

DRAFT CONFERENCE PROGRAM
“FOR 2026: NEW REPUBLICS, NEW WORLDS”
OCTOBER 23-24, 2026

All sessions with the exception of the afternoon plenaries take place here:

William & Mary School of Education
301 Monticello Avenue
Williamsburg, VA 23185

Registrants are invited to attend any of the following sessions.

Friday, October 23

8:30 - 10:00 a.m.

1. Roundtable: “New Methods and Challenges in Communicating the Revolution”

Dogwood Room

Chair & Comment: Christopher Minty (University of Virginia)

James Risk (University of South Carolina), “Bringing the New Republic to Life: Role-Play to Increase Student Engagement in Legislatively Mandated Founding Documents Courses”

Alisha Topete Cromwell (Georgia Gwinnett College), ““Black” and “White” as Catachresis: Artificial Intelligence, Raciolinguistics, and American Slavery Scholarship”

2. RevEd Session: “Beyond the Anniversary: Building Lasting Public Engagement Through Teacher Professional Learning”

Matoaka A

Mark Hofer (William & Mary) and other discussants TBA

3. Slate Seminar Session: “Following Freedom’s Trail in the New Republic: Tracing the Descendants of Bray School Scholars Isaac, Joanna, & Clara Bee from Williamsburg to Wisconsin”

Matoaka B

Presenters: Elizabeth Drembus (William & Mary Bray School Lab)
Keaton Drennan (Menokin, a National Historic Landmark)

**

10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

4. “Revolutionary Promises, Gendered Realities: Black Women and the Family in Postrevolutionary America”

Holly Room

Chair & Comment: Scott Heerman (Omohundro Institute/William & Mary)

Laura Nelson (Princeton University), “Held Together on Paper: Black Women, Family, and the Limits of Gradual Abolition Law in Pennsylvania”

Taylor Brookins (University of Delaware), “Products and Casualties of the Gradual Abolition Regime: Black Women, Racial Capitalism, and the Lived Realities of Gradual Abolition in New Jersey”

Taylor Garrison (William & Mary), “‘Sold to satisfy her’: The Extralegal Possibilities of Enslaved Family Maintenance, 1800-1865”

5. “The Power of the Word”

Dogwood Room

Chair & Comment: Donald Johnson (North Dakota State University)

Kevin Murphy (SUNY Stony Brook), “‘Interest’ and the Gradual Decline of Sworn Bond the Early Republic”

Susannah Haury, University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill, “‘Reminding North Carolina of Her Ancient Promise’: Militia Families and Legacy Formation in the Postwar Southern Backcountry”

Richard Tomczak (Stony Brook University), “LeBlanc & Bellivau: Two Acadian Prisoners of War and Their Escape Back to Quebec, 1777-1778”

6. RevEd Session: “After 250: Legacies of George Washington”

Matoaka A

Wendy Wright (Mount Vernon)

Morgan Smith (ICPS)

7. Slate Seminar Session: “Preserving The Reservation: Place, Memory, and the Descendant Community”

Matoaka B

Moderator: Johnette Gordon-Weaver (Descendant Community Member)

Presenters: Mary Lassiter (Descendant Community Member)

Rosa E. Lee (Descendant Community Member)

Stephanie M. Dunmore (Descendant Community Member)

Molly Robinson (William & Mary)

Taylor Jones (William & Mary)

**

LUNCH 12:00 - 1:30 p.m.

Food trucks (Hungry Hungry Arrow and Curry in a Hurry) will be parked outside the School of Education and there are many other options along Monticello Road and on Richmond Road as well.

1:30 - 3:00 p.m.

