59.

18 Here, and elsewhere in this paper when other citations are not provided, biographical details regarding Viola Barnes are drawn from John G. Reid, "Viola Florence Barnes, 1885-1979: A Historian's Biography", manuscript, Saint Mary's University, 2003.

19 Patricia A. Palmieri, *In Adamless Eden: The Community of Women Faculty at Wellesley* (New Haven, 1995), p. 246.

20 Viola Barnes to Mrs. Edward T. James, 10 February 1968, VBP, VIII: 14.

21 Margaret Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America: Struggles and Strategies to 1940* (Baltimore, 1982), pp. 162-3; Louise Pound, "The College Woman and Research", in *Selected Writings of Louise Pound* (Lincoln, 1949), pp. 309-13.

at Nebraska in the fall of 1910. Several years followed when she was undecided as to her long-term future. She briefly contemplated teaching in the Omaha public school system, and also rejected a possibility of marriage and an artistic partnership with Fred Ballard, who later became a successful Broadway playwright. By 1915 she had made a firm commitment to history, but had no degree at all in her own discipline at a time when the Ph.D. was becoming an essential qualification for any secure or senior university position.[22] She attended summer schools at Harvard and at the University of Wisconsin as she sharpened her focus on the study of the colonial and revolutionary eras, but acceptance at Yale – and the supervision of Charles McLean Andrews, the acknowledged leader of the "imperial school" of early American history – formed an obvious goal for an ambitious young scholar in this area. Andrews was receptive to her initial enquiry, and recommended that the working title of her dissertation should be "Massachusetts and the British Government".[23] Her department head at the University of Nebraska was encouraging, and showed it in the practical way of arranging for leaves of absence to keep a job open for her pending her expected return from Yale.[24] But, as a female doctoral student, how would she be received at Yale? On this, she consulted her brother Donald, who had just gone to Harvard for graduate work – also in history – after receiving his A.B. degree from the University of Nebraska. He was not optimistic:

> Of course the Harvard undergraduate has a horror of women instructors and students and no girl is permitted to attend a class in which there is a single undergraduate. Precedents are too strong. However, if it is an entirely graduate class girls from Radcliffe are often admitted. Here they have no concept of a woman as a college professor. . . . I am inclined to believe that the Conservative professors here look on it more or less as a western innovation.[25]

It was just possible, however, that Yale might turn out to be different from Harvard, and in any case Andrews – who had spent the early part of his career at Bryn Mawr – had a reputation for encouraging promising women graduate students. Helped by a scholarship, Barnes moved to New Haven in the fall of 1916.

She quickly discovered that, at Yale as at Harvard, women faced harassment in any classes where undergraduates were present. They were barred from the student dining room, where even women appearing as guests were liable to be greeted by hammering on tables and stamping of feet. There was no residential accommodation for women, and the "splendid club room" provided by the university for its graduate students took as its explicit and exclusive purpose, "to bring about a closer fellow feeling among the male members of the [graduate] school". All things considered, Barnes later informed

22 Viola Barnes to Mrs. Edward T. James, 10 February 1968, VBP, VIII: 14; on the relationship between the Ph.D. and academic appointments in history, see Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession* (New York, 1988), pp. 47- 50.

23 Charles McLean Andrews to Viola Barnes, 19 September 1915, Nebraska State Historical Society, Library/Archives Division, Barnes (Barns) Family Papers [BFP], I: 11.

24 Howard W. Caldwell to Viola Barnes, 25 January 1916 [sic for 1917], VBP, IV: 8.

25 Donald Barnes to Viola Barnes, [6 March 1916], BFP, I: 16.

a correspondent, "when I went to Yale for Ph.D. [work] I was shocked at the attitude".[26] Like other women, she found that she could be denied enrolment in mixed graduate-undergraduate courses at the discretion of the (male) professor. Even when admitted, she recalled, "I had to sneak into class to avoid a riot. That is, I must come in early and sit on the back seat. . . . But the students were terrible".[27] Barnes, as president of the Graduate Women's Club, helped bring about some advances in the matters of separate dining and residential facilities. For the most part, however, she focused on her scholarship, and in 1919 she defended her thesis on the Dominion of New England (1686-1689) in the spring, returned to Nebraska for the summer and joined the faculty at Mount Holyoke in the fall.[28] That she chose Mount Holyoke over returning to the University of Nebraska was at the behest of Andrews. As he would have it, Mount Holyoke was closer to her research sources in Boston, and to the transatlantic vessels that would take her to London and the Public Record Office. Mount Holyoke, however, was also within the imperial orbit of Yale in a way that the University of Nebraska was not.

Barnes's relationship with Andrews was far from simple. Although his reputation for accepting a substantial number of women graduate students was well-founded, he could be a paternalistic supervisor.[29] At Barnes's first meeting with him, before her acceptance for doctoral work, he had asked whether she was engaged to be married, explaining (she later recalled) by pointing out that "Yale did not encourage women who expected to marry, because the training was such a waste".[30] While this was not altogether a surprising exchange given the expected life patterns of female Ph.D.'s at the time, a more serious incident took place in 1919 while Barnes was still a graduate student. In a seminar, Andrews contested a statement by Barnes regarding the use of quitrents as devices for land tenure in colonial Massachusetts, disbelieving that quitrents had ever existed there. She decided to come to the next week's seminar well-armed with research references to support her argument, and later narrated what followed:

> I thought these notes would prove without a doubt the point I had made. Unfortunately for me, they did! Andrews looked wildly excited, dismissed the class, asked me to remain, and then rapidly began to copy off my notes, saying, Miss Barnes, you have struck a gold mine! It is a pity to take it from

26 Viola Barnes to Mrs. Edward T. James, 10 February 1968, VBP, VIII: 14; *Yale Daily News*, 9 December 1916, 8 October 1917, 17 November 1919.

