

AMERICAN
HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION

2019 Annual Meeting
**Presidential
Address**





Mary Beth Norton

Mary Donlon Alger Professor of American History
Cornell University

President of the
American Historical Association, 2018

AMERICAN
HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION

Presidential Address

Hilton Chicago
International Ballroom South
Chicago, Illinois
Friday, January 4, 2019
5:30 PM

Mary Beth Norton

**By Susanah Shaw Romney, New York University, and
Molly A. Warsh, University of Pittsburgh**

Capturing the Essence of Mary Beth Norton

“A Force of Nature”: this phrase often surfaces when people are asked to describe Mary Beth Norton. It captures a sense of her unflagging, unstoppable energy, but it doesn’t do justice to the myriad channels through which this energy flows or the effective precision with which she has marshaled this energy over the years. A transformative figure in the field of early American history and women’s history, a tireless champion of undergraduate and graduate students, a mentor and advocate for junior scholars, an inspiring teacher and author of a leading undergraduate textbook, and a pillar of support and love to family and friends alike, Mary Beth Norton has nourished a vast community of people touched by her generous soul and intellect. From her early political activism through her work on behalf of women scholars at the university and professional levels, and from her pathbreaking scholarship and inspiring teaching, to her passion for cooking, she has manifested her commitment to the collective good and her joy in community membership. These traits—individual drive combined with deep commitment to community goals, integrity, and fairness—have marked her life and career as an historian.

Early Constraints and Exploration

Mary Beth Norton was born into a family with a deep appreciation for history and for education more generally. Her father, Clark Frederick Norton (1912–2009), received a PhD in constitutional history from the University of Michigan. Mary Beth was born in Ann Arbor in 1943 while her father was an assistant professor of political science at Michigan. Her mother, Mary Elizabeth Lunny Norton (1913–2018), was also an educator, only resigning as a high school teacher when forced to do so by discriminatory Depression-era laws barring married women from holding teaching positions. Mary Norton was trained as a classicist and held an MA from the University of Michigan, where she and Clark first met. Both Mary and Clark were part of the first generation in their families to receive college degrees, and they instilled in both their children, Mary Beth and her younger brother, the idea that social mobility came through education. Mary Beth recalls a childhood in which money was tight but a love of history abounded. Every summer, her father taught summer school for the first six weeks to earn extra pay for the family. Afterwards, Mary and Clark and their children would pile into the car and take a two-to three-week road trip, visiting national parks, state capitals, and historic sites of all types. She has described these childhood vacations as “living history.”

When Mary Beth was still young, the family moved to Greencastle, Indiana, where her father took up a position at DePauw. Public schools in Greencastle provided her primary and secondary education, but without giving her much academic challenge. Instead, Mary Beth's interest in history was nurtured at home and on the family's annual summer road trips. By the time she was ready for college, she had visited all 48 contiguous states and developed a love for the American past.

The child of educators born into a university town, Mary Beth grew up surrounded by teachers of all sorts, but the women she saw in this role were either teaching Sunday school classes at church (as her mother did at the Methodist Church in Greencastle and as she herself began to do as a teenager) or in high school. Her sense of what kind of career was possible for her was limited by what she saw around her; she did not imagine herself as a professor because she did not see women in this role. Though her own mother offered Latin classes at DePauw years later, the college had few female faculty, at least as far as young Mary Beth was aware. Thus, she had no role models to suggest that an academic career was possible for a woman. She did, however, have a series of caring teachers who, in addition to her parents, encouraged her intellectually and treated her with fairness and integrity. These same traits would come to characterize her own professional identity as a teacher, scholar, and mentor.

