

*The State of History in Genesee County, New York: Thinking Nationally While Working Locally*

by

Michael J. Eula, Ph.D.  
Genesee County Historian

*Introduction*

The history community of Genesee County – not to mention the community at large – recently suffered the loss of a local historian, William P. Dougherty. Bill was an expert on an important aspect of American social history – American baseball. He understood that baseball was more than simply a game. Its roots run deep into the soil of this nation’s past – and of course, Genesee County is not an exception. The baseball diamond on a beautiful summer day; the excitement experienced by players and spectators alike; and the sport’s capacity for generating myths and symbols perceived as quintessentially American – provide a measure of reassurance and relief in a country beset with political and economic complexities of all kinds. Bill loved baseball because it embodied all of these traits and more – hence he devoted years to maintaining files regarding baseball in Genesee County.

And yet his interests were not confined to baseball. The History Department record of donations reveals his gifts of documents ranging from a booklet published by the New York Central Railroad system to a yearbook from Batavia High School (1925) through engineering files pertaining to water usage in the County over several decades. This small sampling of his interests is representative of the state of history in our County. That state is a rich tapestry of preservation, narrative, and interpretation that will leave future generations a magnificent repository of a County history whose implications reach far beyond the borders of Genesee County. People in our County care deeply about the past because they understand that contemporary society is only comprehensible if it is carefully

situated in a flow of time that is seemingly endless – the future is a history that has not happened yet.

As I will suggest in this relatively brief overview, the state of history in Genesee County is sound – though there are areas that in my view are in need of improvement. Accordingly, I will discuss our local historians work on the meaning of history in our County via their focus on what I will call the *particular*. After three decades of historical practice in the academy – interrupted by short stints as a public historian in the federal government – I have been continuously awestruck by the levels of commitment, talent, and devotion that so many in Genesee County display in their quest to discover, comprehend, and to just know about the important and fascinating history that is the story of Genesee County. The zeal and purity of purpose that I have witnessed since my appointment in 2014 has many times put the dry as dust practice of academic history to shame.

This brings me to a second motif that I will touch upon in this talk – a practice of history in the classroom that is not always connected to the purity of purpose and the energy articulated by our County’s public historians. If there is a need for improvement in the state of history in our County it is here – the history that is practiced locally by historians in one village and town after another is one that is not always represented in our local classrooms. Young people – our future – need to be brought more fully into our historical conversations. Hence the teachers of history have the task of synthesizing the local history of the County with that of national and even international realities – but more on that later.

Part of our task as historians is to serve as the public memory of all that has gone on before. That includes the reading and analysis of published texts to be sure. But it also includes artifacts and unpublished documents that make up that past. Indeed, one of the most exciting aspects of historical work is the actual touching of materials from that past. In this regard, history in Genesee County received an enormously important donation this past spring – a collection of Emory Upton papers from a donor in Georgia appraised at \$10,000. The market value of these papers – which I will touch upon later on in this talk – represents the significance of these rare documents for a variety of interested parties. Their

addition to our County archives meets a need for those interested in General Upton's life – while also making the past come alive by seeing Upton not simply as a name in a history book but, instead, as a real person leading a real life with all of the challenges this implies.

Upton's place in the history of Genesee County is symbolic of the link between local history and national patterns. This local boy who is so much a part of the history of the United States as a whole takes us into the strong national implications of the local history produced by County scholars. For example, Darlene Warner's and Laurie Nanni's *Gypsum Rock: The History of the United States Gypsum Company* is one rooted in the economic history of Oakfield while, at the same time, adding to our understanding of the industrialization sweeping American life by the early twentieth century. A focus on the local here has the potential to illuminate the causes of labor unrest that beset American life by 1906 – an unrest too often skimmed over in national histories not anchored in localities. Historians such as Darlene and Laurie contribute to a deepening of our understanding of a momentous historical development – industrialization – the consequences of which are still being felt very much today. That need to balance local and national history is one undertaken routinely by our local historians. As a result, that balancing act will also be addressed in this presentation.

