



FRENCH COLONIAL
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SOCIÉTÉ D'HISTOIRE
COLONIALE FRANÇAISE

The FCHS NEWSLETTER

www.frenchcolonial.org

President

Richard Fogarty

University at Albany, SUNY
president@frenchcolonial.org

Past President

Jennifer Sessions

University of Virginia
pastpresident@frenchcolonial.org

Vice President

Jennifer L. Palmer

University of Georgia
vice-president@frenchcolonial.org

Secretary-Treasurer

Spencer Segalla

The University of Tampa
treasurer@frenchcolonial.org

News & Social Media Editor

Robin Mitchell

California State University, Channel
Islands
media@frenchcolonial.org

Editor, *French Colonial History*

Kenneth J. Orosz

Buffalo State College
FCH@frenchcolonial.org

Web Master

Katie Edwards

Tulane University
webmaster@frenchcolonial.org

Summer 2020 Newsletter

Greetings and thank you for your patience with our latest newsletter. The world is a very different place than it was the last time we published. One scarcely knows where to begin. I said this the last time, but “What a time to be a historian!”

Many of us were thrust into remote teaching (I had two days advance notice); we dealt with – on top of our professional responsibilities – scared children, sick family and friends, a barely functioning government, and our own fears. I told my students (who worked on plague journals for future historians) that I don’t know if they will ever be so in the middle of an epic historical moment. Then I saw an image on Twitter of a building in America on fire, juxtaposed with an image of Saint Domingue on fire. French colonial historians clearly see the parallels.

A reminder to please take a moment if you haven’t followed us on Facebook and Twitter to do so. Up-to-date information will always be there, as well as on our Society webpage. In addition, please send pedagogy/ research resource suggestions to Katie Edwards via webmaster@frenchcolonial.org.

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1627205484163791/?ref=bookmarks>

Twitter:

@FrenchColonial

Sorry we didn’t convene in Buffalo. But there will be another time, and another place. Please be well: take care of you and yours.

Robin Mitchell

News & Social Media Editor

President's Message, Summer 2020

In last year's spring message, I cited T.S. Eliot's, "April is the cruellest month," in reference to the angst and stress that attends the approaching end of the academic year. That seems silly now, in view of how genuinely cruel April has been as millions of people across the globe seek to cope with the death, illness, isolation, and disruption wrought by the COVID-19 virus. So I will begin this year's spring message by wishing that everyone in the extended FCHS/SHCF family is healthy and safe, and that you all remain that way through the coming months as the virus continues to disrupt our lives.

Normally the spring newsletter is largely devoted to looking forward to the imminent Annual Meeting, but of course this year we have had to cancel that gathering because of the public health situation. As you know, we did so only under the strictest compulsion and with great regret. And even though we cannot benefit from the fruits of their labor this year in Buffalo, I want to express the sincerest thanks to Ken Orosz, who was to be our host; Amelia Lyons, who chaired the program committee; and that committee's other members: Matt Patsis, Laura Sextro, Jennifer Sessions, and Ken Orosz. They put tremendous effort into laying the groundwork for what promised to be a wonderful series of events, and the Society is in their debt.

Rest assured that the FCHS officers and next year's hosts in Charleston, South Carolina will be working to ensure that the excellence of the 2021 conference will go some way toward compensating for the missed opportunities of this year. I want to thank all our members in advance for remaining active in the Society and helping us to maintain its essential role in promoting scholarly and collegial life in our field.

As readers of the newsletter over the past two years have come to know by now, I like to use the president's message to highlight not only the importance of the work we do, but its timeliness. A pandemic of historic proportions provides many reminders of how knowledge of the past can provide perspective on the present. But for scholars of French colonialism and its legacies, one particular event of the last few months may stand out: in early April the suggestion by a French doctor and a medical researcher that Africa would be an ideal testing ground for experimental COVID-19 vaccines caused an uproar. The head of the World Health Organization denounced these sentiments as the "heritage of a colonial mentality," while a spokesman for the president of Senegal condemned them as betraying "l'inconscient colonial" still prevalent in France and the West more broadly. Perhaps most prominently, and arguably with the most concise and penetrating insight, retired Ivory Coast football star Didier Drogba tweeted, "L'Afrique n'est pas un laboratoire." Of course, scholars in our field know that there is a long history of France and the West treating Africa and other areas precisely thus, as a laboratory for projects of medical, military, governmental, technological, and other forms of modernity. We may not have the public platforms of sports stardom or political position, but I would like to think that we contribute to the sort of consciousness of the colonial mentality that can properly denounce its resurgence.