Mary Beth's increasingly sharp perception of the inequalities facing women as scholars and political activists came during her undergraduate years at the University of Michigan, where she entered her freshman year in 1960. It was during these years, too, that she met one of her most influential mentors, the intellectual historian John Higham. The path to becoming a history major at Michigan was an easy one for Mary Beth; she has no recollection of ever considering going anywhere else, or majoring in anything else. As she understood it, going to Ann Arbor was just what her family did, and studying history only seemed natural, given her family background. This was an early Mary Beth Norton, who accepted the lay of land as an unchanging reality rather than an apple cart that could be overturned, as she would later fight to do. Indeed, her undergraduate years at Michigan would be transformative and hone her political consciousness as well as her ambition as a historian in training.

At Michigan, Mary Beth quickly became involved in student politics, a thrilling but also frustrating experience as she found herself locked out of key roles in student political organizations due to the unapologetic sexism of some male student leaders. During her first semester of her freshman year she began canvassing for Kennedy with the Michigan Young Democrats. These were heady days and Michigan was a particularly exciting place to be. Mary Beth was present on the night when JFK announced his plan to form the Peace Corps from the steps of

the Michigan student union. Over time, she became deeply involved in national student politics through the National Student Association and Voice Political Party, the precursor for Students for a Democratic Society. But even as Mary Beth flourished in student politics, she found herself stifled and angered by her fellow students' sexism. She was discouraged from running for top leadership positions because, she was told, "girls couldn't do that." At the time, she had no language to express or critique what she was facing. But these difficulties were an essential part of her undergraduate education all the same, sharpening her perceptions of inequality and laying the groundwork for her future intellectual pursuits.

Amidst the political excitement of her undergraduate years, her vision of what went into writing and teaching history also expanded dramatically. She chose to write her undergraduate honors thesis on the legal philosophy of Clarence Darrow, but she remained without a female academic role model. The Michigan history department had only one female member at the time. So, while her undergraduate career there awakened her to the possibilities of history, Mary Beth would have to struggle to have her own voice as a woman historian taken seriously by her peers and by the academic establishment. She would need to forge a new path and fight for women's place in the profession.

Mary Beth's growing commitment to gender equality reflected her ongoing involvement in the world of politics, a world no less sexist and unequal than academia. Mary Beth spent the summer of 1963 as an intern in Senator Birch Bayh's office. Although she enjoyed the excitement of living in DC and watching the civil rights bill going through Congress, the summer proved frustrating as well as enlightening. As an intern, one of her jobs was to serve as secretary for the other interns—all of them men. She was assigned to a low-level job, helping to manage form responses to constituent letters produced by a robotype machine supervised by a female staff member. But Mary Beth suddenly had to replace that woman when she quit without notice and took her records with her. Mary Beth was the only other person who knew the relevant codes and as a result she immediately became an indispensable presence in the office, responsible for evaluating many pieces of mail each day and determining which type of response each deserved.

The eye-opening experience of gendered office politics and an exciting internship was heightened because she was simultaneously researching her senior thesis, consulting Clarence Darrow's papers firsthand at the manuscript division of the Library of Congress. Doing real primary research was a revelation for Mary Beth. Reading Darrow's drafts and unpublished trial transcripts got her hooked on using little-read manuscript sources. She realized that this kind of research was what she truly loved doing. And with this realization came the decision to pursue a PhD in history. It would be an exciting path but not an easy one, from start to finish.

Becoming a Historian

Mary Beth returned to Ann Arbor that fall for her senior year. John Higham and her parents both encouraged her to aim high in terms of graduate schools, even though most of the elite institutions still rarely admitted female candidates. Finding funding was just as uncertain as gaining admission to the nation's top programs. Many prestigious national fellowships for graduate support remained closed to women. When she wanted to apply for a Woodrow Wilson fellowship, for example, she was initially told "girls don't usually get Woodrow Wilsons." She applied anyway and ended up winning one. These academic pockets of privilege, historically reserved for young ambitious men, were about to meet their match in Mary Beth Norton.