27 Viola Barnes to Mrs. Edward T. James, 10 February 1968, VBP, VIII: 14; for the related experience of a slightly younger contemporary at Yale, notably with faculty members, see Andrea Walton, "'Scholar', 'Lady', 'Best Man in the English Department'? – Recalling the Career of Marjorie Hope Nicolson", *History of Education Quarterly*, 40 (2000), p. 177. More generally, see Rosalind Rosenberg, *Divided Lives: American Women in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1992), p. 26.

28 Viola Florence Barnes, "The Andros Administration in New England", Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1919.

29 Richard R. Johnson, "Charles McLean Andrews and the Invention of Colonial History", *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, 43 (1986), pp. 532-3 and A.S. Eisenstadt, *Charles McLean Andrews: A Study in American Historical Writing* (New York, 1956), p. 57.

30 Viola Barnes to [Blanche], 20 December 1958, VBP, VIII: 9. On the marriage patterns of women Ph.D's, see Emilie J. Hutchinson, *Women and the Ph.D.* (Greensboro, NC, 1929), pp. 17, 90-8 and Bonnie G. Smith, *The Gender of History: Men, Women, and Historical Practice* (Cambridge, MA, 1998), pp. 189-90.

> you, but I can't afford to let any one else in that field before me, for I should have found it earlier.[31]

Barnes's account is corroborated by certain characteristics of Andrews's "Introduction" to Beverley Waugh Bond's *The Quit-Rent System in the American Colonies*, published by Yale University Press later in 1919. Barnes attributed his excitement in part to his being in the final stages of preparing these remarks, and still having time to make hasty modifications to some of his statements to allow for the existence of quitrents in New England. The introduction did indeed incorporate a curiously equivocal comment that quitrents "had a place, even in . . . [the] self-governing Puritan colonies", and a lengthy note tacked on at the end of the piece (outside of the normal sequence of footnotes) giving examples.[32] Andrews clearly saw nothing wrong in his actions. But for Barnes, the episode was disturbing and disillusioning.

Even more so was a further incident, which Barnes again blamed on Andrews, although this time indirectly. In 1921, the independent scholar James Truslow Adams published *The Founding of New England*, the first of two volumes on colonial New England.[33] Barnes believed that the chapter on the Dominion of New England, titled "An Experiment in Administration", was substantially based on her dissertation. According to her account, she went to Yale in the spring of 1920 to take out the library copy of the dissertation (she had been unable to afford to have a copy made for herself) and start revising it for publication. She was told it was unavailable, as Adams had it out, and that the library somehow had the impression that he was its author. A few days later she received the dissertation – but too late, she believed, to avoid Adams's pre-emption of her interpretation of the Dominion as an important and complex embodiment of British imperial policy rather than (as more conventional accounts had it) a crude form of British tyranny. She was especially galled when the *American Historical Review* published a review of the book by Samuel Eliot Morison that drew attention to the innovative interpretation advanced in the offending chapter.[34] Barnes believed, probably rightly, that it was Andrews who had directed Adams to her thesis. And Andrews certainly saw no evidence of moral turpitude, either when he agreed to look over Adams's book in proof or in carrying on a lengthy correspondence with him throughout the early 1920s.[35] There was no suggestion from

31 Viola Barnes to Howard [Beale], 19 November 1952, VBP, VIII: 8. In this letter, Barnes tentatively ("I think") attributed the episode to her second year rather than her third, but that it occurred in fact in early 1919 is suggested by her linkage of Andrews's excitement to the writing of his foreword for Beverley Waugh Bond's *The Quit-Rent System in the American Colonies* (New Haven, 1919).

32 Charles M. Andrews, "Introduction", in Bond, *Quit-Rent System*, pp. 11-23. Originating as payments to a feudal superior by which a tenant could be "quit" of other obligations, quitrents in North America were payments by landholders to the crown or to a proprietary landowner. In New England, however, an alternate system developed by which town authorities made freehold grants.

33 James Truslow Adams, *The Founding of New England* (Boston, 1921) and his *Revolutionary New England, 1691-1776* (Boston, 1923).

34 See Viola Barnes, fragment of letter, n.d., VBP, VII: 2; Viola Barnes, fragment of letter, n.d., VBP, VIII: 8; S.E. Morison, Review of *The Founding of New England, American Historical Review*, 27 (1921-2), pp. 129-31.

35 James Truslow Adams to Andrews, 22 January 1921, Yale University Archives, Andrews Papers, series I, folder 249. See also other letters in Andrews Papers: series I, folders 250, 252-4, 257, 260, 264, 278 and 280 as well as Eisenstadt, *Charles McLean Andrews*, p. 127.

