



Call for papers, EEASA (European Early American Studies Association)  
biannual conference, December 9-11, 2010, Paris

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/cas/eeasa>

Co-hosted by University Paris-Diderot and University Versailles-St Quentin  
Place: University of Paris-Diderot (Centers Charles V and Paris-Rive Gauche) and Protestant  
Institute of Theology in Paris.

**« Looking back : The Past, History, and History writing in Early America and the  
Atlantic World »**

The third EEASA conference (Paris, December 2010) invites scholars of early American history and the Atlantic world to reflect on the role of the “past” within the time frame, 1607-1865. These two and a half centuries were often constructed by contemporaries not only through a teleological, progressive or providentially-motivated perspective, but also in a retrospective mode. The urge to revolve, to have a “revolution” in its original sense of an eternal return to a distant past – the past embodied by a “purer” America, Europe or Africa – was transformed into idealized beginnings, especially in times of crisis and uncertainty. These moments include the late seventeenth-century Puritan world as expressed through the jeremiad or the invocation of the “spirit of 76” in the later years of the early republic, as well as by the independence movements in Latin America. For American radicals looking to France, “the spirit of 1789” was an inspiration when it was feared that the original meaning of the new United States might have been forgotten. Examples also extend to the idea of “the noble savage” for Europeans “imagining” Native Americans, and the idea of an indigenous Afro-Caribbean culture that early Haitian historians posited in seeking the origins of their Revolution.

These are only a few instances of the roles played by the multiple pasts that made up early American and Atlantic history. They are notably reflected in the current interest in commemoration, memory or nostalgia studies and can be looked at through the history of emotions as well as of material culture, or in the tracing of intellectual and political transfers in their transatlantic as well as trans-American dimensions. From a more theoretical standpoint, this wide-ranging topic may lead to philosophical reflections on changing conceptions of history and relationship to time in the formative years, from early providentialism to a need for a common history in the process of post-revolutionary nation-building in the first half of the nineteenth century. More generally, this topic offers a platform for broader historiographical considerations on our practice as historians of early American history and the Atlantic world.

Please send your proposal up to 300 words and a brief resume (one page) to Naomi Wulf ([naomi.wulf@univ-paris3.fr](mailto:naomi.wulf@univ-paris3.fr)) and Allan Potofsky ([allan.potofsky@univ-paris-diderot.fr](mailto:allan.potofsky@univ-paris-diderot.fr)). The deadline for submissions is January 31, 2010. Applicants will be notified whether they have been accepted by the end of February 2010. Preliminary short versions of the papers are due in by November 1, 2010 for pre-circulation. The main language in which the conference will be conducted is English.

Program committee:

Trevor Burnard, University of Warwick, England  
Zbigniew Mazur, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Poland  
Allan Potofsky, University Paris-Diderot, France  
Naomi Wulf, University Sorbonne-Nouvelle, France