Mary Beth would fight for a place in the academy but not indiscriminately; she chose her battles. For example, when she wrote to Princeton to ask for a catalog, she received a postcard in return. Princeton advised her that the graduate school did not usually admit women, but grudgingly said they would send her a catalog if she really wanted one. That was enough for Mary Beth. She threw Princeton's note in the trash and went on to be admitted to Harvard and Yale. When Harvard heard about her Woodrow Wilson fellowship, she was offered multiple years of support. So, after graduating from Michigan in 1964 as a Phi Beta Kappa member with high distinction and high honors in history, off she went to Harvard.

The five years Mary Beth spent at Harvard pursuing her PhD would prove to be enriching yet challenging. When she arrived in Cambridge in the fall of 1964, she was one of just three women among 20 entering Americanist PhD students. Within a few weeks, there were only two women left—Mary Beth Norton and Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz. Her graduate years at Harvard did not provide the kind of intellectual and professional networking that many young men beginning at the same time experienced. Not living in the graduate women's dormitory, she also missed out on the opportunity to make a cadre of friends among female PhD students in other fields. Reflecting back on these years many decades later, she described them as consisting of herself, the library, her mentor Bernard Bailyn, and a few women in other areas of history.

Recounting the difficulties of these years, Mary Beth credits Bailyn for offering her a path forward through intellectual engagement. In a male-dominated institution, one in which she often ran up against painful encounters with sexism, Bailyn treated her fairly. Mary Beth had entered Harvard intending to work on 19th-century American intellectual history—to follow in the footsteps of her undergraduate mentor. But in her second semester, working on a paper about reactions to the Stamp Act in Massachusetts, she had what she later termed a "conversion experience": James Otis spoke to her from across the centuries and converted her to colonial history. Bailyn thus became her

mentor and support system throughout graduate school and beyond. Under his direction she shifted from James Otis to his opponents, who became loyalists during the revolution. On the way, she passed by a topic on Mercy Otis Warren due to a fear of being typed as a woman working on women—ironic in light of her later career and a pointed reflection on the times.

Her graduate research on loyalists trained her in using the 18th-century correspondence that has been central to her career ever since. It also gave her a different understanding of the revolutionary period, causing her to focus on peoples' personal turning points and the choices they faced at the time. These themes have animated her work on the revolutionary era ever since. Her research on loyalists also took her to London in the spring of 1968, where she made many of the friendships that have endured throughout her professional career. Her passionate and dogged pursuit of her intellectual interests into the archives gave her the academic network that she had been missing at Harvard. It also laid the groundwork for a stellar career. Mary Beth finished her PhD in 1969 and began a job as an assistant professor at the University of Connecticut that fall. A year later, her dissertation would win the Society of American Historians' Allan Nevins prize for the best-written dissertation in American history. The book that resulted, *The British-Americans: The Loyalist Exiles in England, 1774–1789*, took a transatlantic approach long before the field of the Atlantic world had come into existence. Using the techniques of both social and intellectual history, Mary Beth determined that the loyalists came to realize how American they were only after they had abandoned America forever. Praised for its richness of detail and its incisive yet balanced observations, the book established her as one of the leaders of a new generation of historians of the Revolution. Despite the barriers and difficulties, it is safe to say that Mary Beth Norton's graduate career represented a triumph over those who doubted women's place in the academic profession.

Despite the victory of the prize-winning dissertation and the academic job, life as a female academic in the late 1960s and early 1970s remained challenging. Indeed, the job market itself had taught her that already. At the December 1968 AHA annual meeting, when interviews were still arranged through word of mouth rather than by advertisements, she approached the chair of one department with a position in early American history and asked to submit her resume. He refused to accept it. His rationale was that "there were too many skirts on campus." Mary Beth describes this moment as fundamental in her feminist consciousness raising, to use a phrase from the era. The chair's sexism lost his institution a first-rate scholar and teacher and the academy gained an ever-fiercer advocate for gender equality.