Barnes that Adams had lifted passages word-for-word, but rather that he had adopted her overall interpretation without acknowledgment. She was inclined to believe later in life that Adams had acted not with a deliberate intention of plagiarizing but "through ignorance or arrogance or both". Nevertheless, even Andrews did come to believe that a flaw in process had been involved, and he successfully urged the Yale authorities to change the library regulations so that an unpublished thesis could be seen only with the author's consent.[36] Other respected scholars, closer to Barnes's own age, took a more serious view. Howard Beale of the University of Wisconsin heard of the matter independently on a number of occasions in later years, while Leonard Labaree of Yale also had no doubt that she had a valid complaint, and told her so.[37]

The injury was compounded in early 1925. Barnes's dissertation had reached publication in 1923, under the title, *The Dominion of New England: A Study in British Colonial Policy*.[38] The reception was encouraging, but when *American Historical Review* published its review in January 1925, the reviewer turned out to be James Truslow Adams. Although the review offered some praise for Barnes's work, the recurrent theme was its lack of interpretive originality. "The author takes a broad view", Adams wrote, "and her attitude toward the very real difficulties and perplexities of the British government faced with the problem of colonial administration is sympathetic and entirely in accord with that now adopted by most historians". A paragraph later: "Her estimate of . . . [Sir Edmund Andros, Governor of the Dominion of New England] does not differ materially from that of the more recent writers on this period". And, a paragraph later still: "In the main, the book does not alter the general view now held of the Andros régime, but it is the best account we yet have of it in all its features". Adams also made pointed mention of the dearth of manuscript sources cited by Barnes, a shortage which in reality had originated from her inability to cross the Atlantic during the First World War and her lack of the funds to do so more recently.[39] Barnes's reaction was predictably bitter, and the episode remained vivid in her memory throughout her life. "I was heart-broken at first", she later confided to a colleague.[40] Although in years to come her *Dominion of New England* would be read and cited by serious scholars long after Adams's name had vanished from the historiographical map, this was not predictable at the time.

But what connection, if any, did these incidents have with gender? And what did they have to do with Barnes's later encounter with Brebner? It is tempting of course to argue that gender played a major specific role in prompting older male historians to appropriate the work of a junior and female scholar such as Barnes. However, there is no explicit evidence to prove that this was so. Barnes herself was circumspect in

36 Viola Barnes to Howard [Beale], 19 November 1952, VBP, VIII: 8; Viola Barnes to Norma [Adams], 24 February 1952, VBP, VII: 35.

37 Howard K. Beale to Viola Barnes, 29 October 1952, VBP, IV: 7; Leonard Labaree to Viola Barnes, 27 July 1962, VBP, unsorted letters.

38 Viola Florence Barnes, *The Dominion of New England: A Study in British Colonial Policy* (New Haven, 1923).

39 James Truslow Adams, Review of Barnes, *The Dominion of New England*, in *American Historical Review*, 30 (1924-5), pp. 373-5.

40 Viola Barnes to Norma [Adams], 24 February 1952, VBP, VII: 35.

assigning any such over-arching causation to her experiences. Leaving aside the question of gender and cause as inconclusive, it remains clear that a female scholar of the early 1920s was significantly more vulnerable to the consequences of such behaviour than was her male counterpart. As Rosalind Rosenberg has pointed out, the success of universities in the Progressive era at establishing themselves as gatekeepers for the professions had been counter-productive for women. University positions became more attractive for career-minded males, and women faced marginalization.[41] Barnes, on Andrews's advice, had given up an assured position at the University of Nebraska for one at Mount Holyoke from which Nellie Neilson made serious efforts to eject her at least twice during the 1920s. Even for a female scholar well established at a women's college, there were professional dangers. Researchers at women's colleges had to resist stereotyped assumptions that their institutions lacked the scholarly weight of the major universities, and the burden of doing so could combine with heavy teaching assignments to cause careers to stall prematurely. Conversely, the longer a female scholar stayed at a women's college, the more stellar her research record had to be in order to gain serious consideration for a position elsewhere. And for those who spent their careers at a women's college, there was no sustained access to the training of graduate students. As Viola Barnes put it, at Mount Holyoke, "I could not hope to build up a group of disciples around me as scholars in the university can do".[42] For women scholars, the task of gaining secure employment was arduous, and the task of attaining productivity and recognition was more arduous still. Appropriation of a young female historian's research findings in this context was an arena in which – for the young historian – the stakes were very high.

Viola Barnes never forgot either the affronts she had encountered as a young scholar or the unique vulnerability of young women seeking to enter her profession. For herself, she became increasingly protective of her work and her methods. The creation of solid opportunities for younger women became a defining theme of her five-year presidency of the Berkshire Conference of Women Historians during the 1930s. As a woman historian of increasing seniority in a male-gendered profession, she made some contributions to changing the scope and epistemology of historical practice but devoted more sustained efforts to challenging male hierarchy. Barnes published one article in women's history, and during the later years of her career she made "topics on women educators, women writers, women crusaders, etc." an important part of her teaching of United States history.[43] Through the Berkshire Conference and the informal networks it facilitated, however, much of her energy was consistently channeled into efforts to offset the male ascendancy in major historical organizations and to smooth the career paths of ambitious women historians through

41 Rosalind Rosenberg, *Beyond Separate Spheres: Intellectual Roots of Modern Feminism* (New Haven, 1982), p. 239.

42 See Viola Barnes to [Ruth], 18 June 1946, VBP, VIII: 7; Patricia A. Palmieri, "Here Was Fellowship: A Social Portrait of Academic Women at Wellesley College, 1895-1920", *History of Education Quarterly*, 23 (1983), p. 210; Jacqueline Goggin, "Challenging Sexual Discrimination in the Historical Profession: Women Historians and the American Historical Association, 1890-1940", *American Historical Review*, 97 (1992), pp. 775-8.

