

Winter 2023

The Pacific Coast Conference on British Studies

CHARIVARI



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Erika Rappaport (University of California, Santa Barbara)



It was such a pleasure to see so many of you at our conference last March, hosted by UC Riverside. We had a wonderful meeting and enjoyed so many exciting papers, receptions, and meals together. Professor Thomas Cogswell (UCR) and Professor Vanessa Ogle (Yale University) entertained us with their vast knowledge of scandals, tax evasion, and other villainy. Presenters covered a wide variety of topics from the Financial Revolution to the Friends of Zambia (ask Jeff Schauer to tell you more about this lobby group!). The conference could not have been a success without the generous support of UC Riverside, the Huntington Library and Archives, The School of Arts and Humanities at Claremont Graduate University, NACBS, and the Sidney Stern Memorial Trust. Thanks to our program committee, headed by Simon Devereaux, and to Jonathon

Eacott for his efforts, which included ordering great food and tackling the complexities of hotel contracts. I also want to give a very special thanks to Lisa Cody, who is stepping down as our tireless Treasurer. Lisa stayed on long after the normal term to help us manage a very complicated budget, deal with taxes and so much more that was far beyond the usual duties of Treasurer.

Lisa's very large shoes are being filled by Professor Mark Crowley who teaches modern British and business history in the Department of Management at the University of Utah. Mark has a great deal of experience with budgets and bureaucracy, as a scholar of the British Postal Office. Our remarkable Jeff Schauer has also ended his extra-long term as Secretary and we welcome in his stead Jennifer Binczewski, who teaches Early Modern British History at Gonzaga University. Jennifer's expertise lies in 16th and 17th century family, gender, and Catholic history. Many of you may remember Jennifer as the winner of the 2020 PCCBS article prize. Welcome Mark and

Jennifer, and thank you so much for agreeing to serve PCCBS. Finally, we must thank our outgoing graduate student representative, Jeffrey Chun-Jung Chen, who is completing his dissertation at Stanford University. We are looking for a new graduate student to join the board. If you are ABD and would be interested in working with us, please email rappaport@ucsb.edu by February 15. In your email, please indicate your year in your program, field, and past service experience. You would be expected to serve from Spring 2024 to Spring 2025. Thanks so much!!

At the annual business meeting we discussed the costs and benefits of holding an annual in-person conference, a topic which all regionals and many organizations are also discussing. I followed up with a survey of the membership and a conversation with our executive board. While everyone agrees that in-person conferences are extremely important, the majority of those who responded to the survey felt that we should experiment with moving to a bi-annual model supplemented with virtual events, including a graduate student dissertation workshop, plenary, and awards ceremony. **Our virtual “meeting” will be on Saturday March 23, 2024, so please save the date.** Our next in-person conference will be hosted by Stanford University in Spring of 2025. It is difficult not to see each other every spring, but we believe that the growing financial costs associated with in-person conferences, the steadily declining number of faculty and students in the region who work on British history, and finally the environmental impact of conference travel suggest that we should experiment with alternative models.

In spring, we will be initiating a fund-raising drive for the **PCCBS David Lieberman Presidential Doctoral Student Fellowship**. This fellowship honors our former president by providing one-time financial support to students who have reached the ABD stage in their graduate programs and who demonstrate both merit and need. It is open to students working in British Studies defined broadly, who are enrolled in doctoral programs in the Pacific Coast Conference region, and who are members of PCCBS at the time of application. (Please see below for the full description and application process). We hope to see you all virtually in March 2024 and in person in Stanford in 2025.

Prize Citations from the 2023 PCCBS Meeting

David Lieberman Presidential Doctoral Student Fellowship

The winner of the inaugural David Lieberman Presidential Doctoral Student Fellowship is **Eva Vaillancourt** (Department of History, University of California, Berkeley) for her dissertation project “Red Light, Green Light: Traffic and the Twilight of the British World Order, 1890 to 1950.” The project tracks the emergence of rules and laws for regulating traffic across the British Empire, charting the attempt to forge an imperial “traffic system” as the advent of the automobile reshaped human life in the early twentieth century. It is a dissertation operating at the intersection of law, society, and culture, and as such it embodies the legacy and spirit of David Lieberman, our cherished colleague and past president of the PCCBS, in whose memory the Fellowship has been founded. For more on Eva’s work, see her reflection below under “Graduate Student News”.