At the University of Connecticut, Mary Beth got her first real taste of teaching, learning how to structure lectures that could engage students in the US survey course. The isolation of Storrs, Connecticut, proved

difficult for her as a young single woman, but through a colleague at the university, Mary Beth became involved with the Berkshire Conference of Women Historians. She found it exhilarating to be in a room with all female historians for the first time, and she became a steadfast supporter of the organization, known familiarly as the Berks. She has still never missed one of the conferences on women's history that the Berks has sponsored periodically since 1973.

During her early years as an assistant professor in Connecticut, Mary Beth began to be interested in the newly developing study of women's history, though she did not at first imagine herself as a researcher in the field. She began to read the work on 19th-century women that was just coming out at the time by Ann Douglas Wood, Gerda Lerner, Ann Firor Scott, and Barbara Welter. She found herself troubled by what seemed to her to be common assumptions about women in the colonial period. Portrayals of a Golden Age for women before industrialization did not reflect the impression she had formed of women's lives while reading loyalist women's letters. Nonetheless, women did not yet emerge at the center of her own research; this would happen once she took up a new position at Cornell University, the school that would become her institutional home for many decades.

Journey to Ithaca

Joining the history department at Cornell University in the fall of 1971 marked the beginning the crucial shift in Mary Beth's intellectual path. She arrived as the first woman ever to teach in Cornell's history department, and indeed she remained the only woman for five years, and one of two women for another decade. Nevertheless, she joined the university as part of a small group of newly hired women in the College of Arts and Sciences. These interdisciplinary connections proved essential to Mary Beth's own trajectory.

Together, Mary Beth and her female colleagues began the process of overhauling a weak and underfunded Female Studies program to create an intellectually vibrant Women's Studies program. Realizing that so many women were working seriously on women's topics made Mary Beth begin to think more deeply about turning to women's history herself. As her first book, *The British-Americans*, entered the final stages of publication, she began to consider what she would do for her next major research project.

She saw two possible paths forward. One was to consider the role of committees of correspondence and committees of safety in 1774, a topic that had intrigued her during her research for her first book. But niggling at the back of her mind was her own dissatisfaction with prevailing characterizations of women's experiences in the colonial period. Deciding that she did not know enough about women's history to choose, she started to do some background reading. Before long, she was hooked. Her shift to women's history would prove irrevocable.

Not knowing quite where to start as a newcomer to women's history, Mary Beth went back to her previous experience in the archives. She recalled that she had in fact encountered quite a few petitions for compensation from loyalist women to the British government after the Revolution. She returned to those sources, which led to the publication of her first article in women's history, "Eighteenth-Century American Women in Peace and War: The Case of the Loyalists," in the *William and Mary Quarterly* in July 1976.

By this point, Mary Beth was convinced that the notion of the colonial period as an ideal era for women was misguided. The challenge of recovering the true tenor of women's lives in the era would animate her next book, *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750–1800*. Her goals for the book were straightforward—to help people understand how women's lives and the revolution shaped one another and to show that the revolution could not be taught without talking about women. The impact of the book was far-reaching. By giving voice to women who had been shut out the historical record, Mary Beth created a vital emotional connection between readers and women of the 18th century. As an early sign of the book's importance, it was granted the 1981 Berkshire Conference Prize for the best book by a woman historian. The verve and precision with which she crafted the book ensured that it would be accessible to an even wider audience than the generations of undergraduate and graduate students for whom it would be required reading. That wider audience included teachers who incorporated her findings into their own classrooms and public history professionals who altered the presentation of the period to the public. The American Revolution had been forever changed. The historian who as a child couldn't imagine a woman professor had opened new windows onto the American past and forged new research paths into the profession.