43 Viola Barnes to Mrs. George Howard, 16 April 1950, VBP, VIII: 8; Viola F. Barnes, "College Girl and School Ma'am in the Eighteen-Fifties", *New England Quarterly*, 3 (1930), pp. 538-562.

advancing "equal opportunity for women in professional competition with men".[44]

Meanwhile, Barnes's own career not only survived, but prospered. The reputation of *The Dominion of New England* proved solid and durable. A series of fellowships, including a Guggenheim in 1930, allowed her to take repeated summer sojourns in London, where she spent every available day at the British Museum, the Public Record Office or at archives outside the city. Between 1926 and 1931, she published six major articles, including "Francis Legge, Governor of Loyalist Nova Scotia, 1773-1776", which appeared in *New England Quarterly* in 1931.[45] With the appearance of this essay, at a time when women historians characteristically had difficulty in penetrating the close-knit male networks that pervaded the profession and its most prestigious journals, Barnes had compiled an enviable record of publication.[46] It now earned her such public badges of merit as election to the Royal Historical Society in London and to the nominating committee of the American Historical Association, both in 1934.[47] More privately, Leonard Labaree of Yale wrote in 1932 to congratulate her on the Legge essay and commented that "I really do not see how you get time to turn out so many articles, etc., as you do".[48] Some four years later, her fellow-Nebraskan Merle Curti of Smith College reported to her that a trade publisher had asked him, "how you stood as a historian". "I said", he went on, "on the top, practically".[49]

It was from this vantage point that Viola Barnes viewed Brebner's *The Neutral Yankees*, and in many respects the episode that followed was the mirror image of her encounter with James Truslow Adams some twelve years earlier. Even the language of her review of Brebner's work was so similar to that used by Adams in his review of hers as to be almost identical in some passages. "The author's interpretation", she wrote of *The Neutral Yankees*, "represents a shift in emphasis rather than a new and convincing theory. If he were to relegate Yankee passivity to the position of being merely one of many factors in determining Nova Scotia's loyalism instead of somewhat hesitatingly assigning it to the chief role, his conclusions would not differ

44 Viola Barnes to [Beatrice] Reynolds, 4 May 1937, VBP, IV: 47. See also Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York, 1988), pp. 1-11, 178-98; Smith, *The Gender of History*, p. 239 and passim. There is a growing literature of biographical portrayals of women historians engaging with these and related issues, including Jean Barman, *Constance Lindsay Skinner: Writing on the Frontier* (Toronto, 2002); Maxine Berg, "The First Women Economic Historians", *Economic History Review*, 45 (1992), pp. 308-29 and Beverly Boutilier and Alison Prentice, eds., *Creating Historical Memory: English-Canadian Women and the Work of History* (Vancouver, 1997).

45 Viola F. Barnes, "Francis Legge, Governor of Loyalist Nova Scotia, 1773-1776", *New England Quarterly*, 4 (1931), pp. 420-47. The other works were: Barnes, *Richard Wharton: A Seventeenth Century New England Colonial* (Cambridge, 1926; reprinted from *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*); Barnes, "The Rise of William Phips", *New England Quarterly*, 1 (1928), pp. 271-94; Barnes, "Phippius Maximus", *New England Quarterly,* 1 (1928), pp. 532-53; Barnes, "College Girl and School Ma'am in the Eighteen-Fifties"; Barnes, "Land Tenure in English Colonial Charters of the Seventeenth Century", in *Essays* in *Colonial History Presented to Charles McLean Andrews by his Students* (New Haven, 1931), pp. 4-40.

46 See Goggin, "Challenging Sexual Discrimination in the Historical Profession", pp. 780-1.

47 Royal Historical Society, Application and Recommendations, [11 October 1934]; Report of Nominating Committee of American Historical Association, 15 May 1936, VBP, IV: 44.

48 Leonard Labaree to Viola Barnes, 15 February 1932, VBP, IV: 28.

49 Merle Curti to Viola Barnes, 28 May [1936], VBP, IV: 22.

essentially from those previously reached by other writers on the subject". Barnes also complained about Brebner's lack of research in the manuscript sources at the Public Record Office.[50] Of the two historians, this time it was Barnes who was the more senior. Although Brebner was secure in his associate professorship at Columbia and *The Neutral Yankees* was his third book, he was ten years younger than Barnes and had only received his Ph.D. degree in 1927. There was a sense too, however, in which Brebner took the role in 1937 that Adams had played in 1925: namely, that he had advanced without acknowledgment an interpretation already framed by Viola Barnes. In this case, there is no hint in the evidence that impropriety was involved, although the stern character of Barnes's review was undoubtedly related to the existence of a reasonable case that could be made for discourtesy and even disrespect.

