

JAMIE L. PIETRUSKA
<https://jamiepietruska.org/>

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Department of History
16 Seminary Place
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

office: 848.932.8544
mobile: 617.838.0040
pietrusk@history.rutgers.edu
311 Van Dyck Hall

Employment

Associate Professor, Department of History, Rutgers University, 2019-
Assistant Professor, Department of History, Rutgers University, 2012-2019
ACLS New Faculty Fellow Postdoctoral Associate, Rutgers University, 2010-12
Visiting Scholar, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2009-10
Lecturer in History, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Spring 2009

Education

Ph.D., Program in History, Anthropology, and Science, Technology & Society,
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
A.B, English & American Literature; History of Art & Architecture, Brown University

Books

[*Looking Forward: Prediction and Uncertainty in Modern America*](#) (University of Chicago Press, 2017).

Articles and Essays

“The Case of the Competing Pinkertons: Managing Reputation through the Paperwork and Bureaucracy of Surveillance,” in *Surveillance Capitalism in America: From Slavery to Social Media*, ed. Josh Lauer and Kenneth Lipartito (University of Pennsylvania Press, forthcoming).

“Forecasting,” in *Information: A Historical Companion*, ed. Ann Blair, Paul Duguid, Anja Goeing, and Anthony Grafton (Princeton: Princeton University Press, forthcoming).

“The Information Economy,” in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of American History*, online (Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

“[A Tornado is Coming!': Counterfeiting and Commercializing Weather Forecasts from the Gilded Age to the New Era](#),” *Journal of American History* 105, no. 3 (2018): 538-62.

“[Hurricanes, Crops, and Capital: The Meteorological Infrastructure of American Empire in the West Indies](#),” *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 15, no. 4 (2016): 418-45.
*Awarded biennial *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* Best Article Prize (2018)

“[Cotton Guessers': Crop Forecasters and the Rationalizing of Uncertainty in American Cotton Markets, 1890-1905](#),” in *The Rise of Marketing and Market Research*,

ed. Hartmut Berghoff and Uwe Spiekermann (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 49-72.

[“U.S. Weather Bureau Chief Willis Moore and the Reimagination of Uncertainty in Long-Range Forecasting,”](#) *Environment and History* 17 (2011): 79-105.

Popular Writing & Blog Posts

[“Why government weather forecasts shouldn’t be political,”](#) Made by History, *Washington Post*, Oct. 17, 2019. (co-authored with Zeke Baker)

[“Why President Trump gutting the USDA’s research service is so dangerous,”](#) Made by History, *Washington Post*, Sept. 19, 2019.

[“Why President Trump’s Sharpied weather map was likely a crime — and should be,”](#) Made by History, *Washington Post*, Sept. 6, 2019.

[“The Weather Forecast Company and the Business of Prediction,”](#) Society for the Historians of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era blog, Sept. 10, 2018.

Media

[NPR Here and Now](#), Feb. 4, 2020.

[New Books Network podcast](#), Oct. 2019.

[Journal of American History podcast](#), Dec. 2018.

[Roundtable Podcast on the History of Quantification](#), *Journal of the History of Ideas* Blog, April 2018.

Works in Progress

“Investigating the Future Life: The Seybert Commission, Paperwork, and the Material Culture of American Spiritualism,” article manuscript in preparation.

“Paper Trails: Paperwork, Bureaucracy, and Investigation in the Late Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century United States,” book-length research project in progress.

“A Spatial History of Nineteenth-Century American Meteorological Infrastructure,” digital history project and online essay in progress.

Reviews and Review Essays

Review of *Future Remains: A Cabinet of Curiosities for the Anthropocene*, ed. Gregg Mitman, Marco Armiero, Robert S. Emmett (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), *Environmental History* 24, no. 1 (2019): 206-208.

“Gilded Age Redux,” review of Daniel Czitrom, *New York Exposed: The Gilded Age Police Scandal that Launched the Progressive Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016) and Leon Fink, *The Long Gilded Age: American Capitalism and the Lessons of a New World Order* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), *Reviews in American History* 45, no. 3 (2017): 457-63.

Review of Ian Klaus, *Forging Capitalism: Rogues, Swindlers, Frauds and the Rise of Modern Finance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014) in *Business History Review* 89, no. 3 (2015): 580-83.

“Redemptive Suffering,” review of Frances M. Clarke, *War Stories: Suffering and Sacrifice in the Civil War North* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), *Reviews in American History* 42, no. 1 (2014): 104-109.

Review of Robert Casey, *The Model T: A Centennial History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008) in *IEEE Technology and Society* 29, no. 4 (2010): 12-13.