This is my last presidential message, since my term expires at the end of June. I want to thank my fellow officers for doing all the real work of the Society: Vice President Jennifer Palmer, Treasurer Spencer Segalla, Past President Jennifer Sessions, News & Social Media Editor Robin Mitchell, and Webmaster Katie Edwards. Finally, I want to thank all members of the Society for according me the privilege of serving and the opportunity of trying to give a little bit back to an organization that has given me so much more.

Rick Fogarty
University at Albany, SUNY

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Colleagues at Work / Book Announcements

We want to promote your latest works. Please send them to me at media@frenchcolonial.org for inclusion in the next newsletter.

Robin Mitchell has published her first book entitled *Vénus Noire: Black Women and Colonial Fantasies in Nineteenth-Century France* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2020).

Spencer Segalla's book, *Empire and Catastrophe: Decolonization and Environmental Disaster in North Africa and Mediterranean France since 1954* (University of Nebraska Press) is currently available FREE, OPEN ACCESS, thanks to the Mellon Foundation and the SHMP (hardcover available for pre-order May 2021).

Jennifer Sessions's article, "Horace Vernet's *Tête Arabe*: The Artist as Colonial Collector," appears in the May issue of *Monde(s)*, a special issue on the theme "Tristes trophées: Objets et restes humains dans les conquêtes coloniales du XIX^e siècle" edited by Lancelot Arzel and Daniel Foliard.

Sophie White's new book has received Honorable Mention for the Merle Curti Prize for best book in American social history from the Organization of American Historians. *Voices of the Enslaved: Love, Labor, and Longing in French Louisiana* was published in November 2019 by the UNC Press/Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture.

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Announcements

Studies in Modern French History' becomes 'Studies in Modern French and Francophone History'

Since 2011 Manchester University Press has published a book series in collaboration with the Society for the Study of French History. Now it has formed a parallel partnership with the French Colonial Historical Society, and to reflect its new, wider remit the series' name has changed to 'Studies in Modern French and Francophone History'. It aims to cover not just the history of metropolitan France but also the history of France's imperial projects, its colonies and the wider francophone world from about 1750 onwards. The editors are keen to receive proposals for books of about 90,000 words that fall within that remit. The series has been very successful at publishing early career researchers' first monographs, but the editors also encourage monograph proposals from more established scholars and, indeed, other formats, such as edited collections. The series editors are always happy to answer questions or discuss potential projects (see emails below).

Information about published volumes in the series is available here: <https://manchesteruniversitypress.co.uk/series/studies-in-modern-french-and-francophone-history/> The most recent addition to the series is Anne Byrne's study of court ritual in the last decades of the Old Regime; for details see the attached flyer. As members of the FCHS you are entitled to a discount on this and any other books you order from the series. The discount is 35 per cent and the discount code you'll need to enter on the MUP website is **SMFH35**.

Best wishes from your editors, Máire Cross, m.f.cross@ncl.ac.uk; David Hopkin, david.hopkin@hertford.ox.ac.uk; Jennifer Sessions, jcs4fx@virginia.edu

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Call for Papers**General Ongoing CFP: Journal of West African History (JWAH)**

by Caitlin Barker

GENERAL ONGOING CALL FOR PAPERS, JOURNAL OF WEST AFRICAN HISTORY

Founding Editor-in-chief: Nwando Achebe

Editors: Trevor Getz, Saheed Aderinto, Harry Odamtten, and Vincent Hiribarren

Book Review Editors: Mark Deets and Ndubueze Mbah

The Journal of West African History (JWAH) is an interdisciplinary peer-reviewed research journal that publishes the highest quality articles on West African history. Located at the cutting edge of new scholarship on the social, cultural, economic, and political history of West Africa, JWAH fills a representational gap by providing a forum for serious scholarship and debate on women and gender, sexuality, slavery, oral history, popular and public culture, and religion. The editorial board encourages authors to explore a wide range of topical, theoretical, methodological, and empirical perspectives in new and exciting ways. The journal is committed to rigorous thinking and analysis; is international in scope; and offers a critical intervention about knowledge production. Scholarly reviews of current books in the field appear in every issue. And the publication is in both English and French; an abstract in both languages is provided. Michigan State University Press publishes JWAH.

The editorial board invites scholars to submit original article-length manuscripts (not exceeding 10,000 words including endnotes, 35 pages in length) accompanied by an abstract that summarizes the argument and significance of the work (not exceeding 150 words). Please see [submission guidelines](#) for detailed expectations. Review essays (not exceeding 1,000 words) should engage the interpretation, meaning, or importance of an author's argument for a wider scholarly audience. See what we have available for review on our [Book Reviews page](#). Please contact our Book Review editors Mark Deets mark.deets@aucegypt.edu and Ndubueze Mbah ndubueze@buffalo.edu for more information.

