

MEGHAN K. ROBERTS

Curriculum Vitae

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Department of History
Bowdoin College
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EDUCATION

- 2011 Ph.D., History, Northwestern University
2006 M.A., History, Northwestern University
2004 B.A., College of William and Mary, magna cum laude, highest honors in history

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- 2018- Associate Professor, Department of History, Bowdoin College
2011-2018 Assistant Professor, Department of History, Bowdoin College

PUBLICATIONS

Book

- 2016 *Sentimental Savants: Philosophical Families in Enlightenment France*, University of Chicago Press.

Refereed Journal Articles

- 2021 “Spontaneous Human Combustion and Claude-Nicolas Le Cat’s Hunt for Fame,” *Journal of Modern History* 93 no. 4 (December 2021), 749-782.
- 2018 “Laclos’s Objects of Affection: Venerating the Family During the French Revolution,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 51 no. 3 (Spring 2018), 289-304.
- 2017 “Learned and Loving: Representing Women Astronomers in Enlightenment France,” *Journal of Women’s History* 29 no. 1 (Spring 2017), 14-37.
- 2012 “Philosophes Mariés and Epouses Philosophiques: Men of Letters and Marriage in Eighteenth-Century France,” *French Historical Studies* 35 no. 3 (Summer 2012), 509-539.

Chapters in Edited Volumes

- 2021 “Gender, Science, and Medicine in the Early Modern World” for the Wiley Blackwell *Companion to Gender History* (2nd edition), eds. Merry Wiesner-Hanks and Teresa Meade.
- “Philosophy, the Arts, and Attention,” for the Bloomsbury *Cultural History of Fame in the Enlightenment*, ed. Brian Cowan; forthcoming in 2023.

Public-Facing Scholarship

- 2023 [“Claude-Nicolas Le Cat on Blackness, Medicine, and Metamorphoses,”](#) *Medicine and the Making of Race* blog, July 2023.
- 2022 [“How Enlightenment Wife Guys Paved the Way for Instagram PDA,”](#) *Slate*, February 2022.
- 2021 [“Hats Off for the History of Science: Rethinking the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Claims about the Lavoisier Portrait,”](#) *Age of Revolutions Journal*, October 2021.
- 2021 [“The Health of Enslaved Workers in Dazille’s Observations,”](#) *Harvard Library Bulletin, Harvard Contagion Project*, July 2021.
- 2019 [“Three’s a Crowd? Navigating a Love Triangle in Enlightenment France,”](#) *Notches: (re)marks on the history of sexuality*, November 2019.
- 2018 [“Role-Playing the French Revolution, Reacting to the Past in the Classroom,”](#) *Age of Revolutions Journal*, September 2018.

Other Publications

- 2019 “Two Prints by Augustin de Saint-Aubin,” *Art Purposes: Object Lessons for the Liberal Arts*, ed. Joachim Homann (DelMonico Books), 88-89.
- 2017 Participant in the forum “Regards croisés sur le mariage” in *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*.
- 2011 [“Lesson Plan: Inoculation in the Age of Enlightenment,”](#) *Electronic Enlightenment*, 2011.

Research in Progress

My current book project, “Health Wars: Making and Breaking Medical Authority, 1730-1820,” examines how medical expertise and moral authority changed during the Enlightenment, a period of media revolution and colonial exploitation. See meghankroberts.com for more information.

“I’ll have Belle for my wife, make no mistake about that”: Courtship and Coercion in *Beauty and the Beast*,” under review for an edited volume titled *Pop Enlightenment*

“Disgust and Anatomy in Eighteenth-Century Rouen,” in progress for an edited volume titled *Emotions and the City*

SELECTED FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS

- 2023-24 Fellow — University of Strasbourg Institute of Advanced Studies
- 2023-24 Fulbright Research Scholar, Grand Est (France) — U.S. Department of State
- 2023-24 Porter Fellowship — Bowdoin College
- 2019-20 Bowdoin Faculty Research Award — Bowdoin College
- 2019 Franklin Research Grant — American Philosophical Society

- 2014-15 Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship — Bowdoin College
2010-11 Presidential Fellowship — Northwestern University Society of Fellows
2010 Millstone Fellowship — Western Society for French History
2006-10 Jacob K. Javits Fellowship — U.S. Department of Education

HONORS AND AWARDS

- 2011 Harold Perkin Prize for best dissertation — Northwestern Department of History
2004 W. Elbert Fraley Award, for most outstanding honors thesis — Department of History,
College of William and Mary
2004 Alumni Association Award for best history student — College of William and Mary