Writing Gendered Power into Colonial America

The book appeared in 1980, just a few months prior to the publication of a work that alongside *Liberty's Daughters* would help inaugurate a new era in women's history, Linda Kerber's *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America*. Together, the two books essentially created a new area of study out of whole cloth. Using distinct yet complementary approaches, Norton and Kerber together laid the groundwork for a generation of historians to begin asking further questions about women in early America. Indeed, the following year, Mary Beth gave the keynote at a conference for the Omohundro Institute on the needs and opportunities for further study within the field of colonial women's history. That keynote address became the basis for her 1984 historiographical article in the *American Historical Review*, "The Evolution of White Women's Experience in Early America." In this article, Mary Beth sketched a schema for conceptualizing and periodizing early America from women's perspective. In doing so, she created a framework

in which scholars working in the new domain of women's history could situate their contributions to the developing subfield.

As *Liberty's Daughters* entered the world and Mary Beth became increasingly engaged in field-wide discussions about the changing shape of women's colonial history, she also took on a new collaborative project, one that offered the opportunity to re-write American history where it was most likely to have the broadest possible impact: in a textbook. Titled *A People and a Nation*, this survey of US history written by six authors would be the first to incorporate new social history approaches. The project also provided Mary Beth with the opportunity to insist on the incorporation of women into the presentation of every era of American history. Published in 1982, it quickly dominated the college market and later became adopted by the rapidly growing number of AP US history courses across the country. The textbook went through 10 editions with Mary Beth as a contributor (she only recently stepped off the authorial board after more than 35 years). The project's political impact was just as remarkable as its success in the classroom. Mary Beth was the first women's historian to be included on a textbook team for a major publisher, but the success of the book made the inclusion of women and women's history a necessity for textbooks thereafter. Following closely on the heels of *Liberty's Daughters*, *A People and a Nation* ensured that recognition of women's central importance in American society shaped the thinking of countless young people and transformed the teaching of American history across the country. It was fitting that in 1987 Mary Beth was named to the Mary Donlon Alger chaired professorship in the History Department, an endowed chair for women on the Cornell Arts College faculty.

Both *Liberty's Daughters* and *A People and a Nation* laid the groundwork for her next three books, each of which would continue to explore gender and politics in early America. Mary Beth began to think about early American women's history as a chronological whole, realizing that she had written the conclusion to a story that really began much earlier, in the 17th century. However, as she adjusted her chronological focus, she also expanded her perspective. Looking beyond women's experiences, she began to consider the lives of men and questions of ideology. In the end, she would come to define herself as a historian of gender, as well as a historian of women, just as the field as a whole made a similar transition.

In *Founding Mothers and Fathers: Gendered Power and the Forming of American Society*, Mary Beth shifted her gaze to the 17th century to consider the analogy between the family and the state. While that analogy had been widely noted, Mary Beth felt that no one had truly considered the impact of that ideological link on the lives of women and men themselves. In particular, Mary Beth sought to reconsider the nature of authority in early colonial society, focusing on New England and Chesapeake colonies and using court records as her source

base. Her guiding question was the meaning for women of the Fifth Commandment, "Honor Thy Mother and Father," which before John Locke was accepted as the foundation for political as well as familial power. If women (metaphorical "mothers") had power in the family, and the family was the basis on which political structures rested, could women have power in the state? The answer, she determined, depended upon status. High status, she concluded, overruled gender as the most important factor in a woman's life. While some critics objected to her characterization of colonial society as being marked by two gendered systems of thought (Filmerian in New England and proto-Lockean in the Chesapeake), the book established gender as a central component of authority as imagined and enacted in colonial British America. Upon its publication in 1997, *Founding Mothers and Fathers* was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize.

With *Founding Mothers and Fathers*, Mary Beth completed the second of the three books that she now envisioned writing. Before beginning the final installment, which would span the gap between the 17th century and the revolutionary era, she realized that she would have to deal with one of the most written-about incidents in the history of women in early America, one that demanded its own separate treatment: the Salem witch trials.