2022-2023 PCCBS Book Prize

Micah Alpaugh, *Friends of Freedom: The Rise of Social Movements in the Age of Atlantic Revolutions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022)

Micah Alpaugh won the book prize for his ambitious account of the transnational nature of reform sentiment and revolutionary practice across the Atlantic world. Based on impressive archival research in a multitude of personal papers, newspapers and pamphlets across Britain, France, Haiti, Ireland, and the United States, Alpaugh insists that the reforming currents of the late eighteenth century were a transnational formation. The book demonstrates that while national narratives remain important, they are insufficient and cannot alone explain the causes or forms of the reform movements around Wilkes, parliamentary reform, protestant dissent, abolitionism or even the revolts in Ireland, France, and Haiti. The achievement of *Friends of Freedom* is to move beyond generalities to show, for example, how the example of the American Sons of Liberty fueled Wilkite agitation in Britain, and how the Jacobins founded their clubs on English models which were then in turn radicalized by the revolution in France. Written with style and panache, the only thing missing from this book is any sense of the rich visual culture produced within this republic of letters and its associational worlds across the Atlantic.

2022-2023 PCCBS Article Prize

Lisa Cody, “‘Marriage is No Protection for Crime’: Coverture, Sex, and Marital Rape in Eighteenth-Century England,” *Journal of British Studies* 61 (October 2022): 809–834.

This beautifully written and deeply researched article sheds new light on a subject that was “a blind spot” for contemporaries and which has remained largely opaque to historians. In marked contrast to the vast literature on sexual violence outside of marriage, the topic of marital rape -- or even spousal sex generally -- poses a challenge for modern scholars, both because of the paucity of sources and a legal culture of coverture in which the identity of the wife was subsumed by that of the husband. Cody has assembled and analyzed an impressive array of print and manuscript sources, meticulously reconstructing not only the circumstances of five deeply unhappy marriages, but the various and often contradictory arguments, assumptions, and attitudes of jurists, advocates and other decision-makers, demonstrating that marital rape was, if theoretically invisible, not always unimaginable. Cody’s richly contextualized and uncompromisingly rigorous argument eschews simplistic arguments about female agency or progressive change. Rather, her study underscores the persistence of crotchety judges and the preference of the ecclesiastical courts to focus on objective measures of cruelty, such as the knowing transmission of venereal diseases. Although elite women may have had the financial resources to employ a range of different legal strategies to secure their property, if not their persons, aristocratic wives were more likely to be seen as lascivious and to receive unsympathetic hearings than their apparently respectable and chaste bourgeois counterparts. Whether such suits succeeded or failed, however, they lent themselves to contractualist arguments about the mutual rights and obligations of spouses, in which “wives’ absolute sexual subjugation” to their husbands was at least open for debate.

2022-2023 PCCBS Graduate Student Prize

Kristen Thomas-McGill (UC Santa Barbara), “Deciphering Professional Interpersonal Relationships and Archival Practices through an Imperial Scandal.” Advisor: Erika Rappaport, UC Santa Barbara.

Kristen Thomas-McGill's conference paper on an imperial sexual abuse scandal in early-twentieth-century Ceylon, delivered at the PCCBS meeting in Riverside, is a model of compelling story-telling and careful archival reflection. Her insights into the colonial governor's handling of a scandal about the commanding British general in Ceylon begin with thoughtful imagining and exploration of the personal, professional, and imperial stakes of the matter for the governor, followed by careful analysis of the paper trail he left behind. Through this study, she sheds light on how the professional relationships so critical to the empire's functioning worked. Her careful consideration of the governor's consciousness of his self-portrayal in correspondence that he knew would form part of an official archive allows her to make sense of his writerly choices, while other archival sources allow her to reconstruct in real-time his dawning knowledge of the scandal and the steps he began to take. The paper offers substantive and important reflections on the making of the imperial archive, the functioning of imperial bureaucracy, the history of pederasty, and the nature of imperial violence.