Review of A. J. Angulo, *William Barton Rogers and the Idea of MIT* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009) in *The Review of Higher Education* 33, no. 3 (2010): 426-28.

Review of Lynda Walsh, *Sins against Science: The Scientific Media Hoaxes of Poe, Twain, and Others* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2006) in *Journal of Popular Culture* 41, no. 3 (2008): 552-54.

Review of Vaclav Smil, *Creating the Twentieth Century: Technical Innovations of 1867-1914 and Their Lasting Impact* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005) in *IEEE Technology and Society* 26, no. 3 (2007): 9-10.

Fellowships and Awards

National

Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era Best Article Prize, 2018

American Council of Learned Societies New Faculty Fellow, 2010-12

Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Visiting Scholars Program, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2009-10

Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Center for the Humanities at Tufts, Tufts University, 2009-11 (declined)

American Association of University Women American Dissertation Fellowship, 2007-2008
Competitive national fellowship awarded to women doctoral candidates who demonstrate “scholarly excellence, teaching experience, and active commitment to helping women and girls through service in their communities, professions, or fields of research.”

Graduate Student Paper Prize from the New England Popular Culture Association, 2007
Awarded for the best graduate student paper presented at the NEPCA annual meeting.

Joan Cahalin Robinson Prize from the Society for the History of Technology, 2004
“Awarded for the best-presented paper at the SHOT annual meeting by a young scholar presenting for the first time.”

Travel Grant from the Society for the History of Technology, 2004, 2008

Institutional

School of Arts and Sciences Humanities Plus Pedagogical Initiative Grant, 2019-20

School of Arts and Sciences Award for Distinguished Contribution to Undergraduate Education, Rutgers University, 2018

Open and Affordable Textbook Award for Development of the United States II, Rutgers

University Libraries, 2018-19
Digital Humanities Seed Grant, Rutgers Digital Humanities Initiative, 2016-17
Faculty Fellow, Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis, 2013-14
Award from the Kelly-Douglas Fund for Support of Humanistic Scholarship and Teaching at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2008
Massachusetts Institute of Technology Presidential Fellowship, 2002-2003
Brown University Rose Writing Fellow, 1994-1995

Invited Lectures

“Living in the ‘Economic Chance-World’: Capitalism and Culture in the Gilded Age.” Whitehall Lecture Series, Henry Morrison Flagler Museum, Palm Beach, FL, Feb. 2019.

“Economic Forecasting and the Quest for Certainty in the Long Gilded Age” (keynote address). Conference on “Futures Past: Economic Forecasting in the 20th and 21st Century,” Universität Hamburg, Germany, Oct. 2018.

“Paperwork, Bureaucracy, and the Case of the Two Pinkerton Detective Agencies.” History Workshop Series, University of Delaware, April 2018.

“Risk, Uncertainty, and Cotton Forecasting in the Gilded Age.” Seminar on “Risk and Fortune,” Shelby Cullom Davis Center for Historical Studies, Princeton University, Sept. 2017.

“Science, Technology, and Capitalism in the Gilded Age: Progress and Poverty.” The Center for Civic Leadership and Responsibility, Camden County College, Blackwood, NJ, Nov. 2016.

“Weather Prophecies.” Workshop on “Cultures of Prediction: Scientists and the Crafting of the Future,” Centre for Science Studies, Aarhus University, Denmark, June 2016.

“Weather Prophets, Frauds, and Counterfeiters from the Gilded Age to the New Era.” NYC History of Science Working Group, Gallatin School of Individualized Study, New York University, March 2016.

Guest lecturer, Seminar on “Predicting the Future.” Gallatin School of Individualized Study, New York University, Nov. 2015.

“Weather Prophets and Cotton Profits: Forecasts, Markets, and the State in the Gilded Age.” Conference on “Calculating Capitalism,” The Heyman Center for the Humanities at Columbia University, April 2014.

“Forecasting in the Distant Parts of the Country’: The Politics of Rural Access to the National Weather Service in the Gilded Age.” Nineteenth-Century U.S. History Workshop (co-sponsored by the Science & Capitalism Lecture Series), Brown University, Sept. 2013.

Guest lecturer, Seminar on “Histories of the Future.” Graduate School of Design, Harvard University, Feb. 2010.

Rutgers University

“Weather Forecasting, Risk, and Uncertainty.” Lloyd C. Gardner Fellows Seminar, Rutgers School of Arts and Science, Oct. 2020.