It was a risky undertaking. A number of people discouraged Mary Beth from wading into the debates over what had occurred in Salem in 1692. After all, so much ink had already been spilled over this most famous episode in history of Puritan New England: friends and colleagues doubted aloud to her whether there could be anything new left to say. But Mary Beth Norton has never been one to back away from a challenge, and she proceeded to immerse herself in the life of Essex County, Massachusetts, in the 1690s. Many will remember fondly the regular updates on her home answering machine in which she let callers know what had occurred in Salem that week in 1692. More than just amusing her callers, however, this chronological approach to unfolding events in and around Salem was key to her analysis. Rather than focusing on one particular storyline or set of individuals, as many previous scholars had done, Mary Beth traced a detailed step-by-step account of the unfolding crisis, which made her newly aware of how certain incidents and actors had influence at particular moments. *In the Devil's Snare*, which appeared in 2002, offered an interpretation of Salem that was both precise and broadminded, putting much more emphasis on the wider social and military context of the larger New England region than other works.

Having solved the Salem dilemma to her satisfaction, Mary Beth could at last turn back to her decades-long project of crafting the overall story of women in early British America. The final book in her trilogy, *Separated by their Sex: Women in Public and Private in the Colonial Atlantic World*, grappled with the changes in ideologies of gender and the family lives of women and men between the end of the 17th century and

the revolutionary period. Looking for a bridge between the two very different eras, Mary Beth uncovered competing ways of understanding family that coexisted in the early 18th century. The increasing currency of the idea that women belong solely to the “private” sphere explained the decline over time that Mary Beth noted in the political participation of women in 18th century America. With the book’s publication in 2011, the indefatigable Mary Beth had completed her examination of Anglo-American women’s experiences in the colonies.

Having reached the goal she set in the early 1980s, Mary Beth has turned back to her very first love, the American Revolution. Her current project takes as its premise an idea that she set aside in the 1970s when she started *Liberty’s Daughters*: that of the importance of committees in shaping events just before the revolution. But she is now applying the technique that she pioneered in her research on Salem, taking a deeply chronological approach to all of the events of 1774. Answering machines may have gone the way of defunct technologies, but there can be no doubt that Mary Beth now knows as much about the week’s news in 1774 as she did about the events in Salem in 1692.

Empowering a Community of Scholars

In addition to her scholarly work, Mary Beth’s years at Cornell have been marked by an abiding commitment to creating a fair and inclusive historical profession. Mary Beth served as an elected member of the AHA Nominating Committee for a three-year term beginning in 1977. In that role, she fought to make sure that women, especially those working at places other than large research institutions, received an adequate share of nominations—an issue she approached armed with the knowledge that women in the profession disproportionately held positions at these kinds of institutions. Mary Beth’s committee work has continued throughout her career, from serving as the AHA vice president for research and chairing the OAH committee on women historians in the mid-1980s, to being appointed by President Carter in 1978 to the National Council on the Humanities, the governing body of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Yet the work that she is proudest of has been in the classroom. Just as her research moved into new and uncharted territory when she arrived at Cornell, so too did the subjects that she taught to her undergraduates. As she began her foray into women’s history, Mary Beth developed a course that she called Racism and Sexism in US History. The class attracted a diverse group of students, who appreciated what was at that time still a very novel and unusual approach. For quite a while, she felt forced to limit her teaching of women’s history to senior-level seminars, due to the paucity of readings available to support a lecture course. But eventually she would offer Cornell’s first survey course on the history of women, drawing on the growing body of published first-hand accounts written by women themselves. Similar to her approach

in *Liberty's Daughters*, where she let the voices of women ring through, she chose to foreground women's own words in her class, which had the effect of reaching students on a personal and emotional level, as well as an intellectual one.