INVITED TALKS AND SEMINARS

- 2023 “Les controverses médicales et la production des savoirs, 1763-1776,” Séminaire du Cercle de Recherche Interdisciplinaire sur les Humanités Médicales, University of Lille, October 2023.
- 2023 “La fabrique de la race et des réputations au XVIIIe : Claude-Nicolas Le Cat et Jean-Barthélemy Dazille,” Séminaire “Expériences,” University of Strasbourg, May 2023.
- 2022 “Shame, Fear, and ‘Enlightened’ Medicine in the French Empire,” Online Seminar for Cultural and Intellectual History, hosted by the University of Turku and Åbo Akademi University, December 2022.
- 2022 “Lost and Found: Science, Gender, and Race in Enlightenment Guyane,” with Laurie Wood, Klopsteg Lecture Series, Science in Human Culture Program, Northwestern University, October 2022.
- 2022 “Botany, Race, & Gender in Enlightenment Guyane,” with Laurie Wood, Omohundro Institute Colloquium, March 2022.
- 2022 “Making Some Noise: Medicine, Masculinity, and Men of Letters,” workshop on Gender and Sexuality in Historical Perspective, University of Tennessee-Knoxville, February 2022.
- 2021 “Botany, Race, & Gender in Enlightenment Saint-Domingue & Guyane,” with Laurie Wood, keynote address for workshop on Marronage & Practices of Freedom, Winthrop-King Institute for Contemporary French and Francophone Studies at Florida State University, April 2021.
- 2020 “Claude-Nicolas Le Cat’s Quest for Fame,” Séminaire de recherches sur les Lumières, l’Institut historique allemand, March 2020.
- 2017 “‘Prey of the Flames’: Medical Authority, Morality, and the Millet Murder Trial, 1725-1853,” Third Annual Weider History Workshop on Gender and Sexuality in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century France, Institute on Napoleon and the French Revolution, Florida State University, April 2017.

- 2016 “Sentimental Savants: Philosophical Families in Enlightenment France,” The Seminar, Department of History, Johns Hopkins University, March 2016.
- 2015 “Savant Spouses: Love, Marriage, and Intellectual Collaboration in Enlightenment France,” Annual Costello Lecture, Manhattan College, September 2015.
- 2010 “The Astronomical Workshop: The Lalande Family in Eighteenth-Century France.” Andrew W. Mellon workshop on Family Values: Locating the Family in the Early Modern Workshop, organized by University of Warwick-in-Venice, Venice, Italy; July 2010.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Papers

- 2023 “Emotions and the ‘Enlightened’ Physician in the French Empire,” Society for French Historical Studies/Western Society for French History, Detroit, Michigan; March 2023.
- 2023 “Critical Karaoke: Taylor Swift’s ‘Blank Space,’ or, the Mechanisms of Celebrity in the (Very) Long Eighteenth Century,” Society for French Historical Studies/Western Society for French History, Detroit, Michigan; March 2023.
- 2022 “Eighteenth-Century French Newspapers as Sites of Surgical Knowledge Production,” conference on “Learning to Cut, Bandage and Cure: Histories of Surgical Training, Skills & Knowledge in Early Modern Europe,” École Normale Supérieure, Paris, France; September 2022.
- 2022 “Disgust and Utility in the Anatomy Theater,” conference on “Emotions in the Early Modern City: Urban Sociability in Britain and France, c. 1650- c. 1850,” McGill University, June 2022.
- 2022 “‘He Gladly Offered To Do This Test’: Dead Babies, Public Health, and Popular Experimental Culture in Enlightenment France,” American Historical Association, online; February 2022.
- 2021 “Jean-Barthélemy Dazille and the Social Uses of Anatomy in the Eighteenth-Century French Empire,” History of Science Society, online; November 2021
- 2021 “Claude-Nicolas Le Cat, les périodiques et le public,” Journée d’études : Périodiques et santé au XVIIIe siècle, Maison de la Recherche de l’Université Sorbonne nouvelle et Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève; Paris, France; June 2021.
- 2021 Roundtable, “Cultural Histories of Fame and Celebrity in the Age of Enlightenment,” American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies; April 2021.
- 2019 “Claude-Nicolas Le Cat and Masculinity in Enlightenment France,” International Congress on the Enlightenment, Edinburgh, UK; July 2019.
- 2019 “Fear, Infanticide, and the ‘Enlightened’ Physician in Saint-Domingue,” Society for French Historical Studies, Indianapolis, IN; April 2019.
- 2017 “‘That Inexhaustible Pen’: Claude-Nicolas Le Cat and the Making of an Enlightenment Expert,” Society for French Historical Studies, Washington, D.C.; April 2017.
- 2016 “Women on Fire: Murder, Medicine, and Spontaneous Combustion,” Society for French Historical Studies, Nashville, Tennessee; March 2016.
- 2015 “Three’s a Crowd?: Navigating Love Triangles in Enlightenment France,” Western Society for French History, Chicago, Illinois; November 2015.
- 2015 “Men of Letters, Inoculation, and the ‘Good Father’ in Enlightenment France,” Society for the Study of French History, St. Andrews, UK; June 2015.
- 2014 “Laclos’s Objects of Affections: Love, Loss, and Material Culture in Revolutionary France.” Historical Perspectives on Loss, Grief, and Pain, Edinburgh, UK; May 2014.