- “Accidents and Disasters in the U.S. and the World,” High School Teachers’ Institute, Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis, Oct. 2020.
- “Science, Technology, and Capitalism in the Long Gilded Age.” Rutgers High School Teachers Institute, Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis, March 2018.
- “A Spatial History of Nineteenth-Century American Meteorological Infrastructure.” Rutgers Digital Humanities Showcase, March 2017.
- Discussant. “Bull: The Stock Market and the Politics of Financial Security: 1974-2000,” by Jefferson Decker, American Studies Colloquium, Nov. 2016.
- “‘Old Probabilities’ and ‘Cotton Guesses’: Weather Forecasts, Agricultural Statistics, and Uncertainty in the Late Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century United States.” Seminar on “Foundations of Probability,” Departments of Statistics and Philosophy, Nov. 2016.
- “Clerks, Counterfeiters, and Cranks in the U.S. Weather Bureau.” Faculty Forum Brown Bag Series, Department of History, Rutgers University, Nov. 2015.
- “Weather Prophets, Frauds, Counterfeiters, and Cranks in Late Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century America.” Roundtable on “Science, Technology, and Medicine in the Humanities: Current Research at Rutgers,” Natura: The Rutgers British Studies Center's Science and Epistemology Working Group, Oct. 2014.
- “The U.S. Weather Bureau’s West Indian Weather Service and Imperial Meteorology in Cuba, 1898-1908.” Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis, March 2014.
- “Cotton Prophets: Yield Forecasting in the Late Nineteenth-Century American Cotton Market.” Seminar on “Money, History, Finance,” Department of Economics, Rutgers University, April 2012.
- Guest lecturer, School of Arts and Sciences Interdisciplinary Honors Seminar on “Unpredictable Events in History.” Rutgers University, April 2012.
- “Trust in Cotton Statistics: Objectivity, Uncertainty, and Cotton Forecasting in the Gilded Age.” Department of History, Rutgers University, Nov. 2011.
- “Weather Prophets, the U.S. Weather Bureau, and the Reimagination of Uncertainty in Long-Range Forecasting.” Faculty Forum Brown Bag Series, Department of History, Rutgers University, April 2011.

Conference Presentations

- Panelist and panel organizer. “Investigating ‘the ghost business’: The Seybert Commission, Paper Technologies, and the Material Culture of American Spiritualism.” Panel on “Technoscience and Mysticism.” Society for the History of Technology Annual Meeting, Milan, Oct. 2019.
- Panelist. “‘The Greatest Cotton Crop Estimate Expert in the World’: Agricultural Statistics, Meteorology, and Transatlantic Market Knowledge in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries.” Panel on “Global Expertise and Agricultural Markets: Between National Sovereignty and International Cooperation (1889-1949).” European Rural History Organization International Conference, Paris, Sept. 2019.

- “Paperwork, Bureaucracy, and Surveillance in the Case of the Two Pinkerton Detective Agencies.” Conference on “Seeing Like a Capitalist: Histories of Commercial Surveillance in America,” Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Del., Nov. 2018.
- Panelist (paper read in absentia). “A Spatial History of Nineteenth-Century American Meteorological Infrastructure.” Panel on “Reinterpreting the American State: Digital History’s Intervention.” Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, Sacramento, April 2018.
- Panelist. “Promises of Love and Money: Occult Forecasting in Early-Twentieth-Century New York City.” Panel on “Knowledge Production and Economic Life in the Long Gilded Age.” American Historical Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., Jan. 2018.
- Panelist. “‘The Private Detective business is no different than any other business or profession’: Technologies of Paperwork and Bureaucracy in American Detective Agencies.” Panel on “Detecting Crime.” Society for the History of Technology Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, Oct. 2017.
- Discussant. Panel on “The Culture of Finance at the Turn of the Century.” Business History Conference, Denver, March 2017.
- Panelist and panel organizer. “‘A Foreknowledge of the Seasons’: Values of Long-Range Weather Forecasting for Agriculture in the Progressive Era.” Panel on “Temporalities of Agriculture and Capitalism.” Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, Providence, April 2016.
- Panelist and panel organizer. “Climate, Crops, and Capital: The U.S. Weather Bureau’s Predictive Data in the West Indies, 1898-1902.” Panel on “Capitalism and Predictive Statistics.” American Historical Association Annual Meeting, New York City, Jan. 2015.
- Panelist and panel organizer. “From Prophecy to Forecasting? The USDA’s Crop and Weather Predictions in the Gilded Age.” Panel on “Past Futurework: Histories of Environmental Prediction.” American Historical Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., Jan. 2014.
- Panelist and panel organizer. “Edward Bellamy and the Politics of Foresight.” Panel on “Debts to the Future: Temporality in the Nineteenth Century.” American Studies Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., Nov. 2013.
- Panelist. “‘A Tornado is Coming!’: Commodifying and Counterfeiting Weather Forecasts in the Gilded Age.” Panel on “The Business of Prediction.” Business History Conference, Columbus, March 2013.
- “The U.S. Weather Bureau and the Policing of Counterfeit Weather Forecasts at the Turn of the Twentieth Century,” *Climate and Weather: Science as Public Culture Conference*, Maison Française d’Oxford, Jan. 2013.
- “‘Purveyors of Futurity’: Fortune-tellers and the Cultural and Legal Reimagination of Occult Prediction in the Gilded Age.” Conference on “Capitalism by Gaslight,” co-sponsored by the McNeil Center for Early American Studies and the Library Company of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, June 2012.