Crucial to Brebner's argument regarding the absence of Nova Scotia from the rebelling colonies of the mid-1770s was his contention that conflict between Governor Legge and a powerful group of Halifax merchants had been characterized by the efforts of the merchants for political reasons to outdo the governor in their professions of loyalty to the Crown. Legge's eventual recall, far from saving the loyalty of the province by removing a tyrannical governor, represented the triumph of a corrupt merchant elite which out of self-interest would have been loyal anyway. Brebner took pains to distinguish this view from the statements of other, unnamed historians who had "frequently" argued that "Nova Scotia was saved for the British Crown by the recall of Francis Legge".[51] The difficulty was, however, that Legge's most recent historian, Viola Barnes, had argued (six years before) almost exactly the same case as Brebner now did. Barnes, like Brebner, saw Legge as a reformer rather than a tyrant. Barnes, like Brebner, argued that Nova Scotia merchants had a vested interest in their loyalty. It was true that there were some differences between them. Barnes allowed greater effect to Legge's efforts to repress revolutionary efforts where they existed than did Brebner, and Brebner portrayed the elite merchants themselves as more irredeemably corrupt than did Barnes.[52] On the personal role of Legge and the reasons for his recall, however, the differences were outweighed by the unmistakable similarity of the arguments made by the two historians.

Yet, for whatever reason, Brebner chose to marginalize Barnes's contribution. Her article was listed in his bibliography, but cited only once in the body of the work, and then only cursorily as one of five "essays touching on the specific Nova Scotian problem [which] should be noted".[53] Barnes's work, however, had done a great deal more than "touching on" the history of Nova Scotia in the era. Even her most severe critic during the intervening years, W.B. Kerr, had underlined the importance of her analysis. Kerr, whose later book-length study of *The Maritime Provinces of British North America and the American Revolution* would be overshadowed by Brebner, believed that Barnes had over-emphasized both the role of the Nova Scotia merchants and the strength of their economic motivations. However, his major article on these

50 Barnes, Review of *The Neutral Yankees*, pp. 411-2.

51 Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees*, pp. 291-2.

52 Barnes, "Francis Legge", passim. For a more recent assessment, citing both Barnes and Brebner, see J.M. Bumsted, "Francis Legge", in George W. Brown et al., eds., *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (14 vols. to date; Toronto, 1966-), IV, pp. 449-52.

53 Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees*, pp. 149-50, 372.

themes in *Canadian Historical Review* in 1932 acknowledged that "the attempt to examine . . . [Barnes's] view" had been the reason for the article's genesis.[54] Brebner, who cited Kerr prominently in *The Neutral Yankees*, failed to engage with Barnes's work or even to recognize its significance. Liable to the charge of ignoring a fellow-scholar's work even if not of appropriating it, Brebner had also stumbled into a longstanding web of gender-related tensions and provoked a historian who could be counted on for an assertive response. Barnes's review of *The Neutral Yankees* was a magisterial rebuke, by an historian whose long and arduous journey placed her in a position to deliver it.

Yet if Viola Barnes's severity regarding Brebner's work can be attributed in part to her own past experience of the precarious standing of an ambitious female historian during the early decades of the 20th century, her critique also raised central issues regarding the relationship of Nova Scotia to the British Empire. The approaches of Barnes and Brebner converged in their treatments of the role of Governor Legge in the mid-1770s. On broader questions, they were much further apart. In her review, Barnes complained about the superficiality of Brebner's use of British sources, in that he had used only a few items from the Public Record Office and even those were transcriptions rather than originals. Brebner had, in reality, used more Public Record Office sources than she gave him credit for, but it was true that all of them were transcriptions, with their characteristic flaws and inadequacies.[55] All of his research in unpublished materials had been in Ottawa and Halifax. Barnes's article on Legge, by contrast, was heavily (and characteristically) footnoted with Public Record Office manuscripts, with only the occasional admixture of printed materials. At first sight this might seem to be a dry and arcane difference in the technicalities of research. However, more was involved. Brebner's book, in every respect from methodology to interpretive character, was anchored in the continent of North America – and, more than that, in the continentalism of North America, at least in the nuanced sense outlined by Rohit T. Aggarwala, a recent historiographer of Brebner.[56] In Barnes's work, the North Atlantic Ocean was an essential bridge between the two portions of the British world. By contrast, when Brebner articulated fully his own version of a North Atlantic world, with the publication in 1945 of *North Atlantic Triangle: The Interplay of Canada, the United States and Great Britain,* it was one in which Great Britain was separated by the ocean from a North America that could and should be assessed historically in terms of the integration of its colonially-derived populations.[57]

Thus, Brebner saw in Nova Scotia's political stance vis-à-vis the American Revolution the peculiar result of isolation from the mainstream of the Thirteen

54 W.B. Kerr, "The Merchants of Nova Scotia and the American Revolution", *Canadian Historical Review*, 13 (1932), p. 21 and passim. See also Kerr, "Nova Scotia in 1775-6", *Dalhousie Review*, 12 (1932-3), pp. 97-107 and Wilfred Brenton Kerr, *The Maritime Provinces of British North America and the American Revolution* (New York, 1970; first published 1941).

55 See Brebner's bibliography, in *The Neutral Yankees*, pp. 367-8. On the process of transcription of Nova Scotia records, and controversies surrounding it, see Brian Cuthbertson, "Thomas Beamish Akins: British North America's Pioneer Archivist", *Acadiensis,* VII, 1 (Autumn 1977), pp. 89-92 and passim and M. Brook Taylor, *Promoters, Patriots, and Partisans: Historiography in Nineteenth-Century English Canada* (Toronto, 1989), pp. 200-6.