I am therefore suggesting the obvious – that history as it is undertaken in our County under the authority of New York's Historian Law of 1919 is one that consistently makes connections between seemingly unrelated aspects of Genesee County's historical unfolding. Our local historians recognize – and write about – connections between people and families and economic development and political shifts. Hence such seemingly unrelated institutions, such as family, courts, and the press are described, synthesized, and interpreted all in one depiction. As we shall see, historians such as Cindy Amrhein and Ellen Lea Bachorski do precisely this in *Bread & Butter: The Murders of Polly Frisch*. Such local historians pay close attention to time and place – but do so in a manner that both describes *and* interprets. Their ability to make connections is one found in the scholarship of other local historians as well – and, as I will discuss, is one of

the historical practices seen in Genesee County that allow me to conclude that the state of history in our County is sound.

But as I will also discuss historical integrity can only be maintained by a strict adherence to evidence. One historian once remarked that the historian is capable of being just as creative as the novelist – but only while wearing a straitjacket. In other words, the historian first and foremost must keep facts front and center. Maybe the most obvious illustration of this loyalty to facts is found in the work done by genealogists in Genesee County. The work of local genealogists in and of itself is a reminder of our need to keep facts – evidence – in the forefront. The intellectual discipline required for serious research into one’s lineal descent reminds us – as we shall see – that historical research is hard work – but the kind of hard work that is fun. Genealogists remind us that there is something deeply human about self-discovery – a process that inevitably leads to an equally passionate quest to ascertain one’s place in the community and the nation at large. The vigor displayed by our genealogists is symptomatic of the energy regarding history displayed throughout this County. Therefore, with all of this in mind, let us turn to our first consideration of the state of history in Genesee County.

*The Significance of the Particular in an Understanding of History  
in Genesee County*

It may seem trivial to focus consistently on what at first glance appears to be a monotonous succession of facts peculiar to one county in a state as large as New York. Nonetheless, our local historians recognize the worth of such minute detail. The sheer variety of the historical sources used is indeed astounding. Joe Cassidy, the Town of Alabama historian, worked on a project in which he participated in the transcribing of a diary authored by a woman in the Town of Alabama in 1860. As Joe put it, the diary

. . . not only gives the reader a look into the life of Margaret Nichol and her family, but also gives a firsthand look at our community and its people and rural life in that period of

our history.

Joe took the particular and made connections to the world outside of Alabama. Joe is fortunate to have had the opportunity to use a written document from the mid-nineteenth century – a moment in time replete with documentary evidence such as diaries. But as any scholar learns, written materials, such as Margaret Nichol's, are easy to use, can be efficiently organized, reproduced, and archived in libraries. But the historian in search of the particular cannot always rely upon written materials, which more often than not do not survive. As a result, our local historians remain acutely aware of historical sources not of the written variety. Physical evidence – such as buildings – is the kind of particular that reveals much about the past. The Batavia City Historian, Larry D. Barnes, reminds us of this in his work. In 2015, he authored a “self-guided walking tour” of downtown Batavia designed to take people to buildings ranging from the Holland Land Office Museum to the Brisbane Mansion.

The point is that the historians of Genesee County are sensitive to the varieties of historical evidence that one could use to reconstruct the past. While these sources can shed light on the relationship between local history and wider state and national trends, not all of our historians are convinced that there *has* to be a wider implication. In other words, from this vantage point, the specific can be studied as an end in itself. Local history for them has worth and should be studied as something separate from more sweeping generalizations. These local scholars are in good company – in England after World War Two these advocates of local history as an end in itself were known collectively as the “Leicester School” because of their connections to Leicester University. The Leicester perspective is that the limiting of history to a narrow geographic scope is just as worthwhile an approach as those looking for national implications. Here in Genesee County we have some Leicester historians. For instance, I see the Elba historian, Earl Roth, as representative of this tradition. In his newsletter he offers factual summaries of very specific aspects of Elba history – which are not connected to historical realities beyond Elba. Depictions of school district votes in 1937 regarding district closures, or of donations that include a pillow featuring the embroidered

signatures of Elba village residents from 1905, are only some of the particulars featured by Earl. Earl is part of a tradition insisting upon a focus on small communities. As one of the Leicester historians, H.P.R. Finberg, put it:

. . . the subject matter of local history  
. . . as understood by the Leicester  
School, is not identical either in space  
or time, with the subject matter of  
national history. . .

Finberg goes on:

The history of Mellstock or Barchester  
is not a mere fragment splintered off  
from the history of England: it deals  
with a social entity which has a  
perfectly good claim to be studied for  
its own sake.