- Panelist and panel organizer. “God and Rainfall in Prices: Theories of Periodicity in Weather and Market Forecasting in the Late Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century United States.” Panel on “Theories of Forecasting.” History of Science Society Annual Meeting, Cleveland, Nov. 2011.
- Panelist and panel organizer. “Forecasting Risk and the Risk of Forecasting in the American Cotton Market, 1865-1905.” Panel on “Knowing Risk.” Business History Conference, St. Louis, March 2011.
- Panelist and panel co-organizer. “Cotton Watchers: Agricultural Statistics and Market Information in Late Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century America.” Panel on “Eyes on the Market: Surveillance and the American Economy.” Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, Houston, March 2011.
- “Stage Spiritualism and Technologies of Enchantment in Late Nineteenth-Century America.” Panel on “Visions of Technology.” Society for the History of Technology Annual Meeting, Tacoma, Oct. 2010.
- Panelist. “The Predictive Imagination in Edward Bellamy’s ‘The Medium’s Story.’” Panel on “Spirits Rapping: Spiritualism in Anglo-American Fiction.” Northeast Modern Language Association Annual Meeting, Montreal, April 2010.
- “‘Cotton Guessers’: Crop Forecasters and the Rationalization of Uncertainty in the American Cotton Market, 1894-1905.” Conference on “Understanding Markets: Information, Institutions and History.” Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Del., Oct. 2009.
- Panelist. “‘Destitute of the faculty of foresight’: The Predictive Imagination and the Origins of Technological Utopianism in the Work of Edward Bellamy, 1875-1888.” Panel on “Machine Politics: Imagining Technology and Democracy in Nineteenth-Century America.” Society for the History of Technology Annual Meeting, Lisbon, Oct. 2008.
- “Forecasters on Trial: The U.S. Weather Bureau’s Public Verification of Weather Forecasting at the Turn of the Twentieth Century.” Conference on “Weather, Local Knowledge, and Everyday Life,” International Commission for the History of Meteorology Conference, Rio de Janeiro, May 2008. (presented via video transmission)
- “The U. S. Weather Bureau, Long-Range Weather Prophets, and the Rationalization of Uncertainty in the Early Twentieth Century.” Conference on “Uncertain Environments: Natural Hazards, Risk, and Insurance in Historical Perspective,” German Historical Institute, Washington, D.C., Sept. 2007.
- “Policing the Future: Regulation of Fortune-Telling and Weather Forecasting in Late Nineteenth-Century America.” New England Popular Culture Association Conference, Nashua, N.H., Oct. 2006.
- “‘Every man his own weather-clerk!’: Weather Information Systems, Local Communications Technologies and a National Weather Service for Agriculture, 1870-1891.” Society for the History of Technology Annual Meeting, Amsterdam, Oct. 2004.
- “‘Every man his own weather-clerk!’: Weather Information Systems, Local Communications Technologies and a National Weather Service for Agriculture, 1870-1891.” Workshop in the

History of Environment and Agriculture through Technology and Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass., Oct. 2004.

“‘Fiery Dragon’ and ‘Aeolian Harp’: Thoreau's Technological Ambivalence in *Walden* and the *Journal*.” Mid-Atlantic Popular/American Culture Association Conference, Wilmington, Del., Nov. 2003.

Teaching

“Data: A Social History,” Rutgers University, Fall 2020.

“Technology and Nature in American History,” Rutgers University, Fall 2020, Spring 2016, Spring 2014, Fall 2012, Spring 2011.

“Accidents and Disasters in the U.S. and the World,” Rutgers University, Spring 2020, Spring 2018.

“Colloquium in the History of Technoscience and Capitalism” (graduate), Rutgers University, Spring 2020.

“History Honors Thesis Seminar,” Rutgers University, 2018-19.

