

## Call for Papers: LIBERAL DEMOCRACY AND THE AGE OF REVOLUTION

**Submission deadline:** February 15, 2020

**Conference dates:** October 23–24, 2020

The George Washington Forum on American Ideas, Politics, and Institutions, which has its home at Ohio University, invites paper proposals for a conference and subsequent edited volume on the origins of liberal democracy and the Age of Revolution. The conference will be held at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, on October 23 and 24, 2020. Previous George Washington Forum conferences have resulted in edited books from the university presses at Cambridge, Oxford, Virginia, and Manchester.

David Bell (Princeton), Patrick Griffin (Notre Dame), Janet Polasky (New Hampshire), and Helena Rosenblatt (CUNY-Graduate Center) will deliver plenary lectures.

Benjamin Constant famously argued that the great achievement of what we now call the Age of Revolution was “representative government” and that “this form of government, the only one in the shelter of which we could find some freedom and peace today, was totally unknown to the free nations of antiquity.” It has been commonplace ever since to claim that many of the fundamental ideas and institutions that we associate with modern representative democracy emerged from the revolutionary upheavals of the later eighteenth century.

This conference and its subsequent volume aim to look afresh at the story of liberal democracy’s origins in the Age of Revolution spanning from the Seven Years’ War to the fall of Napoleon (c. 1760–1815). Did the ideas and institutions of liberal democracy actually emerge during the Age of Revolution? If so, how and why? Were they the product of long-term developments that came to fruition during the revolutionary era? Or were they generated by and amid the conflicts, debates, and upheavals of the period itself? Given that most of the era’s revolutions and uprisings were ultimately either contained or defeated, is it justified to contend that the Age of Revolution witnessed the birth of liberal-democratic ideas and institutions? If not, then what connection is there between the revolutionary turmoil of the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and the eventual development of liberal democracy in the West and beyond over the next two centuries?

The organizers welcome any and all proposals that reexamine and reinterpret the connections between the Age of Revolution in the Atlantic world, c. 1760–1815, and the origins of the ideas and institutions associated with liberal democracy. All proposals—from those that closely examine specific actors, events, and writings to those that consider the era as a whole—will be given full

consideration. Whether the topic is as tightly focused as the evolution of Condorcet's ideas or as capacious as the progress and consequences of the Haitian Revolution, applicants should be clear about how their work speaks to the connections between the Age of Revolution and the origins of liberal democracy.

The conference organizers welcome proposals from advanced doctoral students and both early career and established scholars in history, political science, law, literature, religious studies, economics, and related fields.

Proposals should include a 500-word abstract, a brief (1-2 page) curriculum vitae, and current contact information. Please send proposals to both conference organizers by February 15, 2020:

Dr. James M. Vaughn, George Washington Forum, Ohio University (jmvaughn@ohio.edu).

Dr. Robert G. Ingram, Department of History, Ohio University (ingramr@ohio.edu).

Limited financial support is available on a competitive basis for graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and junior faculty members who cannot secure institutional funding.