8. “Statistics of Bondage: Enumerating Populations in the Post-Revolutionary Atlantic”

Dogwood Room

Chair & Comment: Ronald A. Johnson (Baylor University)

Nathaniel C. Green (Northern Virginia Community College), “‘Unless These Data Are False, or Unless Figures Will Lie, the Conclusion Must be True’: The Census and the Slave Power”

Meagan Wierda (Université de Montréal), “To Count and Be Counted: Antebellum Black Activism, the Census, and Civic Epistemologies and Ontologies of Quantification”

John Balz (University of Wisconsin Madison), “‘...they watch what others are doing and imitate those actions’: A New Data History to the Study of Slavery on St. Croix using a Moravian Church Register”

9. “Print, Printers, and the Early Republic”

Holly Room

Chair & Comment: Jordan Taylor (Colonial Williamsburg)

Jennifer Merriman (William & Mary), “The Saur Family after the American Revolution: The Transformation of a German-American Printing Dynasty”

Mark J. Noonan (City Tech CUNY), “Irish Ink and American Exile: Rekindling the Spirit of ’76 and ’98 in the Early Republic”

Kaitlin Tonti (Raritan Valley Community College), “The White Woman's Gaze and Early Republic Hierarchies in the Poetry of Hannah Lawrence Schieffelin”

10. RevEd Session: “Building a City: Revolutionary Experiments in Place-Based Learning”

Matoaka A

Cece D’Arville (The Valentine)

Sam Futrell (William & Mary)

11. Slate Seminar Session: “W&M Bray School Lab Student Thought Partners: Life in the Lab”

Matoaka B

Moderator: Elizabeth Drembus (William & Mary Bray School Lab)

Presenters: TBA

**

3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

We encourage you to tour Colonial Williamsburg, W&M’s Muscarelle Museum of Art, and the historic W&M campus. Passes to Colonial Williamsburg, valid from Friday through Sunday, are available at no cost to conference attendees. (Please indicate that you would like a pass when you register.) The Muscarelle Museum of Art is open to all, as is W&M’s historic Wren Building.

On Friday, Colonial Williamsburg will ensure that staff members are available at the following sites to take your questions. Advance registration is not required. All of these sites are near the Hennage Auditorium where the keynote lecture and reception will take place.

- Bray School
- African Baptist Meeting House
- Campbell Archaeology Center
- *100 Years of Colonial Williamsburg* exhibit at the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg

5:00 - 6:30 p.m.

A Talk by Ronald Angelo Johnson
Baylor University

“Slavery and Black Freedom in the Revolutionary Atlantic World”

“FOR 2026: New Republics, New Worlds” 9.10.2026

Hennage Auditorium
Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg
301 South Nassau Street
Williamsburg, VA
Seating begins at 4:30 p.m. | Program begins at 5:00 p.m.
Reception follows.

Ronald Johnson’s book, *Entangled Alliances Racialized Freedom and Atlantic Diplomacy during the American Revolution* (Cornell University Press, 2025), will be for sale at the event.
Credit cards preferred.

*In addition to the Passport app paid parking near the Art Museums (including handicapped accessible spaces), there is limited free street parking available nearby. In addition, the Williamsburg Area Transit Authority (WATA) bus #8 stops in front of the School of Education and travels to the W&M Campus Center on Jamestown Road (a 10-minute walk from the Art Museum.)

The walking distance between the School of Education and the Art Museum is approximately 40 minutes.

Saturday, October 24

8:30 - 10:00 a.m.

12. Mississippi Valley

Holly Room

Chair & Comment: Christopher Hodson (Brigham Young University)

Susan Gaunt Stearns (University of Mississippi), “What Happened in Natchez Stays in Natchez: Crossing the Line in the Spanish-American Borderlands, 1780-1796”

Kent Peacock (Creole Heritage Center and Northwestern State University of Louisiana), “Louisiana Creole Patriots?: Revolutionary-Era Creole Lives and Contemporary Commemoration”

Justin Pope (Missouri University of Science and Technology),
“The French Uprising on the Mississippi During the Revolutionary War, 1778-1785”

13. “Researching and Re-Interpreting the Era of the American Revolution: Collaborative Projects with William & Mary’s National Institute of American History and Democracy (NIAHD) Faculty and Students”