PCCBS Call for Prizes

PCCBS David Lieberman Presidential Doctoral Student Fellowship

The PCCBS has established a doctoral fellowship for ABD students in honor and memory of David Liberman, former President of the PCCBS and a dear friend, colleague, and mentor for several decades. David was a renowned scholar of eighteenth-century law and society at UC Berkeley School of Law, as well as a specialist in the works and ideas of Jeremy Bentham.

The fellowship is intended to provide one-time financial support to students who have reached the ABD stage in their graduate programs and who demonstrate both merit and need. The funds are designed to help support an outstanding doctoral student with living and/or research expenses in the coming year. It is open to students working in British Studies defined broadly, who are enrolled in doctoral programs in the Pacific Coast region, and who are members of PCCBS at the time of application.

Applications should include a c.v., a two-page description of the doctoral project, and plans for the next year (April 1, 2024-March 31, 2025). The description should focus on the applicant's scholarly interests, dissertation project, and budget, which may include living as well as travel and/or other research-related expenses.

In addition, two confidential letters of support, including one from the applicant's primary adviser and/or members of the doctoral committee should be submitted under separate cover to Erika Rappaport, PCCBS President, who will distribute materials to the Fellowship committee. Please send letters to pccbsnews@gmail.com by **February 15, 2024**. The letter should describe the applicant's academic and intellectual qualities and specific financial needs.

The winner(s) will be announced at the annual meeting of the PCCBS during the Spring 2024 Virtual Meeting. The recipient does not need to be present for their announcement, but they will be expected to participate at the following year's panel for PCCBS award winners to discuss their dissertation project. That participation can be by Zoom if necessary.

The complete application is due by **February 15, 2024**. Please send all materials to pccbsnews@gmail.com

PCCBS Book Prize

The prize for the best book published in 2023 by a member of the PCCBS will be awarded at the Virtual Meeting in 2024. The Book Prize submission deadline is **February 15, 2024**. Copies of the book, in hard copy or PDF, should be sent to all three committee members:

Mark Matera, (UC Santa Cruz) mmatera@ucsc.edu
Department of History
565 Bellevue Ave Apt 2003
Oakland, CA 94610

Alister Chapman (Westmont College) chapman@westmont.edu
History Department
Westmont College
955 La Paz Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93108

Lori Anne Ferrell (Claremont Graduate University) lori.ferrell@cgu.edu
1265 N. Indian Hill Blvd.
Claremont, CA 91711

PCCBS Annual Article Prize

The prize for the best article published by a member of PCCBS in 2023 will be awarded at the Spring 2024 Virtual Meeting. The Article Prize submission deadline is **February 15, 2024**. Copies of the article should be sent to all three committee members:

Kathleen Noonan, Chair (Sonoma State University): noonan@sonoma.edu

Peter Hoffenberg (University of Hawai'i, Manoa): peterh@hawaii.edu

Andrea McKenzie (University of Victoria): mckenzie@uvic.ca

PCCBS Graduate Student Prize

The PCCBS invites entries from PhD students for the annual graduate student prize. The student and the advisor, or instructor, must be current members of PCCBS. The submitted entry will have been presented at any conference in 2023, if the paper concerns a topic within the scope of British Studies. The submission should be the paper as delivered with the addition of necessary notes and citations, the total to not exceed 18 pages double spaced. Graduate Prize Submission: **April 1, 2024**. Electronic copies of papers not already submitted should be sent to all three members of the committee, along with a cover letter from the instructor or advisor:

Priya Satia, Chair (Stanford University): psatia@stanford.edu

Jarrett Henderson (UC Santa Barbara): jhenderson@history.ucsb.edu

Muriel McClendon (UC Los Angeles): mcclendo@history.ucla.edu

Graduate Student News

PCCBS is dedicated to our graduate student members, and we strive to help support you during and after your time in school. To that end, we have a few items that especially pertain to student members. In addition to applying to the graduate student prizes mentioned above.

Seeking Graduate Student Representative for the PCCBS:

We are looking for a new graduate student to join the board. If you are ABD and would be interested in working with us, please email rappaport@ucsb.edu by February 15. In your email, please indicate your year in your program, field, and past service experience. You would be expected to serve from March 2024 to March 2025.