56 Aggarwala, "'Non-Resident Me'", pp. 246-9 and passim.

57 Brebner, *North Atlantic Triangle*, especially pp. 6-7.

Colonies. In *North Atlantic Triangle,* he argued that, "Nova Scotia . . . was the rather passive victim of an intermittent competition between New England and Old". In *The Neutral Yankees*, he suggested that, "the principal clue to Nova Scotian behavior in this, as in many other problematical situations, lies in her insulation from the rest of North America".[58] In this context, for Brebner, the role of Halifax merchants gave evidence of a corrupt and unscrupulous pragmatism, by which loyalty to the Crown was reduced to a debased currency of self-interest. Combined with the apathy of the New England Planters, the consequence was that Nova Scotia moved away from being New England's outpost, and instead became a North American backwater, characterized by "habitual subservience to London".[59]

Where Brebner saw isolation, however, Barnes saw centrality. Halifax merchants certainly operated out of self-interest, she argued, but it was not the self-interest of corrupt short-sightedness. Rather, it represented a highly plausible calculation – in which Legge and the merchants concurred for once – that Nova Scotia's central position in the North Atlantic world would yield trade benefits when New England competition was hampered by the conflicts associated with the coming of the revolution. Legge envisaged, Barnes argued, that Nova Scotia would become "the center of the Empire for the fishing of cod and the granary of the West Indies", while Halifax would be "an intermediary port between Canada and the West Indies – such as Louisbourg had previously been for the French".[60] It was in this context that Barnes defined the province during the years of Legge's governorship, from 1773 to 1776, as "Loyalist Nova Scotia". Although Barnes did attribute neutrality to the Ulster Scots of Truro, Onslow and Londonderry, she also believed the New England Planters would have been fertile soil for revolution had they not been effectively repressed by Legge. Ultimately, Barnes insisted that internal political conflict was normal throughout the non-rebelling as well as the rebelling colonies and, therefore, that Nova Scotia was Loyalist not because of the later arrival of the refugees but because it did not rebel.[61]

Underlying all of this, for Barnes, was the conviction that empire, not colonization, was the essential starting point and the basic unit of analysis for an accurate understanding of events in British North America during the 1760s and 1770s. When she departed for London in 1930 on her Guggenheim Fellowship, her professed purpose was to build on her earlier studies of Massachusetts to write on "Massachusetts in the Revolution: A Study in British Colonial Policy, 1763-1776".[62] Two years later, the project had taken a radically new form and had broken decisively with conventional interpretations of the era of the American Revolution. By re-defining the chronological scope to include not just the period from the first Treaty of Paris to the beginning of the Revolution, but instead to encompass all the affairs of the empire from 1760 to 1778 – from the surrender of Canada to the entry of France into the Revolutionary war – she could portray the origins of the revolutionary

58 Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees*, p. 299.
59 Brebner, *The Neutral Yankees*, pp. 313-14, 352-3.
60 Barnes, "Francis Legge", pp. 426-7.
61 Barnes, "Francis Legge", pp. 438-9, 446-7.
62 Application to Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, [1929], VBP, IV: 1.

movement as symptomatic of the larger problems of an empire in which expansion too far and too fast had taken on a life of its own. Thus, neither 1775 nor 1776 marked any real culmination of this crucial phase in imperial history. Only when rebellion gave way to international warfare in 1778 and so brought the expansionist era to an end, was full circle reached and the real imperial significance of the conquest of Canada revealed. And only by examining the role of British policies in the light of the experience of the non-rebelling colonies – as well as the minority consisting of those thirteen in which civil conflict had gone against the Loyalists – could the complexities of empire be understood.[63]

Barnes's approach had some affinities with the work of other historians who were exploring Loyalism and the non-rebelling colonies. Claude Van Tyne had long since published his ground-breaking study of the Loyalists as "conservative and respectable Americans" who suffered in a losing cause in a "fratricidal" war. By portraying Loyalism as a default position for conservatives, however, Van Tyne had been unable – any more than had Brebner – to integrate Loyalism and non-rebellion fully into an imperial framework.[64] Lawrence Henry Gipson of Lehigh University, meanwhile, had not yet begun what would become a monumental and multi-volume history of *The British Empire Before the American Revolution*. Although Gipson's work would begin from a similar premise to that of Barnes – that the defeat of France began a chain of destructive consequences for the first British empire – it was for him the rise of an American civilization and nationalism that ultimately rendered the old imperial relationships untenable rather than, as for Barnes, an evolving complex of tensions within an over-extended empire. While Gipson certainly did not ignore the non-rebelling colonies, he had difficulty integrating them fully into his model. Barnes, for her part, found Gipson's work discursive and lacking in interpretive rigour.[65] Charles McLean Andrews himself might have been expected to cap his career by moving forward into the revolutionary era. Yet he never did so in a detailed study, despite expressing the intention to take his work in this direction. Andrews had always shied away from the revolutionary era, and from the difficult task of carrying his studies of the anatomy of imperial relationships into the era of the collapse of those same relationships. He was not a revisionist either by temperament or by inclination. As a pioneer of uncharted historical territories, he was a master. As a controversialist, he had a penchant – as A.S. Eisenstadt has observed – for "challenging enemies long since vanquished, fighting battles long since won".[66] The American Revolution was an active field in which intervention would mean abandoning this luxury. The reality was that a bold new interpretation of the revolutionary era in an imperial context was more likely to come from Viola Barnes than from Andrews.