- 2014 “Love and Butter: Choderlos de Laclos, Material Objects, and Family Ties in Picpus Prison.” French Historical Studies, Montréal, Québec; April 2014.
- 2013 “Loving and Learned: Jérôme Lalande, Amélie LeFrançois, and the Public Reputations of Women Astronomers.” History of Science Society, Boston, Massachusetts; November 2013.
- 2013 “Citizens, Not Savants: Education and Intellectual Families.” Western Society for French History, Atlanta, Georgia; October 2013.
- 2013 “Providing ‘Living Proof’: Inoculation in Eighteenth-Century France.” International Congress for the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine, Manchester, England; July 2013.
- 2012 “Getting Out of the Armchair: Antoine Lavoisier and the Making of a Social Laboratory.” Western Society for French History, Banff, Canada; October 2012.
- 2012 “‘If He Loves His Children With An Enlightened Love, He Will Not Hesitate to Inoculate Them’: Smallpox Inoculation and the Intersection of Public and Private.” Society for French Historical Studies, Los Angeles, CA; March 2012.
- 2011 “Love and Duty in the Family Laboratory.” Western Society for French History, Portland, Oregon; October 2011.
- 2011 “The Generation of Enlightenment: Philosophes, Fatherhood, and the Practice of Pedagogy.” American Historical Association, Boston, Massachusetts; January 2011.
- 2010 “‘L’Épouse Philosophique’: Work and Companionate Marriage in Eighteenth-Century France.” Western Society for French History, Lafayette, Louisiana; October 2010.
- 2010 “Sentiment and Authorial Identity in Eighteenth-Century France.” Conference on Emotions as History, Center for Historical Studies, Evanston, Illinois; May 2010.
- 2010 “Avoiding the Exceptional: Towards a Collective Biography of the Philosophes of the French Enlightenment.” Conference on the Promises and Perils of Biography, Center for Historical Studies, Evanston, Illinois; April 2010.
- 2010 “Just like Julie?: Practicing Sentimental Love.” Society for French Historical Studies, Tempe, Arizona; March 2010.
- 2009 “Scientific Families: Emilie du Châtelet and Intellectual Domesticity.” History of Science Society, Phoenix, Arizona; November 2009.
- 2009 “Thinking Globally but Writing Locally: The History of the French Enlightenment in the Age of Global History.” Center for Historical Studies Workshop, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, United Kingdom; October 2009.
- 2009 “The Enlightenment at Home: Enlightenment Savants as Mothers and Fathers.” Society for French Historical Studies, St. Louis, Missouri; March 2009.
- 2007 “Fathers and Philosophers: Intellectual Self-Representation in Eighteenth-Century France.” Western Society for French History, Albuquerque, New Mexico; November 2007.

Discussant

- 2022 Discussant for Julie Hardwick, *Sex in an Old Regime City*, “French Presse: New Books on French and Francophone History”; November 2022.
- 2022 Organized roundtable, “New Horizons in Enlightenment Studies,” American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, Baltimore, MD; March-April 2022.
- 2020 Discussant for Antoine Lilti, “In the Shadow of the Public: Enlightenment and Modernity,” The Eighteenth-Century Seminar, University of Cambridge; December 2020.
- 2018 Roundtable discussion, “The Edge of Cultural History,” Western Society for French History, Portland, ME; November 2018.
- 2017 Panel on “Agricultural Enlightenment from Metropole to Caribbean,” Society for French Historical Studies, Washington, D.C.; April 2017.

- 2016 Panel on “Science, Medicine, and Imagination in Eighteenth-Century and Revolutionary France,” Western Society for French History, Cedar Rapids, Iowa; November 2016.
- 2016 Roundtable discussion, “Pedagogical Regime Change? Teaching History to Millennials,” Western Society for French History, Cedar Rapids, Iowa; November 2016.
- 2015 Roundtable discussion, “Bridging the High School/College Divide: Conversations Toward Creating a Comprehensive History Pedagogy,” American Historical Association, New York, New York; January 2015.
- 2014 Roundtable discussion on Reacting to the Past: Rousseau, Burke, and Revolution in France, 1791; Western Society for French History, San Antonio, Texas; October 2014.
- 2012 Panel on “Mediating Communities: Performativity, Embodiment, and Transmission in Revolutionary Publications,” Society for French Historical Studies, Los Angeles, California; March 2012.

