

# Teacher Professional Development Programs with Edward T. O'Donnell, Ph.D.

## *The Making of Central Park and the Quest for Open Space*

By 1850, after decades of relentless growth and development, New York City reigned as America's Empire City. Yet many civic and business leaders recognized that such progress had come at a high cost – seething slums, frequent epidemics, and social unrest. In response, they launched an extraordinary effort to build Central Park. Its success inspired similar initiatives like Prospect Park and, in the late-19<sup>th</sup> century, the movement to build parks downtown in the neighborhoods of the immigrant poor.

**Walking Tour Option:** Central Park

This presentation, augmented with more than 75 visuals, examines the following:

- the ideas behind the open space movement
- Seneca Village and the other settlements destroyed to make way for the park.
- Olmsted and Vaux and their vision that became Central Park.

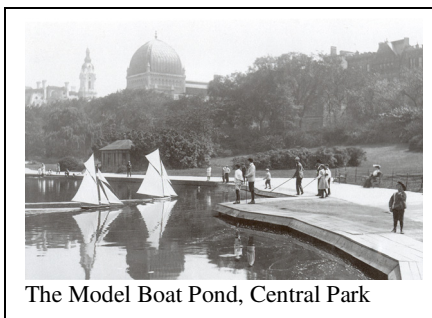
- the controversies over how New Yorkers ought to use Central Park
- the effort in the Progressive Era to build parks in the “slums”
- how park use changed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century

### About the Presentation:

Today's students are visual and interactive learners – and so are their teachers. Consequently, this multimedia presentation is built around 75-100 unique and carefully selected visuals, including vintage photographs, etchings, maps, cartoons, and documents (samples appear on this page). O'Donnell uses them to enhance a lively and interactive presentation. Ample time is allotted for Q & A, but O'Donnell always welcomes questions at any time during the session.

### Benefits for your teachers:

- a renewed and/or deepened awareness of topic's **essential content**.
- an enhanced understanding of the topic's critical **questions, concepts, and ideas**.
- new ideas for finding and using **primary sources** and developing DBQ's, simulations, projects, debates, and field trip preparation.

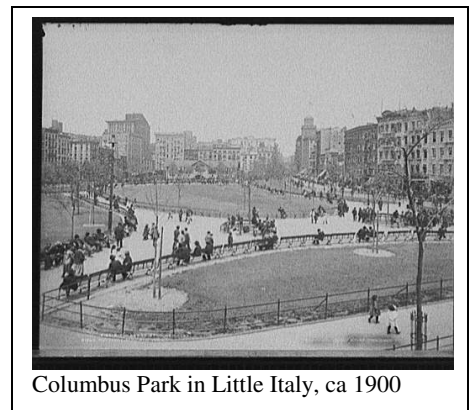


The Model Boat Pond, Central Park

### Programming Options:

- Time Flexibility – all presentations and workshops can be tailored to meet your needs, from 1 to 3 hours.
- Pedagogy Workshops – O'Donnell is also available to lead workshops on primary sources, DBQ's, simulations, projects, and debates.
- Walking Tours & Historic Site Visits - O'Donnell has led thousands – just ask!

**Edward T. O'Donnell, Ph.D.** is a professional historian, author, and speaker. He earned his Ph.D. in American History from Columbia University (1995) and currently is Associate Professor (tenured) of History at Holy Cross College in Worcester, MA. He is the author of several books and frequently publishes history essays in publications such as the *New York Times*. He has made countless teacher professional development presentations and served as lead historian for the Teaching American History grant, “Enlivening American History Through Primary Sources” (2001, Queens College). For a full c.v., please visit his website: [www.EdwardTODonnell.com](http://www.EdwardTODonnell.com).



Columbus Park in Little Italy, ca 1900