Room 1056

Moderator: Julie Richter (Director of NIAHD)

Panelists: Sarah E. McCartney (NIAHD)

Robyn Schroeder (NIAHD)

14. Roundtable: “Local Government: Changes and Continuities through the Founding Era”

Dogwood Room

Moderator: Gabriel Loiacono (University of Wisconsin Oshkosh)

Daniel Dostie (Temple University)

Dillon L. Streifeneder (United States Naval Academy)

William P. Tatum III (County Historian, Dutchess County, New York)

Carolyn Zola (California State University, East Bay)

15. RevEd Session: “It’s *Revolutionary!* A multiplicity of access points to Revolutionary (or any) times. Plus, a how to and what not to.”

Matoaka A

Sally Causey Bloom (North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources)

Jessica Pratt (North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources)

16. Slate Seminar Session: “Documenting the New Republic: Preserving Community History in Special Collections”

Matoaka B

Moderator: Tonia Cansler (LoneStar College, Descendant Community Member)

Presenters: Jay Gaidmore (William & Mary Special Collections Research Center)

Daniel Sunshine (William & Mary Special Collections Research Center)

**

10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

17. “Governance, Credit, and Nation after the American Revolution”

Room 1056

Chair & Comment:

Patrick Callaway (University of Maine, Presque Isle), “Learning the Wrong Lessons from Revolution: Jefferson, Madison, and the Problems of Economic Coercion as Political Policy 1806-1812”

Donovan Fifield (University of South Carolina), “Public Credit, Land Speculation, and Merchant Power in the Early American Republic”

Timothy Milford (St. John’s University, New York), “Capital Intrigues: Liberal Imperialism, the Spanish Colonies, and Anglo-American Enterprise”

18. Roundtable: “Crossing Currents: New Ways of Exploring Transatlantic Biographies of Black Loyalist Women”

Holly Room

Moderator: Alexandra Montgomery (George Washington Presidential Library at Mount Vernon)

Justin Iverson (Public Historian, Department of Defense)

Shantelle Vanterpool (Mixed Media Artist, Shoemaker)

Stephanie M. Dunmore (Project Manager, Digital Systems Transformation Project at the Historic First Baptist Church of Williamsburg, VA)

Akindele Decker (Heritage Consultant, Genealogist, Public Historian)

19. “Indigenous Reconfigurations at the Edge of the Early Republic, 1781-1801”

Dogwood Room

Chair & Comment: Samantha Seeley (University of Richmond)

Russell J. Arbic (McGill University), “One Nation Under Bowles: Cherokee-Creek Diplomacy in the Aftermath of the American Revolution”

Edward P. Green (University of Oklahoma), “Making Peace, Building a Nation, and Facing the Future: The Choctaw Nation, 1780-1801”

Lucas P. Kelley (Valparaiso University), “Nickajack: Native Sovereignty, Settler Memory, and the Exaggerated Destruction of an Eighteenth-Century Cherokee Town”

Alec Zuercher Reichardt (University of Missouri), “Remaking the Eastern Door: Haudenosaunee Diplomacy and Spatiality from Grand River and Buffalo Creek, 1783-1795”

20. RevEd Session: “Peopling the American Revolution: Building Connection and Historical Empathy in the Classroom”

Matoaka A

Catherine VanDyke (Jamestown Yorktown Foundation)

Emily Koch (National Park Service)

Anne Marie Baker (Jamestown Yorktown Foundation)

21. Slate Seminar Session: “Bray School Descendants in a New World”

Matoaka B

Presenters: Tonia Cansler (LoneStar College, Descendant Community Member)
Frances Green (Colonial Williamsburg, Descendant Community Member)

**

LUNCH 12:00 - 1:30 p.m.

Food trucks will be parked outside the School of Education and there are many other options along Monticello Road and on Richmond Road as well.

1:30 - 3:00 p.m.