CAMPUS TALKS (BOWDOIN COLLEGE)

- 2022 “Medicine and Social Media, 250 Years Before Twitter,” Faculty Lecture for Family Weekend, October 2022.
- 2021 “Be Careful What You Wish For: A Discussion of David A. Bell’s *Men on Horseback: The Power of Charisma in the Age of Revolution*,” Office of Alumni Development, March 2021.
- 2020 Participant in faculty panel titled “Medicine, Literature, and Storytelling” in December 2020.
- 2020 Participant in faculty panel titled “‘The 1619 Project’ and Making Sense of the Recent Election” in November 2020.
- 2019 Organized and participated in faculty panel: “Who are the *Gilets Jaunes*?” in April 2019.
- 2018 “Women on Fire: Medicine, Murder, and Spontaneous Human Combustion, 1725-1800,” Faculty Seminar Series, November 2018.
- 2017 Participant in faculty panel titled “How Did We Get Here? Historians on Trump,” April 2017.
- 2016 Organized and participated in faculty panel on the history behind *Hamilton: An American Musical*, December 2016.
- 2014 “Lavoisier’s Organic Enlightenment,” Kemp Symposium on “Visions of Reality: Science and Other Means of Seeking Knowledge,” April 2014.
- 2014 “Love, Risk, and Scientific Proof in Enlightenment France,” Faculty Seminar Series, February 2014.

TEACHING AND MENTORING

Current Lecture Courses

Old Regime and Revolutionary France
Culture Wars in the Age of Enlightenment
Europe’s Age of Expansion, 1600-1789
History of Western Medicine, from the Black Death to Cholera

Current Seminars

Sex, Scandal, and Celebrity in Eighteenth-Century Europe
History of the Body, 1400-1800
The Haitian Revolution
The Science of Solving Crime (first-year seminar)

Honors and Independent Study Students Supervised

Rachel Yang (2021-2022)
Emma Moesswilde (Fall 2016, Summer 2017, 2017-18)
Helen Newton (2013-2014)
Jennifer Goetz (Summer 2013)
Diana Lee (Spring 2013)
Katherine Fitch (2012-2013)
Yojin Yoon (2011-2012)

PROFESSIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE

Professional Service

Member at Large, Executive Board, American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies
Prize Committee, Leo Gershoy Book Prize, American Historical Association
Coordinator, with Daniel Watkins (Baylor University), of a monthly online workshop on the Enlightenment in France and the Francophone World.
Co-Organizer, Franco-American Workshop in Eighteenth-Century France, August 2021.
Nominating Committee, Society for the Study of Early Modern Women and Gender (2019-2022).
Chair of committee, 2020-2022
Local Arrangements Chair, Western Society for French History, 2018 meeting in Portland, ME.
Council Member, Western Society for French History (2012-14)
Reviewer: *Bloomsbury*, *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, *Eighteenth-Century Thought*, *French Historical Studies*; *French History*; *History of Science*; *Isis*; *Journal of the History of Ideas*; *Journal of Women's History*; *Law & History Review*; *Journal of the Western Society for French History*; *Modern Intellectual History*; Routledge; *University of Chicago Press*

Institutional and Departmental Service, Bowdoin College

Search Committee, Assistant Professor of Chinese history (2022)
Faculty Development Committee (2022-
Search Committee, Visiting Assistant Professor of Medieval European history (2022)
Organizer, Kemp Symposium (2022)
Benefits Advisory Committee (2018-22)
Search Committee, Executive Director of Career Planning (2018)
Search Committee, Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship, Modern European History (2017)
Curriculum and Educational Policy Committee (2016-18)
Student Appeals and Grievances Committee (2015-16)
Trustee Student Affairs Committee (2015-16)
Student Internal Fellowships Committee (2012-14)
Ad Hoc Committee, French Department Modern French Literature Search (2012-13)
Organizer, Alfred E. Golz Memorial Lecture (2012-2014)

Institutional Service, Northwestern University

Selection Committee for Presidential Fellowship, Northwestern University (2011)
Coordinator, Doctoral Colloquium, Science in Human Culture Program, Northwestern University (2010-11)
Co-founder and co-director, Professional Development Workshop Series, Northwestern University (2008-09)
Director, European Dissertation Workshop, Northwestern University (2007-09)
Director, Northwestern University History Graduate Student Seminar (2006-07)

RESEARCH LANGUAGES

French (fluent reading, writing, and speaking)

Spanish (reading)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Historical Association

American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies

History of Science Society

Society for French Historical Studies

Society for the Study of Early Modern Women and Gender

Western Society for French History