By letting the topics that she has taught closely mirror her own research interests, she has been able to share with her students the enthusiasm that she feels as she, too, is learning about new subjects. While she was buried deep within the records of 1692, for instance, she developed a sophomore-level research seminar on the Salem witchcraft trials and worked closely with an undergraduate research assistant on the compilation of her secondary source database. This kind of mentorship outside of the classroom has always been a hallmark trait of Mary Beth's, from sponsoring undergraduate research assistantships to encouraging students in her classes to attend talks and lectures by faculty, graduate students, and visiting scholars. Mary Beth has always found that the life of an historian to be full of excitement and opportunity, and in and beyond her classrooms she has worked to make that world visible and available to all those around her. Indeed, the success of her Salem class provides a good example of the types of opportunities Mary Beth creates for her students. The class was a resounding success, with undergraduates making novel arguments by following Mary Beth's guidance on what questions remained unasked. Some of that first group of students ultimately presented their work at an undergraduate panel at a Berkshire Conference on Women's History. The best papers written in the seminar are posted on the website of the Cornell Witchcraft Collection, and some have been cited in recent books on the trials. Some of her past students appeared on a session in Mary Beth's honor at the AHA in 2015, titled "Undergraduate Experience and Scholarly Trajectory," as testimony to her ability to inspire young students to go on to become professional historians. Mary Beth's energy and work ethic are clearly contagious.

As the number of history majors fell nationwide in the last decade, Cornell's history department, like many around the country, began to think of new ways to draw non-majors into the classroom and to introduce them to a love of studying the past. It was in this context that Mary Beth and a colleague in astronomy, Steven Squyres, created a new co-taught lecture course. Titled History of Exploration: Land, Sea, and Space, the course ranges from ancient mariners to the Mars rover, drawing crowds of students every year. The class has proved so much fun that it has made it very difficult for Mary Beth to retire. Her continuing innovation and popularity in the classroom led to her being named a Stephen H. Weiss Presidential Fellow in 2008, in recognition of distinguished undergraduate teaching.

As Mary Beth has worked tirelessly and with immense success to alter the narrative of the early American past to make it more inclusive, accurate, and complex, she has also cultivated rich communities of friends in all of the places she has lived. Her enjoyment of music, her

enthusiasm for cooking, her delight in mystery novels and swimming, all attest to her enormous love of life. She is not only an inquiring and astute scholar of the past, she is an ebullient, joyous explorer of the present. Her family and friends, like her students, have benefitted from this generous heart and mind, just as she has drawn so much from them over the course of her life thus far. When we look at Mary Beth and marvel at her many powers, we might surmise that her family background had a great deal to do with her strength of character. But in the end, we must conclude that a great deal of Mary Beth is Mary Beth's alone. She worked hard to forge a path for herself and her forward momentum has carried her and the field forward, generating an army of Mary Beth Norton loyalists along the way.

Bibliography

Norton, Mary Beth. Interview by Claudine Barnes. Transcript of cassette recording, February 2001, "Living Women's History," Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College. MA.

Norton, Mary Beth. Interview by Ben Barker-Benfield. "Historically Speaking: An Interview with Mary Beth Norton," *Journal for MultiMedia History* 3 (2000).

Norton, Mary Beth. Interviews by Ann Little on www.historiann.com, "Mary Beth Norton: A Founding Mother Tells All" (September 16, 2012), "Feminist Mentors and Feminist Activism: Part II of My Interview with Mary Beth Norton" (September 17, 2012), "Trilogies, Trade Presses, and Books in Print: Part III of My Interview with Mary Beth Norton" (September 18, 2012).