But regardless of how one approaches the particular – is it connected to wider trends or not – the goal remains the same. The historian’s role is to reconstruct the past as it actually was. The historian is not to use the past to advance an agenda, regardless of what that agenda may be. In all instances the historian must not apply the moral standards of his or her own day to the analysis of the past. Reconstructing and explaining the past is one thing – but using that past to eschew the pursuit of truth in order to “change the world,” as social psychologist Jonathan Haidt categorized it, is quite another. If there is a current weakness in Genesee County history, it is here – in the history unfolding in some of the County schools.

### *Academic History in Genesee County*

While the numbers of people utilizing the County History Department’s archives has remained constant since 2015, the type of people using our resources is clearly undergoing a discernible change. Until the adoption of what is usually called the “common core,” it was much more likely that area students and

teachers in the K-12 grades would utilize our Department's materials – such as our collection of newspapers stretching back to the early nineteenth century – in order to actually see – and touch – the past. But I am told that this is increasingly not possible – trips to the County History Archives are precluded by the necessity of “teaching to the test” that both students and faculty are subject to. As a result, the wonder and joy of historical discovery is increasingly denied to young students whose only sustained exposure to the past is via a textbook – and tests.

I recently experienced an exception to this general pattern when one teacher decided, despite the pressure generated by the common core curriculum, to bring a small group of junior high school students into the History Department Library in order to experience first-hand the excitement and intellectual joy of touching the past. Newspapers, diaries, and letters brought the past alive in a way that restricting oneself to a textbook cannot. World War One took on a personal quality when these students looked at our extensive collection of records pertaining to Genesee County casualties as a result of this war – human conflict assumed a vividness when looking at service records and death certificates of young people not much older than themselves, who left our County for France and never returned. Global and national history became connected to their hometown, thus revealing for them the part played by our community in an event of the magnitude of the First World War.

Hence the most glaring problem with the common core curriculum is twofold. Both aspects work to diminish the place of history in our County – and especially, its meaning for young people. In one sense, because there is such a stress on achieving a good grade on a standardized test, there is no attention paid to the process of discovery and creativity that is part and parcel of historical thinking. In other words, students are not afforded a regular exposure to the materials of the past – which includes such non-written materials as our Department's display of engineering equipment used in Genesee County in the late nineteenth century. Secondly, the importance of local history is ignored – even a brief examination of the *New York State Grades 9-12 Social Studies Framework* reveals the heavy emphasis placed upon global history to the clear exclusion of a local focus. While global developments clearly have significance, so too does local history. For young

students, looking at such materials as village maps is exciting because they can relate to changes over time taking place on their own streets. These students start to learn about such concepts as causation – how, and why, do changes take place over time – and how does it directly affect me?

Learning – history or otherwise – is a creative dynamic that cannot be rushed. Nonetheless, the sense I get emanating from this dogmatic adherence to the “common core” is precisely that – there is a hurried quality that prevents a free flow of ideas without which real learning cannot take place. Memorization for a test is not the same as learning – the momentary mastering of random names, dates, and places does not equal recognition of the importance of understanding the past as a means of making sense of one’s place in the contemporary world.

This characteristic of what I am calling *rushing* is discernible in the questionable pedagogical practice of the Accelerated College Enrollment program, otherwise known as ACE. The purpose of ACE – administered under the auspices of Genesee Community College – is “to provide college courses to secondary students during the school day.” The objective is to hurry students as young as fifteen through a college introductory course not taught by college faculty so as to preclude the necessity of a college freshman actually enrolling in a college course. My question is this – why hurry what cannot be hurried? I am reminded of what the late historian John P. Diggins, one of my graduate professors, once remarked about the political far left. “They want to hustle me aboard a speeding train,” he said, “but they won’t tell me where I’m going.”

This hurried quality undermines the need to touch the past – and reflect upon it. Could the rushed quality – once again eschewing local history – be a device to prevent a student’s recognition that historical issues are complex and the answers are not necessarily clear? My sense is that this is part of the reason for the rushing – common core platitudes such as the alleged uniqueness of Western imperialism – while ignoring imperialisms originating from non-Western societies – is one of numerous examples of an agenda at work in the common core smuggled into college courses taught by non-college faculty in a high school setting. Selective blindness is not a pursuit of truth, and such ideological agendas



should have no place in a pursuit of truth via the past. In the end, the student not exposed to the materials of the past – or to the importance of local history – is the ultimate loser.

