

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## ASECS Announces Winners of 2021 Clifford Prize

The James L. Clifford Prize presented annually by the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies recognizes an article that presents an outstanding study of some aspect of eighteenth-century culture.

The 2021 Clifford Prize has been awarded to **Spencer J. Weinreich**, PhD candidate in history, Princeton University, for **“Unaccountable Subjects: Contracting Legal and Medical Authority in the Newgate Smallpox Experiment (1721)”**, which appeared in *History Workshop Journal* (Spring 2020).

In an essay that crosses disciplines and speaks to our contemporary moment, Spencer Weinreich’s “Unaccountable Subjects” focuses on individuals marginalized in the historical record – the seven prison test subjects for Britain’s first trial inoculation against smallpox. Likening inoculation to transportation in the choice of uncertain over certain death, Weinreich argues for the prisoners’ agency, even as they were subjected to state internment and scientific investigation. He considers fusions of public and private authority, the prisoners as rhetorical figures in partisan press, and the relationship of medicine to statecraft. Centering our attention on the prisoners’ role in producing experimental knowledge, Weinreich brilliantly excavates from the archive a new narrative of this transformative event.

Two articles received **Honorable Mention for the 2021 James L. Clifford Prize:**

**Rachael Wheeler and Sarah Eyerly’s “Singing Box 331: Re-sounding Eighteenth-Century Mohican Hymns from the Moravian Archives,”** *The William and Mary Quarterly* (Fall 2019), is a deeply collaborative work. It not only unites the authors’ expertise with that of scholars from across disciplines but also, crucially, relies upon members of Mohican communities to “re-sound” eighteenth-century music. An outstanding example of public history, the essay and accompanying recordings reveal a complex web of relationships behind the hymns’ original creation and examine their history as vehicles for differentiating and sustaining Mohican community. “Singing Box 331” also received the ASECS 2021 Srinivas Aravamudan Award for an article that pushes the boundaries of eighteenth-century studies.

Honorable Mention is awarded to **James Mulholland** for **“Translocal Anglo-India and the Multilingual Reading Public,”** *PMLA*, March 2020. The essay provides a necessary corrective to contemporary approaches to anglophone literary studies. Arguing for conceptual frameworks that embrace the complexities of

Asia's multilingual culture by focusing on intimate place-based relationships and translocal and regional perspectives of community, James Mulholland opens our field to new methodologies and overlooked archival materials. His three cases studies of neglected authors affiliated with the British East India Company point toward the possibilities of these new frameworks.

The American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies is a not-for-profit educational organization founded to promote the study of all aspects of the eighteenth century. It sponsors conferences, awards research fellowships and prizes, and publishes *Eighteenth-Century Studies* and *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*. Eligibility information for the 2021 Clifford Prize is available at [www.asecs.org](http://www.asecs.org) or by contacting the Business Office at [asecsoffice@gmail.com](mailto:asecsoffice@gmail.com).

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