22. "Memories and Responses: the Black Postwar Experience"

Room 1056

Chair & Comment: Serena Zabin (Carleton College)

William Brewster Morgan (Indiana University), "Revolutionary Belonging: Land, Family, and Citizenship in New England"

Ervin L. Jordan (University of Virginia Libraries), "Echoes of Silence: Voices of Revolutionary War Black Virginians"

Andrew Wehrman (Central Michigan University), "The Gravedigger's Tale: How Scipio Gray Challenged New York's Medicine and its Politics"

Andrew Lawler (Independent Scholar), "Exiled from the Land of Liberty: The African American Diaspora at the Revolution's End"

23. "Indigenous Challenges to the New Republic"

Holly Room

Chair & Comment: Joshua Piker (William & Mary/Omohundro Institute)

T. Wyatt Reynolds (Columbia University), "We Hold These Truths Against You: Indigenous Claims on the American Revolution in the Early Republic"

Joanne Jahnke-Wegner (University of Wisconsin Eau Claire), "Dematriation in Iroquoia: Haudenosaunee Women During the Sullivan Campaign in 1779 and Beyond"

Zoie Horecny (The George Washington Presidential Library At Mount Vernon), “George Washington’s Southern Tour: Reflections of the Revolution in the Early Republic”

24. Roundtable: “Publishing the Revolution in 2026: New Books on the American Revolution”

Dogwood Room

Moderator: Katherine Carté (Southern Methodist University)

Richard Bell (University of Maryland)

Kathleen DuVal (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill)

Travis Glasson (Temple University)

Ronald A. Johnson (Baylor University)

25. RevEd Session: “Teaching the Founding at 250: Engaging Students Through Inquiry and Digital Resources”

Matoaka A

Lindsey Horner (Colonial Williamsburg Foundation)

Jessica Johns (Gloucester County Schools)

Joe Schmidt (Colonial Williamsburg Foundation)

Heather Nice (Colonial Williamsburg Foundation)

26. Slate Seminar Session: “Bray School Lab Five Years Later: Listening and Learning to Move Forward”

Matoaka B

Co-Facilitators: Elizabeth Drembus (William & Mary Bray School Lab)
Tonia Cansler (LoneStar College, Descendant Community Member)

3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

We encourage you to tour Colonial Williamsburg, W&M’s Muscarelle Museum of Art, and the historic W&M campus. Passes to Colonial Williamsburg, valid from Friday through Sunday, are available at no cost to conference attendees. (Please indicate that you would like a pass when you register.) Exhibits at the Muscarelle Museum of Art are open to all conference attendees at no charge. Brief tours of W&M Special Collections, located on the first floor of Swem Library, and W&M’s historic Wren Building are also available this weekend as part of W&M’s Homecoming festivities. Conference attendees are warmly welcomed to join the tours.

The keynote talk is in the Muscarelle Museum of Art. Walking distances from the Muscarelle to Swem Library and the Wren Building are a few minutes and approximately 15 minutes respectively.

5:00 - 6:30 p.m.

A Talk by Kathleen DuVal
(University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill)

“The American Revolution and the Survival of Native Nations”

Muscarelle Museum of Art

Campus of William & Mary
611 Jamestown Road,
Williamsburg, VA

Seating begins at 4:30 p.m.|Program begins at 5:00 p.m.
Reception follows.

Kathleen DuVal’s book, *Native Nations: A Millennium in North America* (Random House), will be for sale at the event. Credit cards preferred.

The walk between the W&M School of Education and the Muscarelle Museum of Art, beginning at Compton Drive (behind the W&M SOE), is approximately 25 minutes. (Alas, no WATA bus service runs from the W&M SOE on Saturdays.)

There is ample free parking near the Muscarelle Museum of Art. W&M Parking restrictions are not enforced between 5:00 p.m. on Fridays and 7:00 a.m. on Mondays. Spaces marked Faculty/Staff, etc., are open to all.