



President

Jennifer Regan-Lefebvre, Trinity College

Vice-President and Program Chair

Mary Conley, College of the Holy Cross

Treasurer

Michael Ortiz, University of Rhode Island

Secretary

Anna Suranyi, Endicott College

Communications Coordinator

Craig Gallagher, Colby-Sawyer College

Past President

Brian Lewis, McGill University

NECBS 2026 Conference Program - College of the Holy Cross

The 2026 Northeast Conference on British Studies (NECBS) annual conference is proudly hosted by College of the Holy Cross in Worcester MA. The local arrangements chair is Mary Conley, Associate Professor of History at College of the Holy Cross. The NECBS thanks the Department of History at College of the Holy Cross for their generous support. We also welcome Holy Cross undergraduates, whose historical education is being enhanced through their attendance in some conference sessions.

Please note: the Friday and Saturday events are held at different locations.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2:

Friday sessions are in the main American Antiquarian Society (185 Salisbury Street) with a reception in the Goddard-Daniels House.

From 2 pm: Registration & Coffee

Coffee, tea, water, and cookies will be available.

3:15-4:20: Panel Session One

1A. Reading the Archive at Scale: Digital Approaches to British History

Location: AAS

Anti-Muslim Racism in 1898: the Battle of Omdurman and the Candia Massacre

Colleen Nugent McLean, Northeastern University

"You ask Whether I Like the Life": Digital Analysis of Anglo-Indian Diaries (c. 1850)

Benjamin Grey, Northeastern University

1B. Objects, Ephemera, and the Making of Meaning

Location: AAS

For Sale, Moose-Skin Boots, Never Worn: Inuit Commodities in Victorian Arctic Exploration

Peter Roy, Syracuse University

Ceol 7 Cúirtéireacht: Broadside Ballads and Courtship Behaviours in 19th-Century Ireland

Riley H. Johnson, Clark University

Chair: James Golden, Tufts University

4:30–7:30: Researching British History at the American Antiquarian Society with Tours and Reception

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3: All Saturday sessions will be held at the Hogan Campus Center on the campus of the College of the Holy Cross, 1 College Street. Parking is at the Hogan Parking Lot, which is adjacent to the Hogan Campus Center.

8:45: Breakfast Buffet and Registration: Hogan Campus Center

9:30-11:00: Panel Session Two

2A. Saints, Sanctity, and Conquest in the Medieval British Isles

Location: Hogan [room TBD]

Conversion and Community in St. Patrick's Confession

John Higgins, Smith College

Manly Elevation: The Masculinity Behind Aelfric's Life of St. Oswald

Michael Sexton, University of Rhode Island

Gerald of Wales and his Critique of English Colonialism: a 12th c. Riposte
June-Ann Greeley, Sacred Heart University

2B. Imagining Empire: Vision, Prophecy, and Imperial Rhetoric

Location: Hogan [room TBD]

The Sea is the Only Empire: An Ecological Language of Imperialism for Roman Britain and the British Empire

Avner Goldstein, Boston College

“The British Empire Imagined”: John Dee and a Vision of an Imperial British Identity

Evelyn Du Bon, University of North Texas

Lost Prophet of Empire? Alexander Gika, the Greek Count who Foresaw the Opium Wars

Matthew Wormer, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

2C. Bodies, Coercion, and the State

Location: Hogan [room TBD]

Marriage as Shield: British Colonial Governance and the Cypriot Bride Trade to Palestine

Katie Laird, Young Harris College

“The most un-English... piece of legislation”: Englishness and the Campaign to Repeal the Contagious Diseases Acts

Courteney Smith, St. Bonaventure University

“Putrid Matter” and “Compulsory Poisoning”: Victorian Anti-Vax Sentiment in Colonial Mauritius, 1870s

Robert B. Cochran, Brandeis University

2D. Belonging and Conflict: Reimagining the Nation in Late Twentieth-Century Britain

Location: Hogan [room TBD]

“Death to Betty Williams”: Peace Activism and Armed Opposition during the Troubles

Ashley M. Morin, Sacred Heart University

“All Aboard the Groovy Train to Hip London”: Fashion and Britishness during Cool Britannia

Margot Rashba, Boston University

11:00-11:15: Coffee break

11:15-12:45: Panel Session Three

3A. Faith, Confession, and the Boundaries of Belonging

Location: Hogan

ZOOM Meeting ID:

The Native Saints, Prophecy, and Popular Politics in Reformation Wales

Katharine K. Olson, San Jose State University

The Context, Origin and Intent of “Parliament Physic for a Sin-Sick Nation”

Sean Sullivan, Independent Scholar

“The scum of the population”: Oaths, Religion, and Secularisation in the Nineteenth Century

Karen A. Macfarlane, Trent University (online)

3B. Scotland, Empire, and the Jacobite Imagination

Location: Hogan

Scotland’s Failed Colony: Rethinking the Causes and Context of the Darien Scheme

Darrion Singh, York University

Thomas Innes and the Politics of Scottish Jacobite Historiography

Dylan Fowler, The Open University

“Disaffected Persons,” Projects, and Stocks: John Ker and Jacobite Politics in Empire, 1720–1730