On Saturday March 24th we will be hosting a virtual dissertation workshop. Students who are interested will pre-circulate a dissertation chapter, a prospectus or article-in-progress. We will ask faculty, graduate students to serve as commentators, and audience members to read the work as well. If you are interested in participating, please email rappaport@ucsb.edu as early as possible, but no later than **February 15**, with a title and short description of the work. We will be in touch about how to share your work and the exact time and details of the workshop.

In May (date TBA), we are planning **a virtual panel on Historians beyond Academia**, which considers alternative employment. If you know someone you would like to invite to the panel, please email rappaport@ucsb.edu as soon as possible.

Reflections from Eva Vaillancourt, UC Berkeley, the winner of the David Lieberman Presidential Doctoral Student Fellowship for her Dissertation Project, “Red Light, Green Light, Traffic and the Twilight of the British World Order, 1890-1950”



David Lieberman did seminal work on the British legal imagination in the early modern period, and its great preoccupation: the relationship between common law and statute, custom and legislation, tradition and reason. My dissertation follows that same complex of questions forward several hundred years, and into a realm of law that Lieberman’s eighteenth-century actors (Blackstone, Bentham, et al.) never contemplated, because in their day, it barely existed: road traffic rules. Red lights, stop signs, speed limits, crosswalks... These legal tools were unknown before the rise of the automobile at the turn of the twentieth century. Now, they are the most common way Britons come into contact with the criminal justice system. I study the invention and proliferation of these rules in Britain before the Second World War, and the surprisingly virulent public debates they occasioned about law, liberty, risk, and order. Should traffic be controlled by “arbitrary” rules imposed via criminal legislation? Or is it better (and more British) to let custom dictate the norms of road movement? Should “predatory” police be responsible for enforcing good road behavior? Or is it more effective (and more British) to entrust that function to social pressure and a sense of civility? These questions roiled British institutions – from police courts to Parliament – in the first half of the twentieth century. Notably, they are the questions of Lieberman’s era, reanimated by a confrontation with new technologies and new expectations. That’s one of the reasons I am especially grateful, and especially honored, to be the inaugural Lieberman Fellow. Thanks to this support, I was able to pursue my traffic research into a colonial context, without consideration of which, I think, it is impossible to understand the twentieth-century search for order (in traffic and elsewhere). I spent the summer in Singapore, using local court records to track the emergence of traffic rules amidst the vexed political and racial climate of the late British Empire. In those sources, I saw these same great questions of law and liberalism working themselves out through new protagonists: Chinese rickshaw pullers, Tamil lorry drivers, European joyriders, Malay traffic constables. I wonder what Professor Lieberman would have thought of these stories. I look forward to PCCBS’s next annual conference, where I hope to share some of them with you.

Join or Renew your Membership

MEMBERSHIP IN THE PACIFIC COAST CONFERENCE ON BRITISH STUDIES SUPPORTS THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ORGANIZATION, IN PARTICULAR ITS ANNUAL MEETING.

FULL MEMBERSHIP (PROFESSIONAL HISTORIANS AND INDEPENDENT SCHOLARS) IS \$30 ANNUALLY. GRADUATE STUDENT MEMBERSHIP IS \$15 ANNUALLY.

ALL MEMBERS ARE REMINDED THAT THEIR PCCBS MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE NOT COVERED BY CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION (NACBS).

MEMBERSHIP DUES AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DAVID LIEBERMAN FUND MAY BE MADE IN THE FOLLOWING MANNERS (PLEASE SPECIFY IF YOUR CONTRIBUTION IS TO THE LIEBERMAN FUND):

PLEASE SEND MEMBERSHIP DUES AT [ZELLE](#) TO

PCCBSNEWS@GMAIL.COM

CHECK: MADE OUT TO PCCBS, AND MAILED TO

**MARK CROWLEY
DAVID ECCLES SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
1655 EAST CAMPUS CENTER DRIVE
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84112**

PCCBS OFFICERS

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Website editor: **Molly McClain** (University of San Diego)

Graduate Student Representative: **seeking a new graduate student.**

Contact: PCCBSnews@gmail.com