It never did, at least not in published form. Though none would have suspected it at the time, the publication of Barnes's article on Francis Legge represented the high water mark of her published scholarship. She had minor publications thereafter, and a

63 Viola Barnes to Henry Allen Moe, 28 December 1932, VBP, VIII: 3.

64 Claude Halstead Van Tyne, *The Loyalists in the American Revolution* (New York, 1902), pp. vii, 26.

65 Lawrence Henry Gipson, *The British Empire Before the American Revolution* (15 volumes; Caldwell, Idaho, 1936-70); Viola Barnes to Bernard Bailyn, 28 July 1966, VBP, VIII: 12.

66 Eisenstadt, *Charles McLean Andrews*, p. 217. See also Charles McLean Andrews, "On the Writing of Colonial History", *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, 1 (1944), pp. 27-48.

reprinted edition of *The Dominion of New England* appeared in 1960.[67] The manuscript on the revolutionary era remained stubbornly unpublished, even though she was still working on it at the age of 91, by which time it had gone into three volumes. The reasons for its non-appearance were complex. Although two volumes were essentially complete before the outbreak of the Second World War, the war itself prevented her from pursuing final threads of research in London until 1949. By the early 1950s, she had extended the manuscript's chronological scope to 1783 and altered the focus to accommodate extensive discussion of British radicalism as a facet of the revolutionary movement throughout the North Atlantic world. This change, through which Nova Scotia and Loyalism received considerably less attention, brought delays as the price for much elaboration and rewriting. Potential publishers, meanwhile, became discouraged by her increasingly categorical refusal to revise on the basis of critical comment from press readers.

Also contributing to the uphill battle that she faced was the unwelcome reality that the "imperial school" associated with Andrews and his graduate students was widely seen in the postwar era as a spent force. Not only did the study of the Revolution take a variety of new directions, but also the historiography of New England itself – Barnes's original core area of expertise – had changed dramatically. Barnes's work during the 1920s and early 1930s had been premised on the belief that Puritanism had lesser explanatory power as a historical phenomenon in New England than did the North Atlantic issues of governance and commerce. She wrote about merchant capitalists and imperial office-holders, and she made it no secret that she found them more congenial than Puritan divines, as well as more interpretively revealing. With the publication in 1939 of Perry Miller's *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century*, however, the historiographical landscape changed. For Miller, and for the many scholars he influenced over the next two or three decades, Puritanism was "the most coherent and most powerful single factor in the early history of America".[68] The New England mind, for the time being, had decisively eclipsed the North Atlantic mind – and this at a crucial time for Barnes's efforts to publish her sprawling masterpiece.

Barnes did live long enough to congratulate Bernard Bailyn on his early work and its resonance with the historical New England portrayed in her own, though she had died by the time his *Voyagers to the West* in 1986 brought a North Atlantic perspective again to Nova Scotia in the era of Governor Francis Legge.[69] In the same year, I.K. Steele's *The English Atlantic* revealed the Atlantic Ocean as a highway rather than an obstacle to communication, and the first volume of D.W. Meinig's *The Shaping of America* took a broad geographical approach to "Atlantic America".[70] In the region corresponding to old Nova Scotia itself, 1986 was also the year in which J.M. Bumsted's Winthrop Pickard Bell Lectures insisted on the application of the

67 Viola Florence Barnes, *The Dominion of New England: A Study in British Colonial Policy* (reprinted edition; New York, 1960).

68 Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, MA, 1939), pp. vii-ix.

69 Viola Barnes to Bernard Bailyn, 28 July 1966, VBP, VIII: 12; Bernard Bailyn, *Voyagers to the West: A Passage in the Peopling of America on the Eve of the Revolution* (New York, 1986).

70 I.K. Steele, *The English Atlantic, 1675-1740: An Exploration of Communication and Community* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); D.W. Meinig, *The Shaping of America: A Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History, Volume I, Atlantic America, 1492-1800* (New Haven, 1986).

term "Loyalist" to residents as well as to refugees, and the following year saw the first of the series of Planter Studies conferences at Acadia University that have continued to shape and re-shape historical understandings of the province in the 18th century.[71] The pace has only accelerated since the late 1980s, and to mention major re-interpretive works that take an Atlantic perspective – such as those of Julian Gwyn, Elizabeth Mancke and Geoffrey Plank – is to say far less than enough about the vigour of historical studies of 18th-century Nova Scotia prior to the arrival of the Loyalist refugees.[72] Loyalist studies themselves, in the regeneration of which W.S. MacNutt played a distinguished role, have offered an additional range of innovative works.[73] None of these developments, of course, can realistically be attributed to any direct influence of Viola Barnes. Yet all of them represent efforts to find modern answers to questions which she broached in the 1920s and the 1930s. All of them represent, though in diverse ways, efforts to breach any remaining assumption that 18th-century Nova Scotia can or should be seen exclusively in terms of a continentalist vision of colonial North America. This is not to invalidate studies that continue to investigate such phenomena as Planter neutralism,[74] or apply social history techniques to the study of the 18th-century peoples of Nova Scotia.[75] But it is to say that the skirmish between Barnes and Brebner in 1937 centred on issues of real significance, and that despite Brebner's historiographical ascendancy in the decades that followed, it is Barnes who has ultimately worn the better of the two.