Part of the concern here is the simple fact that high school teachers in the ACE program are neither full-trained historians – nor, as our many local historians reveal in their own research, writing, and public talks – are they engaged in the practice of history. They may be well-intentioned, but they are part of a program that is nonetheless undermining the worth of serious historical study and the consequent intellectual development of young minds.

Hence the scholarly rigor and commitment of college historians such as Genesee Community College historians Derek Maxfield and Garth Swanson is undermined in our community. But if all of this seems questionable enough, there is yet another weakness in our County's academic history that I should allude to – and that takes us into public policy.

County taxpayers work hard to pay taxes to support such endeavors as those taking college history courses at Genesee Community College. Yet, high school students in the ACE program pay about one-third of the tuition that other students pay. Especially given some of the shortcomings of this program it seems even more unfair that hard-working, taxpaying families would be paying so much more for the same course – while expected to meet standards on the college campus that are not by definition expected in a high school setting.

Finally, the ACE program admits home-schooled students who also only pay a fraction of the tuition cost imposed upon the student population at large. This tends to encourage a home school movement in Genesee County utterly at variance with the tradition of public instruction in the county reaching back to the early nineteenth century. For example, in 1805 Alexander established its first school. Four years earlier, in Batavia, Thomas Layton conducted a school in a log house close to the Holland Land Office. That same year – in 1801 – what is now LeRoy erected its first school house. One could cite other County examples as well – but it all comes back to the same point. Education outside of the home – be it in a private or a public setting – was seen in Genesee County – not to mention the

nation at large – as an integral part of the Republic. Democracy demands involvement. Home schooling erodes this basic foundation of the Republic. As one historian of education, Ruth M. Elson, put it, the “purpose of nineteenth century American public schools was to train citizens in character and proper principles.” Instruction outside of the home is an integral part of participation in American civic life – hence efforts via home schooling to undermine this strike at the heart of our society. Rewarding home schooling not only calls into question the integrity of a student’s instruction in history – but just as dramatically – it weakens the foundation of our local and national society. These flaws in the County’s academic practice of history are such that they will have to be addressed in a serious way in the years to come. But fortunately, what appears to be a blemish on the historical scene in Genesee County is more than balanced by the aforementioned strengths of our local historians – and the recent acquisition of rare and valuable Emory Upton papers.

### *The Significance of the Upton Acquisition*

In late May the Genesee County History Department was fortunate to receive a valuable donation from a couple in Georgia. Papers estimated by an independent appraisal firm fixed the value of these materials at \$10,000. Twenty-eight documents, ranging from letters between family and friends, special orders, and even military passes date between 1862 and 1892 and pertain to the life of Emory Upton. Much research regarding this famous Civil War General, scholar, and West Point Superintendent from Batavia remains to be done – and these materials will assist historians in developing a deeper, more nuanced picture of Upton as a public figure – and as a private man.

The significance of further work on Upton is clear in terms of charting the future direction of history in Genesee County. This recent acquisition is a step in the direction of future scholarship; one focusing on a deeper understanding of how our County entered the modern age in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While Upton spent much of his adult life outside of Genesee County, his personality, nonetheless, was largely formed amidst family and friends in Batavia. Hence the receipt of these papers helps researchers striving to

develop a fuller picture of how the stable, conservative character of our community evolved.

Maybe one of the results of more work on Upton – by incorporating these recently acquired documents into the historiography already there – is that this will continue a tradition of history in the County that includes the practice of history featuring something that some historians all too often forget – that history should be a good story. The point is to include as wide an audience as possible. In this regard as well, our local historians do a magnificent job. So too do our local reenactors when they bring history as a good story to their audience. These efforts avoid the trap that all too many academic historians fall into when they spend too much time simply talking to each other. In the process, additional work on Upton is part of a process in which there is a successful mediation between the boundary of local history and national patterns.