Manuscripts submitted to the Journal of West African History should be submitted online at <http://ojs.msupress.msu.edu/index.php/JWAH/about/submissions>. In order to submit an article, you will have to create an account. The site will guide you through this process.

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Prizes and Awards

The Mary Alice and Philip Boucher Book Prize

The Alf Andrew Heggoy Book Prize

The French Colonial Historical Society awards two book prizes annually for the best volumes published in the preceding year. The FCHS encourages interest in the scholarly study of all French colonizing activity and in the history of all French colonies."

- The Boucher prize is awarded in honor of long time members and active supporters Mary Alice and Philip Boucher, and recognizes the best book dealing with the French colonial experience from the 16th century to 1815.
- The Heggoy prize is awarded in honor of one of the Society's founding members, Alf Andrew Heggoy, and recognizes the best book dealing with the French colonial experience from 1815 to the present.

For both prizes, books from any academic discipline will be considered, providing that they approach the French colonial experience from an historical perspective.

The deadline for this year's submissions is March 1, 2021. Questions about the submission process should be addressed to Dr. Charles Keith, Chair of the FCHS Book Prize Committee, at ckeith@msu.edu.

Applicants or their publishers should submit four copies of books published in 2019 (date of publication is determined by the copyright page of the book), one to each of the book prize committee members (addresses listed below). Please make sure to indicate clearly that the submission is for the Boucher or the Heggoy.

Dr. Charles Keith

Department of History
Michigan State University
211 Old Horticulture Hall
506 E. Circle Drive
East Lansing, MI 48824
USA

Dr. Ellen Amster

Department of History
McMaster University
Chester New Hall Room 616
1280 Main Street West
Hamilton, ON L8S 4L9
Canada

Dr. Robert Michael Morrissey

Department of History
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
309 Gregory Hall
810 Wright Street
Urbana, IL 61801
USA

Dr. Elizabeth Heath

Department of History/B5-200
Baruch College
One Bernard Baruch Way
New York, NY 10010

W. J. Eccles Prize, 2019-2020

The Prize honors the memory of William John Eccles (1917-1998), a distinguished historian of French Canada and an outstanding supporter of graduate students. The Prize was created by Bill Eccles's FCHS colleagues to continue his work by encouraging those at the beginning of their careers in our field. From 2000 to 2018, the Prize was awarded to the best graduate student paper in French Colonial History by a graduate student or recent post-graduate scholar.

Application Procedures

Graduate student presenters should submit an electronic copy of their paper to the editor of *French Colonial History*, Dr. Kenneth Orosz oroszkj@buffalostate.edu immediately following the meeting. Session chairs are urged to encourage graduate student members of their panels to submit their papers.

Invitation to submit papers or articles for publication in FCH

Back in 2017 the society's journal switched over to an online submission system that enables us to more efficiently process and track manuscripts as they go through peer review and move on to copy editing and assignment to a future issue. While the system works well, we have had some problems with incorrect or outdated email addresses as well as incomplete user profiles that do not indicate reviewing interests. The editors ask all members to log in and update their profiles at <http://ojs.msupress.msu.edu/index.php/FCH/login>. Once logged in you should see links under My Account to edit profiles and update passwords. If you are unsure if you have a profile and/or cannot remember your user name and password please contact us at FCH@frenchcolonial.org or directly at oroszkj@buffalostate.edu.

French Colonial History is the official journal of the French Colonial Historical Society. *FCH* publishes peer-reviewed research articles, review essays, forums, and reflections addressing all aspects of the history of French colonization and of the French colonies, reflecting the temporal span, geographical breadth, and diversity of subject matter that characterize the scholarly interests of the Society's members. Submissions are welcome in English or French concerning any geographical area or chronological period of French overseas expansion, including the metropole and the postcolonial.

FCH also welcomes proposals for special issues or forums of several articles around a theme. Potential guest editors should contact the Journal Editor to discuss their proposals. Submission guidelines can be found at <http://www.frenchcolonial.org/index.php/journal>.

We would also like to announce a new way to access the current issue of the journal, as well as back issues, through the FCHS website. There is now a direct link to the journal on JSTOR, which you can access via the Journal page on the website, or via the "Quick Link" that appears below the welcome message once you have logged in. Access is password-protected, so if you are not logged in to your profile when you try to access the JSTOR link, you will be prompted to do so. Step-by-step instructions for logging in and accessing issues of the journal are included below the signature line. If you have any questions about the process, please contact the webmaster, Katie Edwards, at webmaster@frenchcolonial.org.