OHS Best Article or Paper Award Winners: Dr. Adam Arenson and Dr. Renée E. Mazinegiizhigoo-kwe Bédard

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The Ontario Historical Society is pleased to present the 2026 Best Article or Paper Award to two outstanding contributions to Ontario's history and historiography: Adam Arenson's "Black residents of Windsor, Ontario during the U.S. Civil War: family histories answer questions left open by the 1860, 1861, 1864, 1870, and 1871 censuses", and Renée E. Mazinegiizhigoo-kwe Bédard's "Manaadam, Eat Sparingly of it: A Wiindigoo on the French River in 1838."

Using the only extant copy of Windsor's 1864 census, Adam Arenson considers Windsor's Black community and themes of cross-border migration during a pivotal year in the US Civil War. Comparing methodologies that reduce diasporic communities to compilations of quantitative data, Arenson turns to the methods of prosopography and microhistory to reframe the analysis of census documents. The article makes an important historiographical argument for the power of qualitative evidence, revealing the "rich tapestry of Black North American lives" at the heart of this study.

In Renée E. Mazinegiizhigoo-kwe Bédard's article, accounts of a Wiindigoo in an Anishinaabeg community on the French River in 1838 are situated within a new historiography that brings Indigenous knowledge systems into conversation with colonial sources. The article offers fresh insight on Anishinaabeg governance and ethical teachings; by introducing the idea of aazhawigamig--the space that must be travelled between lodges--as a spatial metaphor for the historian's craft, the article models an innovative and blended historiography that finds historical truth in the meeting place between perspectives.

Founded in 1888, the Ontario Historical Society is a non-profit corporation and registered charity dedicated to the preservation and celebration of Ontario's history for people of all ages and cultural backgrounds. To learnmore about the OHS Awards Program, or to submit a nomination, please visit ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/awards/ or contact the Society's offices by telephone or e-mail.

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