Presidents of the American Historical Association

1884–85	Andrew Dickson White	1918–19	William R. Thayer
1885–86	George Bancroft	1920	Edward Channing
1886–87	Justin Winsor	1921	Jean Jules Jusserand
1887–88	William F. Poole	1922	Charles H. Haskins
1889	Charles K. Adams	1923	Edward P. Cheyney
1890	John Jay	1924	Woodrow Wilson
1891	William Wirt Henry	1924–25	Charles M. Andrews
1892–93	James Burrill Angell	1926	Dana C. Munro
1893–94	Henry Adams	1927	Henry Osborn Taylor
1895	George Frisbie Hoar	1928	James H. Breasted
1896	Richard Salter Storrs	1929	James Harvey Robinson
1897	James Schouler	1930	Evarts Boutell Greene
1898	George Park Fisher	1931	Carl Lotus Becker
1899	James Ford Rhodes	1932	Herbert Eugene Bolton
1900	Edward Eggleston	1933	Charles A. Beard
1901	Charles F. Adams	1934	William E. Dodd
1902	Alfred Thayer Mahan	1935	Michael I. Rostovtzeff
1903	Henry Charles Lea	1936	Charles McIlwain
1904	Goldwin Smith	1937	Guy Stanton Ford
1905	John Bach McMaster	1938	Laurence M. Larson
1906	Simeon E. Baldwin		Frederic L. Paxson
1907	J. Franklin Jameson	1939	William Scott Ferguson
1908	George Burton Adams	1940	Max Farrand
1909	Albert Bushnell Hart	1941	James Westfall Thompson
1910	Frederick J. Turner	1942	Arthur M. Schlesinger
1911	William M. Sloane	1943	Nellie Neilson
1912	Theodore Roosevelt	1944	William L. Westermann
1913	William A. Dunning	1945	Carlton J. H. Hayes
1914	Andrew C. McLaughlin	1946	Sidney B. Fay
1915	H. Morse Stephens	1947	Thomas J. Wertenbaker
1916	George Lincoln Burr	1948	Kenneth Scott Latourette
1917	Worthington C. Ford	1949	Conyers Read

1950	Samuel E. Morison	1984	Arthur S. Link
1951	Robert L. Schuyler	1985	William H. McNeill
1952	James G. Randall	1986	Carl N. Degler
1953	Louis Gottschalk	1987	Natalie Z. Davis
1954	Merle Curti	1988	Akira Iriye
1955	Lynn Thorndike	1989	Louis R. Harlan
1956	Dexter Perkins	1990	David Herlihy
1957	William Langer	1991	William E. Leuchtenburg
1958	Walter Prescott Webb	1992	Frederic E. Wakeman Jr.
1959	Allan Nevins	1993	Louise A. Tilly
1960	Bernadotte E. Schmitt	1994	Thomas C. Holt
1961	Samuel Flagg Bemis	1995	John H. Coatsworth
1962	Carl Bridenbaugh	1996	Caroline Walker Bynum
1963	Crane Brinton	1997	Joyce Appleby
1964	Julian P. Boyd	1998	Joseph C. Miller
1965	Frederic C. Lane	1999	Robert C. Darnton
1966	Roy F. Nichols	2000	Eric Foner
1967	Hajo Holborn	2001	Wm. Roger Louis
1968	John K. Fairbank	2002	Lynn Hunt
1969	C. Vann Woodward	2003	James M. McPherson
1970	R. R. Palmer	2004	Jonathan Spence
1971	David M. Potter	2005	James J. Sheehan
	Joseph R. Strayer	2006	Linda K. Kerber
1972	Thomas C. Cochran	2007	Barbara Weinstein
1973	Lynn White Jr.	2008	Gabrielle Spiegel
1974	Lewis Hanke	2009	Laurel Thatcher Ulrich
1975	Gordon Wright	2010	Barbara D. Metcalf
1976	Richard B. Morris	2011	Anthony Grafton
1977	Charles Gibson	2012	William Cronon
1978	William J. Bouwsma	2013	Kenneth Pomeranz
1979	John Hope Franklin	2014	Jan E. Goldstein
1980	David H. Pinkney	2015	Vicki L. Ruiz
1981	Bernard Bailyn	2016	Patrick Manning
1982	Gordon A. Craig	2017	Tyler Stovall
1983	Philip D. Curtin	2018	Mary Beth Norton

The College of Arts & Sciences
at Cornell University congratulates
Mary Beth Norton, the Mary Donlon
Alger Professor of American History,
for her formidable
scholarship
and her
appointment
as president of
the American
Historical
Association.



The College of
Arts & Sciences



AMERICAN
HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION

133rd ANNUAL MEETING

CHICAGO · ILLINOIS
JANUARY 3-6, 2019

