

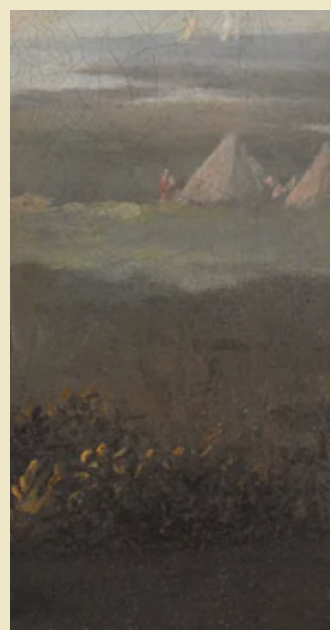


SLAVERY NORTH

Call for Abstracts: **Academic Conference**

*Rebellion, Resistance, and Refuge:
Slavery and Border-Crossing during
the American Revolution*

July 9-12, 2026





SLAVERY
NORTH

UMass Amherst
472 North Pleasant Street, Room 111
Amherst, Massachusetts 01003
United States

Call for Abstracts: Academic Conference

Rebellion, Resistance, and Refuge: Slavery and Border-Crossing during the American Revolution

Dates: Thursday, July 9 to Sunday, July 12, 2026

Location: University of Massachusetts, Amherst, USA

Theme:

Like all conflicts, the Revolutionary War (1775-1783) brought disruption, violence, and uncertainty. However, because it unfolded at a moment when Transatlantic Slavery was yet to be abolished in the regions that were to become Canada and the USA, for the enslaved, the war also brought large-scale upheaval of forced inland and maritime migration which opened opportunities for escape and emancipation. On the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, Slavery North invites proposals for papers that rethink the cultures, events, and experiences of the war across the liminal borders (regional and proto-national) of British North America.

While scholars of early America have centered studies on the political motivations and military maneuvers that influenced the rebels, the grassroots impact of sedition, and the interpretation of constitutional debates, most scholarship on the Canadian side of the border has been regionally and thematically biased towards a celebratory focus on White Loyalists in the Maritimes.

Meanwhile, little scholarship – Canadian or American - has been devoted to recuperating and understanding the experiences of the enslaved across regions, origins, identities, climates, geographies, and circumstances. Nor has attention been paid to the turmoil that ensued when White Loyalist enslavers, those they enslaved, and newly freed Black Loyalists were all evacuated into northern (Canadian) territories which had already been shaped by Transatlantic Slavery.

Slavery North invites abstracts for 20-minute papers in Humanities and Fine Arts disciplines that engage new approaches and perspectives, interrogate un(der)studied archives, and tackle original topics and themes on the art, cultural, material, and traditional histories of the Revolutionary War on both sides of the 49th parallel. We especially encourage contributions that recuperate and center the aspirations, resistance, perspectives, and experiences of enslaved people and communities.

Slavery North

Slavery North is a one-of-a-kind academic research hub at UMass Amherst where students, scholars, and artists form cohorts to support each other in the pursuit of their independent research projects in the understudied fields of Canadian Slavery and US North Slavery. At the heart of Slavery North is an academic fellowship program focused on generating

original research outcomes across a variety of humanities and fine arts disciplines. Slavery North staff also create research outcomes that explore the centuries-long visual archive of Transatlantic Slavery.

Website: <https://slaverynorth.com>

UMass Amherst

Founded in 1863, The University of Massachusetts Amherst is one of the USA's top public universities and is the flagship campus for the University of Massachusetts system. It is the largest public university in New England, offering 110 undergraduate and 127 graduate programs across nine schools and colleges.

Website: <https://www.umass.edu>

Submissions:

Slavery North invites proposals for 20-minute papers from graduate students, scholars, professors, and cultural and heritage workers. Proposals must include:

- 1) Name, title, affiliation/institution, and location (city, province/state, country)
- 2) Paper title
- 3) Abstract: 200-300 words
- 4) Two-page CV (featuring research highlights)

Hospitality: Organizers will cover the cost of travel (to and from conference), accommodation, and some meals. Participants are expected to participate fully in the in-person symposium program on site.

Timeline:

Deadline for Abstracts: Friday, December 19, 2025

Notifications: Friday, January 23, 2026

Conference Dates: Thursday, July 9 to Sunday, July 12, 2026

Submission Instructions:

Please submit your abstract and supporting materials via email as pdf attachments by **Friday, December 19, 2025**, to Emily Davidson at: emilydavidso@umass.edu