### *Balancing Local and National Histories*

While our local historians focus on a study of their respective towns and villages they nonetheless succeed in pointing to the broader implications of local developments. In other words, they recognize that what takes place locally is both influenced by national trends – and that those national trends are in turn the outcome of local developments. They are able to do this because their writing is characterized by a consistency that makes it easy for the reader to follow. Jargon is avoided, and details are selected to concisely illustrate the points they are making – one of which is that there is a clear relationship between what happens in Genesee County and what is taking place in the country at large. A striking illustration of this is the work of LeRoy historian Lynne J. Belluscio. The author of many articles regarding LeRoy history, along with serving as the Director of the LeRoy Historical Society, she reminds us in her work of the obvious national implications of aspects of County history ranging from considerations of Jell-O enterprises to LeRoy's role in the Underground Railroad. In her book *LeRoy*, Lynne makes the national connection explicit:

As the Town of LeRoy prepares to celebrate  
its bicentennial in 2012, it faces the challenges

that confront hundreds of other American communities. Few people live in the towns where they grew up. The mobility of society has created generations of people who know little about the history of the places in which they work and live. And those people who still live in their hometown wonder if anyone will preserve their family's legacy.

Hence, she concludes that

The task is left to local historical societies, museums, and municipal historians to collect and preserve photographs, genealogical records, and artifacts.

Synthesizing the local and the national is of course not restricted to Lynne. In a history of the Town of Pembroke published in 2012, historians Allan Starkweather, along with Lois Brockway and Marvin Meiser, delineated the relationship between railroads and the agricultural sector of the economy in such essays as "Town of Pembroke Railroads" and "Farms and Farmers in Pembroke." In a history of the Town of Elba directed by then Elba historian Scott D. Benz, the reader was constantly reminded of the necessity of viewing local history through a national lens – and vice versa. In the book's dedication, a reference to Elba's pioneers also included the pioneers of later generations from other parts of the world – Elba was a microcosm of the country's ethnic and racial makeup as a whole:

These pioneers who carved Elba out of the forested wilderness deserve our esteem and honor. Few of us in this century would have the courage and ingenuity to subdue such a landscape as they did, aided only with the primitive tools that were available to them. No less courageous were those of other ethnic origins in the migrations that followed.

The passage then goes on:

Each (group of settlers) added its own special skills and cultural contributions to our development, our industry, our agriculture and our rich and unique heritage. The German, Irish, French, Italians, Poles, Afro-Americans, Hispanics and others have all left an indelible part of themselves in our history.

What is therefore seen in the work of our local historians is the application of questions asked by those with a more national bent. To put this another way, historians such as those mentioned in this presentation – along with other local historians that I have not alluded to – are all researching, writing, giving presentations, and maintaining museums in which the “big” issues are grounded locally. How has this affected women, they might ask? Or how does this affect a farmer? Or how do working conditions look in a factory or in a mine? Or what has this meant for the future of a political party? Or what does this mean for a particular ethnic or religious group? The list could go on – the balancing between the national and the local is an ongoing project. So too is the effort to make connections between seemingly unrelated phenomena at any one time in the County’s history.

*Connections between Seemingly Unrelated Aspects of the Past*

In my conversations with people from different walks of life the subject of history – if it comes up as a topic of discussion – is usually thought of as a straightforward proposition. It is a factual narrative that does not appear to be very complicated. But our local historians know better – for they confront a mountain of varied materials that they are called upon to make sense of. Here too the state of history in Genesee County is sound. No, indeed, it is superb. Town and village historians organize, preserve, and then discuss an observable reality that is endlessly fascinating – and complicated. One of the reasons it is so complex is because that observable reality is made up of parts that are connected – but to make the initially invisible parts apparent our local historians must dig –

and then connect – aspects of life which do not, at first glance, appear to have any relationship at all.

But yet, they do. The people and objects making up Genesee County's past are numerous and varied – but they nevertheless stand in relation to each other. To understand that connection is to more fully appreciate our County's rich history. For example, look at the story of *energy* in the history of Genesee County. While a number of our historians look at energy, let me use just one illustration to make the point – a source of energy, and how it is harnessed and therefore how it links different features of our local history into a comprehensible, unified whole. The example takes us back to the aforementioned history of Elba directed by Scott D. Benz. In that work, we are told that energy – its origins and its use, goes a long way to describing and explaining Elba's history.

Initially, the pioneers in Elba had one source of energy – their muscles. Carving a settlement out of a wilderness is hard, physical work. The body as an engine therefore needed support – literally. Should it surprise us then that as early as 1824 – at Daw's Corner – a shoe and boot making business appeared. Chopping and clearing required foot support and protection. Here is the link – clearing the land with a source of energy found in the body necessitated reliable footwear – even in the warm months when frozen feet were not a concern.