Clare Byers, Kinder Institute, University of Missouri–Columbia

3C. British Royal Women and Political Interventions

Location: Hogan [online]

Crown Princess Victoria in the Period of the Prussian Constitutional Conflict and German Unification (1858–1871)

Nathan N. Orgill, Georgia Gwinnett College

“The Right to be Consulted, The Right to Encourage, and The Right to Warn”: Queen Victoria’s Marital Machinations Over Her Second Son

Aidan Jones, King’s College London

Hidden Influence: Mary of Teck and Her Impact on George V’s Political Thinking

Judith Rowbotham, University of Plymouth

12:50-2:30: Lunch break and Keynote Address

Location: Hogan Campus Center

Lunch will be a sandwich buffet, with vegan and nut-free options.

Keynote Address: The Painter’s Fire: A Forgotten History of the Artists Who Championed the American Revolution

Zara Anishanslin, University of Delaware

3:00-4:30: Panel Session Four

4A. Performing Power and Projecting Legitimacy in the Early Modern Period

Pageantry, Performativity, and Power in the Early Henrician Dynastic Landscape

Kristen Vitale Engel, Fitchburg State University

“My Heart is Not Made For a Kingdom”: Reconstructing Mary II’s Beliefs on Leadership

Amelia Rosch, Queen’s University

Responding to Hunger and Famine in Early Modern England: Evidence from the State Papers

Amanda Coate, Independent Scholar / Stanford University

4B. Slavery and Unfreedom in the British World

Contesting Enslavement in 18th-Century Ireland: the Indian Experience

Mark Doyle, Middle Tennessee State University

Slavery and Community in Urban and Rural Eighteenth-Century New Hampshire

Timothy Hastings, University of Massachusetts Amherst

The Explorer and the Caravan: The Role of the Environment in Understanding the Trans-Saharan Slave Trade

Thomas Anderson, Merrimack College

4C. Contesting Public Opinion: Press, Posters, and Political Communication

A Question of Representation? Starving Workmen, Seditious Socialists, and the West End Riots, 1886

Sophia Cohen Galvao, McMaster University

Public Arena Theory and the Fight Over Narrative in the General Strike of 1926

Jeffery Patterson, University of Texas at Austin

Marketing Anti-Racism, Imagining Citizenship

Sarah Samira El-Taki, University of Copenhagen

5-6 pm: Workshop: The Book Proposal

Led by Jennifer Regan-Lefebvre, Trinity College. This workshop is open to everyone, particularly scholars writing their first book proposal. The workshop opens with the basics of identifying a press, pitching a book, and navigating the publication process (approx. 30 minutes), followed by small-group discussion of proposals. Please bring a printed copy of a draft proposal. Participants are encouraged to pre-submit proposals: Jennifer and Mike Ortiz, University of Rhode Island, will offer written feedback on drafts submitted by September 25th, 2026.

6:00-8:00: Reception at the Courthouse Brewery

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4:

All Sunday sessions are held in the Hogan Campus Center. All Session Five panels are hybrid.

From 8:30: Coffee and Continental Breakfast — Hogan

9:00–10:30: Panel Session Five

5A. Empire Beyond Formal Rule: Networks, Ideology, and Personal Authority

Location: Hogan [room TBD]

ZOOM Meeting ID: [TBD]

Universal Brotherhood, Conditional Membership: Theosophy and Labour in Colonial Madras
Viswesh Rammohan, Central European University (online)

“For the Benefit of the World”: Imperial Scrutiny and the Conference on Egypt in 1882
Rebecca L. Burrows, Binghamton University

From Public School Authority to Postcolonial Institution: Geoffrey Langlands and British
Pedagogy in Pakistan, 1954–2019
Eskandar Ross, University of Oxford (online)

5B. The Many Meanings of 1776: Revolution, Memory, and Empire

Location: Hogan [room TBD]

ZOOM Meeting ID: [TBD]

Establishing Therein an Arbitrary Government: The American Colonial Response to the 1774
Quebec Act
Greta Gaffin, Independent Scholar

1775 and 1945: Transatlantic Depictions of the American Revolution During World War II
Elizabeth Grumer, Independent Scholar

Self-Reliance under Empire: Raychaudhuri, American Transcendentalism, and the Bengali
Afterlife of 1776
Swetabja Mallik, University of Hyderabad (online)

5C. Britain and the Wars of the Twentieth Century: Service, Death, and Security

Location: Hogan [room TBD]

ZOOM Meeting ID: [TBD]

The Catholic Women’s League and the Great War
Kathryn Lamontagne, Boston University

After the Bombs Fell: Portland Square and the Management of Civilian War Death
Michael C. McLaughlin, Independent Scholar

The Soviet Threat, Ballistic Missile Defence and the British–United States Nuclear Partnership,
1988–1992
Alexander Rees, Swansea University (online)

10:45–12:15: Business Meeting and Light Lunch