This said, there are other issues raised by the debates of the 1930s that remain to be fully explored by historians. One of them has to do with Barnes's emphasis on the centrality of Nova Scotia in a North Atlantic empire. It is true, of course, that she meant this to be understood as a reference to the aspirations of Legge and others, rather than as a historiographical statement. Yet among the results of taking seriously the imperial

71 J.M. Bumsted, *Understanding the Loyalists* (Sackville, NB: Centre for Canadian Studies, Mount Allison University, 1986), especially pp. 39-49 and Margaret Conrad, ed., *They Planted Well: New England Planters in Maritime Canada* (Fredericton, 1988). A similar point regarding extending the definition of Loyalism was concurrently made in Meinig, *Atlantic America*, pp. 311-2.

72 See Julian Gwyn, *Excessive Expectations: Maritime Commerce and the Economic Development of Nova Scotia, 1740-1870* (Montreal and Kingston, 1998); Elizabeth Mancke, "Another British America: A Canadian Model for the Early Modern British Empire", *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 25 (1997), pp. 1-36; Geoffrey Plank, *An Unsettled Conquest: The British Campaign Against the Peoples of Acadia* (Philadelphia, 2001).

73 Examples are D.G. Bell, *Early Loyalist Saint John: The Origin of New Brunswick Politics, 1783-1786* (Fredericton, 1983); Ann Gorman Condon, *The Envy of the American States: The Loyalist Dream for New Brunswick* (Fredericton, 1984); Neil MacKinnon, *This Unfriendly Soil: The Loyalist Experience in Nova Scotia, 1783-1791* (Kingston and Montreal, 1986); Patricia Rogers, "The Loyalist Experience in an Anglo-American Atlantic World", in Margaret Conrad and Barry Moody, eds., *Planter Links: Community and Culture in Colonial Nova Scotia* (Fredericton, 2001), pp. 165-74; Carole W. Troxler, "A Loyalist Life: John Bond of South Carolina and Nova Scotia", *Acadiensis*, XIX, 2 (Spring 1990), pp. 72-91.

74 See, for example, Gordon Stewart and G.A. Rawlyk, *A People Highly Favoured of God: The Nova Scotia Yankees and the American Revolution* (Toronto, 1972) and Donald Desserud, "Nova Scotia and the American Revolution: A Study of Neutrality and Moderation in the Eighteenth Century", in Margaret Conrad, ed., *Making Adjustments*: *Change and Continuity in Planter Nova Scotia, 1759-1800* (Fredericton, 1991), pp. 89-112.

75 See, collectively, the essays in Margaret Conrad, ed., *Intimate Relations: Family and Community in Planter Nova Scotia* (Fredericton, 1995).

dimensions of the North Atlantic world is the principle that the relative fragility of colonial settlement in Nova Scotia does not intrinsically make this region any less worthy of the historian's attention than any other part of northeastern North America. It could only be taken to do so if we were to accept the old-fashioned colonial model as the criterion for the importance we attribute to any given geographical area. If we do apply that colonial model, and do so in a crude and heavy-handed manner, then of course we will conclude that it is better to conduct an intensive study of more heavily populated colonies such as Canada, Massachusetts or New York than to waste time on the small colonial populations on the northeastern periphery. In the Atlantic world, however, Nova Scotia was far from peripheral, and colonization was only one result of the imperial outreach. The second point, closely related to the first, was implicitly flagged by Barnes (and by Brebner) in a totally different way – namely by their ignoring of the aboriginal dimension to 18th-century Nova Scotian history. If the colonial model is to be transcended, adding the imperial dimension – while essential – is not enough in itself. Naomi Griffiths, Geoffrey Plank and William C. Wicken have shown the way in recent studies that explore the negotiated relationships that prevailed among aboriginal, colonial (including Acadian) and imperial presences.[76] The way lies open for further integration of these three indispensable perspectives. Given the region's central geographical position, there is much to be learned about the North Atlantic world from the study of 18th-century Nova Scotia, about the persistence of negotiated relationships involving a British colonial regime and the non-British peoples of the territory it was supposed to control. Imperialism existed and colonization existed, and both were crucial to the events and processes that developed. But imperial control and colonial security were illusions, and aboriginal power persisted. Hence, this was a part of the Atlantic world where the elements of cross-cultural interactions went together in different patterns from those that prevailed elsewhere, and one where those elements are uniquely accessible to the historian who cares to look for them.

These reflections begin to take us far from Viola Barnes, although they still relate to the North Atlantic mind. In Barnes's review of *The Neutral Yankees*, she was true to her personal self, and to her experience of the difficult business of being a female professional historian in the United States of the interwar era. It would only become more difficult as the 1940s gave way to the 1950s, but that is another story. In her review, she was also true to her historiographical self, and her contributions to 18th-century Nova Scotian history were vigorous and suggestive. That her voice was not more often and more publicly heard thereafter was a loss both to herself and to the audience she would have reached. I do not know if thoughts such as these went through her mind in 1968 as she rolled onto the *Bluenose* ferry, or if she voiced them to Mildred Howard as they left Yarmouth behind. I do suggest, however, that they are worth our while to contemplate, even as we leave the 20th century and its historiography further and further behind.

76 Naomi E.S. Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History*, 1686-1784 (Montreal and Kingston, 1992) and Griffiths, *From Migrant to Acadian, 1604-1755: A North American Border People* (Montreal and Kingston, forthcoming 2004); Plank, *An Unsettled Conquest*; William C. Wicken, *Mi'kmaq Treaties on Trial: History, Land, and Donald Marshall Junior* (Toronto, 2002).