But as you can surely guess, muscles alone are not very powerful sources of sustained energy. Accordingly, muscle power yields to horse-power. Shoes are inextricably linked to a blacksmith shop – the first one appearing in Elba in 1829 under the ownership of Samuel Laing. Muscle power was joined to shoes that are in turn linked to horsepower which is then united to a blacksmith's shop. But as agriculture and industry developed human-based energy – along with horse-based energy – it was realized by some that this is not enough in all cases. Therefore, a dramatic revolution in mechanical engineering emerged by 1874 when two Elba farmers, Frank E. and Orin C. Barr, created the Tornado Windmill Company in order to harness energy by managing the wind as a power source. In Elba – and as written about by other local historians – connections between seemingly unrelated aspects of life – shoes, blacksmith shops, and windmills – all

become comprehensible when a unifying connection is discovered – in this case, sources of energy. The seeming disorder of an everyday life made up of people and objects becomes explicable. This focus on ordering the seemingly haphazard flow of the past is made even sharper when one looks at the work of genealogists in Genesee County, whose concern with factual integrity and verifiable sources offers yet another insight into the generally healthy state of history in our County.

### *Genealogy and Historical Integrity*

Over the last three years the Genesee County History Department has received 573 information requests. This means an average of about two questions per day. The vast majority of those requests concern genealogy. These genealogical requests emanate from people residing in Genesee County and from people living as far away as California and the state of Washington. One room in the rear of our archives is made up exclusively of file cabinets containing family files. These files are added to, and created, by a team of dedicated volunteers who have given 7,589 hours of service to the County as they research, organize, and maintain family files from A to Z. Their dedication is inspiring, and speaks to the seriousness of this area of historical inquiry.

Throughout the last several years, with the expert assistance of History Department Research Assistant Judy Stiles, we have worked hard to provide the tools necessary for serious genealogical work in this County. The constant updating of church records, family files, newspaper indexes, and a host of other materials make a genealogical visit to our archives worthwhile indeed. Our statewide reputation is growing, as evidenced by an article I authored on our Department – complete with a detailed discussion of what materials are available to the public – in the winter of 2015 issue of *The New York Researcher*. With a picture of the Sumner farm in Darien on the front cover, our Department was this issue's feature repository. This journal is published by the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society located on 44<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan. Founded in 1869, it is the second oldest genealogical society in the United States. It is the only genealogical society in New York that is statewide in scope. The article, entitled "A Genealogical Gem: The Genesee County History Department," has generated

numerous inquiries from people throughout New York State planning to come here to undertake research. Since the appearance of this article a number of these people have come to use our archives.

Therefore, in the area of genealogy, the state of history in our County is healthy and robust – a testament to the reliance upon a factual base pursued by dedicated researchers; one supportive of the tradition of historical integrity evident in our community's history.

### *Conclusion*

I started this talk with a reference to the late Bill Dougherty. It seems fitting to begin my conclusion by alluding to the outgoing Genesee County Legislature Chair, Ray Cianfrini. In the midst of a busy schedule and active family life he devoted time to researching and writing about the history of our County, and about Oakfield in particular. He developed a well-received public lecture on the history of the Ku Klux Klan in Genesee County, especially at its height in the immediate aftermath of World War One. Ray, like Bill, is symbolic of the seriousness with which history is pursued in our community. In their work – as in the work of other scholars in our midst that I have mentioned in this presentation – along with other not mentioned due to time constraints – we can see, and reflect upon, the place of historical work in Genesee County.

Maybe it is appropriate that the flaws discernible in the state of County history are those related to the teaching of history as it is connected to an institution – in this case, aspects of the secondary school system in our community. The contrast between debates regarding a program such as ACE and the work actually conducted by active historians – be they academics such as Derek Maxfield and Garth Swanson – or local historians and reenactors throughout our County – reminds us that history itself should never be confused with history programs.

Therefore, the state of history – as evidenced by the activity that I have only touched upon – is indeed healthy and vibrant in Genesee County. There is every reason to believe that this energy and commitment will continue into the future – which is, after all, simply history that has not happened yet.