“The History of Predicting the Future (and Getting it Wrong),” School of Arts and Sciences Interdisciplinary Honors Seminar, Rutgers University, Spring 2018.

“The Development of the United States II,” Rutgers University, Fall 2017, Spring 2016, Fall 2015, Spring 2015, Fall 2014, Spring 2013, Spring 2012, Spring 2011.

“Colloquium in the History of Technology and Nature” (graduate), Rutgers University, Fall 2017.

“The Forging of Modern America, 1880-1920,” Rutgers University, Fall 2015, Spring 2014, Spring 2013, Fall 2012, Spring 2012, Fall 2010.

“History Workshop” (co-taught), Rutgers University, Spring 2015.

“Colloquium in the History of Technology” (graduate), Rutgers University, Fall 2014.

“History Seminar: Food in the United States,” Rutgers University, Spring 2013.

“The History of the American Future,” Rutgers University, Fall 2011.

Lecturer, “America since 1865,” Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Spring 2009.

Instructor, “Technology and Nature in American History,” Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Spring 2008.

Teaching assistant for “Technology in American History,” Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Spring 2007, Spring 2006; “America since 1865,” Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Fall 2005, Fall 2004.

Service

Chair, *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* Best Article Prize Committee, 2019-20

New Jersey State Advisory Board, National History Day, December 2015-

Rutgers University

- Steering Committee, Critical AI Initiative, 2020-
- Digital Humanities Steering Committee, 2012-
- School of Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee, 2018-19
- History Department, Undergraduate Advisor for STEM in Society Minor/Certificate, 2019-
- History Department, Undergraduate Vice Chair, 2018-19
- History Department, Americanist Caucus Convener, 2017-18
- History Department, Member of Executive Committee, 2017-19
- History Department, Member of Undergraduate Education Committee, 2017-19
- History Department, Search Committee Member for Modern Latin American History, 2017-18
- History Department, Representative to New Brunswick Faculty Council, 2015-18
- History Department, Faculty advisor for the Workshop in the History of Environment, Agriculture, Technology, and Science (WHEATS), Rutgers University, Spring 2015-Fall 2016
- History Department, Caucus Convener for Science, Technology, Environment, and Health (STEH), 2014-16
- History Department, Member of Graduate Education Committee, 2014-16, 2018-19
- History Department, Search Committee Member for Public History and History Internship Coordinator, Spring 2016
- History Department, Examiner for STEH Ph.D. exams in Environmental History, History of Technology, 2015-
- History Department, Co-examiner for Nineteenth-Century Americanist Ph.D. exams, Spring 2014, Spring 2019
- History Department, Undergraduate Advisor for Prospective Social Studies Teachers, 2013-

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

- Program in Science, Technology, and Society, Faculty Search Committee, 2007-08
- Program Committee, STS Graduate Student Conference, 2006
- History, Anthropology, and STS Curriculum Committee, 2005
- History Faculty Graduate Student Representative, 2004-06
- Graduate Student Council Department Co-representative, 2003-04
- Secretary for the Workshop in the History of Environment and Agriculture through Technology and Science (WHEATS), 2003-04

Manuscript referee for *American Historical Review*; *East Asian Science, Technology and Society: An International Journal*; *Enterprise and Society*; *Environment and History*; *History of Meteorology*; *Modern American History*; *Science in Context*; Oxford University Press; Palgrave Macmillan, University of Chicago Press, Wiley-Blackwell

Professional Affiliations

American Historical Association

Business History Conference

Organization of American Historians

Society for Historians of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era

Society for the History of Technology

History of Science Society

References

Jackson Lears, Board of Governors Professor of History, Editor-in-Chief, *Raritan: A Quarterly Review*, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 31 Mine Street, Room 201, New Brunswick, N.J. 08901
848-932-7887 | tjlears@history.rutgers.edu

Ann Fabian, Professor Emeritus of History and American Studies, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, N.J. 08901
afabian@rci.rutgers.edu

Merritt Roe Smith, Cutten Professor of the History of Technology, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 77 Massachusetts Avenue, Building E51-194B, Cambridge, Mass. 02139
617.253.4008 | roesmith@mit.edu

Christopher Capozzola, Associate Professor of History, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 77 Massachusetts Avenue, Building E51-180, Cambridge, Mass. 02139
617.452.4960 | capozzol@mit.edu

Meg Jacobs, Senior Research Scholar, Woodrow Wilson School of Public & International Affairs, Princeton University, 311 Robertson Hall, Princeton, N.J. 08544
609.258.0559 | megj@princeton.edu